Question 11.1 from GFC Member Ryan Dunch (submitted by email March 12, 2018)

Question regarding the Duty to Accommodate and U of A policies

The Duty to Accommodate is an obligation for educational institutions under federal and provincial legislation. The Alberta provisions state that “students who require accommodation should provide enough medical information to facilitate accommodation” (Alberta Human Rights Commission). The point of the provision of medical documentation is to verify that a duty to accommodate exists for this individual.

At the University of Alberta, we require students to apply for provincial and federal grants prior to allowing them to present documentation of their need for accommodation under the Duty to Accommodate (see https://www.sdds.ualberta.ca/en/Students/Register.aspx). That is to say, it seems as if we require students to take an additional step not laid out in the legislation prior to meeting our obligations as an institution under the legislation.

Is the University confident that this requirement does not contravene the federal and provincial relevant legislation (by placing an additional barrier in the way of students seeking accommodation)?

Response 11.1 from the Dean of Students

There is in fact no requirement for students to apply for, or receive funding, before being accommodated. We will ensure that this is clear in our documentation.

Currently, students provide medical documentation of their disability. They then meet or speak with an Accessibility Advisor to review medical and other relevant documentation (such as Individualized Educational Plans, psycho-educational assessments, hospital records, audiologist report, letter from physician, etc.) provided by students. The Accessibility Advisor then discusses possible accommodations with the student and determines what would be appropriate.

If these accommodations can be funded through provincial and/or federal sources, students are asked to complete the required funding applications. Accommodations are put in place for the student immediately, with the understanding that students will complete the funding applications.

Student grant funding helps pay for services used by students. This helps cover the costs of providing services to students with disabilities. This is common practice in post-secondary institutions in Alberta and other jurisdictions.

Granting organizations have firm deadlines in place for application and approval of funding. As previously indicated, Student Accessibility Services works with students to remind them of these deadlines. Students receive as many as three reminders from the Dean of Students Financial unit regarding applying for funding and, usually, this results in a successful outcome. A copy of the form letter is attached to the email reminders. The Accessibility Advisor may also be in communication with the student regarding the status of financial applications.
Students are asked to sign an Agreement to Remit Funds https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/ualberta/students/student-accessibility-services/documents/remitfunds.pdf in advance of meeting with an Accessibility Advisor.

Students with documented disabilities who cannot access provincial and/or federal funds (International students and some students with a temporary disability that potentially may become permanent) are provided accommodation.
Question 11.2 from GFC member Ilya Ushakov regarding budget allocation (received by email April 19, 2018)

To VP Finance and Admin (Gitta): How much of the budget allocated for administration is allocated to senior administration versus faculty and other administrative units on campus (for example, PLLC)?

Response 11.2 from Vice-President (Finance and Administration)

The following analysis provides information and trends of where university dollars are allocated.

Over the last decade, the Faculties of the University have received a 67.2% net increase to budget allocations. Administrative units have received a 39.2% increase to budget allocations. Administrative units include:

- Provost’s portfolio (includes IST, Dean of Students, Registrar’s Office, UA International, Learning Services and Libraries)
- Research (includes VPR, Research Services Office)
- President’s Office (includes Governance, General Counsel)
- Facilities and Operations
- Finance and Administration
- University Relations
- Advancement

For additional national context: National Post-Secondary Context

The following table provides information on the expenditure of U of A operating funds. In addition, the last row provides the total value of non-operating expenditures. These figures are taken from U of A’s 2016-17 CAUBO submission, the most recent year for which data is available. PLLC is addressed in response to a separately submitted question.

