

Approved minutes for Meeting 87 of the Athabasca University General Faculties Council held on September 5, 2024 via Microsoft Teams.

**Present:** Alex Clark (Chair), Nina Acharya, Carmen Allen, Carrie Anton, Walid Belassi, Angela Beltaos, Derek Briton, Priscilla Campeau, Bryce Clark, Martha Cleveland-Innes, Lynn Corcoran, Michael Dabrowski, Joel English-Dubois, Elaine Fabbro, Glen Farrelly, Shawn Fraser, Stella George, Chantel Groening, Megan Hall, Bob Heller, Steven Johnson, Dietmar Kennepohl, Jacqueline Limoges, Denver Ma, Manijeh Mannani, Michael Mauws, Alain May, Rebeccah Nelems, Amy Neumann, Hugh Notman, Jennifer Pascoe, Cori Paul, Andrew Perrin, Kristen Petrovic, Frederique Pivot, Matthew Prineas, Adnan Qayyum, Diana Ramirez, Ann Reynolds, Kristin Rodier, Bailey Sousa, Eric Wang, Lisa Watson, Krystal Zahara, Shauna Zenteno

**Regrets:** Caroline Buzanko, Brittany Hollett, Paul Kellogg, Angela Kuzyk, Dale Mountain, Marc Nesca, Brock Oliver, Ching Tan, Vina Tirven-Gadum, Ray Welshman

**Guests:** Catherine Swindlehurst

**Governance Staff:** Tyler Tollefson (Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel), Allison Strydhorst (Governance Coordinator), Monica Brzak (Recording Secretary)

The Chair delivered a land acknowledgment.

The Chair welcomed the following new, re-appointed, and re-elected members to General Faculties Council:

- Alain May, Associate Vice-President, Students
- Andrew Perrin, Associate Vice-President, Research
- Angela Kuzyk, Registrar
- Walid Belassi, Faculty of Business
- Denver Ma, Faculty of Business
- Michael Mauws, Faculty of Business
- Amy Neumann, Faculty of Health Disciplines
- Kristin Petrovic, Faculty of Health Disciplines
- Rebeccah Nelems, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Marc Nesca, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Hugh Notman, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Adnan Qayyum, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Joel English-Dubois, Tutor/Academic Expert, Faculty of Business
- Krystal Zahara, Non-academic staff member.

The Chair introduced Dr. Candy Khan, Associate Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

The Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel provided an overview of meeting protocol and guidelines.

### Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:16 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- 1.1 Motion 87-01** That the General Faculties Council approves the agenda and thereby approves the consent agenda, including the minutes of Meeting 86 held May 2, 2024, as presented.

Kennepohl/Fabbro

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.

Discussion held on planning and logistics of the learning conference, noting team members unable to attend in person in Athabasca will have the option to attend virtually.

**4. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS****4.1 2023-2024 Annual Report**

The Chair presented this item.

Discussion held on how the new reporting template allows for greater clarity on contributions and initiatives at AU.

**4.2 Library and Scholarly Resources Annual Report**

The Provost and Vice President Academic acknowledged the critical role the library has within the AU Community for learners and team members.

The University Librarian presented this item noting the AU Library is now open to community members one day a week.

Discussions held on:

- filling vacant positions while looking at ways to meet the goals of the university and support researchers, learners, and team members
- the role the library plays in supporting accessibility services
- exploring the possibility of a partnership with the Center for Equitable Library Access (CELA)

#### 4.3 Athabasca University Strategic Plan Update

The Chair and Chief Growth Officer presented this item noting:

- the AU Strategic Plan was endorsed by GFC and approved by the Board of Governors at their May 31, 2024 meeting
- the final designed Strategic Plan and website will launch mid-September and will include tools to assist with implementation of the plan
- the Chair's Report to GFC now includes a checklist of updates and how they connect to the Strategic Plan

Discussions held on:

- the connection and timing of the Academic Plan and faculty foundational plans noting the Academic Plan should complement the Research Plan
- the role and responsibilities of the President who is the sponsor of the Strategic Plan
- the importance of communication channels during the implementation of the Strategic Plan including governance bodies, discussions with leaders and team members to encourage team empowerment and growth, while creating a safe and productive space at AU to build the foundation for achieving our highest contribution

#### 4.4 Research Status and Strategy Update

The Provost and Vice President Academic acknowledged the importance of research, and noted the great strides the Associate Vice President Research has made in supporting research culture and research in all faculties.

The Associate Vice President Research presented this item noting the opportunities and challenges to support and empower research at AU.

#### 4.5 Flexible and Hybrid Work Culture

The Chair and Chief Growth Officer presented this item noting:

- in person population choosing to work at AU main has doubled
- AU main building improvements ongoing
- in person social events demonstrating the benefits of bringing people together
- work to begin on Flexible and Hybrid workspaces in Calgary and Edmonton

#### 5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

None

#### 6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.