

GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL – OPEN SESSION

January 15, 2021

Virtual Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillors: Tim Rahilly, CHAIR	Geri Lynn Gouglas	Stephen Price
Elizabeth Evans, VICE-CHAIR	Leah Hamilton	Maggie Quance
Tala Abu Hayyaneh	Sally Haney	Michael Quinn
Julie Booke	Tim Haney	Alireza Rezvani
Meagan Bowler	Alyanna Hernal	Kari Roberts
Carly Bullough	Paul Jessop	Paul Rossmann
Peter Choate	Brenda Lang	Jessy Santos
Erik Christiansen	Michelle LoGullo	Bill Scott
Christian Cook	Brad Mahon	Robyn Stewart
Yasmin Dean	Micheline Maylor	Spirit River Striped Wolf
Michelle DeWolfe	Katharine McGowen	Cheryl Techentin
Anna Dinh	Tori McMillan	Brian Traynor
Kit Dobson	Cari Merkley	Michael Uzoka
Doug Doucette	Sarah Micho	Annalise Van Ham
Israel Dunmade	Tonya Mousseau	Paul Varella
Lee Easton	Elaine Mullen	Phil Warsaba
Mohamed El Hussein	Scott Murray	Gaye Warthe
John Fischer	Kenna Olsen	Renae Watchman
Cynthia Gallop	Carlton Osakwe	Meg Wilcox
Shane Gannon	Jennifer Pettit	Jonathan Withey

Resources: Jane O'Connor, **SECRETARY**
Sheena Jensen, **RECORDING SECRETARY**

ABSENCES

Regrets: Aida Patient
Maryam Elahi
Trevor Day

Absent: Sean Cook

T. Rahilly, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. TERRITORIAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

T. Abu Hayyaneh opened the meeting with a Territorial Land Acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR JANUARY 15, 2021

MOTION: Pettit / Uzoka

THAT the Agenda for the January 15, 2021 General Faculties Council open session meeting be approved, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

3.1. Minutes from November 27, 2020

MOTION: El-Hussein / Lang

THAT the Minutes of the November 27, 2020 General Faculties Council open session meeting be approved, as AMENDED.

- Amendment: To correct a typo in section 5.1. – “Planning for Winter ~~2020~~ 2021 Semester”

MOTION CARRIED

3.2. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1. TLC Membership Change Recommendation

MOTION: Cook / Rezvani

THAT the General Faculties Council approve that the Manager, Learning Technologies (Academic Development Centre) be added to the membership of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

Discussion:

- It was asked if this membership change request is to support the Learning Management System (LMS) project, and if so, why the position of Manager, Learning Technologies (Academic Development Centre) could be added as a resource instead. The questioner stated they do not support changing the structure of a committee for one specific project.
- An additional question was raised if this position from Academic Development Centre (ADC) needs to be added permanently or is it more related to the current LMS project and perhaps the needs for understanding online remote delivery. The questioner also flagged the concentration of members within a particular area on a committee and why this position could not just be added as a Resource.
- Historical context was provided about how the position is a critical part of discussions and decisions on all parts of delivery of online material and technology for use in instruction. Background information on previous discussions was also given that explained that the intent for this position to always be represented on this committee, and not just for the LMS project, and that there was approval from the previous Teaching and Learning Standing Committee to add this position to the new TLC.
- Rationale for adding this position as a full member of the committee was provided in the meeting package and highlighted at the meeting. It was reiterated that the addition of this position was not for

the current pandemic situation or just for the LMS project. Clarification was also provided about the representation from ADC on the committee, explaining that this position is a permanent position from ADC, whereas the Director, ADC incumbent is a secondment. Therefore, it is critical to have this position on the committee.

- In response to questions about adding the position as a member instead of a resource, it was explained how this position has a significant responsibility to the committee in which their contributions and expectations significantly exceed that of other resources currently on the committee.

MOTION CARRIED

4.2. Curriculum

4.2.1. Major Program Change – Criminal Justice, BA-CJ (Honours)

MOTION: Choate / Dean

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the major program change for the Criminal Justice, BA-CJ (Honours).

