GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL
Approved Minutes

Meeting #603
Thursday, January 14, 2021, 1:30 p.m.   By Zoom platform

Voting Members

E. McCauley, Chair	S. Cork	F. Jalilehvand	E. Perrault	D. Slater
D. Marshall, Vice-Chair	L. Dalgetty	B. Kahanyshyn	N. Peters	D. Stewart
S. Abraha	S. Davidson	P. Khosla	Q. Pittman	M. Tarailo-Graovac
B. Adams	J. Dewald	S. LeBlanc	R. Plume	S. Thrift
S. Alexander	S. Eaton	K.-Y. Lee	J. Poissant	A. Timm
O. Alp	A. Estefan	J. Lock	M. Qurishi	T. Tombe
D. Altahsh	S. Farheen	R. McCorkell	R. Ramdhaney	B. Uppal
K. Baral	F. Finley	M. McDonough	L. Reid	A. Viczko
S. Barker	M. Fraser	B. Mayer	M.J. Romaniuk	M. Wang
T. Beattie	D. Gereluk	J. Meddings	W. Rosehart	H. Warsame
J. Bergerson	W. Ghali	N. Molina	F. Samavati	P. Werthner
C. Bousman	P. Gimby	E. Montes Garces	A. Saweczko	J. Winter
J. Brown	D. Hodgins	L. Nowell	T. Shandro	B. Wylant
M. Cassis	I. Holloway	M. O'Brien	N. Shaw	R. Yates
P. Chopra	C. Hurrell	A. Paquette	R. Sigurdson	M. Zhang
R. Clements	M. Husein	D. Paskevich	D. Sinasac	M. Zytaruk

Guests

S. Bryant, Schulich School of Engineering – present for Item 11
P. Dolata, Faculty of Arts – present for Item 11
B. Dragicevic, Associate Vice-President, Facilities Development – present for Item 12
J. Ferrabee, University Architect – present for Item 12
I. Gates, Schulich School of Engineering – present for Item 11
A. Knight, Head, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering – present for Item 7
Y. Koskinen, Haskayne School of Business – present for Item 11
S. Larter, Faculty of Science – present for Item 11
R. Skinner, School of Public Policy – present for Item 11
M. Tonelli, Associate Vice-President (Research)– present for Item 10
R. Tscherning, Faculty of Law – present for Item 11

Observers

M. Alam, Graduate Students' Association
J. Alho, Assoc. Vice-President (Government and Community Engagement)
K. Hamilton, President's Office
M. Hart, Vice-Provost (Indigenous Engagement)
M. Hebert, Postdoctoral Association
K. Jackson, General Counsel
C. Johns, Provost's Office
J. Krygier, Faculty Association
M. Kularatne, Students' Union
C. McVie, Provost's Office
J. Ruwanpura, Vice-Provost (International)
F. Strzelczyk, Deputy Provost
R. Thompson, Associate Vice-President (Research)

Secretary
S. Belcher

Scribe
E. Sjogren

Staff
J. Carter
T. Hodzic

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1.   Conflict of Interest Declaration

No conflicts were declared.

2.   Remarks of the Chair

The Chair included the following in his remarks:

- Several new Students' Union representatives were welcomed on this occasion of their first meeting

- As COVID-19 restrictions remain, the Winter 2021 term will continue the hybrid of online and some in-person delivery of classes. Members of the University community are thanked for their efforts in this regard.

- There is a coordinated effort by the U15 institutions and Universities Canada to encourage support for the post-secondary sector in the federal budget, such as for work integrated learning programs and funding for research

- The provincial government's Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs initiative is well underway, and public consultation has started. Matters discussed at recent sessions attended by University representatives include the need for better system coordination and possible changes to institutional governance. The University's representatives place great importance on bicameral governance and the autonomy of the University and are advocating to achieve the desired system coordination while maintaining autonomous and bicameral institutional governance.

