



# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

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### General Faculties Council Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, March 14, 2013  
L1-490, Edmonton Clinic Health Academy  
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

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#### **ATTENDEES:**

##### Voting Members:

Adamski, Nicholas	Engineering
Amaral, J. Nelson	Science
Andrews, Nathan	Grad Council of Students
Arbuckle, Kathryn	Acting Chief Librarian
Belosevic, Mike	GFC Appointee to the Board of Governors
Berger, Allen	Dean, Augustana Faculty and Executive Officer of Augustana Campus
Blackburn, Ed	Faculté Saint-Jean
Bozso, Sabin	Medicine and Dentistry
Brown, Cary	Rehabilitation Medicine
Brown, Norman	Arts
Bryden, Philip	Dean, Law
Campbell, Katy	Dean, Extension
Chelen, Dustin	Student Nominated by the Undergraduate Council of Students
Chen, Chris	Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Clark, Brenda	Medicine and Dentistry
Clark, Phyllis	Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
Cormack, Lesley	Dean, Arts
Coulthard, Roy	Graduate Student at-Large
Crone, Lyndon	Engineering
Danko, Maggie	Nursing
DeGara, Chris	Medicine and Dentistry
Deyholos, Michael	Science
Ferguson-Pell, Martin	Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Goble, Erika	Graduate Student at-Large
Gotell, Lise	Arts
Harrington, Joanna	Law
Harris, John	Arts
Haeubl, Gerald	Business
Hickey, Don	Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)
Hokowhitu, Brendan	Dean, Native Studies
Hong, Jason	Education
Ingles, Ernie	Vice-Provost (Learning Services) and Interim Director, Library and Information Studies
Ives, Jack	Arts
Jensen, Louise	Nursing

Joseph, Sam	Arts
Kabata, Kaori	Arts
Kehrer, James	Dean, Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Kelly, Brent	Students' Union (SU) Appointee to the Board of Governors
Kendal, Gerry	Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Kennelly, John	Dean, Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Koch, Katherine	Library Academic Staff
Konkin, Jill	Medicine and Dentistry
Kristensen, Todd	Graduate Student at-Large
Kuryliw, Sarjenka	Education
Laing, Lory	Interim Dean, Public Health
Lee, Matt	Science
Lemelin, Pierre	Medicine and Dentistry
Lemire, Bernard	Medicine and Dentistry
Leskiw, Brenda (Delegate)	Dean, Science
Loebenberg, Raimar	Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
McGetrick, Jennifer	Graduate Student at-Large
Meston, John	Graduate Student at-Large
Mills, Kelsey	Arts
Milner, Rachel	Medicine and Dentistry
Molzahn, Anita	Dean, Nursing
Mummery, Kerry	Dean, Physical Education & Recreation
Nilson, Anna	Graduate Student at-Large
Nocente, Norma	Education
Odoom, Isaac	Graduate Student at-Large
Osburn, Debra Pozega	Vice-President (University Relations)
Outar, O'Neil	Vice-President (Advancement)
Porteous, Ken (Delegate)	Dean, Engineering
Pu, Christopher	NASA Appointee to the Board of Governors
Renke, Wayne	AASUA Appointee to the Board of Governors
Richards, Jeremy	Science
Robertson, Sean	Native Studies
Robinson, Frank	Vice-Provost and Dean of Students
Rodgers, Wendy	Physical Education and Recreation
Samarasekera, Indira	President (Chair)
Saunders, Duncan	Public Health
Shirvani, Mazi	Vice-Provost and Dean, Graduate Studies and Research
Shores, Sandra	Library Academic Staff
Steier, Lloyd (Delegate)	Interim Dean, Business
Sumar, Saadiq	Student Nominated by the Undergraduate Council of Students
Swanson, Ruby	APO
Turpin, Karen Vera Lyn	Graduate Student at-Large
Van der Baan, Mirko	Science
Whelton, Bill	Education
Williamson, Deanna	Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Willows, Noreen	Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Wilson, Donna	President of AASUA
Woods, Adam	Arts
Yamagishi, Colten	Students' Union President

Zhang, Hao	Engineering
Zhou, Mary	Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Zielinski, Michal	Graduate Student at-Large

Presenters/Proposers:

Ed Blackburn	Chair, GFC Nominating Committee
Mike Belosevic	Academic Staff Representative on the Board of Governors
Garry Bodnar	Secretary to General Faculties Council and Coordinator, GFC Replenishment Committee
Bill Connor	Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee
Martin Ferguson-Pell	Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Acting Chair, GFC Executive Committee
Ada Ness	Associate Registrar (Enrolment Services), Office of the Registrar
Indira Samarasekera	President and Chair, General Faculties Council
Mazi Shirvani	Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
Catherine Swindlehurst	Special Advisor to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Rory Tighe	Past-President, Students' Union
Colten Yamagishi	President, Students' Union

Staff:

Garry Bodnar	Director of GFC Services and Secretary to GFC
Marion Haggarty-France	University Secretary
Andrea Patrick	Scribe

**OPENING SESSION**

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

A member pointed out a minor typographical error on the Agenda within Item 2.