10.7% of U of A’s operating expenditures are on administration and academic support; with approximately equal amounts expended on each category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUBO Category</th>
<th>General Description</th>
<th>U of A Notes</th>
<th>Amount ($thousands)</th>
<th>% of operating expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction and non-sponsored research</td>
<td>Includes all direct costs of faculties, academic departments (including salaries of academic deans and their offices), graduate school, summer school, credit extension, and other academic functions and expenditures attributable to this function.</td>
<td>Relates to all costs associated with academic faculties except for those that have been segregated and allocated to other functions (e.g. student services and external relations).</td>
<td>652,265</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-credit instruction</td>
<td>Lectures, courses and similar activities that are not recognized by the institution for the purpose of granting credit.</td>
<td>Primarily associated with the Faculty of Extension.</td>
<td>18,234</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Includes the institution's Archives and other activities related to the institution’s main, branch and faculty or departmental libraries.</td>
<td>Relates to the all costs associated with the operation of all libraries on campus. This includes the cost of purchasing physical materials as well as the cost of subscriptions for online materials.</td>
<td>48,298</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>Includes computing activities and resources that have been organized under the management of a central administration. The computing facility is available on an institution wide basis and is the most effective way of providing certain services supportive</td>
<td>Relates to the cost of operating and maintaining all campus wide IT services and infrastructure. This includes all campus wide software licensing, computer labs, wifi access and infrastructure, etc.</td>
<td>58,690</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of the institution’s research and administrative activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration and academic support</th>
<th>The Administration and academic support function in the general operating fund covers expenditures in the two broad areas of academic support and other support services. Other support services include administration.</th>
<th>This includes funds that are expended across the institution but the expenditures are recorded centrally; for example, certain elements of benefit programs.</th>
<th>125,236</th>
<th>10.7%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student services</td>
<td>The student services function in the General operating fund includes the cost of services (other than direct teaching, research and administrative services) provided to students by the institution.</td>
<td>Relates to the services provided by the Dean of Students as well as those student services embedded within individual faculties. Also includes the cost of scholarships paid to students sourced from operating funds. This category excludes costs associated with the Office of the Registrar, which is included under the administration and academic support category.</td>
<td>71,366</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical plant</td>
<td>The Physical plant function in the General operating fund includes expenditures related to the physical facilities of the institution.</td>
<td>This includes the cost of all renovations and capital improvements campus wide.</td>
<td>159,157</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Item No. 11.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External relations</th>
<th>The external relations area includes all activities in support of ongoing external relations.</th>
<th>The costs associated with both the central External Relations and Advancement. This also includes communications/advancement functions embedded within faculties.</th>
<th>37,827</th>
<th>3.2%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-operating funds</td>
<td>Includes special purpose and trust, sponsored research, ancillary and capital.</td>
<td></td>
<td>684,832</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U of A 2016-17 CAUBO submission

**Question 11.3 from GFC member Ilya Ushakov regarding HEPI and API (received by email April 19, 2018)**

To President Turpin: How does the University of Alberta respond to scientific studies debating the merits of the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI), including allegations of misuse of such indexes, used to calculate tuition inflation and also used to formulate the Academic Price Index (API) applied to the international student tuition at this University?
Question 11.3 from GFC member Ilya Ushakov regarding HEPI and API (received by email April 19, 2018)

To President Turpin: How does the University of Alberta respond to scientific studies debating the merits of the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI), including allegations of misuse of such indexes, used to calculate tuition inflation and also used to formulate the Academic Price Index (API) applied to the international student tuition at this University?

Response 11.3 from President and Vice-Chancellor

The Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) was created by the US government in 1975 in response to the need to better measure the rate of inflation relevant to colleges and universities which is driven by a different basket of goods than applies to the Consumer Price Index calculation [1]. HEPI is calculated as a weighted average of the main cost drivers for post-secondary institutions which are salaries, benefits, miscellaneous services, supplies and materials and utilities. HEPI has been used extensively by many institutions in the US to manage all aspects of budget planning. The index is currently managed by the Commonfund institute which aggregates data from a broad cross section of US institutions. The 2017 value of the index is 3.7%.[2] The Academic Price Index (API) is modeled closely on HEPI but uses UofA data rather than an average of multiple institutions as Canadian/Alberta data is not generally shared or centrally collected. The 2017/2018 value of API is 3.14%.

