



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

General Faculties Council
ACADEMIC PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

Meeting #126
November 23, 2020, 2:00 p.m.

By Zoom platform

Voting Members

Dru Marshall, Co-Chair
Tara Beattie, Academic Co-Chair
Elena Braverman
Nicole Culos-Reed
Frank Finley
Andy Knight
Tanille Shandro
Amy Warren
Penny Werthner
Barry Wylant

Non-Voting Members

Violet Baron
David Stewart
Florentine Strzelczyk
Melanie Zimmer

Secretary

Elizabeth Sjogren

Scribe

Tasha Hodzic

Guests

Susan Barker, Vice-Provost (Student Experience) and Co-Chair, Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee – present for Items 4 and 9
Mary Grantham O’Brien, Associate Dean (Policy and Program Development), Faculty of Graduate Studies – present for Item 5
Leslie Reid, Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and Co-Chair, Teaching and Learning Committee – present for Items 4 and 9
Angelique Saweczko, Registrar – present for Items 4 and 9
Bryce C. Tingle, QC, Edwards Chair in Business Law, Faculty of Law – present for Item 6
Kristen Van de Biezenbos, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, and Academic Director, Centre for Corporate Sustainability, Haskayne School of Business – present for Item 6
Robin Yates, Dean and Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) and Co-Chair, Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee – present for Item 5

Observers

Christine Johns, Senior Director (Academic & International Strategies)

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

It was requested that the items “Pass/Fail Compassionate Grading” and “Extension of Leave Time” be added under Other Business.

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the November 23, 2020 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting be approved, with the requested amendments.

Carried**2. Remarks of the Co-Chair and Academic Co-Chair**

The Co-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- An update on how new provincial restrictions to combat COVID-19 will affect the University community. It was explained that the Crisis Management Team (CMT) will meet following Deena Hinshaw's announcement to accommodate whatever message is provided from the province.
- The CMT has been meeting weekly or twice weekly as issues relating to the pandemic arise
- The University conducts investigations of every case of COVID-19 on campus, and it was noted that when clusters of cases occur, it is typically the result of individuals not following protocols, such as wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, or properly cleaning equipment
- The University is working with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to potentially set up a field hospital, and it was noted that this same work was done in April but was never needed
- The Finance and Property Committee met this morning to review the 2021-2022 tuition rates, meal plan rates, and the like, and these proposals will be brought to the Board for final approval in December
- The University is working closely with the Premier's office, AHS, and a COVID-19 task force, and it was reported that the mortality rate is rising in sync with case numbers, and that provincial restrictions must take into account the mental health risks of economic closures

The Academic Co-Chair encouraged Committee members to take actions to stay safe and healthy.

In response to a question, it was explained that the notifications circulated to the community when an individual on campus tests positive for COVID-19 follow the advice of Alberta Health Services in terms of the details provided. The communications team circulates these messages at a fast pace, and so certain details, such as the process for deep cleaning, are not included.

3. Approval of the November 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting held on November 2, 2020 be approved.

Carried

4. Approval of Changes to Regulations G.1 Scheduling of Tests and In-Class Assessments and G.5 Scheduling of Final Examinations in the University Calendar

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Leslie Reid, Susan Barker, and Angelique Saweczko presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the proposal, explaining that the changes incorporate more flexibility in the 24-hour timed window, outline the mechanisms needed for an instructor to schedule a common assessment time, increase flexibility to develop contingency plans for issues students may experience during a timed online assessment, allow smaller-stakes online assessments worth less than 10% of a student's grade to be exempt from these guidelines, provide support to students who require formal accommodations, and include suggestions on when an instructor is to be available to answer assessment questions. It was explained that these changes aim to ensure a fair and equitable approach to assessments, reduce stress, and clear up any confusion resulting from the previous guidelines, and that a thorough communications plan will be implemented to bring awareness to the changes.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - These changes will take effect January 1, 2021, and will not affect the December 2020 exams
 - Guidelines for contingency planning are excluded from the online assessment section as additional time is not the only contingency option available to students and instructors and may also include rescheduling the assessment
- The Committee discussed:
 - The 10% weighted criteria for smaller-stakes asynchronous assessments and how this affects instructor and student workload, and the resources available in the Taylor Institute to assist instructors with effective pedagogical design
 - The difference between an online exam and a take-home exam
 - The difficulty some instructors may have in accommodating the 50 percent time extension to complete an online timed exam
 - What feedback was received from the Associate Deans in the different Faculties, and what changes are needed for Winter 2021 course outlines
 - The possibility that, as a result of these changes, some instructors may shift to fewer heavily-weighted assessments, and it was noted that these guidelines aim for a common ground and that some students appreciate fewer high-stakes assessments as opposed to more frequent, lower-stakes assessments
- The Committee suggested that:
 - A supplement to the guidelines could include a breakdown of what has worked well and what has not in order to provide pedagogical support for instructors
 - Language be added to the fourth bullet under "Timed Assessments for Online and Blended Courses" to clarify that the procedure for students who wish to arrange an assessment at an alternate time must be clearly articulated in the course outline

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the changes to Regulations G.1 *Scheduling of Tests and In-Class Assessments* and G.5 *Scheduling of Final Examinations* in the University Calendar, as set out in the document provided to the Committee and as recommended by the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee, effective January 1, 2021, with the requested amendment.

