



General Faculties Council
Academic Standards Committee
Minutes

Thursday, January 20, 2011
3-15 University Hall
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

ATTENDEES:

Colleen Skidmore – Chair (delegate), Ada Schmude (delegate), James Eastham, Vikki Northrup (delegate), Natalie Sharpe, William Street (delegate), Jim Bohun (delegate), Harry Prest (delegate), Elaine Geddes (delegate), Clive Hickson (delegate), Ken Porteous (delegate), Lois Gander (delegate), René Poliquin (delegate), John Law (delegate), Nathalie Kerموال (delegate), Joanne Olson (delegate), Dion Brocks (delegate), Pierre Baudin (delegate), Lory Laing (delegate), Dave Magee (delegate), Ed Blackburn (delegate), Douglas Cheung, Pat Dalton, Marlene Lewis (Coordinator), Deborah Holloway (Scribe)

PRESENTERS AND GUESTS:

Susan Barker, Professor and Chair, Secondary Education, and Academic Coordinator, Office of Sustainability
Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Pat Dalton, Associate Registrar and Director of Enrolment
Deb Gougeon, Assistant Registrar, Admissions
Trina Innes, Director, Office of Sustainability
Bob Luth, Associate Chair, Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences and Provost's Fellow, Office of the Provost
Dru Marshall, Deputy Provost
Harry Prest, Associate Dean, Augustana Faculty
Frank Robinson, Vice-Provost and Dean of Students
Colleen Skidmore, Vice-Provost (Academic) and Chair, GFC ASC
Lihong Yang, Assistant Registrar of International Admissions

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Magee/Baudin

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Regular Session Minutes of November 18, 2010

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Magee/Geddes

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve the Minutes of November 18, 2010.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

The Chair provided comments of interest to members regarding the Festival of Teaching, sick notes, missed term work, and University Governance's new website.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Items Deemed Minor/Editorial

The Following Proposal(s) are Deemed Minor/Editorial (GFC ASC's Terms of Reference (Mandate) (3.A.i and iii)) by the Vice-Provost (Academic Programs) and Chair, GFC ASC and are APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM GFC IN A SINGLE OMNIBUS MOTION.

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Colleen Skidmore, Vice-Provost (Academic) and Chair, GFC ASC

4A. Faculty of Business Transfer Credits and Residency Requirements

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, proposed Faculty admission/transfer requirements, as submitted by the Faculty of Business, for early implementation, ie, September, 2011-2012.

CARRIED

4B. Augustana Faculty and Proposed Changes to Section 64.4 (Attendance, Evaluation and Grading) of the University Calendar

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, proposed changes to Section 64.4 (Attendance, Evaluation and Grading) of the University Calendar, as submitted by Augustana Faculty, for early implementation, ie, September, 2011-2012.

CARRIED

4C. Office of the Registrar and Student Awards Proposed Changes to Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, proposed changes to Admission Chart 7 (Advanced Placement courses for advanced standing), as submitted by the Office of the Registrar and Student Awards, for implementation upon final approval.

CARRIED

4D. Office of the Registrar and Student Awards Transfer Course Approvals for January, 2011

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, the proposal for approval of courses for transfer credit, as submitted by the Office of the Registrar and Student Awards.

CARRIED

4E. Faculté Saint-Jean Admission/Readmission Requirements for the Bachelor of Science (Environmental and Conservation Sciences— Bilingual) Degree Program

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, proposed admission/readmission requirements for the Bachelor of Science (Environmental and Conservation Sciences— Bilingual) Degree Program, as submitted by Faculté Saint-Jean, for early implementation, ie, September, 2011-2012.

CARRIED

4F. Faculté Saint-Jean Faculty Academic Standing/Promotion Requirements

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, proposed Faculty academic standing/promotion requirements, as submitted by Faculté Saint-Jean, for early implementation, ie, September, 2011-2012.

CARRIED

Omnibus Motion: Geddes/Porteous

THAT the Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, the above-noted editorial changes to academic standing/graduation/promotions, admission/transfer requirements, and changes to the University Calendar for Items 4A – 4F.

CARRIED

5. Augustana Faculty and Deletion of the Certificate of Equivalence

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Harry Prest, Associate Dean, Augustana Faculty

Purpose of the Proposal: On November 17, 2005, ASC approved the continuation of the Augustana University College certificate of equivalence programs, whereby students with a 3-year Bachelor of Arts (General) or Bachelor of Science (General) degree could complete 30 additional credits in Augustana Faculty and obtain a Certificate indicating that all the requirements equivalent to a 4-year BA or BSc degree had been met. At the time, these Certificates were approved for a limited duration, according to a similar timeline as the old Augustana 3-year degrees as established in the official merger documentation. This deadline for completion was 30 April 2011. This proposal formally requests the deletion of these Certificates effective Fall 2011, in accordance with the original documents of approval.

Discussion:

Dr Prest introduced the item, providing a history of the Certificate of Equivalence and noting that the current proposed action is one of the final matters remaining to be dealt with following the merger with the University.

