



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

General Faculties Council  
**GFC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
Approved Minutes

March 13, 2024, 2:30 p.m.

AD 167 (Governors Boardroom)/Zoom

***Voting Members***

Ed McCauley, Chair  
Penny Werthner\*, Vice-Chair  
Jessica Ayala\*  
Joule Bergerson  
Olive Chapman  
Jacqueline Jenkins  
Shazia Jinnah Morsette\* – arrived during item 2, left during item 8  
Bill Rosehart  
James Steele – left after Item 7

***Non-Voting Member***

Kent Donlevy\*

***Secretary***

Courtney McVie

***Scribe***

Elizabeth Sjogren

***Regrets***

Rachel Lauer  
Aoife Mac Namara  
Satish Raj

***Guests***

Renate Weller\*, Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine – present for Item 4  
Justine Wheeler, Academic Co-Chair, Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook Working Group  
– present for Item 8  
Robin Yates, Administrative Co-Chair, Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook Working Group  
– present for Item 8

*\*Attended virtually*

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The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Agenda for the March 13, 2024 General Faculties Council Executive Committee meeting be approved.

**Carried**

## **2. Remarks of the Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Chair included the following in his remarks:

- The provincial budget was recently announced. The University did not receive an increase in the Operating and Program Support grant for the third consecutive year, which is a challenge as this does not account for inflationary pressures, and the Campus Maintenance and Renewal funding decreased. Funding is being provided for: the joint rural physicians and physician assistants training program, the Multidisciplinary Science Hub, The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine's learning commons and diagnostic services unit projects, and existing approved targeted enrolment expansion programs.
- The Aerospace Innovation Hub was launched at the Calgary Airport Authority on March 12, 2024. This partnership will include the offering of a degree minor in Aerospace Engineering.
- The search for a new Provost and Vice-President (Academic) is at the interview stage

The Vice-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- The annual Western Vice-Presidents Academic (WestVAC)/Vice-Presidents Research conference was held March 6-8, 2024 in Victoria. This is a productive conference that supports institutions working together.
- The search for a new Dean of the Faculty of Law has been paused until the Fall, and an Interim Dean will be appointed. The searches for new Deans of the Schulich School of Engineering and the Faculty of Graduate Studies are progressing.

In response to questions, it was reported that capital funding can only be used as designated and not allocated to other expenses, for example infrastructure funding cannot be used to hire faculty.

## **3. Approval of the February 14, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Minutes of the General Faculties Council Executive Committee meeting held on February 14, 2024 be approved.

**Carried**

## **4. Approval of Revisions to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Faculty Council Terms of Reference**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Renate Weller, Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent reported that all of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM) Terms of Reference (TOR) were reviewed following the Faculty's dissolution of departments, and changes to the Faculty Council TOR are being recommended, including to the membership and some operational pieces.

- In response to questions, it was reported that:
  - The term for the undergraduate student representative will be for one year only, as the Students Legislative Council members are elected to one-year terms
  - It is intended that the Students' Union name the delegate for the undergraduate student representative, if one is needed, and not the elected student themselves. It was observed that including a provision for a delegate allows the Students' Union to name a student to the Faculty Council if the UCVM elected Students Legislative Council seat is vacant.
  - The proponent felt strongly that the UCVM Director of Operations should be added as a voting member of the Faculty Council. It was noted that both the Faculty Council and Faculty Council Committee have a strong majority of academic staff members.
- It was requested that the description of the undergraduate student seat should be revised to correct a typographical error from "Student Union" to "Students' Union"
- It was suggested that, in future, the approved Faculty Council Committee TOR be attached to a proposal like this for completeness

**Moved/Seconded**

That the General Faculties Council Executive Committee approve the revisions to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Faculty Council Terms of Reference, in the form provided to the Committee and with the requested amendment.

**Carried****5. Approval of Revisions to the 2024-2025 General Faculties Council (GFC) and GFC Standing Committees Meeting Schedule and the 2025-2026 Meeting Schedule**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Courtney McVie, University Secretary, presented this item.

**Highlights:**

- The consistency of the schedules, with each body's meeting day and time remaining constant from year to year, is appreciated
- The proponent reported that calendar invites for both meeting years will be sent to continuing members as soon as possible

**Moved/Seconded**

That the General Faculties Council (GFC) Executive Committee approve the revisions to the 2024-2025 GFC and GFC standing committees meeting schedule, and the proposed 2025-2026 GFC and GFC standing committees meeting schedule, in the forms provided to the Committee.

**Carried**

## **6. Approval of the 2024 GFC Member Survey**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. The University Secretary presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent reported that the Qualtrics functionality for survey distribution will be used for the 2024 GFC member survey rather than asking members to input their name to confirm eligibility to submit
- Discussion resulted in the following requested amendments:
  - The second part of question 8 (“If you will be continuing as a GFC member, do you anticipate any barriers to your engagement and attendance in the coming year?”) is not needed
  - Members may find it difficult to answer question 9 (“The University Secretariat provides an appropriate level of service”) as they may not be fully aware of the role of the Secretariat. It was observed that the other questions may cover what this question is trying to determine, such as questions 3 and 4 (“The GFC is provided with adequate information and resources (i.e. the meeting package)” and “The upload of the meeting package provides adequate time for review in advance of meetings”) and so question 9 is not needed.
  - A complementary question be asked, about what aspects of GFC operations members like
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
  - There is a trend for institutions’ GFC or equivalent meetings to return to fully in-person
  - A new meeting space for GFC meetings is anticipated for the 2024-2025 meeting year. However, even if the new GFC meeting space has hybrid meeting functionality, there is still concern that a hybrid meeting will not allow for GFC member participation at a standard needed for good governance. The Secretariat is continuing to explore options. Members observed that hybrid meetings do provide accommodation for members who cannot attend in person.
- Following discussion, the decision to leave the GFC meetings with alternating modality was confirmed, with the intention to consider trialling a hybrid meeting in the new in-person meeting space should it have such capability.

