
GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL – OPEN SESSION

March 12, 2021

Virtual Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE

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

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

TERRITORIAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

T. Rahilly opened the meeting with a Territorial Land Acknowledgement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR MARCH 12, 2021

Moved by S. Reena and seconded by L. Hamilton:

THAT the Agenda for the March 12, 2021 General Faculties Council open session meeting be approved, as presented.

Motion carried by unanimous consent.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Moved by K. Dobson and seconded by B. Lang:

THAT the Minutes of the February 12, 2021 General Faculties Council open session meeting be approved, as presented.

Motion carried by unanimous consent.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

Curriculum: Major Program Change – Physical Literacy, BHPE

Moved by P. Choate and seconded by J. Booke:

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the major program change for Physical Literacy, BHPE.

Discussion:

- The Chair of APCC gave an overview of the major program change.

Motion carried.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Planning for Fall Semester 2021

With the University's intention to offer as many courses and services as possible in person (within public health guidelines) starting in Fall 2021, this item was brought to GFC for a preliminary discussion on how members of GFC and faculty in general will respond. Context was provided in the meeting package that explained the importance of starting the dialogue now, to discuss lessons learned, to talk about flexibility and responsiveness, to think about potential impacts on students and faculty, and to provide input into planning for the Fall. To facilitate the discussion at GFC, framing questions were provided to members to consider prior to the meeting.

GFC engaged in an open discussion around planning for Fall 2021, which included comments and questions/responses in the following areas:

- Ensuring there is understanding of blended and remote delivery terminology
- Positive and negative impacts of blended and remote delivery to both students and faculty (negatives such as increased work loads and mental health concerns; positives such as alternate forms of assessment and use of technology for flexibility)
- Level of alternative or blended delivery in the short-term or longer-term, including consideration of provisions in the Collective Agreement and the incorporation of technology in classrooms
- Managing a safe return to campus
- Response to outbreaks and ensuring the plan is understood in advance, e.g. impact to students for exams and planning that best supports students
- Considerations of reintegration scenarios and the approach to transitioning back to campus, including how to determine which classes would be online or in-person and being considerate of the challenges and concerns people may face during the transition

- Use of technology to support blended and remote delivery
- Lessons learned from the past year and what worked/didn't work
- Methods and considerations for supporting international students

T. Rahilly provided closing comments, reiterating that final decisions about course delivery formats for the Fall have not yet been made. It was acknowledged that there is a lot of uncertainty about where the University will be in the Fall due to the pandemic and there are many external factors that will influence the decision. E. Evans invited members to provide comments and feedback directly to her. Further discussions will occur at the April and May GFC meetings.

REPORTS FROM SENIOR ADMINISTRATION

President and Vice-Chancellor

T. Rahilly submitted a written report on planning for the future, the provincial budget and the panel for the Alberta 2030 review, and provided highlights at the meeting. Congratulations were given to the newly elected SAMRU Executive Council members and thanks were expressed to the outgoing members.

Two fundraising initiatives were brought to the attention of GFC. One is in development by Janet Miller with Cheryl Techentin to establish an MRU endowment to support temporary relief housing for those dealing with domestic violence. The other is the Gifting Circle Bursary for Indigenous Women in Entrepreneurship created by Shannon Peston (MRU Board of Governors member and alumna).

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.

Discussion of Reports from Senior Administration

In response to questions:

- The intention is to bring forward the University Strategic Plan document to GFC for consultation, versus bringing it to a Committee of GFC.
- Application information for students for the CEWIL Canada Funding will be provided, and Career Services can be contacted for this information, as well.
- With respect to concerns raised about the relationship between the budget process/decisions and GFC's ability to make recommendations on budget (as per the PSLA) the Chair responded that this needs to be addressed. The Chair of the Academic Planning and Budget Committee (APBC) additionally reported on the challenges the Committee is having with their mandate and that conversations are taking place with the Provost to address these challenges, including their mandate as it relates to budget.
- With respect to concerns raised about the changes made within the Career Services structure and concern there was not sufficient consultation done with Faculties prior to the changes being made, it was explained that the changes made were to align with future needs for students. Plans are underway to provide more communication about these changes. The vote of non-confidence with Career Services at a Faculty Council meeting will be followed up on with the Faculty to better articulate the changes that were made. A comment was made to strongly encourage student consultation.

- With respect to the report on APBC given above, a comment was made about the importance of providing clarity about the role of this Committee to ensure they can be effective.

COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

Executive Committee

T. Rahilly, Chair of the Executive Committee (EC), submitted a written report about the March 3, 2021 Executive Committee meeting. In response to a question, an overview of EC's rationale regarding their decision on retroactive changes for peer evaluations during COVID-19 was given. Further clarification was provided on EC's rationale to not conduct a formal evaluation of GFC this year.

Academic Planning and Budget Committee

P. Varella, Chair of the Academic Planning and Budget Committee, further highlighted the difficulties the Committee has been having with fulfilling their mandate and expressed that as part of EC's review of Committees this be considered.

Academic Programs and Curriculum Committee

No updates.

Academic Standards Committee

L. Easton, Chair of the Academic Standards Committee (ASC), submitted a written report that gave a progress report for the working group on Acknowledging Indigenous Ways of Knowing. It was also reported at the meeting that the program reviews for all four majors in the Bachelor of Health and Physical Education were reviewed by ASC at their March 11, 2021 meeting.

Research and Scholarship Committee

K. Olsen, Chair of the Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC), submitted a written report summarizing their February 16, 2021 meeting.

Student Affairs Committee

P. Warsaba, Chair of the Student Affairs Committee (SAC), submitted a written report summarizing their February 22, 2021 meeting.

Teaching and Learning Committee

C. Cook, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC), submitted a written report summarizing their February 25, 2021 meeting. It was also reported at the meeting that there is currently a call for proposals for the Celebrate! event being held on May 5 – 7, 2021 (mru.ca/celebrate).

OTHER REPORTS

Report from the Board of Governors

A written report was submitted with a summary of the open session board meeting on February 22, 2021.

QUESTION PERIOD

Written Questions

No written questions were submitted to GFC.

Questions from the Floor

No questions.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items Removed from the Consent Agenda for Discussion

No items were removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

Consent Agenda Items for Information

The following consent agenda items were received for information:

- Report from SAMRU
 - SAMRU is hosting an Anti-Racism Commemoration event on March 18, 2021.
- Committee Meeting Minutes
- Faculty Approved Curriculum

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

10:37 AM

Dunmade / Watchman