

General Faculties Council Terms of Reference

1. Authority

General Faculties Council is established as one of the two governing authorities of the University of Alberta under Section 33(1) of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)*. GFC's powers and composition are set out in Sections 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 of the *Act*.

The complete wording of the section(s) of the *PSLA*, as referred to above, and any other related sections, should be checked in any instance where formal jurisdiction or delegation needs to be determined.

2. Composition of the Committee

Ex officio (*PSLA* Section 23(a))

- the president, who is the chair;
- the vice-presidents;
- the dean of each faculty;
- the director of each school;
- the chief librarian;
- the director of extension, or if none, the officer performing comparable functions;
- the registrar.

Statutory Student Members (3) (*PSLA* Section 23 (c))

Each university must have a general faculties council consisting of ... the following student members:

- a. 2 students nominated by the council of the students association;
- b. if there is a graduate students association, one student nominated by the council of the association

Elected Members (*PSLA* Section 23 and 24)

Each university must have a general faculties council consisting of the members elected under Section 24 of the *PSLA*, to represent the faculties and the schools having school councils.

The faculty council of each faculty and the school council of each school that has a school council may elect from the full time members of the academic staff of the faculty or school the number of members to the general faculties council that may be assigned to it pursuant to subsection (2), *PSLA* Section 24(1).

For the purpose of election of faculty to GFC at the University of Alberta, "full-time members of the academic staff" is interpreted to mean continuing academic staff in Categories A1.1 and A1.6.

Appointed Members (*PSLA* Section 23(d))

Each university must have a general faculties council consisting of "...the members appointed from the staff and students of the university under section 25."

The members of the general faculties council referred to in section 23(a), (b) and (c) shall appoint the appointed members of the general faculties council from the staff and students of the university, in the number and for the terms of office that the elected and student members and persons who are members by virtue of their offices determine (*PSLA* Section 25).

Unless otherwise specified, terms of office for appointed staff members shall be three (3) years and terms of office for appointed student members shall be one (1) year.

The following shall be appointed members of General Faculties Council:

a. Chief Academic Officer for Student Affairs (1) (GFC 26 MAY 1966) (GFC 27 OCT 1980)

b. President of AASUA (1) (GFC 26 MAY 1966)

c. Board of Governors Representatives

Members of the academic staff who are nominated to the Board of Governors by the GFC, undergraduate students who are nominated to the Board of Governors by the Council of the Students' Union, the graduate student who is nominated to the Board of Governors by the Graduate Students' Association Council, and the non-academic staff member who is nominated by non-academic staff to serve on the Board of Governors, shall be appointed members of GFC with full privileges for the term of their office on the Board of Governors. (GFC 29 APR 1968) (GFC 28 APR 1980) (GFC 12 FEB 1996)

d. Non-Academic Staff (3)

Three members of the Non-Academic Staff each for a three-year term. (GFC 28 SEP 1970) (EXEC 12 SEP 2005)

The Non-Academic Staff Association shall be responsible for providing nominees for two of the three nonacademic staff seats on General Faculties Council.

The Secretary of General Faculties Council shall be responsible for obtaining nominees from non-Association members of the non-academic staff for the third seat by communicating with eligible nominees. An election shall be held by GFC if necessary. (GFC 30 APR 1979)

e. Appointed Student Members

Students are elected and nominated by the Students' Union and Graduate Students' Association in accordance with the principle approved by General Faculties Council on February 3, 1971, that the total number of appointed student members have parity with the number of elected faculty members. (GFC 03 FEB 1971)

Undergraduate student members appointed to General Faculties Council must be registered in the Faculty they purport to represent and if, after election to General Faculties Council, student members change Faculties, they shall be required to resign from General Faculties Council. (GFC 26 NOV 1973)

The graduate students shall be drawn from the graduate students at large. (GFC 25 FEB 1974)

f. University Library Academic Staff (3)