Carried**5. Changes to A.1 Qualifications in the Graduate Chapter of the University Calendar**

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Mary Grantham O'Brien and Robin Yates presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the changes, explaining that the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) proposes to extend the temporary English Language Proficiency requirements approved by the Committee in April 2020, as students are still having trouble accessing testing centres. It was noted that FGS has set a minimum English Language Proficiency requirement but that programs can adjust the score or test requirements to suit their program needs, and that FGS proposes to increase the Duolingo English Test minimum score from 115 to 125 to align with other graduate programs in Canada.
- There were no questions

Motion 1:**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the changes to A.1 *Qualifications* in the Graduate Chapter of the University Calendar to include the addition of the Duolingo English Test and the TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition Test to the list of acceptable English Language Proficiency tests for admission to graduate programs for the Fall 2021, Winter 2022, Spring 2022 and Summer 2022 academic terms, as set out in the document provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

Carried**Motion 2:****Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the change to A.1 *Qualifications* in the Graduate Chapter of the University Calendar to increase the minimum Duolingo English Test score for graduate student admissions from 115 to 125 for the Fall 2021, Winter 2022, Spring 2022 and Summer 2022 academic terms, as set out in the document provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

Carried

6. Creation of a Corporate Law Summer Institute in the Faculty of Law

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Kristen Van de Biezenbos and Bryce C. Tingle presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the proposal, explaining that the initial offering of a summer program in London was run through Group Study in Summer 2019, that the Corporate Law Summer Institute (the Institute) allows students to complete programming similar to an internship along with additional programming and have it recorded on their transcript, and that the Faculty of Law aims to offer the program across Canada and the United States. It was noted that the program fee aligns with that of comparative programs in Canada.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - The program fee covers the cost of running the program but does not include travel to London, and it was explained that this is comparable to similar programs' fee structures, which also do not cover travel costs
 - The creation of the Institute does not need Ministry approval
 - There is high demand for a program of this kind, and the Faculty of Law is keen to grow the program and provide additional offerings within it, but would need additional teaching staff to do so
 - The initial Group Study offering in 2019 was managed by University of Calgary International office
 - The Faculty may be able to hire support staff to help run the program
 - The Faculty of Law is looking at ways to keep the program fee manageable for students, and more scholarships could help offset the costs of this program. It was noted that external grant funding was available to the 2019 Group Study cohort.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve creation of the Corporate Law Summer Institute, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee, effective May 1, 2021.

Carried

7. Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee Report for the October 22, 2020 Meeting

Documentation for this item was circulated for information only.

There were no questions.

8. Status of Program Approvals Report

Documentation for this item was circulated for information only.

There were no questions.

9. Other Business

9a. Pass/Fail Compassionate Grading

It was proposed that the Committee consider the possibility of providing a CR/F grading option to students for the Fall 2020 term, given the complications and stresses of the term and that there are strong mental health reasons for doing this. It was expressed that there is desire for this option by students, that it is not unusual in the U15, and that there is a precedent from the University's Winter 2020 term.

The Committee discussed:

- The possible ramifications associated with making this change for current courses, given the late date in the semester, including the administrative impacts
- The impacts seen from the CR/F option in the Winter 2020 term, and how doing this might alleviate some stress on students at this time
- The possible implications of choosing the CR/F, including impacts on GPA calculations and admissions to other programs, especially professional programs and programs that consider letter grades only, and that these implications must be clearly communicated to students
- The stresses academic staff and students are experiencing with the shift to online learning
- How shifting to a CR/F option for Fall 2020 might affect full-year courses
- Whether students who have recently withdrawn from a course could reverse this decision if a CR/F option is made available

The Co-Chair reported that this issue will be discussed at Deans' Council this week, and an emergency meeting of the Committee may be scheduled to move this item forward.

9b. Extension of Leave Time

It was proposed that the Committee consider the possibility of extending the break before the start of the Winter 2021 term, as other institutions in Canada are doing in light of COVID-19. It was explained that the University has a January block week, which means that the Winter term already starts a week later than most other universities, and that other options for additional time off within the term could be considered.

The Committee discussed:

- How the extension or addition of a break could affect lab-based courses and courses scheduled on Mondays and Fridays
- The possibility of adding additional days to the Easter long weekend
- The possibility of adjusting the Winter 2021 exam schedule and end of classes
- The University of Waterloo's move to add two days off in mid-March, and the possibility of implementing something similar here
- How extra leave time might affect sessional contracts, and it was noted that there is no perceived issue with this
- That a decision would need to be made quickly in order to be incorporated into Winter 2021 course outlines
- Whether a longer break is seen as more valuable than multiple, shorter breaks throughout the term, and it was noted that breaks structured around weekends allow for some students to return home

- That breaks scheduled mid-week may not alleviate stress as intended as persons might be inclined to work
- Other ways that the University might help reduce student and instructor stress, including Zoom-free weeks and extra exam preparation days
- How these changes might affect graduate students who don't take many classes and how this might affect lab-based graduate students
- That academic staff should also be provided a break, so it was requested that academic staff and leadership be directed not schedule meetings on days when these extra breaks are scheduled

The Co-Chair noted that the General Faculties Council (GFC) approves any changes to the Academic Schedule, but that the GFC Executive Committee has the authority to approve this if a decision is needed before the next GFC meeting.

10. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee adjourn the November 23, 2020 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Elizabeth Sjogren
Meeting Secretary