Discussion:

- The Chair of APCC provided a brief overview of the major program change.

MOTION CARRIED

4.2.2. Major Program Change – History, BA

MOTION: Choate / Murray

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the major program change for the History, BA.

Discussion:

- The Chair of APCC provided a brief overview of the major program change.
- A comment was made that this change is a revision to include an Indigenous content requirement. It was pointed out and encouraged that Indigenization can continue to move forward on campus, despite other factors not being in place, e.g. not having people in leadership positions, or awaiting GFC's work in this area.

MOTION CARRIED

4.2.3. Major Program Change – History, BA (Honours)

MOTION: Choate / Gannon

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the major program change for the History, BA (Honours).

MOTION CARRIED

4.2.4. Major Program Change – Faculty of Business and Communication Studies Proposals**MOTION:** Choate / Dunmade**THAT** the General Faculties Council approve the major program change for the following programs:

- Accounting, BBA (Honours)
- Finance, BBA (Honours)
- General Management, BBA (Honours)
- Human Resources, BBA (Honours)
- International Business, BBA (Honours)
- Marketing, BBA (Honours)
- Supply Chain Management, BBA (Honours)

Discussion:

- The Chair of APCC provided a brief overview of the major program change for all the Honours programs to remove one of the statistics courses.
- Comments were made in support of the change and benefits to students. It will allow more students to take the programs and it will not make the program any less rigorous.

MOTION CARRIED**5. REPORTS FROM SENIOR ADMINISTRATION****5.1. President and Vice-Chancellor**

T. Rahilly submitted a written report with updates on the Winter 2021 semester, COVID-19, and business of GFC in the semester ahead from committees.

5.2. Provost and Vice-President, Academic (Interim)

E. Evans submitted a written report with academic updates, and updates from the Vice-Provost and AVP, Academic and Vice-Provost and AVP, Students. The following promotions to Full Professor were announced and the individuals were congratulated:

- Faculty of Arts – Lee Easton
- Faculty of Business and Communication Studies – Paul Varella Connors
- Faculty of Health, Community and Education – Mohammed El Hussein and Christy Lane
- Faculty of Science and Technology – Nathan Akroyd and Israel Dunmade
- Teaching and Learning – Michelle Yeo

5.3. Discussion of reports from Senior Administration

- A concern was raised with respect to Alberta 2030 and their acknowledgement of “soft skills” during one of the recent roundtables. Though support for the importance of “soft skills” was acknowledged verbally, it is not documented in the Alberta 2030 goals. It was asked if GFC can expect to have a discussion on this and if GFC should communicate to the Government of Alberta, explaining how it is an academic matter with an impact on MRU’s future. It was requested that EC should consider engaging GFC in this conversation.
 - T. Rahilly responded with information about his involvement with Alberta 2030 as a member of the Guiding Coalition and the status of their work currently in progress.

- He will bring this request to EC for advice on whether or not it should be brought forward as a matter of GFC business.
- It was confirmed that there is a plan underway to disseminate to the MRU community information collected from the student survey conducted in the Fall. More information will be provided to GFC.

6. Committee Chair Reports

6.1. Executive Committee

T. Rahilly, Chair of the Executive Committee (EC), submitted a written report about the December 2, 2020 special meeting and January 6, 2021 regular meeting. The GFC Executive Committee was thanked for their consideration of a number of motions approved on behalf of GFC for changes to the Winter 2021 semester. Committee Chair's were encouraged to provide written reports to GFC.

With respect to peer evaluations that were completed during the COVID-19 pandemic prior to the TLC approving and making available the temporary peer evaluation forms for use during COVID-19, a question was asked as to why EC decided not to recommend making retroactive changes for the previously completed peer evaluations to indicate that they had been completed during the pandemic. The concern was that when they are reviewed years from now, memories may have faded about the conditions the evaluation was completed in. It was suggested that there is another form available to faculty members to use to provide context for peer evaluations, and a comment was made in response that supported a retroactive change to the forms instead of filling out additional forms. The main question raised could not be definitively answered at the meeting and the Chair advised that he will bring this to EC for discussion in response to the issues raised.