Three elected representatives of the academic staff of the University Library each for a three-year term. (GFC 19 NOV 1973) (EXEC 12 SEP 2005)

g. APOs/FSOs (2)

There shall be two representatives on General Faculties Council, each for a three-year term, elected from the combined Administrative/Professional Officer and Faculty Service Officer groups and the election shall be run by the Academic Staff Association. (GFC 27 JUN 1977) (EXEC 12 SEP 2005)

h. St Joseph's College Representative (1)

The President of St Joseph's College or the President's delegate shall be an appointed member of GFC. (The Board of Governors has declared the President or the President's delegate a member of the academic staff for the purpose of serving on GFC.) (GFC 26 MAR 1980) (BG 02 MAY 1980) (EXEC 1 MAR 1999) (GFC 15 MAR 1999)

i. Sessionals and Other Temporary Staff (2)

There shall be two representatives on General Faculties Council, and the election shall be run by the Academic Staff Association. These appointed members will be elected for a one-year term and, notwithstanding their stated term on GFC, may serve on GFC only while a member of the academic staff. (GFC 15 JUN 1998) (EXEC 12 SEP 2005)

j. Chair of Chairs' Council or delegate (1)

For a term concurrent with the term of the Chair of Chairs' Council. (GFC 31 MAY 2005)

No person shall be appointed to General Faculties Council solely by virtue of that person's position as Chair of a Department. (GFC 02 JUN 1966) (GFC 28 OCT 1968)

Alternates

The *PSLA* makes no provision for alternates to elected members. (GFC 02 JUN 1966)

The *Ex officio* members shall be permitted to send alternates to the meetings of General Faculties Council. They shall have full voting rights and the right to propose motions. (GFC 02 JUN 1966)

The Dean of Students may send an alternate who may vote and initiate motions. (GFC 27 OCT 1980)

Members may only send alternates to Council meetings when they hold seats by virtue of their office. (GFC 28 OCT 1974). Therefore, members who are elected to GFC by fellow staff members or fellow students may not send alternates to meetings of Council. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Reapportionment

On the direction of the General Faculties Council, from time to time the registrar shall

- a. establish the total number of elected members to be on the general faculties council, which shall be twice the number of persons who are members of the general faculties council by virtue of their offices, and
- b. determine and assign to each faculty and school the number of members that may be elected by that faculty or school, which so far as is reasonably possible shall be in the same proportion to the total number of elected members as the number of full time members of the academic staff of the faculty or school is to the total number of full time members of the academic staff of all the faculties and schools. (*PSLA* Section 24(2))

Responsibility for the reapportionment of GFC in practice resides with the Secretary to GFC.

Reapportionment of seats on GFC shall be completed every third year except when there has been a significant shift in faculty or student numbers or a change to the *ex officio* seats on GFC.(EXEC 13 FEB 1995)

There shall be at least one elected representative for every Faculty with a full-time instructional staff of 6 or more. (GFC 29 APR 1966)

Method of Election

Each Faculty Council shall adopt a method of election for their respective elected faculty representatives to GFC.

Every effort shall be made to ensure that the annual replenishment of staff vacancies on General Faculties Council shall be completed by June 30, and replenishment of student vacancies by April 30. (GFC 15 JUN 1967)

Terms of Office

An academic staff member elected under [PSLA Section 24] subsection (1) holds office for a term of 3 years or until the member's successor is elected. (PSLA Section 24(3))

Notwithstanding [PSLA Section 24] subsection (3), a member elected under subsection (1) ceases to hold office if the member ceases to be a full time member of the academic staff of the faculty or school. Notwithstanding subsection (3), a faculty council or school council

a. shall, as circumstances require, elect members to hold office for one year or two year terms so as to provide overlapping terms of office for the representatives of the faculty or school, and

b. may, when a member ceases to hold office before the expiry of that member's term of office, elect a new member to hold office for the remainder of the unexpired term (*PSLA* Section 24 (4) (5)).