The University of Alberta’s audited operating expenditures from the previous three years including a weighting of salaries, benefits and non-compensation expenditures are used to make the API calculation. In addition to the student associations agreeing to the calculation formula (in the context of our Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee (MNIF) Oversight structure), the terms of reference for the MNIF Oversight Committee, which include the annual inflation calculation, was approved by the Board of Governors at its meeting of March 18, 2016.

The data used to make the calculation is audited, publicly available and the calculation is presented on an annual basis to the student associations prior to any recommended fee increase going forward to the board.

This approach of using a sector-specific price index is not unique to the post-secondary system. For example, the City of Edmonton maintains its own Municipal Price Index based on its cost drivers. For 2017, the Municipal Price Index was forecast to be 2.25%. [3] Other price indices exist for health care, manufacturing, etc. In all cases, these cost indices provide an estimate of how much revenues must increase to maintain real purchasing power and sustain activities at the current level.

As a very mature tool, there is little ongoing scholarly work on HEPI. One report in 2011 from the Center for College Affordability and Productivity [4] put forth some criticisms of the ways HEPI is sometimes used. These range from technical (how to properly make adjustments between years when comparing the evolution of tuition levels) to philosophical (that using HEPI
to adjust revenues does not drive improvements in efficiencies). These concerns are duly noted and apply to most price indices.

**Question 11.4 from GFC member Marina Banister regarding international undergraduate student tuition (received by email April 19, 2018)**

To President Turpin:

The University of Calgary has chosen to freeze undergraduate international students’ tuition for the coming year. The University of Alberta claims that the government continually gives direction to universities that international students must cover the whole cost of their education. How much does it cost to educate an undergraduate student at the University of Alberta? Further, how much additional does it cost to educate an international undergraduate student? What steps is the senior administration taking to ensure University of Alberta stays competitive, international undergraduate student tuition wise, to its other provincial counterpart the University of Calgary?

**Response 11.5 from President and Vice-Chancellor**

A precise calculation of the cost to educate a student is very challenging, and varies by undergraduate/graduate, Faculty, and program.

One approach to calculating these costs is to take the Campus Alberta grant plus domestic tuition and divide by total domestic students. Very roughly, this calculation looks like this:

- GoA grant = ~$650M
- Domestic tuition = ~$190M
- Domestic headcount = ~32,000
- Average cost per student = $26,250 [Note that this blends graduate and undergraduate students]

The University does not track the additional costs for international students, which are built into the budgets of faculties, the Dean of Students, and University of Alberta International. This tracking exercise would be costly and complicated to undertake, with questionable value to the institution.

International students shop the entire globe, so focusing on a single competitor institution oversimplifies. The University of Alberta recruits significantly more international students than the University of Calgary. Amongst the University of Alberta’s U15 peer institutions, the U of A international tuition is well below average ($21,010 vs $24,545 for undergraduates and $7,058 vs $14,506 for graduate students.) Canadian international tuition tends to be comparable or lower than that of other English-speaking nations.
Question 11.5 from GFC member Marina Banister regarding the budget (received by email April 19, 2018)

To President Turpin:

Members of the University of Alberta Students’ Union, University of Alberta Graduate Students’ Association, Association of Academic Staff University of Alberta, University of Alberta Non-Academic Staff Association, and Postdoctoral Fellows Association have put out statements opposing the University’s budget for 2018-19. When can these representative associations expect a formal response from the Office of President to their joint statement?

Response 11.5 from President and Vice-Chancellor

There have been a number of communications to the community following the provincial budget announcement, related to the University’s budget and our interactions with the provincial government. We are awaiting our official budget letter from the Ministry that will outline the details of our provincial funding for 2018/19. Once this is received, any changes in revenue that are different than our assumptions will be dealt with as a budget variance, as per the usual practice, which will be discussed with the Board of Governors. We will continue to keep the community informed via The Quad and regular updates at governance meetings.
Question 11.6 from GFC member Shane Scott regarding remote access to GFC and standing committee meetings (received by email April 19, 2018)

To Chair of GFC,

Given that the Office of University Governance does not provide accommodation to attend GFC and standing committee meetings remotely, several GFC members have been unable to attend critical meetings. What steps is the institution taking to ensure this issue of remote access can be mitigated so that all members of GFC can participate and engage fully with the important deliberations on key issues regardless of their other and conflicting commitments? If not, please justify why the University does not want to increase accessibility.

