General Faculties Council
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

March 12, 2024, 2:00 p.m.   AD 167 (Governors Boardroom)/Zoom

Voting Members
Wendy Benoit, Co-Chair
Barbara Brown, Academic Co-Chair
Sandra Amin
Fabiola Aparicio-Ting*
Rebecca Archer* – left during Item 5
Mark Bauer
Tracey Clancy*
Dianne Gereluk* – left during Item 5
Kathleen James
Dawn Johnston
Kirsten Neprily – left after Item 6
Hieu Ngo* – left during Item 5

Regrets
William Bridel
Michelle Drefs
Sarah Eaton
Barb McCutcheon
Jennifer Markides
Geoffrey Messier
Fabian Neuhaus
Evaristus Oshionebo
Scott Radford

Non-Voting Members
Natasha Kenny
Vui Kien Liau
D'Arcy Norman
Trevor Poffenroth
Mary-Jo Romaniuk – arrived during Item 2
Verity Turpin
Justine Wheeler* – left during Item 5

Secretary
Courtney McVie*

Scribe
Elizabeth Sjogren

Guests
Robin Arseneault, Teaching and Learning Project Coordinator, Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning
     – present for Item 4
Jacqueline Lambert, Institutional Analyst, Office of Institutional Analysis – present for Item 4
Garrett Parry, Graduate Assistant (Research), Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning – present for
     Item 4

Attended virtually

The Co-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 12, 2024 Teaching and Learning Committee meeting be approved.

Carried

---

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

The Co-Chair remarked that all course surveys are now moved onto Explorance Blue, completing the replacement of Class Climate.

The Academic Co-Chair remarked that the University of Calgary Teaching Awards announcement and celebration was held February 28th, 2024, and the results of the University of Calgary Teaching and Learning Grants adjudication will be communicated soon.

3. **Approval of the February 13, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on February 13, 2024 be approved.

Carried

---

4. **2023 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Institutional Results**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Wendy Benoit, Interim Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning), Verity Turpin, Vice-Provost (Student Experience), Natasha Kenny, Senior Director of the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning (TI), Garrett Parry, TI Graduate Assistant (Research), Jacqueline Lambert, Institutional Analyst, Office of Institutional Analysis, and Robin Arseneault, TI Teaching and Learning Project Coordinator, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents reminded the Committee that the NSSE is administered every three years to students at the beginning and end of their undergraduate education, and the NSSE enables thoughtful consideration (primarily at the institutional and Faculty levels) of student experience strengths and areas needing improvement. The proponents then gave a presentation on the 2023 NSSE institutional results, including:
    o Compared to the U15, the University has strong response rates (36% of first-year students, 35% of senior-year students, and 37% of targeted after-degree students)
    o The University's scores in most question areas met or exceeded the 2020 results
    o Highlights of first-year and senior-year results:

- 71% of first-year respondents rated their overall experience as 'excellent' or 'good'. This number is down from 78%, and this could be because the meaning of 'overall experience' may be different to different people or because the overall experience of these students may have been impacted by the pandemic circumstances.

- 81% of first-year respondents indicated that they would 'definitely' or 'probably' attend again

- First-year respondents identify Learning Strategies, Quantitative Reasoning, and Learning with Peers as the University's learning experience strengths

- Senior-year respondents identified Thinking Critically and Analytically, Writing Clearly and Effectively, Working Effectively with Others, and Reflective and Integrative Learning as the strongest skills gained at the University

- The NSSE report describes high-impact practices, which include experiential learning (EL) and work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities for practical skill-building offered at the University. Students see benefit in EL and WIL embedded in their programs and would like to see growth in EL and WIL opportunities.

- Under equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA), the University is ranked higher than the U15 by first-year and senior-year respondents for enabling impactful 'Discussions with Diverse Others'

- One open-response question was included within the NSSE 2023 survey, "What could UCalgary do to help you prepare for your future career or education?" and a thematic analysis of the qualitative responses was prepared for discussion. The report identified and discussed responses in five theme areas: Navigating the University, Impact of Affordability, Supporting Wellness, Meaningful Learning Experiences, and Preparing for Next Steps. First-year students describe concerns about enrolling/registering, advising, and mental health supports; senior-year students show that they are thinking about the next phase in their lives and describe concerns about having networking opportunities, useful curriculum, and hands-on learning experiences.

