

Approved minutes for Meeting 76 of the Athabasca University General Faculties Council held on November 15, 2022 via Microsoft Teams.

**Present:** Peter Scott (Chair), Josie Auger, Nina Acharya, Carmen Allen, Murray Anderson, F. Haider Alvi, Jolene Armstrong, Davina Bhandar, Priscilla Campeau, Karie-Lynn Chambers, Alex Clark, Nichole Collins, Lynn Corcoran, Eliana El Khoury, Glen Farrelly, Shawn Fraser, Karen Fletcher, Stella George, Anita Girvan, Alyson House, Richard Huntrods, Paul Kellogg, Vive Kumar, Angela Kuzyk, Cynthia Lambertson-Poon, Jacqueline Limoges, Manijeh Mannani, Helen Mayes, Deborah Meyers, Sue Mitchell, Ken Munyikwa, Terra Murray, Agnieszka Palalas, Cori Paul, Andrew Perrin, Matthew Prineas, Sarah Reid, Ann Reynolds, Kristin Rodier, Jennifer Schaeffer, Anne-Marie Scott, Dur-E-Najaf Syed, Vina Tirven-Gadum, Kristine Williamson, Shauna Zenteno

**Regrets:** Terry Beckman, Mark Crawford, Elaine Fabbro, Alain May, Mark Morpurgo, Myra Tait, Ching Tan, Lorraine Thirsk, Lisa Watson

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

### Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. and delivered the AU land acknowledgement.

## 1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 1.1 **Motion 76-01** That the General Faculties Council approves the agenda and thereby approves the consent agenda, including the minutes of Meeting 75 held October 6, 2022, as presented.

Clark/Reynolds

Carried

The Chair and Provost and Vice-President Academic thanked member Girvan, who is leaving Athabasca University, for their time, contributions, and service on General Faculties Council.

## 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 there are no updates regarding the Investment Management Agreement from the Government of Alberta but if further consultation of GFC is required a special meeting will be called.

Discussions held on:

- federal supports for provincial post-secondary institutions
- declining enrolment and the approach to increase enrolments in the coming months including enhanced marketing and the ways that the Integrated Learning Environment (ILE) may address gaps and increase enrolments
- increasing costs of tuition and the impacts it could have on students accessing financial aid
- barriers Indigenous learners face obtaining access to AU and noted connecting with First Nations Education Authorities to promote AU and its offerings

#### 4. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 4.1 Motion 76-02 That the General Faculties Council approves the Master of Science in Earth System Science, effective July 1, 2023, or thereafter at the discretion of the Provost and Vice President Academic, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors and Alberta Advanced Education.**

**Clark/Perrin**

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

Discussions held on:

- funding requirements
- potential opportunities for industry partnerships
- potential for laddering in from undergraduate programs at AU including creating pathways and micro-credentials and collaboration between faculties
- inclusion of the new Indigenous Research Methodology course once opened
- tuition breakdown and how costs are inline with other post-secondary institutions
- differentiation between research projects or thesis and the credits assigned
- workload implications for graduate student supervision
- cost associated with the program and attracting thesis students
- inclusion of Indigenous themes into the program and encouragement of Indigenous Peoples to enrol in this program

The Chair and Provost and Vice-President Academic noted this program proposal would be presented to the Board of Governors Finance and Property Committee and the Board of Governors at the January 2023 meetings.

**Carried**

## 4.2 Nukskahtowin Update

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

- the opening of the Linda Bull Memorial Garden and the Bertha Clarke Jones Gallery of Indigenous Art on September 27, 2022, which had a good turnout of family members, staff and community members
- the recently held children's feast will be an annual event
- the Bertha Clark Jones Gallery of Ingenious Art features the works of Terry Lusty who has displayed photographs of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee
- event photos were captured by Indigenous photographer Curtis Cameron and will be made available online
- an article from the Four Seasons Speakers Series will be published later this month
- meetings are continuing with the Deans, Vice Presidents on Indigenous Research at AU and discussions have included how the Nukskahtowin website will interact with faculty and departmental websites
- the next Strategic Planning session on November 21<sup>st</sup> is on Including Indigeneity in the AU Community. The session will begin a review and renewal of the Nukskahtowin Plan.

*Break 3:00-3:10 p.m.*

## 4.3 Research Status and Strategy Brief

The Associate Vice-President, Research presented this item noting grand writing development support being offered has been well received and members seeking REDCap training can reach out to the Associate Vice-President, Research.

The Chair complimented the Associate Vice-President, Research on receiving the 2022 ASTech Regional Innovation award.

## 4.4 Strategic Issues

### 4.4.1 Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Plan Progress Report

The Provost and Vice-President Academic and Deputy Provost, Academic Operations presented this item noting:

- the difficulties for AU to find comparatives in the Canadian market and the difficulty in obtaining national data on the adult learner market unlike market data that is available in international markets
- the pandemic period demonstrated both increases and declines in enrolment

Discussions held on:

- obtaining data from AU learners instead of seeking data from comparative markets
- tracking of visiting students and the importance of retaining them as AU learners
- building community for learners through cohort building and integrating professional development
- increasing learner support through reach outs, communications, connecting learners to opportunities and connection to their instructors
- increasing marketing activities to reach lifelong learners including career fairs and the development of PowerED courses to entice learners to enrol at AU
- finding the right mix to allow the university to take control of enrolment

- making courses more accessible including neurodivergent ratings and assessment for learners
- implementing “badges” for learners as they progress through courses
- providing education support for newcomers to Canada

The Provost and Vice-President Academic informed members the discussions and points raised would be taken away to explore how to integrate some of the ideas into the SEM plan and to determine how to best report to GFC on a more regular basis.

#### **4.4.2 Roundtable (*identification of emerging academic issues to be discussed at future GFC meetings*)**

The Chief Governance Officer and General Counsel noted work continues with finalizing the GFC Workplan and it will be presented to GFC Executive Committee at its January meeting. It was also noted an update on the Land Development and Real Estate plan will be presented at the January 31, 2023 GFC meeting. It was asked if the Land Development and Real Estate plan was giving consideration to returning land to the Indigenous Peoples. The Vice President Finance and Performance Services to follow up with the consultant on this matter.

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

None

#### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

6.1 The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 p.m.