



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL MEETING #582.1

Approved Minutes

Monday, May 13, 2024

Online Meeting

Present: D. Jayas (Chair), A. Akbary, S. Alam, L. Barrett, V. Baulkaran, N. Buis Deering, C. Burton, J. Cunningham, H. Davis-Fisch, Y. Dixit, J. Doan, J. Dobbie, A. Dymond, S. Findlay, J. Ford, E. Galway, P. Ghazalian, K. Godfrey, K. Greenwood, K. Haight, M. Helstein, K. Ito, M. Letts, R. Marynowski, S. McDougall, D. McMartin, D. McNeill, L. Micheal, A. Oblak, J. Oldfield, N. Patel, N. Rebry, J. Reiter, J. Sadr, R. Schiff, K. Schwarz, E. Scott, D. Slomp, L. Starr, R. Sutherland, N. Thakor, M. Thomas, G. Tian, P. Visentin, L. Vogelsang, A. von Heyking, N. Walker, R. Williams, P. Wilson, J. Youngdahl

Regrets: L. Burckes, C. Carnaghan, A. Ebenmelu, A. Enigbokan, B. Hughes, H. Jansen, S. Johnsrude, S. Malla, K. Massey, J. Mather, C. Mattatall, I. McAdam, D. McIntyre, J. Rice, Y. Sackey-Forson, D. Smither, J. Sumbera, S. Urquhart, D. Zalesak

1. CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

- 1.1. Approval of the GFC Meeting #582.1 May 13, 2024 Agenda
- 1.2. GFC Executive Committee Report – May 9, 2024
- 1.3. GFC Executive Committee Approved Minutes – #565 – April 29, 2024

MOTION: gfc.2024.05.12

Helstein/Thomas

*That the General Faculties Council approve the May 13, 2024
Consent Agenda.*

Motion: Carried

2. ITEMS FOR ACTION

- 2.1. Bill 18 – Provincial Priorities Act

MOTION: gfc.2024.05.13

Helstein/Dobbie

*That General Faculties Council approve the preamble and motion
listed below.*

Motion: Carried

Preamble:

Whereas, in its current form, Bill 18 recently introduced by the Government of Alberta has the potential to undermine institutional autonomy, introduce red tape, and infringe upon the academic freedom of scholars to pursue their activities in a way that adheres to the professional and academic standards of their disciplines.

Whereas, unless Bill 18 is significantly amended, its passage has the potential to lead to the loss of many millions of dollars in research and scholarship funding for the University of Lethbridge, and hundreds of millions of dollars for Albertan post-secondary institutions, funding that is critical to achieving the teaching, research, scholarly and artistic strategic ambitions of the University of Lethbridge specifically and of all Albertan post-secondary institutions generally.

Whereas, since the 1960s, Southern Albertans have fought for, and are rightly proud of, the University of Lethbridge as an academic centre of excellence for the entire region, providing high-quality education and scholarship in all fields of knowledge and from all intellectual and epistemological perspectives, which has taken nearly sixty years of dedicated work by academic and other staff supported by provincial and federal research grants awarded based on intellectual and scholarly merit.

Whereas, in its current form, Bill 18 would have significant reputational impacts that would jeopardize our ability to compete nationally and globally, both for research dollars and to attract the best and brightest post-secondary educators and researchers, who will choose other jurisdictions where the research funding necessary to do world class work is not threatened and academic freedom is assured.

Whereas, federal funding is vital to the education, experience, and livelihood of a large number of students, since both undergraduate and graduate students benefit from employment and training through faculty research funding and federal grants training and support. Bill 18 in its current form would have a very deleterious effect on the young people of Southern Alberta.

Whereas the General Faculties Council, as set out in Section 26(1) the Alberta Post-Learning Act, subject to the authority of the Board of Governors, “is responsible for the academic affairs of the University,” including the promotion of free inquiry and the pursuit of knowledge by its faculty and students.

Motion:

General Faculties Council at the University of Lethbridge is opposed to Bill 18 as proposed and calls on the Government of Alberta to reconsider and revise Bill 18, specifically for the full exemption of post-secondary institutions from any and all provisions of Bill 18.

Further, the General Faculties Council at the University of Lethbridge respectfully requests the Chair of GFC (President of the University of Lethbridge) to notify the Board of Governors of the University of Lethbridge and the Premier and Minister of Advanced Education of the Province of Alberta, respectively, of this resolution by the General Faculties Council of the University of Lethbridge, thereby passing along our recommendation.

A question arose and an explanation was provided of the current wording of the motion and clarification of the process behind it that GFC Executive went through in selecting the motion to GFC.