- The Ministry is moving ahead with post-secondary Investment Management Agreements and performance-based budgeting, and more information on this will be shared with the General Faculties Council (GFC) when it is known

3.   Remarks of the Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- Relating to COVID-19:
  - o It will be announced today that the University is extending its remote work requirement to June 30. Mental health is a primary concern, and it is hoped that the certainty provided by this announcement will be helpful. Members of the University community may arrange for an exception if they need to work on campus (e.g. to access specialized equipment), but any persons doing so must be identified in their unit's workplace safety plan.
  - o A decision regarding the delivery mode for Spring and Summer classes will be made and announced soon
  - o It was previously announced that undergraduate student international travel related to study abroad and other in-person programs is not permitted until April 30, and an announcement regarding undergraduate travel in the Spring term will be made by February 1
  - o A decision will be made and announced soon regarding the University's summer camps

- o   It is expected that a plan for the Fall 2021 term will be determined by late April

- Members of the University community are reminded of the University's Partisan Political Activities Policy in relation to the upcoming mayoral election and possible federal election

4.   Question Period

In response to questions, it was reported that:

- An offer has been made to Alberta Health Services to use the University as a site for COVID-19 vaccinations

- The Ministry is currently considering the various options for changes to the post-secondary model, including the possibility of creating a super board, and it is expected that plans will be finalised in Spring 2021

5.   Safety Moment

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Linda Dalgetty, Vice-President (Finance and Services), presented on the topic of Safe Winter Walking.

6.   Approval of the December 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

> **Moved/Seconded**
>
> That the Minutes of the General Faculties Council meeting held on December 10, 2020 be approved.
>
> **Carried**

7.   Approval of the Change of Name of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Andy Knight, Head, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Bill Rosehart, Dean, Schulich School of Engineering, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the proposal, and explained the rationale for choosing the name 'Department of Electrical and Software Engineering'

- In response to questions, it was reported that:

  - o   The new name will be used going forward and will not be applied retroactively

  - o   The Faculty did contemplate creating separate departments of Electrical Engineering and Software Engineering but decided not to do so

- Discussion included:

  - o   That Electrical Engineering and Software Engineering are related disciplines, with regular interactions and interdisciplinary activities

○   The Registrar reported that the name change cannot be implemented immediately, and it was agreed that the effective date will be March 1, 2021

Moved/Seconded

That the General Faculties Council (GFC) approve the change of name of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering to Department of Electrical and Software Engineering, effective March 1, 2021, as presented to the GFC and as recommended by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee.

Carried

Faramarz Samavati abstained.

8.   Election of Two Academic Staff Members to an Advisory Selection Committee for a Dean of the Faculty of Science

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. The Chair presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Chair reported that the election will be held by an email vote immediately following the meeting, to ensure accurate vote count and proper participation

- There were no nominations from the floor

The following persons were elected:

> **Susan Graham**, Arts
> **Elise Fear**, Engineering

Bernhard Mayer abstained from voting in the election.

9.   Growth Through Focus Update

Ed McCauley, President and Vice-Chancellor, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter reviewed the background of the Growth Through Focus vision (GTF), noting that it captures the current aspirations of the University, and then described the timeline for its development

- The presenter reported that consultation is continuing and the GTF is evolving, and noted that the following elements have been specifically identified as requiring a more prominent place in the GTF: reconciliation; equity, diversity and inclusion; and examples representing the Humanities. The presenter further noted that feedback has indicated that concepts such as 'entrepreneurial thinking' and 'transdisciplinary scholarship' need to be clearly defined.

- A multi-day online congress at the end of January 2021 will allow members of the University community to discuss the GTF content and implementation plan. Breakout rooms will be utilised for focused discussion on the different parts of the GTF.

- The presenter confirmed that any action items will move through the governance system as appropriate
- There were no questions

10.   San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Marcello Tonelli, Associate Vice-President (Research), and Bill Ghali, Vice-President (Research), presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), including its focus on the quality and impacts of research in addition to metrics such as bibliometrics, and noted that this connects well with the University's *Eyes High* and other strategic plans and the new Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook. The proponents reported that the Executive Leadership Team has recommended that the University become a signatory to the DORA.
- In response to questions, it was reported that:
  - o Indigenous-based scholarly work has not been well recognised under the traditional assessment system, and DORA is seen as opening the door to improving this by considering a broad range of non-traditional types of output such as community engagement, exhibitions, and testimonials. Under a new assessment system, traditional metrics could be complemented by a narrative summary of accomplishments.
  - o Because some evidence of research output may be difficult to present, such as influencing policy, each Faculty will have to set discipline-specific guidelines for assessment
  - o It is not known why no Canadian post-secondary institutions have become signatories to DORA since its inception in 2012, but bibliometrics are a known and easy to use measure and so institutions may not be motivated to move away from this
  - o While the first DORA recommendation speaks against the use of journal-based metrics, in practice, publishing in strong journals will still be an accepted demonstration of reputational research output
- Discussion included:
  - o That Indigenous engagement and equity, diversity and inclusion are related, but different, priorities
  - o It will take time to communicate these ideals to the University community and to implement these into the assessment system. The proponents noted that the University has momentum in this area through the development of the new Academic Staff Criteria and Processes Handbook, and that there will be a communications effort after the University becomes a signatory to DORA.
  - o It is important to identify and recognize rigorous, high quality and impactful research. The proponents noted that DORA is not seen as watering down the assessment of research, but as enabling the use of a variety of measures beyond publications and presentations.
  - o Funding agencies now require data management plans, and it is expected that researchers will be required to also produce impact plans in the future

