Orientation 2018-2019
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)

- Ex Officio
- Elected Academic Staff
- Statutory Students
- Appointed Students
- Other Appointed Members*

* Board, Non-Academic Staff, Library Staff, APO, FSO, ATS, Dean of Students, St. Joseph’s College, AASUA, Chair’s Council
General Faculties Council - Academic Governance at the U of A

- Academic Planning (APC)
- Executive (EXEC)
- Nominating (NC)
- Facilities Development (FDC)
- Student Conduct Policy (SCPC)
- Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)
- University Teaching Awards (UTAC)
- Undergraduate Awards and Scholarship (UASC)
ad hoc Committee

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
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’s Procedural Rules

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
The Executive Summary

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

Choose an item.
For the Meeting of <month, date, year>

Item No. <>

Agenda Title: (in Bold)

Motion: THAT

Item
Action Requested
Proposed by
Presenter(s)

Details
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 Executive Summary

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)
The Executive Committee is the executive body of General Faculties Council (GFC).

It is charged with

- preparing the GFC agenda and
- carrying out the functions delegated to it by GFC.

The Committee acts on behalf of GFC in areas as defined in the terms of reference. The Chair may bring forward items for advice from the committee.
GFC Executive Committee Terms of Reference

Areas of Responsibility

- **Act on behalf** of General Faculties Council as defined in Terms of Reference
- Preparation of **agendas** for GFC
- **Faculty Councils** - membership, quorum, control function, sub-delegations
- **Student Judiciary** matters
- **Academic procedural matters** - approval of the academic schedule, publication of the University Calendar, and resolutions of
- Unresolved **new course challenges**
- **Academic Awards**
What do we do if a fire alarm goes off during the meeting?
Questions?