Response 11.6 from Chair, General Faculties Council; University Secretary; General Faculties Council Secretary

I am very pleased with the commitment that GFC and committee members have shown to academic governance over the past three years. Many changes have been implemented during this time to improve the engagement and contributions of members and, as you see from today’s agenda, these improvements continue to happen.

As participation in GFC and standing committees was part of the considerations of the ad hoc Committee on Academic Governance including Delegated Authority, I have asked the University Secretary and the GFC Secretary to respond on my behalf. Their answer is below:

General Faculties Council (GFC) operates under the principle of collegial academic governance including:

- A commitment to inclusive and participatory governance decision-making
- A desire to facilitate meaningful individual-level engagement in governance processes
- A commitment to openness, transparency, and respectful communication
- A commitment to responsiveness, respect, and reciprocity between governing bodies and between governing bodies and university administration

The establishment of an ad hoc Committee on Academic Governance including Delegated Authority in September 2016 spoke to the community’s interest in transforming structures and practices to better reflect these principles.

On April 21, 2017, GFC approved 4 guiding documents in support of collegial academic governance

- Principles for Delegation of Authority
- Principles for Standing Committee Composition
- Roles and Responsibilities of Members
- Meeting Procedural Rules for GFC and its standing committees.

These documents speak to the responsibilities of members to attend and participate in meetings of GFC and its standing committees. The procedural rules were drafted to facilitate inclusive and respectful dialogue, while ensuring efficient decision-making.
In joining GFC and its standing committees, members make a commitment to be present, prepared, and to participate in GFC and committee discussion and decision making. That said, members will sometimes be unable to attend a meeting due to illness or other commitments.

GFC has in place the following provisions to assist members arrange their availability to participate fully:

- Meeting schedules for GFC and standing committee meetings are published well in advance; these are normally available and posted online at the end of the previous academic year.
- Ex-officio members may appoint delegates to attend meetings in their place.

There have been a number of occasions where special arrangements have been made for members to attend committee meetings via teleconference. These were done on an individual case-by-case basis due to travel issues related to health and weather conditions. This was managed internally and involved standing committees. To extend this to GFC with its 158 members would not contribute to active engagement of remote members in the deliberations at the meeting.

Finally, on a resource basis, to establish a system of remote access for GFC and GFC committee members to participate fully, while not impeding participation of those attending in person, would be cost-prohibitive and cumbersome.

Given the current limitations of the space and IT infrastructure for GFC and GFC committee meetings, providing the resources to enable members to participate fully from remote locations, while not impeding participation of those attending in person, is cost-prohibitive and cumbersome. This does not mean that it will not be revisited in the future when situations change, but in the meantime, in-person attendance at meetings provides for the best forum for the strategic discussions and decision making of GFC and its committees.
Question 11.7 from GFC member Shane Scott regarding support for the Peter Lougheed Leadership College (PLLC) (received by email April 19, 2018)

To the Provost and Vice President (Academic),

Several media outlets have reported that the University of Alberta will “find” $9 Million in its central operating budget to continue to support the Peter Lougheed Leadership College (PLLC) following temporary provincial funding withdrawal. What is the specific source of this $9 million funding directed to an administrative unit, such as PLLC? What cost-benefit analysis and assumptions support this investment in an administrative unit of the university given the proposed budget reductions directed toward academic units (such as faculties) that fulfil the University’s core academic mission?

Response 11.7 from Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide clarification around the government funding hiatus. The cash flow for PLLC has been structured such that, if the government funding resumes after the three-year funding hiatus - as per the government grant - there would be no need to access the university’s operating funding to maintain PLLC programming. If, however, the government funding does not continue from 2020 onward, PLLC’s accumulated deficit, the payments for capital, and any continued programming costs would need to be supported through operating funding.