6.2. Academic Planning and Budget Committee

P. Varella, Chair of the Academic Planning and Budget Committee (APBC) advised that APBC has not met since early November and will be meeting again on February 4, 2021.

6.3. Academic Programs and Curriculum Committee

P. Choate, Chair of the Academic Programs and Curriculum Committee (APCC) advised that the work of the committee to date were the items brought forward to today's meeting.

6.4. Academic Standards Committee

L. Easton, Chair of the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) gave updates on the committee's recent approval of program reviews and discussions regarding the scope of the review of the Tenure and Promotion Handbook and Criteria. An update was also provided on behalf of the ASC working group who is reviewing MRU Tenure and Promotion Criteria with respect to Indigenous knowledge, with the aim of bringing recommendations forward to ASC in April or May and then to GFC.

6.5. Research and Scholarship Committee

K. Olsen, Chair of the Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) gave an update on the establishment of working groups and planning for the year, as summarized within the President's Report in the meeting package. In response to a question for more information on the proposal for the Undergraduate Research

Transcript Notation, it was explained the committee is in the early stages of concept and development. It was announced that the call for nominations for the Research Recognition Rewards has been sent out.

6.6. Student Affairs Committee

P. Warsaba, Chair of the Student Affairs Committee (SAC) did not have a report. The committee's next meeting is on January 25, 2021.

6.7. Teaching and Learning Committee

C. Cook, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) advised that the peer evaluation forms for temporary use during COVID-19 are available online through myMRU. She thanked the MRFA and GFC Executive Committee for their support to move the approval of these forms forward quickly. A summary of the committee's priorities as detailed in the President's Report was given. In response to a request for more information about the LMS working group, it was explained that their work is currently on hold, but they will begin to define their role, membership and involvement in the LMS project at the next TLC meeting.

7. OTHER REPORTS

7.1. Report from the Board of Governors

A written report was submitted for the open session board meeting on December 2, 2020.

8. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

No written questions were submitted to GFC.

9. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

- An ongoing issue at the University of Alberta was flagged by a member with respect to bicameral governance and decisions about the reorganization of their Faculties and how the U of A Board responded to recommendations from GFC. Concern was raised about potential implications for MRU around academic affairs and bicameral governance based on what happened at the U of A. T. Rahilly was asked what he thinks those implications might be, particularly in consideration of the current budget development. The member also raised this so that GFC has this on their radar.
 - T. Rahilly reiterated MRU's commitments to the Collective Agreement and the value of bicameral governance at the University. It is important for GFC to consider and make recommendations to the Board of Governors and the Board must be mindful of their authority within the *Post-secondary Learning Act*.

10. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION

11.3 TLC Decision on Evaluation Forms

TLC was asked for clarification on whether a potential consequence of having a COVID marker on the peer evaluation form would be that critical student feedback might be dismissed, and if TLC also considered use of a similar marker for student evaluations in this current environment. In response, it was explained that the intent of these temporary peer evaluation forms are for faculty members to capture the context of delivery. All information is considered, but in the context of the current conditions.

The differences between peer evaluation forms, which are used in Tenure and Promotion dossiers, and SPoT was highlighted. The information provided in the peer evaluation forms differs from the feedback from students that come through SPoT. The MRFA President offered to speak with SAMRU in regards to this concern raised.

Comments were made in support of the concerns raised. A point was made that evaluations for students are staying the same. It was suggested that the potential for using a similar marker for student transcripts as has been done for peer evaluations for faculty be looked into. The current pandemic conditions have an impact on student grades/GPA's. As well, a general suggestion was made to adjust how students are instructed and evaluated during a pandemic, and with in-person learning. The comments were noted and any action would be brought to GFC.

11. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

<p>MOTION: Dean / Dobson</p>	<p>THAT the consent agenda for information be approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11.1. Aviation Diploma Program Review 11.2. Bachelor of Nursing Program Review 11.4. GFC and Committee Schedule 11.5. Committee Meeting Minutes 11.6. Faculty Approved Curriculum
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MOTION CARRIED

12. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business brought forward.

13. ADJOURNMENT 10:40AM Easton / Abu Hayyaneh