

Approved minutes for Meeting 77 of the Athabasca University General Faculties Council held on January 31, 2023 via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Matthew Prineas (Chair), Josie Auger, Nina Acharya, Carmen Allen, F. Haider Alvi, Terry Beckman, Walid Belassi, Davina Bhandar, Priscilla Campeau, Karie-Lynn Chambers, Nichole Collins, Lynn Corcoran, Mark Crawford, Michael Dabrowski, Eliana El Houry, Elaine Fabbro, Glen Farrelly, Shawn Fraser, Karen Fletcher, Stella George, Richard Huntrods, Paul Kellogg, Vive Kumar, Angela Kuzyk, Cynthia Lambertson-Poon, Manijeh Mannani, Alain May, Deborah Meyers, Sue Mitchell, Mark Morpurgo, Ken Munyikwa, Terra Murray, Agnieszka Palalas, Andrew Perrin, Sarah Reid, Ann Reynolds, Kristin Rodier, Jennifer Schaeffer, Anne-Marie Scott, Bailey Sousa, Dur-E-Najaf Syed, Ching Tan, Lorraine Thirsk, Vina Tirven-Gadum, Kristine Williamson, Shauna Zenteno

Regrets: Jolene Armstrong, Murray Anderson, Alex Clark, Jacqueline Limoges, Cori Paul, Peter Scott, Myra Tait, Lisa Watson

Others: Pauline Smeltz, Minnie Takhar, Salopek & Associates

Governance Staff: Sara Kunto (Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel), Eileen Hendy (Governance Coordinator), Allison Strydhorst (Recording Secretary)

The Chair welcomed the following new members to General Faculties Council:

- Walid Belassi, Faculty of Business
- Michael Dabrowski, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Bailey Sousa, Associate Vice President, Planning, Quality and Assessment

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. and delivered the AU land acknowledgement.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 1.1 **Motion 77-01** That the General Faculties Council approves the agenda and thereby approves the consent agenda, including the minutes of Meeting 76 held November 15, 2022, as presented.

Morpurgo/Perrin

Carried

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 2.1 Subject to the [Code of Conduct for Members of the University Community](#) and the Conflict of Interest provision (clauses 11.1 and 11.2) of the [General Faculties Council Rules](#), members will be asked to declare any conflict they may have with respect to particular agenda items contained within the meeting agenda.

No conflicts declared.

3. REPORTS

3.1 Report of the Chair

The Chair presented this item, noting the following:

- Integrated Learning Environment (ILE) pilot:
 - timeline for completion of implementation will be extended beyond March 2023
 - work continues on the email announcement tools within Brightspace, exploring the use of Quick Eval, and on registering learners with Office 365
 - once course migration into Brightspace is complete, courses will be under the ownership of course production teams within each faculty
 - Brightspace allows for continuous updates and roll out of new features as it is hosted in Desire2Learn (D2L)
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI):
 - EDI position is being developed to support the entire university, including the EDI activities already occurring across AU

3.1.1 2022-2025 Investment Management Agreement (IMA)

The Chair presented this item noting:

- no changes were made to the Mission and Vision language
- language relating to economic development in Athabasca was added to the IMA
- exploring how to meet the metrics included in the IMA through the Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) process whilst considering declining enrolment levels
- data sources and methodology need to be defined for calculating the IMA metrics

3.2 Faculty of Business Quarterly Report

The Acting Dean, Faculty of Business presented this item noting a meeting with the external reviewer was held in December for the Doctor of Business Administration and the faculty is working on responses to the report.

3.3 Faculty of Graduate Studies Quarterly Report

The Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies presented this item noting:

- Faculty of Graduate Studies and Faculty of Science and Technology presented work around supporting faculty members as supervisors at the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies meeting
- work is continuing on improving connection and oversight with learners and identifying learners who may be eligible for funding, aligning administrative process with associated IT systems, responding to the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to Action by updating regulations, and connecting with students, programs and faculties to promote graduate students at a higher level and more wholistic awards support

3.4 Faculty of Health Disciplines Quarterly Report

The Associate Dean, Faculty of Health Disciplines presented this item noting:

- Dr. Kate Leslie was the recipient of a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) grant

- holding an upcoming faculty forum to promote a wholistic understanding of AU and faculty
- Dr. Lorraine Thirsk led a collaborative interdisciplinary team including Myra Tait, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Priscilla Campeau, Nukskahtowin and have received funding of \$800,000 from the Government of Canada for three course strands on addressing discrimination and racism in the health system
- work is continuing with regulators regarding compliance with a growing student body and faculty to student ratio
- new faculty manager role upcoming to increase growth capacity
- hosting a retreat on February 1-3

Discussion held on the work with regulators regarding how AU differs from other post-secondary institutions.

3.5 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Quarterly Report

The Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) presented this item noting:

- work is continuing on Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) with Institutional Data Analysis (IDA) reviewing course registration reports to identify gaps
- working with University Relations on more targeted promotions for programs
- continuing work on alternative and auto assessments
- FHSS has achieved the Work Integrated Learning target for this year, through course revisions and capstones
- declining enrolment in Graduate and Undergraduate programs
- strategy has been put in place to help with staff and faculty workload, as workload has had an impact on course content rejuvenation

Athabasca University Students' Union acknowledged the benefits the Map the System Canada partnership offers AU learners.

