The University of Alberta governs itself with a bicameral governance structure (literally, it is governance in two chambers):

- **Board of Governors** and **General Faculties Council**
- Although the Board is the senior of the two, the Board and GFC **share and balance power** within the University
- Self-governing

The **University Governance** Unit, under the direction of the University Secretary, provides support for all areas of the Board and GFC
Where Does GFC’s Authority Come From?

Province of Alberta enacts

LEGISLATION: *Post-Secondary Learning Act* of 2003 (PSLA) that establishes

AUTONOMOUS ENTITY: *University of Alberta*, with an

ACADEMIC GOVERNING BODY: *General Faculties Council* (subject to the Board)
General Faculties Council (GFC)

GFC Composition

- 54 Ex Officio
- 54 Elected Academic Staff
- 27 Statutory Students
- 20 Appointed Students
- 3 Other Appointed Members*

* Board, Non-Academic Staff, Library Staff, APO, FSO, ATS, Dean of Students, St. Joseph’s College, AASUA, Chair’s Council
System of governance that depends heavily upon the participation of colleagues to establish and realize a shared purpose

Provides an opportunity for citizens to participate in decision-making, and it is the hallmark of academic decision-making
ad hoc Committee on Academic Governance Including Delegated Authority

At the meeting of April 21, 2017, GFC endorsed the *ad hoc Report and Recommendations*.

The implementation of the recommendations will continue this academic year, to be completed by April 2019.
Implementation of Recommendations

So far:

- Orientation/ Education - [GFC Guidebook](#)
- Board/GFC/Senate Summit
- Early Consultation – weigh in on strategic issues
- Standing Committee Terms of Reference
- GFC Principles
GFC Principles

Delegation of Authority
Committee Composition
Roles and Responsibilities of Members
Procedural Rules
Timely and efficient decision-making

Allows GFC to focus on substantive and strategic issues

Accountable and transparent

Reviewed regularly

*Does not have to be exercised* – Option to refer matters within mandate to full GFC

Early consultation is built into the system

**GFC Principles for Delegation of Authority**
Standing Committee Composition

Diversity and broad representation

Elected members > ex-officio members

Majority of elected members from GFC

Election of vice-chair – GFC member when possible

Ex-officio and cross-reps only as necessary

GFC Principles for Standing Committee Composition
Roles and Responsibilities of Members

1. Understand GFC
2. Attend Meetings
3. Participate!
4. Manage Conflict of Interest and Act Ethically
5. Ask Questions
6. Communicate Information to Constituents

GFC Roles and Responsibilities of Members
Purpose:

To assist rather than impede the conduct of business
To facilitate inclusive and respectful dialogue
To ensure efficient decision making

GFC Meeting Procedural Rules
Agenda Items:

Action Items

Discussion Items

Information Items

Items for early consultation
### Executive Summary for Proposals Used Across Governance

**Objective of the Executive Summary**: Contains a high-level summary for the committee about why the proposal is before the committee for consideration.

- **Action required by the committee** (motion/ discussion/ information)
- **Purpose, rationale and a high level briefing of the proposal**

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**Governance Executive Summary - Action Item**

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**Agenda Title**: (in Bold)

**Motion**: THAT

**Responsibility**

**The Purpose of the Proposal is (please be specific)**

**Executive Summary (outline the specific item– and remember your audience)**

While you are preparing the governance briefing note, consider why this item is before the committee and what you are asking of the committee.

Consider addressing the following questions in the briefing note:

- What is the strategic impact of the proposal?
- What problems/opportunities will it address?
- What questions might you consider asking in the executive summary that will enable members to think about the issue meaningfully – for example:
  - Analysis undertaken in developing the proposal
  - Other options that were considered
  - Timeline
- What risk (opportunity) is addressed in the Enterprise Wide Risk Management Framework (be specific)
- What are the financial implications (costs and funding sources)
- Does this item come forward annually?
- What are the next steps?

**Supplementary Notes and context**

Ideally, the executive brief should be no more than two pages.
The Outline of Issue

Engagement and consultations (who has seen the proposal and in what capacity)

Roadmap of the governance approval route

Proposal’s alignment with the institutional strategic plan, *For the Public Good*

Legislative compliance and jurisdiction (summary references to the applicable legislation, terms of reference, policy)
promotes an optimal learning environment in alignment with guiding documents of the University of Alberta

GFC Committee on the Learning Environment Terms of Reference
Review and recommend on policies:
• teaching, learning, teaching evaluation, and recognition of teaching

Develop policies:
• On-going assessment of teaching, learning and learning services
Nurture/Encourage/Promote

• Innovative and creative learning services and teaching practices

• Sharing and discussion of evidence about effective teaching, learning, and learning services

• Promote projects with relevant internal and external bodies that offer unique teaching and learning opportunities that would benefit the university community
What do we do if a fire alarm goes off during the meeting?
Questions?