Unless otherwise specified, the term of office for appointed staff members of GFC shall be for three (3) years (beginning July 1 and ending June 30).

The terms of office of the three statutory student GFC members shall run from May 1 in any given year to April 30 in the succeeding year. (EXEC 10 JAN 1983) (EXEC 11 JUL 1988)

The term of office of appointed student members shall run from May 1 in any given year to April 30 in the succeeding year. (GFC 26 APR 1976) (EXEC 11 JUL 1988)

Attendance

If a student misses two consecutive meetings, or more than three meetings, the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association may request that the Chair declare the position vacant. If the position is declared vacant, the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association will recommend a replacement and advise the Chair about the method used to obtain the replacement. (EXEC 12 JAN 1998)

If a Faculty representative, or a non-student appointed member, misses three consecutive meetings, or more than five meetings in any one academic year, without a reason satisfactory to the members of the GFC Executive Committee, the Executive Committee shall declare the position vacant. If the position is declared vacant, the Dean will recommend a replacement and advise the Secretary to GFC about the method used to obtain the replacement. (EXEC 27 APR 1998) (GFC 15 JUN 1998)

3. Mandate of the Committee

Powers Retained by General Faculties Council

All powers and responsibilities under Section 26 of the *PSLA* not expressly delegated now or in the future shall be retained by General Faculties Council. (GFC 02 DEC 1966)

The issues which remain with GFC or which would be referred by a Standing Committee to GFC would generally be in the nature of the following:

- high level strategic and stewardship policy issues or matters of significant risk to the University;
- alterations to the mandate, terms of reference, composition, or structure of a Standing Committee;
- those things which a Standing Committee considers to be of major strategic significance to or long-term impact on the University;
- those matters on which, in the opinion of a Standing Committee chair, there has been a strong division of opinion within the Standing Committee; and
- issues in which there is a lack of clarity as to which Standing Committee is responsible.

Powers of GFC under the *PSLA*

- exercise any power of a faculty council that the general faculties council considers desirable to exercise; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(a))
- determine all programs of study to which clause (b) does not apply that are to be offered by the university for credit toward the requirements for any degree or diploma; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(c))
- consider all matters reported to it by any faculty council and communicate its opinion or action on those matters to the faculty council concerned; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(i))
- make rules and regulations for the management and operation of libraries; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(k))
- make recommendations to the board with respect to affiliation with other institutions, academic planning, campus planning, a building program, the budget, the regulation of residences and dining halls, procedures in respect of appointments, promotions, salaries, tenure and dismissals, and any other matters considered by the general faculties council to be of interest to the university; (GFC 24 NOV 1980) (GFC 20 NOV 1995). (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(o)) [Some aspects of this authority have been delegated to other bodies or Officers and as set out in the terms of reference for the appropriate Standing Committees of GFC.]

Powers Under the *PSLA* as Delegated in Whole or in Part (*PSLA* Section 26(1))

Subject to the authority of the board, a general faculties council is responsible for the academic affairs of the university and has delegated its authority to

- consider and make decisions on the reports of the faculty councils as to the programs of study in the faculties; (GFC 30 MAR 1981) (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(b))
- determine the timetables for examinations and for lectures and other instruction in each faculty; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(d))
- consider and make decisions on the reports of faculty councils as to the appointment of examiners and the conduct and results of examinations in the faculties; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(e))
- provide for the granting and conferring of degrees other than honorary degrees; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(f))
- provide for the preparation and publication of the university calendar; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(g))
- hear and determine appeals from the decisions of faculty councils on applications, requests or petitions by students and others; (GFC 29 JAN 1973) (GFC JUN 23 1975) (EXEC 01 NOV 2004) (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(h))