- The NSSE results connect to other University initiatives, including the *Ahead of Tomorrow* strategy and the Academic Innovation Plan, and all data associated with these will be explored to identify and respond to the needs of students

- Discussion included:

  - NSSE feedback relating to affordability and wellness aligns with the feedback being heard through other mechanisms, and this validates the priorities in the Academic Innovation Plan supporting the student experience

  - It was suggested that Faculties with commonalities could be brought together to reflect upon the results of the NSSE. Faculties could identify areas that cross units (e.g. mental health) and collaborate and share resources to address these.

  - While there are differences between undergraduate and graduate student needs, and course-based versus thesis-based graduate students, the holistic synergy between these can be explored and some common approaches to support student engagement may be found

  - Faculties can learn from each other's successes, and discussions across Faculties are planned for the year ahead to reflect on and learn from each other

- In response to questions, it was reported that:
    - The CGPSS (Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey) is the closest graduate student equivalent to the NSSE survey
    - The dissemination and discussion of the NSSE results will differ among Faculties, and persons interested in learning more about their Faculty's results should reach out to their Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) to determine how the NSSE results are used in their Faculty. The summary thematic analysis report of qualitative responses to NSSE 2023 will be posted publicly.
    - There is some demographic data collected through the NSSE, and it is known that there is institutional appetite for EDIA data, so the NSSE Steering Committee is assessing what data could be thoughtfully used to support improvements to student experience

5. M1 (*Supporting Documentation*) Academic Regulation Review

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Verity Turpin presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent reported that an M1 Working Group was formed in 2023 to review the wording of the M1 regulation in the Academic Calendar and how it is being applied, that stakeholder engagement sessions were held in early 2024, and feedback from the TLC is now being sought

- Discussion included:
    - It would be valuable to have a point person, such as an Associate Dean or Department Head, in each unit who understands the intent of and the process relating to supporting documentation, as students and academic staff members may not understand this. This point person should educate academic staff members on this, as students will often speak only to their instructor or supervisor, and not approach an administrator.
    - There is confusion about whether the M1 regulation applies to examinations as well as to in-semester assessments. The presenter noted that there is a separate process for the deferral of final examinations.
    - Clarity is needed around what documentation (e.g. medical note, personal statement) is acceptable and what is not, and what instructors are required to do
    - Instructors have the authority to grant or decline a deferral request, and this authority should be maintained. An instructor cannot require a medical letter, but in some cases a self-declaration may not be sufficient. It was suggested that the M1 regulation should clearly state that an instructor can decline a request.
    - It was suggested that the M1 regulation could include language that frames that being supportive of students is a priority
    - Arranging a deferred examination can be challenging, as supervision resources and rigorous assessment are needed. Limited resources make it challenging to address arrangements for many individual students.
    - Examples of arrangements arising from a missed examination, depending on the timing and other contextual factors in the course, and implications when arrangements include re-weighting of assessments. Having a final examination worth 90% of a student's grade is problematic, as this may not be a fair assessment of a student's learning and this puts

tremendous pressure on a student. Ongoing supports and services for students are needed, to enable them to manage their time and to understand the implication of a deferral request.

- o It was suggested that a process could be put in place to trigger referral of a student to the Student Success Centre for support if they have requested a number of deferrals. Some students use the deferral process as a study strategy, to manage their time, and this is not what this process is intended for.

- o Having flexibility in regulations is desirable, as unclear language (i.e. "may be asked", "may include", "encouraged to submit", "could be") can lead to confusion. It was suggested that the M1 regulation be written as clearly and specifically as possible so that all parties can understand the process.

6. **Revisions to the TLC Terms of Reference**

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

Highlights:

- The proponent reported that one revision to the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) Terms of Reference (TOR) is being proposed: to capture that the current Quality Assurance Curriculum Review Handbook includes that the TLC reviews and provides feedback on curriculum review reports, as part of the "Post-Review Process and Interim Progress Report"

- Discussion included:

  - o As the TLC receives all the curriculum review reports, this could be business for every agenda and take a lot of the Committee's time. It was observed that this work could be streamlined to be manageable.

