

Approved minutes for Meeting 88 of the Athabasca University General Faculties Council held on October 3, 2024 via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Alex Clark (Chair), Nina Acharya, Carmen Allen, Carrie Anton, Angela Beltaos, Derek Briton, Caroline Buzanko, Priscilla Campeau, Martha Cleveland-Innes, Lynn Corcoran, Michael Dabrowski, Joel English-Dubois, Glen Farrelly, Shawn Fraser, Stella George, Bob Heller, Brittany Hollett, Steven Johnson, Paul Kellogg, Angela Kuzyk, Jacqueline Limoges, Denver Ma, Manijeh Mannani, Michael Mauws, Alain May, Marc Nesca, Amy Neumann, Hugh Notman, Jennifer Pascoe, Cori Paul, Andrew Perrin, Kristen Petrovic, Frederique Pivot, Matthew Prineas, Adnan Qayyum, Ann Reynolds, Kathleen Roberts, Vina Tirven-Gadum, Eric Wang, Lisa Watson, Ray Welshman, Shauna Zenteno

Regrets: Walid Belassi, Elaine Fabbro, Megan Hall, Dietmar Kennepohl, Jan Lehmann, Rebeccah Nelems, Brock Oliver, Diana Ramirez, Kristin Rodier, Bailey Sousa, Ching Tan, Krystal Zahara

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 and acknowledged the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

The Chair welcomed the following new members of GFC:

- Kathleen Roberts, Acting Vice President Finance and Operations and Chief Financial Officer
- Jan Lehmann, Athabasca University Students Union representative

The Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel provided an overview of meeting protocol and guidelines including pathways for submitting items for consideration to General Faculties Council.

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 1.1 **Motion 88-01 That General Faculties Council approves the agenda and thereby approves the consent agenda, including the minutes of Meeting 87 held September 5, 2024, as presented.**

Reynolds/Anton

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 successful launch of the university strategic plan and expressed thanks to David Head, Director Strategic Initiatives and Services for the name of the strategic plan “Like No Other”
- the launch of the strategic plan website
- ongoing strategic plan consultations and engagement with faculties and units across AU
- the continued importance of building community through events and team building activities
- achievements in research, noting AU researchers among the top 2% globally in their fields, and the current recruitment of a Canadian Research Chair for Emerging Technologies for Digital Learning and Open Education (Tier II)

3.2 Faculty of Business Quarterly Report

The Dean, Faculty of Business presented this item noting:

- the Research Spotlight series hosted with the assistance of University Relations
- Angela Workman-Stark’s appointment as the Canadian Research Chair in Rights-Based Organizational Development (Tier II)

Discussion held on the use of AI tools in undergraduate courses, and noted members interested in learning more or wishing to have a demonstration to connect with the faculty.

3.3 Faculty of Graduate Studies Quarterly Report

The Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies presented this item noting the soft launch of the Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies new admission system as part of Transforming Graduate Admissions. It was further noted that those interested in additional information on the professional development for graduate students pilot can contact the faculty.

3.4 Faculty of Health Disciplines Quarterly Report

The Dean, Faculty of Health Disciplines presented this item noting the highly competitive environment for nursing recruitment and the beyond forecasted growth of the Nurse Practitioner program.

Discussions held on:

- the laddering potential of the Indigenous Health micro-credential into other programs
- work continuing with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to develop undergraduate and graduate level courses connected to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action
- linguistics used in the Indigenous Health Course development noting creators have collaborated with knowledge keepers and Nukskahtowin

3.5 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Quarterly Report

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

- work continuing on the recruitment for new faculty members

- work continuing with Associate Vice President, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion course

3.6 Faculty of Science and Technology Quarterly Report

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

- acknowledgement of FST researchers in the top 2% of their field
- Master of Architecture is proceeding through the eligibility for accreditation process
- Master of Science in Earth Systems Science will be opening for enrolment
- October 8th is Ada Lovelace day which celebrates achievements of women in science

4. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 4.1 **Motion 88-02** That General Faculties Council appoints the Associate Vice President, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as a member of General Faculties Council in accordance with section 25 of the Post-secondary Learning Act, effective October 3, 2024, to serve a three (3) year term of office, expiring June 30, 2027.

Zenteno/Kellogg

The Chair and Provost and Vice President Academic presented this item.

Carried

- 4.2 **Motion 88-03** That General Faculties Council approves the following change to the Academic Research Committee Membership and Terms of Reference effective October 3, 2024:

Responsibilities

From:

3.4 Establish and oversee subcommittees for the distribution of research funds and grants, including the Academic Research Fund, Academic and Professional Development Fund, Research and Study Leave Travel and Relocation Fund, and the Graduate Student Research Fund.

To:

3.4 Establish and oversee subcommittees for the distribution of research funds and grants, including the Academic Research Fund, Academic and Professional Development Fund and Research and Study Leave Travel and Relocation Fund.

Watson/Zenteno

The Provost and Vice President Academic and Associate Vice President Research presented this item.

Carried

Break: 10:26-10:35 a.m.

4.3 Strategic Plan Update

The Chair and Chief Growth Officer presented this item noting:

- faculty and departmental plans will orientate from the strategic plan
- work continuing on the academic plan
- the Office of the President will prioritize participation in retreats or sessions to assist with implementation of the strategic plan

4.4 Nukskahtowin Update

The Interim Associate Vice President, Indigenous presented this item noting:

- Nukskahtowin will be developing a new strategic plan with consultations beginning in the fall
- work continuing with Red Crow College on Blackfoot knowledge course
- work continuing with the Associate Vice President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion on policy development, cultural safety, and lateral violence

Discussions held on:

- Indigenous Research Methodologies course noting work on the course will continue once recruitment for a new academic to oversee course development is complete
- the consultation process undertaken for the development of the Blackfoot knowledge course

4.5 Flexible and Hybrid Work Culture Update

The Chair and Chief Growth Officer presented this item noting:

- in person and hybrid events continuing in the Athabasca region with plans for similar activities in Edmonton and Calgary
- hybrid workspace planning work continuing for Calgary and Edmonton

Discussion held on tools and technology to enhance hybrid meetings.

4.6 Learner Success & Learner Access

The Provost and Vice President Academic presented this item noting:

- the course migration initiative is on track to have all courses in Brightspace by January 1, 2025
- student awards portal launch in August
- work continuing on the Frontline Learner Services Transformation noting the incubator model will launch Spring 2025
- improvements made to self-service support model including piloting a tool that utilizes artificial intelligence to deliver some self-service support
- Transforming Graduate Admissions project soft launching the Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies program

Discussions held on:

- the student experience in Brightspace noting feedback can be directed to the Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic
- systematic collection of data relating to the student experience in Brightspace, noting an assessment presentation to come forward to a future GFC meeting.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

None

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:26 a.m.