- determine the date for the beginning and end of lectures in the university and also the beginning and end of each university term; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(j))
- recommend to the board the establishment of faculties, schools, departments, chairs and programs of study in the university in any subject that the general faculties council thinks fit; (GFC 27 MAY 2002) (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(l))
- make rules and regulations respecting academic awards; (GFC 27 MAY 2002) (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(m))
- determine standards and policies respecting the admission of persons to the university as students; (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(n))
- authorize lecturing and teaching on the university premises by persons other than members of the staff of the university; ... (Delegated to the appropriate Dean or Director who will act in consultation with the Chair of the Department or other appropriate persons (GFC 02 DEC 1966)). (*PSLA* Section 26(1)(p))
- The general faculties council has general supervision of student affairs at a university and in particular, but without restricting the generality of the foregoing, the general faculties council may
 - a. subject to a right of appeal to the board, discipline students attending the university, and the power to discipline includes the power
 - i. to fine students,
 - ii. to suspend the right of students to attend the university or to participate in any student activities, or both, and
 - iii. to expel students from the university;
 - b. delegate its power to discipline students in any particular case or generally to any person or body of persons.... (*PSLA* Section 31(1)(a))

(Delegated to the University Appeal Board and to the Discipline Officer. Delegated in part to Deans with respect to enrolment of students who constitute a danger or who put the public at risk and to the GFC Practice Review Board (PRB). Delegated in part to instructors with respect to disruptive behavior in class).

4. General Faculties Council Procedures

GFC has previously voted against adopting Robert's Rules of Order. GFC is governed, instead, by precedent (as set out in the following procedural rules) and, in situations not covered by precedent, GFC is guided by the Chair, whose rulings will be subject to challenge (see GFC 28 OCT 1974).

Date of GFC Meetings

Council shall normally meet once a month, usually on the last Monday of the month. The date of each meeting shall be announced one month in advance. (GFC 28 OCT 1968)

To enable student and staff members of GFC to attend all meetings, the meetings of GFC shall not be scheduled during the period set aside for final examinations and Reading Week. (GFC 24 APR 1978) (EXEC 06 NOV 2006)

The May meeting of GFC may be held on a Tuesday in order not to conflict with the date of the Chancellor's Cup. (EXEC 04 OCT 2004)

GFC Agendas

a. Reports

Reports not requiring action by GFC will be discussed by the Executive Committee (with committee chairs in attendance) and placed on the GFC agenda for information. If a GFC

member has a question about a report, or feels that the report should be discussed by GFC, the GFC member should notify the Secretary to GFC, in writing, two business days or more before GFC meets so that the committee chair can be invited to attend. Such reports will be discussed as the last of the standing items. (EXEC 06 NOV 2006)

The Board Learning and Discovery Committee has directed the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the Chair of the Board Learning and Discovery Committee, in consultation with the Secretary to General Faculties Council, to review proposals which set out minor, editorial, and/or strictly administrative changes to existing University policies and procedures and determine whether or not, after the proposals have been duly considered and endorsed by the GFC Executive Committee or General Faculties Council, the Board Learning and Discovery Committee would be asked to take formal action on such proposals or simply receive such items for information only.

If the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) (or delegate) and the Chair of BEAC (or delegate) agree the amendments shall go forward to the Board Learning and Discovery Committee for information only, the amendments will be considered to be formally approved by the GFC Executive, on behalf of GFC and the Board, at the time the Executive's decision on the matter is rendered or, if considered by GFC, approved by GFC on behalf of the Board. (BG 10 JAN 1997)

b. Board Reports to GFC

Board Reports that are filed with GFC shall be distributed to GFC members for information. (EXEC 06 NOV 2006)

c. Executive Committee Minutes

This Report is for information only which means that while questions may be asked for clarification, no debate may take place on any item. If a member believes that Council should discuss a particular action of the Executive Committee, the concern should be sent to the Executive Committee prior to debate at General Faculties Council (GFC 28 OCT 1974) (EXEC 06 NOV 2006)