3.6 Faculty of Science and Technology Quarterly Report

The Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology presented this item noting:

- Masters in Earth Systems Science was approved by the Board of Governors
- Bachelor of Science in Human Science's name was changed to the Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences and has been presented to the Ministry for approval
- Dr. Henry Tsang received recognition from the American Institute of Architects
- Dr. Junye Wang received funding from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation
- work is continuing on supporting teams and faculty workloads
- course development production team continue to support the ILE migration
- continuing course development for new graduate programs, including new focus areas in bioinformatics and environmental data analysis
- program learning outcomes assessment are underway
- faculty-wide review of assessment methods, course delivery and pedagogy has been initiated by new Associate Dean, Learning & Assessment, Dr. Jon Dron
- work is continuing on a faculty wide strategy for student engagement

Discussions held on:

- the SHAD Canada partnership, which brings an online university experience to high-school students and the various collaborations AU could explore, noting AU currently offers dual credit options with some schools.
- exploring the learning aspects of the ChatGPT tool and detectors to identify plagiarism and holding an AU wide symposium to explore the varying perspectives across the institution.

4. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

4.1 Nukskahtowin Update

The Chair/Program Administrator, Nukskahtowin presented this item noting:

- work is continuing with faculties, university relations and academic portions of the centre
- attended government meetings with Universities Canada and held discussions on how to get AU involved with civil service training courses
- involvement with the new Faculty of Health Disciplines course strands on addressing discrimination and racism in the health system
- planning continues for the next speaker series, which will be a multi-speaker series and the topic for consideration is land-based education and how it can be achieved
- First Nations University of Canada received 2 million dollars to set up a land-based learning centre in Saskatchewan

4.2 Deans' Council Sub-Committee Working Group for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Faculty Council Program Regulation Review Final Report

The Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies presented this item noting the final report will be presented to the Board of Governors Audit Committee in March. The next step will be to review Program Council and Faculty Council Terms of Reference.

4.3 Strategic Issues

4.3.1 AU Land Development and Real Estate Plan

The Vice President, Finance and Performance Services & CFO presented this item noting:

- plan is being developed in response to the Post-secondary Learning Act Land Use Regulation
- process began in mid-2022 and the end result will be to provide AU with a 5 year-10 year- and 15 year strategy that will consider existing real estate and if it aligns with operational requirements and strategic priorities and new proposed directions
- two consultants have been engaged, Dr. Ken Coates and Addison Young. Dr. Coates held engagement sessions with groups across AU and met with elected officials in the Town & County of Athabasca and Village of Boyle. Many ideas generated focus on the opportunity to enhance research activities in the region. Addison Young held two engagement sessions across AU and met with local government officials.
- information compiled will be presented to the Land Development Steering Committee, Administrative Council and GFC for consultation, and presented to Executive Team for recommendation to the Board of Governors at the May or September meeting.

Discussed including the following in the Land Development and Real Estate plan:

- residence for visiting learners and conference attendees in Athabasca and seeking funding from the Government of Alberta

- establishing an architecture lab
- establishing a sub-committee to explore partnerships with indigenous peoples to support research and land back projects related to the United Nations Indigenous Sustainability Goal

It was suggested that the composition of the Land Development and Real Estate Steering Committee include a representative from Nukskahtowin.

4.3.2 Faculty Workload Initiative (FWI) Update

The Chair presented this item and noted the FWI analysis has to do with faculty workload and the purpose is to understand how we do things across facilities and provide tools to Deans and Faculties to manage workload better. The Chair introduced the Interim Chief Human Resources Officer and the Senior Consultant of Salopek & Associates who provided a presentation on the work completed, noting a final report will be presented to the Provost and Vice President Academic, and Interim Chief Human Resources Officer.

Discussions held on:

- the importance of the initiative and how equitable workload can contribute to job fulfillment and morale
- the FWI is focusing on faculty as it was a concern raised by AUFA to AU
- the importance of flexibility as there is a wide range of difference in workload across faculties
- the structure of the model and how it would be dependent on the needs of the university, the faculties and departments while being bound by university policies, collective agreements and government regulations
- the various applications used across post-secondary institutions to implement the model
- the importance of having resource allocations benchmark data available to support the faculties when budget planning

4.3.3 Open Educational Resources

The Provost and Vice President Academic (Chair) and Associate Vice President Academic Resources presented this item. Discussions held on:

- external benchmarks and learnings that could be taken from other institutions, and how the AU OER Librarian is tracking what other institutions are doing with their OERs
- benefit of AU Press supporting this initiative with their experience in open publishing
- sharing of OERs via Open Education Alberta and the possibility of seeking external funding for OERs
- importance of reviewing the entire OER when completing revisions and providing resources for content considerations surrounding EDI
- holding a future presentation from OER pilot participants regarding lessons learned

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

None

The Chair thanked member El Khoury for her service on and contributions to General Faculties Council.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.