
GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL – OPEN SESSION

OCTOBER 23, 2020

Virtual Meeting

ATTENDANCE

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

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

ABSENCES

Regrets: Tim Rahilly, **CHAIR**
Paul Rossmann
Michael Quinn
Sean Cook

E.Evans, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. TERRITORIAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

J. O'Connor opened the meeting with a Territorial Land Acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 23, 2020

MOTION: Dunmade / Dobson	THAT the Agenda for the October 23, 2020 General Faculties Council open session meeting be approved, as presented.
---------------------------------	---

MOTION CARRIED

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

3.1. Minutes from September 11, 2020

MOTION: Lang / El Hussein	THAT the Minutes of the September 11, 2020 General Faculties Council open session meeting be approved, as presented.
----------------------------------	---

MOTION CARRIED

3.2. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. REPORTS FROM SENIOR ADMINISTRATION

4.1. President and Vice-Chancellor

T. Rahilly submitted a written report on the following areas:

- Planning for Winter 2020 semester
- Board of Governors update (October 14, 2020 meeting)
- Town Hall (September 30, 2020)
- System Review Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs

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

E. Evans submitted a written report with academic updates, including updates from the Vice-Provost and AVP, Academic and Vice-Provost and AVP, Students.

The following questions and concerns were responded to in relation to the information provided in the written report:

- Whether or not the number for winter registrations will change or impact budget, and if the summer call-out campaign was representative for winter registrations.
 - Campaigns are in progress to generate additional winter registrations and impacts to budget is not expected. The impact of the current campaigns will be monitored to determine anything further needs to be done, such as another call-out campaign.
- Concerns with winter registration fees and whether or not they could be waived, if its a financial barrier to a student wanting to register, and how students are advised about financial aid options.
 - It is asked that students are referred to Student Awards and Financial Aid to assist with options. This is communicated to students a variety of ways, e.g. registration emails, MRU website, through other offices.
- Concerns with student's experience and performance this Fall semester, and if/how the student experiences of the Fall semester will be collected.

- A survey to understand student experience in the Fall semester is in development.
- If it is possible to temporarily suspend one aspect of policy (Registration Policy 13.1) so that a student's full-time status does not lapse for those students deciding not to continue to the next semester because of the online environment during the pandemic.
 - The definition of full-time status and the reactivation period was clarified. Implications of implementing exceptions to this policy were given, such as students not qualifying for funding if the definition of full time is modified, tracking individual students progression through their academic career if exemptions were made, and impact to faculty planning.
 - It was also explained why a policy would or would not be adjusted, in the context of previous precedent raised, and that this policy has not shown to be disadvantaging students at this time.

The following questions and concerns were raised regarding the launch of the faculty annual reporting system, as per the update provided in the Provost's Report:

- Requests were made for (i) an update related to the launch not being as successful as stated in the Provost's Report, (ii) a status update on the MOU between the MRFA and University to extend the deadline and which will guide the meaning of the extension, and (iii) assurances about the security of Google Drive for faculty to put supplementary files to their reports.
 - It was informed that the Provost is reviewing MOU and will be responding to the MRFA.
- A comment was made that the software spectacularly failed and that it's understood it was because of the vendor. Calling it a "successful launch" (as written in the report) gives the impression that MRU is satisfied with this expensive software. Can the contract with the vendor and MRU be challenged because they failed to provide a service?
- It was stated that MRU is committed to this software for five years, so it is important to get this system right. It was requested that GFC receive a formal accounting of what went wrong and what will be done to ensure there is not a repeat of the difficulties next year.
- Concern was expressed about how tenure portfolios may be negatively affected because difficulties were experienced early on with uploading documents to the system before the Google Drive option was presented. Consideration should be given to this issue as tenure portfolios are reviewed.
- It was asked if annual reporting could be put on hold for the year in consideration of the issues and concerns raised, and in consideration of the challenges associated with the pandemic.
 - The importance of having annual reports completed this year was explained, and recognized that the reports be reviewed through the lens of being in a pandemic. This is also being addressed in the MOU being drafted with the MRFA.

