



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL MEETING #558

Approved Minutes

Monday, October 4, 2021

3:00 p.m. via Zoom

- Present:** M. Mahon, (Chair), L. Barrett, J. Blum, G. Bonifacio, R. Bright, N. Buis Deering, C. Carnaghan, B. Cummins, C. Currie, C. Devoy J. Dobbie, P. Dutt, A. Dymond, C. Fleischman, K. Godfrey, K. Greenwood, T. Harrison, M. Helstein, M. Letts, R. Marynowski, H. Jansen, D. Jarvie, L. Kennedy, M. Kildaw, H. Kletke, O. Kovalchuk, Y. Li, R. Lindblad, M. Magnuson, K. Massey, J. Mather, C. Mattatall, I. McAdam, D. McIntyre, D. McMartin, A. Mendenhall, D. O'Donnell, E. Okine, T. Oosterbroek, B. Parker, T. Patel, N. Rebry, J. Rice, D. Scott, M. Serebryansky, P. Shao, J. Sheriff, L. Spencer, C. Steinke, M. Stingl, A. Taylor, S. Urquhart, N. Walker, S. Wismath, R. Yalamova, A. Zovoilis
- Regrets:** K. Alexander, B. Badiuk, A. Dodd, I. Genee, P. Ghazalian, M. Hawkins, S. Malla, G. Ogilvie, D. Olsen, R. Parkkari, D. St. Georges, K. Walker, P. Wilson, R. Wood
- Other:** J. Gallais, K. Fuglerud, V. Grisack, M. Mathurin-Moe, H. Mirau, S. Nieboer, R. Westlund

Oki. The President opened the meeting with a welcome and the Territorial Statement. A moment of silence was observed for the passing of Dr. Donald Frantz, Professor Emeritus, Indigenous Studies. M. Mahon welcomed S. Scott, Interim Dean of Fine Arts as of October 1st.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: gfc.2021.10.01

Mattatall/Jansen

That the Agenda for GFC Meeting #558 held Monday, October 4, 2021 be approved.

Motion: Carried

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: gfc.2021.10.02

Wismath/Marynowski

That the Minutes for GFC Meeting #557 held Monday, September 13, 2021 be approved.

Motion: Carried

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

M. Mahon reported:

- Senate Report – the annual report was included within the agenda.
 - Honorary Degree Nomination form – the deadline closes soon so please consider nominating someone for an honorary degree. We also look forward to honoring Honorary Degrees in person sooner rather than later.
- Truth and Reconciliation Day – we are pleased that the University of Lethbridge chose to honor the day as well as hosting many events virtually to continue the path to truth and reconciliation with our Indigenous community on and off campus. The President participated in two of the events. The ribbon tying event in the Atrium as well as the smudging demonstration done by our Elder Francis First Charger which were wonderful ways to think about Truth and Reconciliation and to move the important conversation forward.
- Return to campus – Lots of communication from us for the necessity of mandatory vaccinations on campus becoming effective November 1st and the principals associated with that. There were new orders that came from the government last week regarding physical distancing in public areas but some of the communication has created challenges because it has lead to questions. One communique on the ministry site speaks to the fact that vaccinations and/or rapid testing are the way people can come to campus. M. Mahon clarified this as best he could by saying that while the government has stated this, our university has mandated vaccinations are the only way individuals can come to campus after November 1, 2021 unless the person has an exemption. Vaccines are our way through this and so we made this difficult decision as our path forward.
- Convocation – the in-person component of convocation was unfortunately cancelled. We are going back to convocation in a box and are inviting students to attend a convocation in the future. The boxes will be sent out for the end of October and not our scheduled date.
- The President wanted to give an update on the taskforce recommendations. One of the processes to consider in more detail is the recommendation to moving to a five-faculty structure for the UofL. E. Okine and M. Helstein will be meeting with faculty councils and then moving to an in-faculty process lead by a faculty leader to look at structure related to departments. This process will unfold in the next couple of months in early winter/spring semester with final recommendations coming to GFC. He wanted to give everyone a heads up that this process was starting.
- Lori Pillipow, new Deputy Minister of Advanced Education – commenced October 1st. M. Mahon had met her in the Assistant Deputy Minister Environment portfolio. He is looking forward to conversations in collaboratively moving forward.
- The Evelyn Hamilton Chair in Liberal Education (\$2M Art and Mary Jane Crooks) was announced at Liberal Education symposium. The search for this chair can now commence.
- A number of events are continuing in various ways to ensure that we remain active as a university. Congratulations to those who are bringing these events to light.

