



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL MEETING #578

Approved Minutes

Monday, December 11, 2023

3:00 p.m. in W646

- Present:** D. Jayas, (Chair), A. Akbary, S. Alam, B. Allen (virtually), K. Anderson-Bain, L. Barrett, V. Baulkaran, N. Buis Deering (virtually), J. Burke, C. Burton, C. Carnaghan, J. Cunningham, J. Dobbie, A. Dymond (virtually), A. Ebenmelu, S. Findlay, P. Ghazalian (virtually), K. Godfrey (virtually), K. Haight, M. Helstein, M. Hill (virtually), C. Hosgood, B. Hughes, K. Ito, H. Jansen, S. Johnsrude, M. Letts, S. Malla?, R. Marynowski, K. Massey, J. Mather, A. Mukherjee, L. Ochieng, J. Oldfield, D. Olsen, N. Patel (virtually), R. Patel, R. Preston, N. Rebry (virtually), J. Reiter, J. Rice, Y. Sackey-Forson, J. Sadr, K. Schwarz, E. Scott, D. Slomp, D. Smither, L. Spencer, L. Starr, R. Sutherland (virtually), N. Thakor, M. Thomas, G. Tian (virtually), S. Urquhart (virtually), A. von Heyking, N. Walker, P. Wilson (virtually), J. Youngdahl
- Regrets:** H. Davis-Fisch, J. Doan, K. Greenwood, O. Kovalchuk, C. Mattatall, D. McIntyre, D. McMartin, D. McNeill, L. Vogelsang, R. Williams, F. Wright, Y. Zheng, A. Zovoilis
- Other:** J. Gallais, G. DeSteuer, M. Mathurin-Moe, R. Westlund, M. Whipple
(other guests were present on Zoom)

Oki. The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome and the Territorial Statement and thanked members whose terms expire on December 31, 2023: Jennifer Burke, Ying Zheng, Deric Olsen, and Athan Zovoilis. M. Thomas also led GFC in the Pass the Hat fundraiser.

1. CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL

- 1.1. Approval of the December 11, 2023 Meeting #578 Agenda
- 1.2. Approval of the GFC Meeting #577 – November 6, 2023 Minutes

INFORMATION

- 1.3. GFC Executive Committee Report – December 4, 2023
- 1.4. GFC Executive Committee Approved Minutes – #560 – October 30, 2023

MOTION: gfc.2023.12.01

Massey/Preston

That the General Faculties Council approve the December 11, 2023 Consent Agenda.

Motion: Carried (1 abstention)

A member raised a point of order regarding the multi-sports dome agenda item and not allowing GFC consideration before Board approval. The Chair clarified that this was not a point of order and clarified in the agenda it is being brought to GFC for discussion and feedback and then will come back to GFC again prior to it being presented to the Board for any type of approval.

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

D. Jayas referred to the President's Report that was included in the agenda package.

A few highlights and additions were noted:

- President Jayas had a brief phone call with the Minister of Advanced Education and discussed sustainable, predictable funding.
- President Jayas and Provost Michelle Helstein continue to meet with groups on campus and encourage those who have not yet had a chance to meet with them to contact Lisa Neufeld to schedule a meeting.
- The volunteer award deadline (January 15th) was highlighted, and applications were encouraged to be submitted.
- President Jayas also thanked everyone for their work in the Fall 2023 semester and for the warm welcome during his first six months on the job.

3. QUESTION PERIOD

No questions were submitted in advance.

- The prior question from J. Mather from the October GFC meeting was provided to GFC for information. M. Helstein spoke on student access to the Science Commons classrooms and the difference in key vs. card access and how these unlock times are automated. It was highlighted that there are plenty of 24-hour spaces for students like the new Library 24-hour study space. Another question was raised about ad hoc bookings and students not being to access the room if they need to leave for a moment. M. Helstein highlighted that these policies have been developed to ensure a healthy balance between safety and open access.
- R. Preston asked about the Calgary Campus and the limited spaces available and how that growth will be accommodated. D. Jayas spoke on the future of space planning with the Calgary Campus and acquiring a new space. M. Helstein noted that the University does have a lease with Bow Valley College and that there have been difficulties in the University being able to use that space effectively. President Jayas and Provost Helstein are advocating to the Government about these pieces as the Bow Valley College building is a Campus Alberta building meant to host multiple campuses.
- A. Ebenmelu asked about the supports for Navitas students. M. Helstein responded by stating that we are expecting cohorts to start by Fall 2024 and highlighted the support plan for Navitas students. Also asked about was the potential cap on international students and how the University is responding to that. D. Jayas spoke about the advocacy being done by Universities Canada and that consists of Presidents and International officers of universities across the country.