With the absence of the Vice-Provost and AVP, Academic at this meeting, responses to all the questions and concerns about the faculty annual reporting system was deferred. It was requested that a formal report be submitted to GFC to address the questions and concerns raised, and for the Executive Committee to consider it as a separate item on the GFC agenda for discussion.

5. Committee Chair Reports

5.1. Academic Planning and Budget Committee

P. Varella, Chair of the Academic Planning and Budget Committee (APBC), submitted a written report for the October 8, 2020 APBC meeting.

5.2. Academic Programs and Curriculum Committee

P. Choate, Chair of the Academic Programs and Curriculum Committee (APCC), gave a brief verbal report for the October 6, 2020 APCC meeting. The APCC charter was reviewed, with minor revisions made. A working group was formed for addressing a 3-credit equivalent graduation requirement in Indigenization.

5.3. Academic Standards Committee

L. Easton, Chair of the Academic Standards Committee (ASC), submitted a written report for the October 7, 2020 ASC meeting.

5.4. Executive Committee

T. Rahilly, Chair of the Executive Committee, submitted a written report for the October 15, 2020 Executive Committee meeting.

5.5. Research and Scholarship Committee

K. Olsen, Chair of the Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC), gave a verbal report for the October 14, 2020 RSC meeting. The RSC charter and MRU Institute annual reports were reviewed. RSC is working on priorities and working groups to establish for this year, and good news stories were received.

5.6. Student Affairs Committee

P. Warsaba, Chair of the Student Affairs Committee (SAC), gave a brief verbal report for the October 5, 2020 SAC Committee meeting. SAC reviewed their meeting times and the SAC charter.

5.7. Teaching and Learning Committee

C. Cook, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC), gave a verbal report for the October 13, 2020 TLC meeting. TLC reviewed their meeting times, had preliminary discussions on priorities and working groups for this year. The committee is finalizing the draft TLC charter to bring to GFC for approval in November.

Questions were responded to about the status of APIC, the relationship between APBC and the Academic Plan Implementation Committee (APIC), and balancing APBC's mandate as it relates to academic planning and budget process. APBC is discussing their mandate, with consideration of how it relates to the work of APIC. It was explained that APIC is currently on hiatus for reasons related to the discussions occurring at ABPC about the relationship of the mandates, the current strategic planning process, the scope of the role of the interim Provost, and the COVID-19 pandemic. It was requested if the GFC Executive Committee could further discuss how APIC relates to this new GFC for resolution of APIC's status, as part of the transition to Part 1 GFC and in a timely fashion.

6. OTHER REPORTS**6.1. Report from the Board of Governors**

A written report was submitted for the open session board meeting on October 14, 2020.

7. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

No written questions were submitted to GFC.

8. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

A question was responded to asking if there will be a student survey conducted to capture the experience of learners in the Fall term to help inform faculty/departments for the winter term and how it would be conducted, and concerns about the timing of making the information available. It was explained a survey is in development, and updates will be provided by the Provost’s Office. It was acknowledged that there is urgency to have it as soon as possible.

9. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION

No items were removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

10. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

MOTION: Varella / Elahi	<p>THAT the following Consent Agenda Items for Approval be approved, as presented:</p> <p>10.1. GFC Committee Charters THAT the following GFC Committee Charters are approved, as presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academic Planning and Budget Committee ● Academic Programs and Curriculum Committee ● Academic Standards Committee ● Research and Scholarship Committee ● Student Affairs Committee <p>10.2. Arts Faculty Council Charter THAT the Arts Faculty Council Charter is approved, as presented.</p> <p>10.3. MRU Institute Annual Reports THAT General Faculties Council recommends the 2019-20 annual reports for the MRU Institutes to the Board of Governors for approval.</p>
--------------------------------	---

MOTION CARRIED

11. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following consent agenda items were received for information:

- 11.1. Accessibility Services Annual Report 2019-20
- 11.2. Committee Meeting Minutes
- 11.3. Faculty Approved Curriculum

12. NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought forward.

13. ADJOURNMENT **10:15am** **Uzoka / Pettit**