Motion: Amaral/Shirvani

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the Agenda, as amended.
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**CARRIED**

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of January 21, 2013

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Amaral/Molzahn

THAT the General Faculties Council approve the Minutes of January 21, 2013.
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**CARRIED**

3. Comments from the President

There were no documents.

President and Chair, Dr Indira Samarasekera, welcomed all in attendance to the 388<sup>th</sup> meeting of General Faculties Council (GFC) and reported:

- On the transition of incoming and outgoing Students' Union members. She warmly bid farewell to the Students' Union executive members leaving office and welcomed new members, most notably Students' Union President-Elect Petros Kusmu, to General Faculties Council (GFC).
- On the Provincial Budget. She reported that the recently-unveiled Provincial Budget, containing the deepest cuts to Alberta's post-secondary sector in over a decade, was unexpected. She added that, subsequently, the University has been granted an extension to finalize its 2013-2014 budget and that, in addition, the 2013 Comprehensive Institutional Plan (CIP) would need to be revised accordingly. She stated that the Change@UAlberta.ca website will be updated regularly to keep students, faculty, and staff apprised of developments regarding the impact of the Provincial Budget and the University's plans to move forward.

Dr Samarasekera invited comments and questions in relation to the Provincial Budget, and members and attendees expressed several, including, but not limited to: how the University of Alberta revised budget will be determined; whether increases to Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) were being considered; clarification about the "Letter of Expectation" from the Ministry of Enterprise and Advanced Education (EAE); whether classes with low enrolment would be cancelled; and whether the President would be joining the post-secondary education spending cuts protest at the Alberta Legislature on Friday, March 15, 2013.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

##### **4. New Members of GFC**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter:* Indira Samarasekera, President and Chair, GFC

Motion I: Yamagishi/Cormack

**MOTION I: TO APPOINT/REAPPOINT** [This motion may be proposed only by statutory members of GFC – VPs, Deans, statutory students or elected faculty members]:

The following undergraduate student representatives to serve on GFC for terms beginning immediately and ending April 30, 2013:

Jason Davidson	Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Mary Zhou	Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Samuel Gagnon	Campus Saint-Jean
Sabin Bozso	Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

The following undergraduate student members elected by the Students' Union (SU) to the Board of Governors and appointed to GFC for terms that are concurrent with their terms on the Board (May 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014):

Petros Kusmu	President, SU
Brent Kelly	SU Appointee

The following graduate student member elected by the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) to the Board of Governors and appointed to GFC for a term that is concurrent with his term on the Board (May 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014):

Brent Epperson

President, GSA

**CARRIED**

Motion II: Swanson/Kennelly

The following *ex officio* member to serve on GFC for a term beginning July 1, 2013 and extending for the duration of her appointment:

Lisa M Collins

Vice-Provost and University Registrar

The following statutory faculty members who have been elected or re-elected by their Faculty to serve on GFC for terms beginning immediately and ending June 30, 2013:

Tarek El-Bialy  
Ron McElhaney  
Jutta Preksaitis  
Amy Tse

Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry  
Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry  
Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry  
Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

The following statutory undergraduate student members nominated by the Students' Union (SU) to serve on GFC for terms beginning May 1, 2013 and ending April 30, 2014:

Dustin Chelen  
William Lau

Vice-President (Academic), SU  
Vice-President (Student Life), SU

The following statutory graduate student member nominated by the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) to serve on GFC for a term beginning May 1, 2013 and ending April 30, 2014:

Colin More

Vice-President (Academic), GSA

**CARRIED**

5. Course Feedback Prior to Withdrawal Deadlines – Proposed Changes to Section 23.4 (Evaluation Procedures and Grading System) of the University Calendar

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenters:* Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee; Ada Ness, Associate Registrar (Enrolment Services), Office of the Registrar

*Purpose of the Proposal:* To work to ensure students receive feedback in their courses prior to term withdrawal deadlines.

