



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL MEETING #544.1

Approved Minutes

Tuesday, March 24, 2020

4:00 p.m. via Zoom

Present: M. Mahon, (Chair), K. Alexander (phone), L. Barrett, J. Blum, J. Brassolotto, S. Bubel, L. Burckes, D. Burleigh, P. Cardozo, J. Copeland, B. Cummins, J. Cunningham, J. Dobbie, G. Fujiwara, A. Gammack, K. Godfrey, B. Harray, L. Howard, B. Hughes, M. Ingraham, D. Jarvie, S. Johnsrude, D. Kaminski, H. Kletke, H. Ladd, J. Laurendeau, M. Letts, C. Loewen, R. Marynowski, K. Massey, C. Mattatall, K. Mazurek, J. Miles, R. Munn, C. Nicol, J. Nugent, E. Okine, T. Oosterbroek, T. Patel, K. Peacock, K. Potts, E. Pullan, J. Rice, B. Rogers, M. Serebryansky, J. Sheriff, A. Stewart, M. Stingl, J. Usher, J. Vokey, N. Walker, P. Wilson, S. Wismath, R. Wood, L. Zink

Regrets: C. Currie, J. Gamble, H. Ghanbari, R. Harper-Brown, A. Khalil, J. Mather, A. Moatari-Kazerouni, B. Nikolai-Wilson, P. Shao, C. Steinke, K. Vos

Other: J. Gallais, V. Grisack, M. Whipple, C. Adams, M. Helstein, H. Mirau

Oki. The President opened the meeting with a welcome and the Territorial Statement.

M. Mahon and J. Gallais went over the mechanics of the Zoom meeting and how to participate.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: gfc.2020.03.06

Laurendeau/Oosterbroek

That the Agenda for GFC Meeting #544.1 held Tuesday, March 24, 2020 be approved.

Motion: Carried

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

M. Mahon reported

- Covid-19 Update – we have been moving through the most challenging times that the University of Lethbridge has faced.
- Everyone has been tremendous to help us move through this situation. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the global outbreak of COVID-19 a pandemic. On March 13 we began to experience a new normal with classes

suspended on the advice of the chief medical officer of Alberta. We felt that we should close classes as we had over the 250 class limit in some areas. We enacted the emergency management committee chaired by Doug Mackie originally and then by Michelle Helstein. Then in the space of 4 days we decided to go to an alternate delivery method which has unfolded reasonably well. It is not perfect but will allow us to finish the semester. We thought we may be able to keep the practicums going but have had to make the decision to stop these as well. We asked staff to work from home where possible but it wasn't as significant a response as we hope. We maintained the residences and were able to keep students there as long as possible until this past weekend. Because the physical distancing was not happening in the residences, we made the decision to close them. We gave students 48 hours to move out. Many thanks to housing staff for accomplishing this so quickly. We had to support students that could not move out and have addressed that by having 60 – 80 residence students move to the townhouses. It will allow for physical distancing with 1 student to 1 kitchen. There will be no services and all students have direct access to outside. Physical distancing continues to be a challenge.

- We have moved to an entirely different delivery model for classes, closed residences now and the food services will close tomorrow at 5 pm. For the first time in the history of University of Lethbridge, we will be locking up all buildings on campus later this week. This decision was based on health and safety concerns that our buildings remain safe. Essential services such as like financial services will have access to the university but as of Friday, if you need access, you will need to be preapproved.
- Moving forward, we are starting to put our minds to the new normal and what this means for university. Summer programming decisions are starting to be discussed. Summer one will only be online programming only. From the discussion with Dr. Deena Hinshaw our chief medical officer of Alberta, there will probably be no face-to-face meetings until the fall. We will be looking at alternative formats possibly for the fall as well. We are trying to do business as usual.
- THANKS to all Faculty, Students, and staff on GFC for their assistance and understanding during this unprecedented time of change.
- Arts & Science Dean Search will be completed using an alternate delivery process. VP (Advancement) Appointment committee will move into the fall due to the COVID 19 situation and the fact that we haven't started the process yet.
- First positive COVID19 case here at the university with a faculty member who had travelled to Europe and self isolated on their return. The faculty member did not return to campus. Positive case information is controlled by the public health authority and we need permission to release any information. Lastly I will say that as we move through this, I would like to encourage you to help your colleagues to understand what is happening on campus. We have used various forms of communication but are now focussing on only using the website. Please direct any questions from colleagues to the website. Thank you to Michelle Helstein who has taken on the leadership of this. M. Helstein relayed her thanks to everyone. People have been working really hard and the students are appreciative

of all of your work on their behalf. M. Mahon stated that there are 2 key drivers – the first is the health and safety of our community and our people. It will be imperfect at times but we remain focussed on the health of people at the University of Lethbridge and the extended community members. We represent 10000 people plus and we are trying to be role models in the city of Lethbridge. The second is the continued success of the University of Lethbridge to prosper as an institution. We have a commitment to faculty, staff and students to prosper. Business continuity going forward is critical.