4. QUESTION PERIOD

- G. Bonifacio – Regarding the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) activities - perhaps one way in which we can provide a more genuine response is to go beyond recognition of the holiday in looking at ways to support our Indigenous students. M. Mahon stated that there are a number of things going on. A new fund to support Indigenous students in transition was announced. There are many initiatives being developed with a number of them being supported by the MasterCard Foundation who work with our Blackfoot confederacy partners related to enhanced connectivity. We have had discussions with Red Crow Community College (RCCC) on 2+2's programs as well as an MOU for research programming at RCCC to develop their own research. There are many examples in relation to the TRC that are going on in many areas of campus led by different units. If there are ideas on moving forward, M. Frank and L. Shade are enthusiastic about hearing and supporting new ideas. G. Bonifacio commented that many activities are one off events and she was looking for more meaningful long-term initiatives like scholarships or student supports for those students who were formerly under foster care. M. Mahon has met with K. Greenwood on how we move forward with new initiatives and student scholarships are high on the list for Development to bring in more funding.
- H. Kletke – re: clarification on restructuring – how will we know of the progress and process of each recommendation, who is in charge and how we get involved in the consultation. M. Mahon commented that student involvement is critical. As the process evolves, we will be communicating who is leading each section and how to provide input. It will happen using our normal communication process such as GFC and other groups on campus. We will provide opportunities for robust input and the faculty structure piece will eventually come back to General Faculties Council for approval. It will initially come for discussion and feedback and then back to GFC in the following month for input and final decision.
- P. Dutt – What is the UofL doing to decolonize our institution and some of the courses we offer? How are we implementing the calls to action? M. Mahon reported that there is work at the faculty level on many fronts. We are looking at the process of hiring more Indigenous faculty and this has been discussed at Statutory Deans' Council as well as Provost's Council. It is multipronged but there is more work that needs to happen. E. Okine commented that as indicated, we are taking a strategic look at our curriculum and one point in relative to faculty structure. Once we have gone through what the faculties and departments are, we will need to look at streamlining the curriculum, we will look at the Equity Diversity and Inclusion file. A lot of you have ideas of how we can move forward and we are committed to operationalize it.
- B. Cummins – re: faculty restructure process coming out of the task forces. We have talked about this over and over again. Two questions were posed: will materials be provided to faculty councils about the impacts to each faculty before E. Okine and M. Helstein come visit. Because if they don't, I don't understand the purpose of them coming to speak with each faculty council. Secondly, what is the faculty lead supposed to do once Erasmus and Michelle have visited? We have talked about this and we have arrived at the same place we were at earlier. M. Mahon responded that what we heard most in the taskforce consultation was that faculty members in