- A. Mukherjee asked about the immigration minister limiting student visas until universities increase supports for these students and the actionable steps that we will be taking to increase supports? M. Helstein also highlighted that enrollment numbers are top of mind and that will inform decisions for student supports.
- J. Cunningham asked about the percentage of international students currently enrolled and M. Helstein responded with 14.9%.

4. ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1. GFC Curriculum Coordinating Committee Report Implementation May 1, 2025

Student Enrolment & Registrar Services

MOTION: gfc.2023.12.02

Buis Deering/Massey

That GFC approve the following commitments in the academic schedule guidelines for implementation May 1, 2025.

The academic schedule guidelines will reflect the following:

- *The grade submission deadline will be extended to 2.5 working days after the last day of the exam period.*
- *To alleviate tight timelines at the end of term, flexibility will be used to schedule the first day of classes (in September, not August)*
- *The final exam period will be seven day in length instead of eight days*
- *The grade submission due date will be in December, with time for grades to be released to students on the Bridge before the holiday closure (at the least).*
- *The Reading Break will remain in November during the week of the University's observance of Remembrance Day.*

Motion: Carried

N. Buis Deering provided some context around these recommendations. Some questions and comments arose on if class size would be factored into exceptional circumstances, and it was indicated that the SEARS office is frontloading the exam schedule for larger classes and faculty can request exams to be moved. A thank you was provided for the proposal in keeping students front of mind in crafting these changes. It was clarified that these changes aren't taking place until January 2025. A question arose on the marking demand in first year vs. senior courses and the SEARS office can release conflicts once the bigger classes are scheduled earlier in the exam period, and faculty may also identify that they are grading a more time-consuming course.

Another question was asked about the academic schedule and the flexibility of the make up days. N. Buis Deering spoke on some measures of flexibility that was approved at last GFC.

4.2. GFC Admission Standards Committee Report

Faculty of Arts & Science

MOTION: gfc.2023.12.03

Letts/Thomas

That GFC approve the changes to the admissions policy for the B.A./LL.B with Bond University.

Motion: Carried

Faculty of Education

MOTION: gfc.2023.12.04

Starr/Marynowski

That GFC approve to terminate the Career and Technologies Studies business focus Major in the Faculty of Education.

Motion: Carried

A question was asked about the plan to deal with students who are currently in this program. It was clarified that this is a measure directed toward future enrollment, and current students are not impacted.

School of Graduate Studies

MOTION: gfc.2023.12.05

Rice/Massey

That GFC approve the campus of delivery for the Graduate Certificate in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Graduate Certificate in Public Health Program and Policy Planning and Evaluation, and Master of Science in Health Sciences – Public Health Specialization to all be online.

Motion: Carried

Student Enrolment & Registrar Services

MOTION: gfc.2023.12.06

Buis Deering/Starr

That GFC approve the addition of the IELTS One Skill Retake assessment for graduate ELP recognition.

Motion: Carried

5. ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

5.1. Multi-Sport Dome Proposal

N. Walker did a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation to GFC highlighting the material within the agenda on the draft proposed multi-sport dome proposal. A provincial grant was also noted as potential partial funding source for this project. B. Halma and N. Langevin were present to listen and address any questions if needed. Several questions arose surrounding this proposal and to ensure feedback is captured they have been more comprehensively noted below:

- A question arose on the consultation and timelines? The strengths of the sports dome were highlighted and a timeline was noted as ready for Fall ideally and this could be completed in 6-8 weeks.
- Why are student fees to be increased by 10%? Our student ARS fees are lower compared to similar universities.
- Why is the dome considered a strategic priority opposed to other areas of student wellbeing? The University does support the foodbank and other student supports significantly. It was also asked why Student Housing wasn't more of a priority. It was noted that there is currently not the demand for student housing and those projects must be self funded. The balancing of strategic priorities and funding, and how those will support the other academic programming in a sustainable way all are factors in prioritization.
- What will the student access to these facilities be, including students who are not Pronghorns athletes? It will be use for intermural, our sports teams, employees, and the community. The space would also be rented out during the evenings to allow for a revenue stream. B. Halma noted that programming would be shifted from our existing sport facilities freeing up more available space in our current gymnasium.
- Why was this was not put up to referendum to the entire student body? This is because the fee is just being increased, this is not a new fee.
- What about the use of the dome for events such as Fresh Fest and Last Class Bash? The inability to currently book the stadium for events like Fresh Fest because of the lack of spaces to move our sports teams to accommodate the use of the stadium for events like Fresh Fest.
- What about safety of the dome and pressure needed? The dome would come with revolving door to keep the pressure in and have a minimum of 6-8 emergency exits and 2 other revolving doors.
- What about accessibility to the building for academic programming and the commute time associated with class changes? Academic Programming would be carried out in our current gym and non-academic activities would be moved over to the Dome/Stadium.
- What about the environmental impact of the dome and the lack of understanding of Indigenous values and how does monetizing the campus adhere to Indigenous values? The Vice-Provost (Iniskim Indigenous Relations) has been involved in working with us.
- Additional costs, such as ancillary services, and costs associated with building operation have not been built in and an environmental impact study? We have undergone an environmental impact study for the campus and that an additional

environmental impact study will also be part of the design and development of this project. The dome would use less heat than a normal building, especially as this is an activity space. Some context around the cost of similar domes in Alberta were provided it was also noted that annual cost is built into the business case for the dome and those expenses will not come out of our operating budget.

- What about the harsh weather conditions and wind? The company has been very mindful of the environment and concerns and have assured us there are measures to address this.
- Was asked about the consultative process and as it seems like this was behind the scenes and is this a good time with a new Vice-President (Finance & Admin) being hired? Also are contingency funds in place for a collapse of the dome due to severe weather and risks? It was noted that this dome has been part of the capital plan that is publicly available online. There are domes around the continent and they are very safe with hurricane winds. In terms of snow load and inclement weather so long as pressurization is maintained properly. This building would be insured like all other buildings on our campus.

MOTION: gfc.2023.12.07

Mather/Reiter

That GFC extend the meeting past 5:00 pm.

Motion: Carried

The discussion continued and more questions were asked:

- It was highlighted the Capital Plan that contained this Dome is a public document, but Senior Admin will do a better job of making everyone aware of this document. This document is made for a government audience.
- What about the other priorities like housing and the need for housing? While there are options for housing, not all students want to live in places like University Hall. This proposal has been advertised as a student focused proposal but the benefit primarily shows for the community and Pronghorns' users, noting that the increase in fees would not be a popular decision to students? Comparing us to other institutions with greater enrolment and then comparing our fees and facilities to those much larger institutions is not a fair comparison, especially as justification for raising student fees.
- What about the provincial grants that were to be received and how that was factored into the business plan? It was noted that we have not factored in the grants into the budget itself and the grants are to be used for multiple projects so they wouldn't cover the full cost of the project, but we are anticipating a significant infusion of cash into this project. It was also noted that there was some budget set aside for maintenance of the turf and that 200,000 was set aside for the development of this project.

- For other projects a best and a worst-case scenario are required and asked if this budget is based on a worst-case scenario or best case scenario? It was noted that this is a very conservative budget but the best/worst case analysis would be taken into consideration.
- What about the student fee increase per semester and a community fee was suggested that could be developed and that could be used to directly fund student wellness? It is something that could be considered.
- Were any other options explored to renovate existing spaces on campus? It was noted that it would cost significantly more than the cost of this project to renovate.
- Where has the demand for this project had come from? The report shows the space restrictions that currently exist and this is also a revenue generation.
- What about climate change planning on campus and the cost of the impact and the development of the dome?
- Why has this not been consulted by the greater student body in terms of what students want for wellness and noted that this is something that should be brought to the student body? Like fine arts where not everyone uses the theatre these things still need to be supported,
- What about the space that the land could be used for other than this dome? This would not be good for academic use as this project is further away from the rest of campus and noted that there was no other planned use for this space.

D. Jayas asked that any further questions/comments be emailed to Jodie Gallais at governance@uleth.ca.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: gfc.2023.12.08

Jansen/Helstein

That the GFC meeting of December 11, 2023 be adjourned.

Motion: Carried