- o If other post-secondary institutions do not adopt DORA, it may be difficult for outsiders, such as external reviewers and new faculty members, to understand how the University is assessing research

- o By becoming the first Canadian post-secondary institution to become a signatory to DORA, the University will demonstrate leadership in moving toward a more inclusive system to assess scholarship

- o It is possible that disciplines will be able to learn from each other's assessment measures and practices

11.   **Energy Research Strategy 2**

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Ian Gates, Schulich School of Engineering, Jennifer Winter, Faculty of Arts, and Bill Ghali, Vice-President (Research), presented this item. Also present were Energy Research Strategy 2 participants Steven Bryant, Schulich School of Engineering, Petra Dolata, Faculty of Arts, Yrjo Koskinen, Haskayne School of Business, Stephen Larter, Faculty of Science, Bob Skinner, School of Public Policy, and Rudy Tscherning, Faculty of Law.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the transdisciplinary Energy Research Strategy 2 (ERS2), reporting that the Energy Research Strategy underwent an external review in 2019 and the ERS2 has been developed by a core interdisciplinary group in consideration of the review's report and recommendations. The presenters described the ERS2's development process, motivators, and principles, that the updated strategy incorporates current economic and policy matters as well as building on the University's strengths, and the four specific projects that have been identified (Achieving Net Zero in a Democratic Society, Hydrogen Systems and Economy, Transport, and Business and Economic Implications of Energy Transition).

- In response to questions, it was reported that:

  - o The ERS2 is transdisciplinary and inclusive, and interested researchers are invited to reach out to any of the presenters or anyone in the ERS2 group. The presenters reported that they will be visiting Department meetings and Faculty Councils in the coming months.

  - o The ERS2 name is not yet set. One of the ERS2's principles is "For the Common Good", and so incorporating sustainability into the name can be considered.

  - o The GFC approved the University's Research Plan, and the research strategies are presented to the GFC for information

  - o The ERS2 will be responsive to public policy discussion and goals, particularly with respect to carbon, but the document's grand challenges have been deliberately left open so as not to exclude any potential ERS2 participants

- Discussion included:

  - o There is interest in the ERS2, and the GFC can receive an update on this in the future

  - o The ERS2 could help attract agency funding and scholars to the University, and it is hoped that the provincial and federal governments will invest in research in this area

  - o How the ERS2 connects to the GTF, such as through transdisciplinary research and connections to community

12.   Main Campus Landscape Plan

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Jane Ferrabee, University Architect, and Boris Dragicevic, Associate Vice-President, Facilities Development, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the Main Campus Landscape Plan (MCLP) and its development process, particularly noting that this will result in a cohesive landscape that incorporates concepts from the Indigenous Strategy

- In response to questions, it was reported that:

    o It is known that it is desired to connect the Foothills campus to the main campus through the open space to the south of the Children's Hospital, and the University's Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) addresses this. The presenters noted that the LRDP also includes ways to connect to the University District and addresses concerns such as the age of some campus buildings and the need for improved classroom spaces.

    o The University monitors where pedestrians walk, and new pathways are installed where use indicates they are needed

- Discussion included that the pedestrian focus and meaningful landscaping of the MCLP are applauded

13.   Standing Reports

The following reports were circulated with the Agenda for information:

- a) Report on the December 16, 2020 GFC Executive Committee Meeting
- c) Report on the December 17, 2020 Research and Scholarship Committee Meeting
- d) Report on the December 15, 2020 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting
- e) Report on the December 11, 2020 Board of Governors Meeting
- f) Report on the December 11, 2020 Senate Meeting
- g) Policy Development Update

The Chair reported that the APPC report (Item 13b) will be included in the package for the February 11, 2021 GFC meeting as it was not ready for this meeting.

14.   Other Business

There was no other business.

15.   Adjournment

The January 14, 2021 General Faculties Council meeting was adjourned by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

Susan Belcher, University Secretary