- departments are the ones who understand where they fit best in the faculty structure. One of the items that was clear is that we need to decrease the number of departments as that will save us resources that can be turned into teaching resources. The intent is to turn it back to faculty and departments to help provide that input for those decisions. We need to move dramatically to a smaller number of departments. E. Okine commented that in terms of faculty structures, we will ask the departments and experts in their fields – where would you belong and what are the connections to other units and departments across campus? What is your curriculum and research that is connected to other departments? Where do you think that you are best situated? These are some of the questions that the leads of the working group will be discussing. These decisions/feedback need to come at the department level. M. Mahon commented that data will be provided but it is in analysis right now – plotting the size of faculty against the number of departments looking at what would be the optimal amount of departments. Then to what makes sense in the terms of faculty make up and department input will be very helpful. This is a budget exercise. We need to decrease the amount of resources we have in administration to put it back into teaching and research. We heard the concern that senior administration would just decide on the structure. The exercise is that we will ask the faculty/department to be involved.
- T. Harrison – what is the purpose in meeting with the individual faculties and then the individual departments? The changes being proposed involve the whole university. You cannot talk about your area in isolation without the understanding how this will affect the whole university. Most of the money is spent on salaries and that means faculty. What are we going to be consulted about when we are just going to look at losing bodies? The President responded that we need to look at what will allow us to reduce the number of administration and what are the savings. We recognize that 85% of the budget is in people. The question is where to put the people in research and teaching and how to decrease the people in administration to have as many people in the classroom as possible. E. Okine responded that we have 6 faculties/1 school/1 library for a total of eight, if we reduce to five faculties, there will be savings there. How can we group departments in a more efficient way?
 - D. McIntyre – re: Indigenization. One thing would be ideal within the institution is a single set of terminology. This is a systemic problem that we could take the lead on nationally because no school has said that these are the terms that we use and use consistently across all faculties. Students move from faculty to faculty and the set of terms (Indigenous, First Nations, etc.) are used differently. We are setting up another generation of students to struggle. If we only do one thing for the entire year, this will make a difference and maybe get us back into Maclean's. How do we move forward and where do we do it as it has to be across the whole institution? M. Mahon responded that this is what the GFC Iniskim Education Committee was intended to do. It is that sort of committee that would potentially play a role. It would need to be GFC and broader – if we are talking about the whole campus. M. Mahon will bring this back to President's Executive. D. MacIntyre commented that there are five other committees that are doing the same work but there are no overriding committee to direct us. M. Mahon commented that H. Mirau is working on a governance structure

to look at this question so that we have a mechanism that covers our approach from academics and broader on facilities and student support.

- A. Mendenhall – when we are mentioning decolonization and Indigenization, we are not talking about things led by Indigenous faculty, elders or Indigenous studies students. For example, Indigenous Health is situational, not teaching things that will help improve their situation. E. Okine stated that this is a great comment. At the centre of the governance structure, is how inclusive are we to get the elders, faculty and indigenous people to direct and guide us in the pathways that we need to take to meet the Truth and Reconciliation tenets.
- J. Mather expressed concern with the task force recommendation that we reorganize. If we are going to save money, show us how we are going to save money and then we can work on reorganization. The President commented that the information on savings will be communicated and this information is being worked on right now.
- D. O'Donnell – Thank you for what has been a really good discussion. It seems to me here that given that the fact that establishment of faculties, schools, departments and chairs is literally one of the things that GFC is supposed to recommend to the Board on. If we are going around to the faculties to discuss where the savings could be made and how they could be made, it seems to me that it is absolutely something that GFC should be part of the consultations for because in order to make a report to the Board that the Board could act on, we need to be as informed as possible. The President responded that the intent of this consultation process at the level of the faculty is pre-work that would lead to providing GFC with the recommendations that would be considered by GFC with opportunity to discuss or provide input prior to final recommendations come forward and then on the board. This is the normal course of how things come to GFC.

There was further discussion about having members of GFC also come to the Faculty Council meetings and how the majority of GFC members are already sitting around those faculty council meetings. There was robust conversation on the various aspects of having extra people at these meetings as well as the powers and duties of GFC in the PSLA. Also discussed was a request for a timeline and if there will be any decisions made between this meeting and the next. Several members added comments about the process and what happens if there are no savings realized in a restructuring. The Provost feels that there will be savings and commented that there will be difficult conversations that need to happen on the academic and administrative sides.