GFC Minutes

The record of discussion shall reflect fully the basis of decisions. ((EXEC 17 JAN 1968) (EXEC 06 NOV 2006)

GFC agendas, minutes and memberships shall be made available to the public. (EXEC 06 NOV 2006)

Open Meetings

Council Chamber Space

Admission will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis, to the limit of available space in the Council Chamber, on the understanding that a limited space may be reserved by the officer responsible for staff or students who have a special interest or competence in particular items on the agenda, and who have been given permission by the Chair to attend and to speak. (GFC 28 OCT 1968)

New Committees and Ad Hoc Committees

a. New Committees: When GFC establishes a new committee, GFC (or delegate body) shall provide clear, explicit, and detailed terms of reference. (GFC 24 NOV 1980)

b. *Ad Hoc* Committees: When an *ad hoc* committee is in doubt as to the scope of its terms of reference, it shall seek clarification and guidance from the Executive Committee of General Faculties Council. (EXEC JUN 1971)

When GFC establishes an *ad hoc* committee, a reporting date shall be set by the Secretary to GFC. (EXEC 03 MAY 1982)

Ad hoc committees shall be considered as being discharged once their reports are received or accepted by General Faculties Council unless the committee recommends otherwise, or General Faculties Council requests it to continue. (GFC 29 APR 1968)

Agenda Approval Procedures

GFC has delegated to the Executive Committee the authority to decide which items are placed on a GFC Agenda. New items cannot be introduced at Council meetings except by a two-thirds vote of those present. In cases where the Chair or Secretary has been informed in advance of a request to add a new item, the proposal shall be circulated, time permitting, to GFC members, and to Deans for onward transmission to staff. (GFC 28 OCT 1974) (GFC 20 SEP 1982) (EXEC 18 OCT 1982)

When the Agenda is being approved, the Chair will entertain a request to change that order, for specified reasons. (EXEC 20 SEPT 2001)

Amendments

An amendment is a subsidiary motion. It is used to modify the wording - and within certain limits the meaning - of a pending motion before the pending motion itself is voted upon. Its adoption does not adopt the motion thereby amended, and its rejection leaves the pending motion unaltered. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

The amendment must be germane; that is, it must be closely related to or have bearing on the subject of the motion. No new subject can be introduced under the pretext of being an amendment. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

An amendment must be seconded and is debatable. Such debate must be confined to the desirability of the amendment and must not extend to the merits of the motion to be amended, except as may be necessary to determine whether the amendment is advisable. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

An amendment can be amended, by a motion to amend the amendment. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A majority vote is required. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Calling the Question

Calls of "Question!" by members from their seats are informal expressions of individual members' desires to proceed to a vote on the matter under discussion. (Such calls are disorderly if made while another member is speaking.) Upon hearing such a call, the Chair will ask members if they are ready to vote on the motion being discussed. If there appears to be opposition to closing the debate, the Chair may ask for a motion to close debate. If seconded, members will then vote on this motion and proceed accordingly. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Challenging the Chair

The Chair may allow debate on a point of order before making a ruling. The Chair should state the basis on which such a ruling is made and no debate thereon is permitted. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)
When the Chair rules on a question of procedure, any member may rise and state to the Chair, "I respectfully appeal to this Council from your ruling." The Chair will respond by stating, "The Council has heard the ruling of the Chair. The question is: Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?" This issue is then put to the vote. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Committee of the Whole

Debate should be either for or against a motion. However, an issue may arise which is not so clear cut or for which the rules may seem to be a hindrance. In such a case, a motion that Council resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole may be made. If carried, the visitors are asked to leave the Chamber, the Chair steps down and another Chair is appointed or elected for the duration of the meeting of the Committee of the Whole. Minutes are not taken and members may speak more freely and informally. A motion need not be seconded in order to be discussed. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

When the Committee of the Whole reaches agreement, a motion is made "that the Chair rise and report," upon the adoption of which motion the Committee of the Whole is dissolved, the Chair of Council resumes the Chair and the Chair of the Committee reports to the Chair of Council the action taken by the Committee of the Whole. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Debate Procedures

In a special debate, no member may speak for a second time until the Chair is satisfied that all those wishing to speak for the first time have done so.