- Working through the budget – COVID 19 has not lessened the challenges but made them bigger. The cost to change our delivery methods is large, refunding of residence plans and meal plans are a factor in the budget.
- AE Minister Meeting on March 27th – discussing the Investment Management Agreement, Budget 2020 & the challenges of COVID-19
- Meeting with Deputy Minister C. Clarke March 25th

3. QUESTION PERIOD

- G. Fujiwara –My question is while we continue to teach our courses, what are you hearing from the students. M. Mahon reported that there are lots of different experiences from the students. There is the stress of moving to different deliveries, practicum experiences halted, residence changes, and financial pressures. There have been lots of positive comments from students on how they are able to finish the semester. Many are experiencing stresses but some are finding the process reasonably helpful for them. There are different reactions regarding the way we are doing things.
- C. Nicol – regarding the locking up of buildings, what is the authorization route? M. Mahon referred the question to M. Helstein. We are still using Wednesday as the date to move people off campus. A working group is moving through clarity on which groups need access to campus. We are putting together communications on this now. This was not an easy decision to make but a reasonable course of action to take to limit the spread.
- K. Peacock – do I need permission to get personal stuff from my office. M. Helstein stated that we are trying to encourage people to get their belongings by Wednesday but buildings should be locked on Friday. Just come get things and practice physical distancing. We are working on all the pieces and will publish a communication when we have everything in place.
- L. Howard – Regarding the mail –how do we pick up mail since we won't be able to get in the building? Do we click on the link on the website? M. Helstein stated that they are gathering information on those groups who need access to mail. If there are issues, please reach out to Colleen Sullivan who is the lead on this.
- K. Godfrey – practicums and placements are closed. Co-ops are still open. Is that correct? M. Mahon suggested that work was in progress as some places are shutting down. J. Rice stated that many co-op placements where students were already making arrangements to self isolate and work from home. We are letting them do it as a case by case basis.
- M. Ingraham –We have arrangements for rentals this summer which are now on hold. When will we get the official notice that summer session will only be online so rentals can be told. M. Helstein reported that there is still conversation surrounding this topic. We are having to prioritize in our committee but will have consultation with deans' offices. I would hope in the next week that we can communicate this to you.

- Thanks to everyone for their hard work during this COVID 19 pandemic. We will move from emergency context to running the university context hopefully in the not too distant future. This is a challenging situation but we want to get back to our new normal in running the university as soon as possible. We will keep people apprised of this ever changing situation.

4. ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1. Grade Assignment and Withdrawal Recommendations for Spring 2020 Semester

Motion 1

MOTION: gfc.2020.03.07

Okine/Laurendeau

That General Faculties Council approve the following, effective immediately:

- a) *the extension of the deadline for graduate and undergraduate students to request the Credit/Non-Credit non-grade designation from February 3, 2020 to within 10 days of receiving the final grade for a Spring 2020 course or May 15, 2020, whichever is later; and,*
- b) *that, where a student requests it by the new deadline, a Credit/Non-Credit non-grade designation may replace any grade for any course offered in Spring 2020, except those where the Pass/Fail option is used or where the course concluded prior to the cancellation of in-person classes, so that:*
 - *for undergraduate courses, 'Credit' is granted for grades of D and higher and 'Non-credit' is granted for grades below D;*
 - *for master's courses, 'Credit' is granted for grades of B- and higher and 'Non-credit' is granted for grades below B-; and,*
 - *for doctoral courses, 'Credit' is granted for grades of B and higher and 'Non-credit' is granted for grades below B.*

Where no request is made the letter grade remains recorded on the transcript.

Motion: Carried

E. Okine reported as an administrator and a professor. Due to the fact that the COVID-19 has put us in a situation with the students and instructors going through difficult times. It has changed the way we assess the competencies of our students. We believe in the integrity and quality of our programs but it will take some adjustments to the alternate delivery method and all of the distractions that come with learning at home. We believe in the flexibility in how we are doing this. With K. Massey, we are looking at the

way other institutions are helping their students through this situation. There was discussion on what the various institutions are proposing for grades. We chose to leave the choice in the hand of students for this particular term. We are looking for a fair way to assess grades. We are aware of a student's petition asking for this same thing. Members had a robust discussion surrounding the various approaches to awarding grades and how those grades will affect student's future education endeavours with preserving the grade in their records. It was suggested that a notation be made on the student's records regarding the COVID 19 situation. There was concern regarding the communication of this motion and making sure that the students understand their options. It was hoped that this would be communicated to the university community by the end of the week. A comment was made that the students appreciate their involvement in the decision making process as many other student leaders have not been involved. It was mentioned that there was a good piece in the Washington Post Perspective section that discusses this situation (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/03/20/coronavirus-college-pass-fail/>).

Motion 2

MOTION: gfc.2020.03.08

Okine/Ingraham

That General Faculties Council approve the following, effective immediately:

- *That the deadline for withdrawal from Spring 2020 courses be extended from April 6, 2020 to May 15, 2020; and,*
- *That the deadline for withdrawal with cause from Spring 2020 courses be extended from April 6, 2020 to May 15, 2020 or a later date identified by the Dean or designate.*

Motion: Carried

There was discussion around giving the students as much flexibility as we can, and if withdrawal with cause would come with a refund (no).

M. Mahon thanked all that contributed to bringing the motions forward. There was lots of good discussion here today.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

GFC will continue as scheduled. GFC Exec on Monday, March 30th and then GFC will be a week later on April 6th. We will use our governance bodies to guide us through these unprecedented times.

Thank you all for your participation.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: gfc.2020.03.09

Marynowski/Blum

That the GFC meeting #544.1 be adjourned.

Motion: Carried