GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL MEETING #602
Draft Minutes

Monday, September 14, 2026
3:00 p.m., W646 & Zoom

Present: D. Jayas, (Chair), C. Adams, O. Awosoga, J. Bachinger, A. Bamigbola, K. Bruce, N. Buis Deering(virtual), D. Burleigh, C. Carnaghan, D. Checkley, J. Clark (virtual), J. Copeland, B. Cummins, J. Cunningham, S. Das, J. Dobbie, J. Doan, K. Edwards, C. Epplett, S. Findlay, A. Fiori, E. Galway, D. Gaur, E. Gomez-Riviere, M. Helstein, A. Iwaniuk (virtual), H. Jansen, S. Johnsrude, A. Kasten, A. Khassetarash, L. Kopp, I. Kovalchuk, O. Kovalchuk, K. Krasnokutska, E. Kroeker, R. Larouche, O. Legg, M. Leibel, M. Letts, K. Lewis, D. Lucas, A. Mack, M. Madore (virtual), R. Mae, M. Mathurin-Moe, K. Massey, D. McMartin, J. Oldfield, T. Oosterbroek, W. Osborn, S. Pelech, B. Phillips, R. Schiff, D. Slomp, L. Starr, C. Steinke, K. Sumanasena, B. Sumner, N. Thakor (virtual), M. Van Leeuwen, P. Wilson, J. Wiltshire (virtual), J. Youndahl.

Regrets: D. Bysterveld, I. Chukwuelue, H. Davis-Fisch, N. de Bruin Nutley, A. Figueroa, K. Greenwood, S. Malla, J. Sanders

Other: J. Gallais, K. Fuglerud, C. Kanashiro, S. Marchant, M. Okeowo-Grant, T. Schmaltz, L. Svenson, M. Whipple, R. Westlund *(other guests were present on Zoom)*

Oki. D. Jayas, as Chair, opened the meeting with a welcome and Territorial Acknowledgement, noting the importance of reflecting on the responsibilities associated with the acknowledgement.

New and returning members were welcomed. New members included: Mia van Leeuwen, Penni Wilson, Miranda Leibel, Emily Kroeker, Dawn Burleigh, Amy Mack, Tracy Oosterbroek, Michael Madore, Blake Phillips, Jennifer Copeland, Natalie de Bruin Nutley, Esteban Gomez-Riviere, and Jim Clark.

Returning members beginning a new term included: Jerimy Cunningham, Carla Carnaghan, Shawn Johnsrude, Sharon Pelech, David Slomp, Igor Kovalchuk, and Arash Khassetarash.

A welcome was also extended to Annette Fox Bruised Head, Vice-Provost, Iniskim Indigenous Relations, whose membership on GFC would be considered later in the meeting.

Presentation – GFC Executive Committee
Michelle Helstein, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), provided an overview of the responsibilities and value of service on the GFC Executive Committee, including its role in supporting the work and effectiveness of General Faculties Council. It was noted that vacancies arising from completed terms will be filled through nominations from the floor at the next GFC meeting.

1. CONSENT AGENDA
APPROVAL

1.1. Approval of the GFC Meeting #602 September 14, 2026 Agenda
1.2. Approval of the GFC Meeting #601 June 1, 2026 Minutes

INFORMATION
1.3. GFC Executive Committee Report – #588 September 8, 2026
1.4. GFC Executive Committee Approved Minutes – #586 May 25, 2026 Meeting
1.5. GFC Executive Committee Approved Minutes – #587 June 29, 2026 Meeting

MOTION: gfc.2026.09.01

Massey/Kopp

That the General Faculties Council approve the September 14, 2026 Consent Agenda.

Motion: Carried

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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

- The University received several national and international awards recognizing its brand, strategic plan launch, and storytelling initiatives, including Circle of Excellence awards. Congratulations were extended to the Communications team, and appreciation was expressed to the University community for its contributions to these accomplishments.
- An update was provided regarding an individual who attended campus on September 1. Campus Security and local police responded, and the individual left campus voluntarily.
- Condolences were extended to those affected by the Montréal shooting. The University condemned the violence and associated ideologies and communicated available supports and resources to the campus community.
- A letter was received from faculty members regarding campus safety, and discussions are ongoing regarding additional measures to enhance safety and support the campus community.
- The Board Chair will attend the GFC Reception following the meeting.

2.1 Questions Received in Advance

Andrew Fiori
Question:
What is the status of the proposal for the creation of an engineering program and when will units be given the information they need to implement the plan for it?

M. Helstein provided an update on the development of the engineering program and highlighted the following:

Confirmation of provincial funding support for the engineering program was received in August 2026. Following the Province's public announcement on September 25, 2026, the University is now able to proceed with its own communications regarding the program.

