

Approved minutes for Meeting 98 of the Athabasca University General Faculties Council held on May 7, 2026 via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Alex Clark (Chair), Carrie Anton, Derek Briton, Shauna Bryce, Priscilla Campeau, Andrew Chiarella, Martha Cleveland-Innes, Liam Connelly, Alexa DeGagne, Ali Dewan, Richard Dixon, Elaine Fabbro, Glen Farrelly, Stella George, Osire Glacier, Lisa Gray, Ramses Ilarraza, Steven Johnson, Stuart Johnston, Anshuman Khare, Angela Kuzyk, Michael Lithgow, Denver Ma, Marc Nesca, Amy Neumann, Kristin Petrovic, Frédérique Pivot, Adnan Qayyum, Ann Reynolds, Diana Sarkis, Simon Sigué, Serita Smith, Ian Stephenson, Catherine Swindlehurst, Norin Taj, Tyler Tollefson, Eric Wang, Harris Wang, Ray Welshman, Krystal Zahara, Shauna Zenteno

Regrets: Caroline Buzanko, Joel English-Dubois, Dietmar Kennepohl, Candy Khan, Jan Lehmann, Hugh Notman, Manijeh Mannani, Rebecca Nelems, Cori Paul, Diana Ramirez, Fayez Seifeddine

Governance Staff: Tyler Tollefson (Vice President Governance and University Relations and General Counsel), Eileen Hendy (Governance Coordinator), Allison Strydhorst (Recording Secretary)

The Chair delivered the AU Land Acknowledgement and welcomed new member Diana Sarkis, Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association.

The Chair thanked GFC members whose terms are ending for their contributions to GFC.

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 1.1 Motion 98-01 That General Faculties Council approves the agenda and thereby approves the consent agenda, as presented.**

Zahara/George

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. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 3.1 Motion 98-02 That General Faculties Council approves the minutes of Meeting 97 held March 9, 2026, as presented.**

Khare/Taj

Carried

4. REPORTS**4.1 Chair Report to GFC**

The Chair presented this item noting the Government of Alberta will be introducing a new funding model for post-secondary institutions focusing on enrolment growth, performance, research, and community impact.

Discussions held on the new funding model, AU's ongoing commitment to increasing enrolment, community impact, research intensity, the development of AU's academic plan, and considerations for expansion of research opportunities across the institution.

4.2 Faculty of Business Quarterly Report

The Interim Dean, Faculty of Business presented this item.

4.3 Faculty of Health Disciplines Quarterly Report

The Dean, Faculty of Health Disciplines presented this item.

4.4 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Quarterly Report

The Associate Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences presented this item.

4.5 Faculty of Science and Technology Quarterly Report

The Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology presented this item.

4.6 Faculty of Graduate Studies Quarterly Report

The Interim Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies presented this item.

4.7 Faculty Quarterly Reports Discussion

Following the presentations of the faculty quarterly reports, discussions were held on:

- support services for learners
- international enrolments and recognition of international credentials

5. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 5.1 Motion 98-03** **That General Faculties Council reappoints the Deputy Provost, and Associate Vice President, Learner Experience as members of General Faculties Council in accordance with section 25 of the Post-secondary Learning Act, effective July 1, 2026, to serve a three (3) year term of office, expiring June 30, 2029.**

Zenteno/Khare

The Chair presented this item noting that recruitment activities for the Deputy Provost are underway.

Carried

Break 2:15 – 2:30 p.m.

- 5.2 Motion 98-04** **That the General Faculties Council approves the Master in Management, effective July 1, 2027 or thereafter at the discretion of the Provost and Vice President Academic, subject to the approved by the Board of Governors and Ministry of Advanced Education**

Khare/Dixon

The Provost and Vice President Academic, and the Dean, Faculty of Business co-presented this item.

Discussions held on:

- research opportunities within the program
- the distinctions between the Master in Management and the Master of Business Administration programs

Carried

5.3 Nuksahtowin Report

The Associate Vice President Indigenous Conciliation presented this item noting:

- work continuing on micro-credentials with PowerED
- Elders meet and greet during convocation
- work continuing on course development with the Faculty of Health Disciplines and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- the meetings and events attended
- planning currently underway for convocation and Indigenous History Month
- development of a new plan for the centre, and incorporating the new Elders

5.4 Academic Plan

The Provost and Vice President Academic presented this item noting over 1600 people have participated in consultations and emerging themes include:

- connections and community, and building community online and in person
- learners at our core, and improvement of the student experience
- physical spaces to connect in person, and hybrid opportunities
- how to address technology changes (i.e., AI), building technology equity, and addressing data needs
- maturing research culture and being a Comprehensive Academic Research University (CARU) in a digital space
- community, connection, context, and care threaded throughout conversations
- building a welcoming workplace culture, and education around unconscious bias
- remove barriers for all learners
- knowledge hub of the north, incorporating Indigenous knowledge, and welcoming people from northern communities
- teaching impact and ensuring courses are up to date and relevant

Discussion held on:

- what it means to be a CARU, how AU has been promoting and investing in research, and embracing what makes AU different from other post-secondary institutions
- opportunities to address skill gaps to aid in removing barriers and enhancing opportunities for learners entering trade programs

5.5 Learner Success and Learner Access

The Provost and Vice President Academic presented this item noting Athabasca University is committed to removing barriers to access for learners, providing support services for all learners and learners with diverse learning needs, improving retention, supporting course development and revision, exploring what a teaching and learning centre would look like, how to foster and enable our learners to find financial support. and building communication with learners.

Discussions held on how to support lifelong learners at AU, the benefits of a teaching and learning centre, and opportunities to build community connection including the learning conference held each fall.

5.6 Research Update

The Provost and Vice President Academic presented this item noting research is at AU's core and spoke to the need to support academics and students wanting to conduct research and celebrating research being conducted/completed.

Discussion held on how to foster a research community, building connections across AU and with researchers in other areas, and fostering innovation.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

None

The Chair thanked the following members for their contributions to GFC as their terms are ending:

- Glen Farrelly, Eric Wang, and Walid Belassi, Faculty of Business
- Adrienne Weare, Faculty of Health Disciplines
- Michael Lithgow, and Derek Briton, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Dietmar Kennepohl, and Stella George, Faculty of Science and Technology
- Carrie Anton, non-academic staff member
- Ann Reynolds, appointed CUPE Tutor
- Cori Paul, appointed Tutor/Academic Expert, Faculty of Health Disciplines
- Fayez Seifeddine, appointed Tutor/Academic Expert, Faculty of Science and Technology
- Jan Lehmann, and Diana Ramirez, Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU)
- Kia Buchanan, Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association (AUGSA)

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:46 p.m.