  - o Having the TLC review the curriculum review reports enables additional engagement, reflection, and learning to continue across the institution and between units, through the sharing of good practices and the offering of feedback from a variety of perspectives

- In response to questions, it was reported that:

  - o The Quality Assurance Curriculum Review Handbook specifically requires that the TLC receive all curriculum review reports (Executive Summary and Action Plan) and curriculum review interim reports (Action Plan)

  - o At an upcoming meeting, the TLC can be reminded of recent curriculum review reports that have come through, to inform discussion and improvement of TLC involvement in this process

  - o The TLC could monitor the amount of time spent on curriculum review reports, as an understanding of the time and input required from the TLC would be informative for any future revisions to the Quality Assurance Curriculum Review Handbook

- The members were invited to think about any other possible revisions to the TOR and communicate this to the University Secretary in advance of this item returning to the Committee for recommendation at its April meeting.

7.   Teaching and Learning Updates and Emerging Issues Roundtable

The Committee was given an opportunity to discuss matters currently impacting teaching and learning, and discussion included that:

- Construction of the Multidisciplinary Science Hub building will break ground in 2025, in the location now occupied by parking lot 21 (near the northeast corner of the main campus)

- A toolkit has been developed by Libraries and Cultural Resources to assist faculty and students in relation to the topic of misinformation. This toolkit has been recognized locally, nationally, and internationally.

8.   Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Report

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Natasha Kenny presented this item.

Highlights:

- Efforts were made to reflect parallel processes in the University of Calgary Teaching Awards celebration event, with Elders included and with connections to community. Joelle Tomlinson, Global News, guided the evening.

- The 2024 Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching speakers are: Jennifer MacDonald, University of Regina, and Jennifer Markides, University of Calgary (topic: Navigating the Tensions & Possibilities of Brave Work); Shawna Cunningham and Malinda Smith, University of Calgary (topic: In Dialogue); Dawn Johnston, William Bridel, Derritt Mason, and Safaneh Mohaghegh Neyshabouri, University of Calgary (topic: What is Queer Pedagogy? Or, Stop Teaching Straight!); Aisha Haque, Western University (topic: Anti-racist Approaches to Higher Education); Gregor Wolbring, University of Calgary (topic: The Issue of Anti-Disablism and Attitudinal Accessibility); and Enid Lee, Leader in Anti-Racist Education (topic: Checking and Changing Our Systems and Ourselves For Equity: It Takes Courage!). The first day of the conference will be in person, and then there will be two days of online sessions for accessibility.

- The University of Calgary Teaching and Learning Grants letters have gone out to applicants. There are thirty-five recipients, with over $1 million in funding being awarded. With the support of the Students' Union and Libraries and Cultural Resources, over $150,000 is grant funding dedicated to work relating to Open Educational Resources (OER).

9.   Graduate Students' Association Report

There was no report.

10. Students' Union Report

Sandra Amin, Students' Union member of the committee, presented this item.

Highlights:

- Growing the use of OER is a priority for the Students' Union, and so the highlighting and

endorsement of this through the University of Calgary Teaching and Learning Grants is appreciated

- The Students' Union's elections were held last week. The incoming executive members are: Ermia Rezaei-Afsah, President, Jessie Dinh, Vice-President (Academic), Naomie Bakana, Vice-President (Internal), and Mateusz Salmassi, Vice-President (External). Jessie Dinh will attend next month's TLC meeting as part of her onboarding.

- Some practices around Term Break and the timing of assessments are still an issue. This is a complicated matter that requires attention.

Discussion included:

- A balance must be struck between being compassionate and supportive of students and requiring completion of course work

- Even with extensions some students are not completing work, in part because the work piles up if they are receiving multiple extensions

- If an entire class of students needs an extension of a due date, this should trigger thought about whether there is a larger issue such as struggling with course concepts

- The University has deliberately moved away from using the phrase "Reading Break", but it is recognised that there may be some circumstances when assessments and due dates happen around this time. It will take time to change the campus culture and to embrace the idea of a fully restful term break organized around this.

11. **Other Business**

There was no other business.

12. **Adjournment**

| **Moved/Seconded** |
| That the Teaching and Learning Committee adjourn the March 12, 2024 meeting. |
| **Carried** |

The meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Courtney McVie
University Secretary