*Discussion:*

Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) Bill Connor briefed members on the history of the proposal, noting that it originated from a discussion with students regarding their requests for individual course feedback before term withdrawal deadlines; he noted that the proposal before members reflects existing UAPPOL policy on assessment and grading that speaks to the provision of such feedback. He

stated that this proposal had been discussed and recommended forward by the appropriate standing committees of GFC and had been well supported throughout the process.

During the ensuing discussion, members expressed several comments and questions, including, but not limited to: clarification with regard to the meaning of the word “substantive” in the proposed wording; whether a percentage regarding the amount of feedback to students should be added within the proposal; that providing feedback in large classes would be difficult; that instructors/professors may feel forced to provide substantive feedback early in the course; that the Association of Academic Staff – University of Alberta (AASUA) had not been consulted on the proposal; that the proposal represent a cultural change which will allow students to obtain knowledge of their performance earlier in their courses; that students have a right to important, meaningful, and considerable feedback earlier, rather than later, into a course; and possible use of the word “appropriate” instead of “substantive.”

Motion: Rodgers/Chelen

THAT General Faculties Council approve the proposed changes to Section 23.4 (Evaluation Procedures and Grading System) of the University Calendar, as submitted by the Office of the Registrar in cooperation with the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and as set forth in Attachment 1, to be effective 2013-2014 (Fall Term) and for publication in the 2014-2015 University Calendar.

**CARRIED**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **6. Provincial Budget**

There were no documents.

*Presenter:* Indira Samarasekera, President and Chair, GFC

#### *Discussion:*

Further to the information provided in her opening comments, Dr Samarasekera invited questions from members and attendees regarding the Provincial Budget.

Members expressed comments and questions in relation to this item, including, but not limited to: the possibility of cuts by the Faculty of Arts to Community Service-Learning (CSL) as a result of reduced funding from the Provincial Government; clarity from the Dean of the Faculty of Arts that no cuts were being contemplated to the Faculty's CSL initiatives; and the tone of University-wide and leadership responses to the Provincial Budget.

### **7. Graduate Education at the University of Alberta**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenters:* Martin Ferguson-Pell, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Mazi Shirvani, Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research; Catherine Swindlehurst, Special Advisor to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

#### *Discussion:*

Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Martin Ferguson-Pell outlined the contents of the so-called 'Swindlehurst Report' to members, as well as the attached Action Plan, explaining that it was drafted by Dr

Swindlehurst at the request of the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) in late 2012 following extensive consultation across the University of Alberta on the subject of improving graduate education at the University of Alberta.

Dr Swindlehurst reported to members that, during her consultations, she met with approximately 200 people which included representatives of 18 Faculties across the campuses of the University, and she stated that participants were engaged and informative throughout the process. She clarified that the scope of her focus during consultation included administration, recruitment, quality measures, and professional development, all in relation to graduate education at this university.

Dr Ferguson-Pell added that two site visits had been conducted by a small team from the University of Alberta to the University of Toronto and to Waterloo University in order to observe their successful graduate education programs and corresponding procedures and practices, with specific attention paid to their funding models and information technology (IT)/administration systems.

Dr Shirvani described the contents of the accompanying 'Action Plan' to members, explaining that quality measures are under development and outlining the concepts underlying the proposed Graduate Strategic Management Plan (GSMP).

Dr Ferguson-Pell noted that areas for further improvement include institutional IT/administration systems related to graduate admission and programming and designated funding, adding that Principal Investigator-driven grants also play a factor in providing quality graduate education and that areas of excellence must continue to be supported and developed as well as those programs that, for a variety of reasons, are struggling.

During the ensuing discussion, members expressed several questions and comments in relation to this item, including, but not limited to: that the Report is unclear and difficult to read; that the role of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research was not clarified within the Report; that the GSMPs will be difficult to complete and will add a significant workload to Faculties; that clarification is required about how the gathered data within the GSMPs will be used; clarification about how the Provincial Budget will affect the Action Plan; and that the uniqueness of each Faculty prevents universal research funding thresholds.

Dr Ferguson-Pell thanked members for their feedback and stated that these matters will continue to be discussed.

8. Fall Term Reading Week (Green and Gold Week) – Proposed Changes to the UAPPOL Academic Schedule Procedure from the Students' Union (SU)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenters:* Colten Yamagishi, President, University of Alberta Students' Union; Rory Tighe, Past-President, University of Alberta Students' Union

*Discussion:*

Students' Union (SU) President Colten Yamagishi described the Fall Term Reading Week proposal to members, adding that it has taken three years to plan and has been the platform for three consecutive SU Presidents. He stated that the consultation process was vast and included as many people as possible. He explained that most concerns have been addressed within the current proposal. He outlined the schedule associated with this proposed Reading Week, as contained in the proposal before members.