Formal funding confirmation has been received, although a funding agreement has not yet been finalized.

A School of Engineering will be established within the Faculty of Arts and Science, together with a corresponding school council. Media communications regarding the new school are expected to occur shortly.

The search process for the inaugural Director of the School of Engineering is underway and members with engineering expertise were encouraged to consider serving on the search committee.

Faculty recruitment will begin following the appointment of the Director. It was noted that the initial engineering program will build upon the University's existing pre-engineering offerings and that program growth will occur over time.

Approval was received for an exceptional tuition increase specific to the engineering program, effective July 2027.

2.2 Question Period on Report Items
None

3. ITEMS FOR ACTION

3.1. Approval of Appointed Members

MOTION: gfc.2026.09.02
Helstein/Awosoga

That the GFC approve of the appointed faculty members to GFC for the terms effective as noted.

APPOINTED MEMBERS [13] Section 25 & GFC Bylaws – (GFC Appoints) [Two-year terms staggered to provide continuity where possible (GFC Bylaws Part 2, E, 7)]

Business - Carla Carnaghan - July 1, 2026 -June 30, 2028

Fine Arts - Mia Van Leeuwen - July 1, 2026 -June 30, 2028

*Education - Sharon Pelech - July 1, 2026 -June 30, 2027**

Health Sciences - Penni Wilson - July 1, 2026 -June 30, 2028

Liberal Education - Miranda Leibel - July 1, 2026 -June 30, 2028

Library - Emily Kroeker - July 1, 2026 -June 30, 2028

Arts & Science - Arash Khassetarash - July 1, 2026 -June 30, 2028

Arts & Science - Esteban Gomez-Riviere - July 1, 2026 -June 30, 2028

**One year term*

Motion: Carried

3.2. GFC Bylaws Revisions (2/3 Approval)

MOTION: Helstein/Starr — gfc.2026.09.03

GFC Executive met on September 8, 2026 and recommends the following to GFC : That GFC approve of the revised GFC Bylaws as follows, effective immediately.

1.Part 2, Section E, Council Members

2.Part 3, Section B, 6. Academic Timetable Committee

An amendment clarified that graduate student representation would remain unchanged.

3.Part 3, Section B, 13. Research Planning Committee

4.Part 2, Section L. Adjournment

Motion: Carried

4. ITEMS FOR REVIEW (Prior to Board Action)

4.1. None

5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

5.1. None

6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

6.1. GFC Nominations Committee – Call for Nominations

J. Dobbie advised that nominations have opened to fill a vacancy on the GFC Research Planning Committee. The Nominating Committee will meet later in the month to prepare a recommended slate for consideration.

Members were also advised that nominations are being sought for the Director, School of Engineering Search Committee, and were encouraged to consider serving or to encourage qualified colleagues to put their names forward.

6.2. GFC Executive Committee Nominations Notice

J. Gallais advised that there are three upcoming vacancies on the GFC Executive Committee and encouraged interested members to put their names forward or contact the Governance Office with any questions. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the next GFC meeting.

It was noted that efforts are made to achieve broad and diverse representation on the Committee, including representation from across faculties and schools. Members were encouraged to consider serving or to encourage colleagues to stand for nomination.

Members were advised that the GFC Executive Committee meets on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. during the week preceding each GFC meeting and that individuals must be members of GFC to be eligible to serve on the Committee.

6.3. GFC Meeting Guidelines

J. Gallais reviewed the GFC Meeting Guidelines and noted that both the guidelines and recent Boardroom enhancements were developed in response to feedback received through GFC evaluations.

Members were reminded that GFC meetings continue to be offered in a hybrid format and were encouraged to attend meetings in person where possible.

An update was provided on improvements to the Boardroom, including new furnishings, additional workspace to support laptop use, fresh paint, and new blinds, all intended to enhance the in-person meeting experience.

It was also noted that photographs previously displayed in the Boardroom will be made available on the Governance website.

6.4. GFC and GFC Standing Committee Evaluation Summary

J. Gallais thanked members who completed the 2025-2026 GFC evaluations and noted that the feedback was carefully reviewed to celebrate successes and identify opportunities for improvement.

Feedback related to committee effectiveness and efficiency was highlighted. Members were advised that the Governance Office will undertake a review of each GFC standing committee over the coming year, including consideration of committee powers and duties, membership composition, processes, and opportunities to streamline operations.

Members were also advised that annual reports from all GFC standing committees will be presented at the next GFC meeting and were encouraged to review the reports and consider the committees' activities and contributions over the past year.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1. Question Period on Other Items

No questions were raised.

Members were reminded of the GFC Reception immediately following the meeting, beginning at 4:00 p.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair declared the meeting adjourned.