Motion: Prest/Street

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, the deletion of Augustana Faculty's Certificate of Equivalence Degree Program, as submitted by Augustana Faculty, to be effective in 2011-2012.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

6. External Programs for Review and Programs in Progress on Campus: Standing Item

Presenters: Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic); and Colleen Skidmore, Vice-Provost (Academic) and Chair, GFC ASC

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:

Ms Brough noted that there are currently no external program reviews in progress. Regarding programs in Progress on Campus, she reported the following:

- The Master of Arts in Native Studies has been approved.
- The change of name from LLB to JD has been approved.
- The Master of Financial Management proposal has been recommended for approval by Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) and now awaits approval from the Minister.
- The name of BSc/BEd (Secondary) combined degrees program (Augustana) will be revised in response to feedback received from CAQC.
- The Planning program has been forwarded from the Ministry of Advanced Education (AET) to CAQC for quality review.
- The PhD in Performance Studies has been forwarded to AET for system coordination review.
- The Aboriginal Governance and Partnership Certificate has been forwarded to AET for system coordination review.
- The PhD in History of Art, Design and Visual Culture has been forwarded to AET for system coordination review.
- The PharmD proposal has been forwarded to AET for system coordination review.

7. Update on Assessment and Grading Initiative

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Bob Luth, Associate Chair, Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences and Provost's Fellow, Office of the Provost

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:

Dr Luth introduced the item, noting that at the October 21, 2010 meeting of GFC ASC he had requested feedback from members regarding the purposes and principles of the project. He thanked members for their contributions and reported that he would be summarizing the feedback before sharing it with the working group, which is comprised of several members of the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE). The end of the current term is the goal for delivery of the new policy.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenter received comments and questions regarding the following matters: an instructor's responsibility to discuss a grade with a student, the various methods employed across the academy to communicate this responsibility to instructors, and the options for students in cases where an instructor does not comply with the current policy; and challenges faced by instructors where grade descriptors are vague, a situation that particularly applies to those grading large classes.

8. Embedded Undergraduate Certificate in Sustainability

Presenters: Susan Barker, Professor and Chair, Secondary Education, and Academic Coordinator, Office of Sustainability; Trina Innes, Director, Office of Sustainability; and Frank Robinson, Vice-Provost and Dean of Students

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:

Dr Barker introduced the item, noting that the proposed certificate would be the first interdisciplinary certificate offered at the University of Alberta, and that other groups are also considering creating interdisciplinary certificates. Dr Robinson outlined the advantages for students, noting that elements would be co-curricular. Ms Innes described the activities of the Office of Sustainability and reported that the development of a Certificate in Sustainability would earn the University credit in the Sustainability Tracking and Rating System, a framework for colleges and universities to gauge relative progress toward sustainability.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenters received comments and questions regarding the following matters: whether the application for graduation should be the point of administration, as opposed to being the responsibility of a particular Faculty, or, alternatively, whether a 'virtual' entity should manage the administration of certificates; whether the uptake was expected to be significant for such a certificate; and the issue of prerequisites was explored.

9. Academic Policy and Process Review Task Force (APPRTF)

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenters: Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Pat Dalton, Associate Registrar and Director of Enrolment; Deb Gougeon, Assistant Registrar, Admissions; Marlene Lewis, Coordinator, GFC Academic Standards Committee; and Lihong Yang, Assistant Registrar of International Admissions

Purpose of the Proposal: To discuss outcomes of the Academic Policy and Process Review Task Force (APPRTF).

Discussion:

Ms. Brough introduced the item, reporting that the Task force was formed by the Provost to explore rules, regulations, and processes identified by the community as presenting potential barriers to student engagement which may require review and/or change. The Task Force is Chaired by the Provost which and is comprised of 27 members drawn from a broad range of constituencies including undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, Associate Deans, APOs, front-line staff, alumni, and Vice-Provosts. The Task Force has met twice and has had wide-ranging conversations about what might warrant further exploration. Currently, a list of specific submissions will be prioritized based on feedback from the members of the Task Force and the community. The recommendations derived from The Registrar's Office process review have been included on that list of submissions. It is anticipated that GFC ASC and GFC ASC SOS will have a significant role in identifying those items that are most pressing or most in need of reform.

Ms Dalton provided highlights of the Admissions Process Review Suggestions to the Task Force, as outlined in the document before members.

During the ensuing discussion, the presenters received comments and questions regarding the following matters: concern that some suggestions, intended to simplify matters for students, might lower standards; that some of the suggestions for change are within the purview of the Faculties; why the University of Alberta would consider accepting the “D” grade and how our practices related to that grade are viewed by transfer institutions within Campus Alberta; whether the changes to any of the suggested activities would be of value to current students; and the need for transparency related to any changes arising from the Task Force’s work.

10. Question Period

Discussion:

In response to a question from a member regarding why the University grading is a paper-system, Ms Schmude noted that the Registrar’s Office and Academic Information Technologies are investing the whether Moodle may be used as a grading platform.

Regarding a query about whether teaching awards for teaching in graduate programs are being contemplated, the Chair reported that the Provost will be forming a group to examine this and other related teaching award issues.

The Chair noted that by the next meeting of GFC ASC, a decision regarding the day and time of ASC meetings in future years would be made and reported to members.

INFORMATION ITEMS

11. Items Approved by the GFC Academic Standards Committee by E-mail Ballots (non-debatable)

Items 4A, 4B and 4C from the December 16, 2010 GFC ASC Draft Agenda (e-mail vote sent on December 8, 2010 and approved on December 10, 2010)

12. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

13. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.