SU Past-President Rory Tighe outlined some of the ongoing concerns that continue to circulate including: the impact of a Fall Term Reading Week on the University's Orientation; the timing of the proposed break; and the length of the break. He explained that students have considered all of these issues and that, despite them, Students' Council voted unanimously in favour of this proposal. Mr Yamagishi added there is strong student support for the proposed timing of the break as well as the length of time, noting that a full week break in November allows a period of 'recharging' for students at a time when student counselling numbers increase and midterm exams are a major cause of anxiety. Mr Tighe commented that the main impetus of the proposal is the preservation of student mental health; he added that similar breaks are offered at various other Canadian institutions.

Dr Ferguson-Pell explained that, as *per* his "Approver" status within the Academic Schedule Procedure in the University of Alberta Policy and Procedures On-Line (UAPPOL), his role is to gather information to determine whether or not he will approve the changes to the Academic Schedule Procedure, as set out in the proposal, and invited members to provide commentary on this proposed initiative.

During the ensuing discussion, members expressed comments and questions in relation to this proposal, including, but not limited to: an expression of gratitude directed to the SU for revising the proposal so that it does not impact accreditation within some Faculties; concerns with the full week model; concerns that the proposal is not evidence based; individual expressions of strong support for the full week break; concerns that the proposed break in November is too late in the term to have the intended impact for students; concerns that a break situated, instead, in October would be too early in the term to have intended consequences; that an earlier start date for the term could have cost implications for certain Faculties; that a break in November may isolate certain students; and that turnouts for mental health-related programming for students might be minimal.

Dean Allen Berger read from a prepared statement that contained several comments regarding the proposal, including, but not limited to: student mental health remains a top priority to Deans and the University of Alberta; that the proposal is not evidence based in terms of how the week off, proposed in November, properly addresses issues of student mental health; that a mid-November break is too late in the term to assist struggling students; that early identification of academic problems is crucial to solvency; that the best predictor of academic success is performance in the first term and that success in the first term depends on successful adjustment within the first weeks of that term; that Orientation would be impacted at Augustana Faculty, as it is not run by students; that McMaster University just instituted a shorter break in October; and that Deans would like to collaborate with the students to address some of these issues.

Mr Yamagishi acknowledged his willingness to work with Deans to address their concerns, adding that students are extremely supportive of the full week break.

Dr Samarasekera stated that, in order to move forward in a positive manner on this student-led initiative, compromise between the SU and the Deans will be necessary and that evidence should be reviewed to come to an agreement satisfactory to concerned stakeholders.

## 9. The Umbrella Committee (TUC) Report

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter:* Martin Ferguson-Pell, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Discussion:*

Dr Ferguson-Pell spoke briefly to this Report. Due to time constraints, however, there was little opportunity



for members to ask questions or engage in discussion on this item.

10. Question Period

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

10.1Q/10.1R Question from GFC Member Mr Adam Woods (Undergraduate Student Representative) Regarding Residence Services' Complaint and Response from Vice-Provost and Dean of Students Frank Robinson to Question Raised by Mr Woods

10.2Q/10.2R Question from GFC Member Mr Roy Coulthard (Graduate Student Representative) Regarding Media Representation from an Alberta Post-Secondary Institution and Response from the Vice-President (University Relations) to Question Raised by Mr Coulthard

*Discussion:*

Mr Woods and Mr Coulthard both acknowledged the responses to their submitted questions.

Mr Yamagishi enquired about how options in response to the Provincial Budget will be determined and suggested that members of the academy should be included within the decision-making, particularly through GFC and the Board of Governors. Dr Samarasekera replied that there are established processes in place to make these determinations and that students are involved through their participation on governance committees and will be afforded many opportunities to contribute to the discussions. She added that it would not be advantageous to create more processes.

A member asked if there would be an opportunity ask questions and discuss further the final report of The Umbrella Committee (TUC) (as before members on the occasion of today's GFC meeting). Dr Samarasekera stated this report would be brought forward once again to the next meeting of GFC to allow for discussion.

**INFORMATION REPORTS**

11. GFC Executive Committee Minutes of January 9 and February 4, 2013

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

There was no discussion.

12. Reports of the Board of Governors of February 8, 2013

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

There was no discussion.

13. E-Mail Report of the GFC Nominating Committee (January 7, 2013)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

There was no discussion.

14. E-Mail Report of the GFC Replenishment Committee

There was no report to date.

15. Information Items Forwarded to GFC Members Between Meetings

There were no items to date.

16. Reports

There were no reports to date.

**CLOSING SESSION**

17. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:00 pm.