- P. Dutt – It was commented that a chuckle was heard when a member discussed the language used on Indigenous speakers and it was noted that we need to come from a place of empathy so the chuckle made the individual uncomfortable.
- D. O'Donnell – It was asked what is the difference of us participating as individuals in our individual faculties and how is this different from receiving a report from CCC via the English department. There are a couple of differences that are important. First is that this is not the same as a faculty initiated proposal for GFC to consider. This is a fact-finding mission. We have an idea that might be worthwhile reducing the number of faculties and someone, not GFC, is going to go out to the faculties and ask them. It seems to me from everything we are hearing from everyone on this, given that there doesn't seem to be a problem in that you are going to be at GFC and hear these things anyway. I am finding it hard to understand why we would choose not to

have a couple of consistent ears that listen to all the faculties councils as part of the fact finding? This is very much in GFC's wheelhouse and seems to be quite easy for us to say that we will put together a small group that will go around and listen and hear and report back to GFC what they heard. The President responded that we need to take this back to GFC Executive to discuss and will figure the best way forward and I can assure GFC that we will not move forward until we have a good sense of that from GFC Executive and move forward from there. D. O'Donnell stated that there is not a guarantee that there will there won't be action on this before GFC meets again. A point of privilege was raised in that GFC Exec answers to GFC and I think that by going and taking reports from faculty councils, without the participation of GFC or the approval of GFC for the course of action that you are violating the privileges of GFC. (The Chair asked the members to stand at ease for five minutes)

- Upon return, the Chair stated that the sense is that GFC Executive will have an unscheduled meeting to discuss this and that we call together GFC in a Special GFC meeting to discuss how best to proceed. It was noted that every month we wait is an increased challenge for the institution from a budgetary standpoint. It was clarified by the member that this answers the point of privilege.
- The Chair, thanked everyone for the discussion and recognized how difficult the decision is.
- To address the conversation that happened in the break (while members felt they were muted), M. Mahon's expressed the goal at GFC and as president and Chair is always to do things in the best interest of the University.

5. ITEMS FOR ACTION

5.1. GFC Executive Committee Nominations

M. Mahon introduced the process. E. Okine reported that there are two upcoming vacancies on the GFC Executive Committee. Two members are required for two-year terms (immediately to October 2, 2023). E. Okine went over the procedures for the nominations and the approval voting as required by the bylaws.

M. Mahon opened the floor to nominations. The following nominations were received for the two, two-year terms:

- Jennifer Mather
- Aaron Taylor

MOTION: gfc.2021.10.03

Okine/Cummins

All nominations cease.

Motion: Carried

6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

6.1. GFC Standing Committee Reports

J. Gallais reported that all GFC Standing Committees are to report annually on their activities. The reports are reviewed by GFC Executive before coming to GFC for information and then posted on the GFC website for information for future members. A minor correction for T. Harrison's department on Credo Awards was noted and will be fixed before the report is uploaded.

6.2. GFC Nominations Committee Call for Nominations

J. Gallais noted that there are three upcoming vacancies for academic staff members to serve on the GFC Nominations Committee. Two members are required for two-year terms (November 2, 2021 - November 1, 2023), and one member is required to fill a study leave for a one-year terms (November 2, 2021 – November 14, 2022). These members will be elected following nominations from the floor. Please prepare for the request for nominations at the November 1, 2021 GFC meeting. Clarification was requested that Nominations Committee members need to be from GFC.

6.3. GFC Executive Committee Report – September 27, 2021

Received as information. No questions raised.

6.4. GFC Executive Committee Approved Minutes - #538 – September 7, 2021 Meeting

Received as information. No questions raised.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: gfc.2021.10.04

Kletke/Scott

That the GFC meeting #558 be adjourned.

Motion: Carried

It was noted that as there will be a special meeting of GFC check your emails, as we will try to pick a time when we can get quorum.