

General Faculties Council (GFC) meeting overview: October 20, 2011

Report prepared by Pat Kostouros, MRFA, Academic Liaison Officer

Third meeting of the GFC for the 2011/2012 academic year

GFC Business

Minutes for Sept 22, 2011 approved

Reports from Senior Administration

- President:
 - David Docherty reported on Hunter White's new position with the Premier's office. Carole Simpson will be in the Acting role for University Advancement. Announcements about the office of University Advancement forthcoming.
 - The Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes (AACTI) conference was held at MRU. We will be leaving AACTI and joining the Alberta Universities Association (AUA)
 - Academic and Student Services plan going to the Board of Governors since these documents inform the Strategic plan
 - CBC At Issue panel filming here on the MRU campus tonight
 - Nov 8th @ 11am a memorial service to be held for 27 veterans who were previous Mount Royal students. Event will be attended by the Minister of Defense Peter McKay
 - General thoughts shared about GFC not being a rubber stamping venue and that there is no shame in sending something back to committee. GFC is meant to be a healthy place for debate.
- Provost and Vice-President, Academic:
 - There is much enthusiasm in the post-secondary system for the MRU template created for partnerships
 - Quality council provided protocols on partnerships based on the MRU model
 - Quality council receives information about initiatives for information only not approval.
 - Numerous (4 or 5) contacts have been made regarding partnerships or the template agreement.
- Vice- President Student Affairs:
 - No report
- Associate Vice-President, Enrolment:
 - Open House Oct 29th
 - After consultation with specific programs, and open studies there will be a small winter 2012 intake
- Associate Vice-President, Research
 - Alberta Innovation grant approved for a team in Marketing for \$100,000

- Associate Vice-President, Academic
 - Moving forward with partnerships on Bachelor of Business Admin (BBA)
 - Degree proposed for Environmental Science may move forward based on allocation of existing funds

Decision Items

- Recommendations of Detailed Faculty Tenure and Promotion Criteria
 - Scott Murray recognized to recommend Faculty of Communication Studies criteria for tenure and promotion documents
 - Some comments about equitability to other Faculty criteria particularly in the area of scholarship
 - Noted that this Faculty of Communication Studies document mirrors another Faculty criteria document that was passed at GFC
 - Noted that the Faculty of Communication Studies is different and diverse from other faculties however, the rigor within their disciplines are the same
 - Recommendation to accept documents approved
- Articulation Agreement
 - This is a 2 + 2 articulation for degree completion
 - Recommendation approved
- Curriculum
 - Two items removed from the consent agenda: ANTH 12369 and ENGL 12622
 - Reminder on consent agenda approved
 - Items removed from the consent agenda discussed, concern about the change in ANTH from 4 hours to 3 hours class instruction and that while the ANTH student society was consulted the impression was that without the changes there would be more of a disadvantage to student (e.g., increased class size). Concern raised that with the ENGL changes there was no clarity on the student consultation process, and concern regarding pre-requisites. Clarified that the changes make it easier for students that student input was sought
 - Both ANTH and ENGL curriculum submissions were approved

Reports

- Executive Committee
 - Appreciate the written questions
 - Meetings with student GFC representatives and having robust discussions
- BSC
 - Have not met. This committee accumulates items and meets when needed
 - Expect that in the near future there will be a need to discuss who is responsible for criteria and who is responsible for process
- APPC

- Questions about process for student input and student impact statements into curriculum changes
- Committee wants to see how students are consulted and have enough of a statement to show that appropriate consultation had taken place
- Noted that certain areas have more difficulty finding student cohorts for input and noted the need to consider the big picture (e.g., department planning)
- Noted that curriculum changes are not created in a vacuum that these are done in consultation with programs, departments, and faculty councils
- May not always be necessary to have student input
- Recommended that potentially students could create an effective timely structure for input
- APTC – Nothing to report
- LASC – Nothing to report
- LOSC
 - Community consultations have been taking place
 - Recent survey results will be tallied and considered prior to submission of recommendations to GFC
- RSAC – Nothing to report
- Student Awards – Nothing to report
- BOG – Nothing to report

New Business

- None

Written Questions

- Research Days
 - Perhaps these should be termed non-instructional days
 - Research days are a fantasy and perhaps should not be promoted
 - What began as a possible scheduling reference may have become an entitlement
 - Could be discussed when scheduling is on the table at GFC or as discussions ensue related to the academic year
- Text books
 - Cost and use are the main concerns
 - High level of faculty autonomy regarding choice of textbooks
 - Want to be careful that students do not choose a course based on the cost of text
 - Faculty could be considerate in choosing books and making sure to use the books they note as being required
 - If there are transfer issue to other courses or institutions there may be no choice in the textbook
 - More robust student input may be sought at APPC however, it may not be useful to

decontextualize at that level. Various other levels (e.g., departments, programs) look at course texts before final decisions are made

Question from the floor

- Directed to David Docherty to discuss how caucus might be useful
 - Recognized there are mixed reviews on caucus, he appreciates that caucus can be useful
 - Can be helpful for bringing issues forward as long as there is not block voting that creates barriers
 - Believes this is a useful process if the representative understand his or her role to be in the best interest of the institution