### **Moved/Seconded**

That the General Faculties Council (GFC) Executive Committee approve the 2024 GFC Member Survey and process, as set out in the form provided to the Committee and with the requested amendments.

**Carried**

## **7. Nominations for Election by GFC of Two Academic Staff Members to an Advisory Review Committee for the Dean of the Faculty of Social Work**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

The Committee named, in rank order, academic staff members to be approached by the University

Secretariat to stand for election to the Advisory Review Committee for the Dean of the Faculty of Social Work. The first four individuals to agree to stand for election will be presented on a ballot for the election of two by the GFC. The election will be held electronically following the April 11, 2024 GFC meeting.

## **8. Revisions to the GFC Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Robin Yates, Administrative Co-Chair of the Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook Working Group (ASCPHWG), and Justine Wheeler, Academic Co-Chair of the ASCPHWG, presented this item

### Highlights:

- The proponents reported that recent changes to the Collective Agreement Between the Faculty Association and the Board of Governors, in particular relating to the academic performance assessment, Progression Through the Ranks Increases, and Outstanding Achievement Awards, have necessitated updates to the GFC Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook (the Handbook). The proponents indicated that the proposed revisions to the Handbook need to be approved by June 2024 to enable these updates to be applied to the 2025 assessment review.
- Discussion included:
  - The revisions to Section B.1.3 (Teaching) are significant, and Sections B.1.3 and B.4.5 (Criteria for Assessing Teaching Activities) are linked
  - The expectation in Section B.1.3.2 (“that academic staff members... develop their teaching practice, engage in professional learning in teaching, and remain current in the evidence-informed pedagogical approaches in their fields”) is applauded because teaching is a priority in some disciplines
  - It is positive to have flexibility in what is considered to be development of teaching practice, professional learning in teaching, and being current in pedagogical approaches, but flexibility can produce confusion among Heads and academic staff members around what these include. For example, it is unclear if activities such as producing new course materials or giving an address at a conference will be counted.
  - Not every academic staff member will be able to demonstrate advancement in teaching in every assessment cycle
  - If it is expected that senior academic staff members will continue to advance their teaching, clear guidelines will be needed
  - It was suggested that Section B.1.3.2 refer to the development and evolution of teaching practice, to be more easily relatable to newer and more senior academic staff members. It was alternatively suggested that Section B.1.3.2 could be made less prescriptive and refer to reflection upon teaching practice and not the development of this.
  - It is unclear if or how student course surveys relate to the assessment of academic staff
  - It was suggested that reference to professional learning in teaching not imply that academic staff members are required to take courses offered by the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning
  - There can be confusion between professional learning and professional development. Professional learning is learning that applies to one’s profession, including self-reflection and independent study, while professional development usually takes the form of

structured training programs with designed learning outcomes.

- In response to questions, it was reported that:
  - The expectation for an academic staff member to develop teaching practices, engage in professional learning, and be current in pedagogical approaches will be as required by their rank and stream and be dependent on their workload assignment. If expectation is not assigned as part of an academic staff member's workload, they will not be assessed on this.
  - It is intended that the companion Faculty Guidelines will set out discipline-specific guidelines for how advancement in teaching will be evaluated. The Handbook working group determined that having specific guidelines in the Handbook would not be feasible as these would likely not be fully comprehensive and would not be applicable to all disciplines. It is known that the Faculty Guidelines will need to be updated, and Faculties have been asked to work on this in parallel with the Handbook revisions because the revised Faculty Guidelines will also need to be approved by June 2024 for use in the 2025 assessment cycle.
  - Progression Through the Ranks is an expectation of all academic staff members, but the Outstanding Achievement Awards are intended to recognize academic staff members who perform above the norm
  - The addition of Sections B.1.3.2 through B.1.3.5 of the Handbook signals that antiquated and disengaged teaching methods do not meet the University's expectations of academic staff for whom teaching integrity is an expectation of their workload
  - The Collective Agreement, and not Section B.4.3, sets out how many times an academic staff member may apply for an Outstanding Achievement Award

## **9. Review of the Draft April 11, 2024 GFC Agenda**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Highlights:

- Bill Ghali, Vice-President (Research), will have returned from leave at the time of this GFC meeting, and so it should be confirmed if he should be listed as a presenter for the Research Security Update item
- In response to a question, it was indicated that fifteen minutes should be enough time for an information item, but this will be considered

## **10. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**11. Adjournment**

**Moved/Seconded**

That the General Faculties Council Executive Committee adjourn the March 13, 2024 meeting.

**Carried**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

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Courtney McVie  
University Secretary