Debate upon a new item on the Agenda will not be entertained after Council has been sitting for three hours. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Impeachment

No member of Council can be impeached. (GFC 03 FEB 1971)

Interrupting a Speaker

A member who has the floor may not normally be interrupted. However, the Chair may interrupt a speaker if the speaker is out of order by using unacceptable language, is abusive of other members, or is not speaking to the motion. If the Chair does not do so, a member may raise this as a point of order. A speaker may not be interrupted because the listener does not agree with what is being said. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Motion

A motion is a formal proposal that the assembly take certain action. To make a motion, a member must obtain the floor, that is, the member must be recognized by the Chair. (In the interest of clarity, it is advisable to write out a motion in advance; giving a copy thereof to the Secretary usually expedites business.) The person making a motion will be invited by the Chair to speak first in any ensuing debate. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A motion must be **seconded**. A second merely implies that the seconder agrees that the motion should be debated and not that the seconder necessarily favors the motion. If no seconder is found, the motion is dead and the meeting moves on to other business. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn is a motion to close the meeting. It must be seconded, is not debatable or amendable and requires a majority vote. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

During the months of March and April, motions to adjourn require a two-thirds majority if substantive items of business remain on the agenda.(GFC 26 NOV 2001)

Motion to Table

A Motion to Table enables Council to lay aside the pending question until some future time. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A Motion to Table must be seconded and cannot be debated, except that the mover may make a brief statement on what information s/he believes would be necessary to lift an item from the table, followed

by the proposer of the original item, who may make a brief comment to Council on the impact of the tabling motion. (GFC 28 OCT 1974) (GFC 24 FEB 2003)

Motion to Take From the Table

A Motion to Take from the Table is a motion to bring back before Council the matter laid aside. Upon such a motion, there shall be a majority vote and no debate. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Motion to Reconsider

A Motion to Reconsider enables a majority in Council, within a limited time and without notice, to bring back for further consideration a motion which has already been voted on. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A Motion to Reconsider has the following characteristics:

1. It can be made only by a member who voted originally with the prevailing side. (This prevents abuse by a defeated minority.) (GFC 28 OCT 1974)
2. It can be moved only on the same or on the next succeeding meeting day after the original vote was taken. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)
3. No question can be twice reconsidered. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)
4. Such a motion suspends action on the motion to which it applies until it has been decided. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)
5. Action which cannot be reversed cannot be reconsidered. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)
6. A motion to reconsider is debatable - unless the motion to which it applies was undebatable. Only a majority vote is required. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

The effect of a Motion to Reconsider is to restore proceedings to the point immediately prior to the vote to which it applies. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Motion to Rescind

A Motion to Rescind is the motion by which a previous act or order can be cancelled or countermanded. A Motion to Rescind must be seconded, is debatable and amendable. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A Motion to Rescind requires a two-thirds vote of the total membership if no Notice of Motion has been given. If Notice of Motion to Rescind has been given at the previous meeting, a majority vote will suffice. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A Motion to Rescind is only used when a Motion to Reconsider is out of time. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion is a method of informing the membership in advance of the intention to make a specific motion. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

When Notice of Motion has first been given at a GFC meeting, the GFC Executive Committee will decide whether it is appropriate that such a motion be placed on the Agenda of the next GFC meeting. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Point of Order

It is the right of every member who notices a breach of the rules of Council to insist on their enforcement. If the Chair fails to notice such a breach, any member may make the appropriate Point of Order, calling on the Chair for a ruling. If the Chair, being in doubt, refers the point of order to the judgement of Council, it thereby becomes debatable. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A Point of Order is the only time when a member is allowed to interrupt a speaker who has the floor. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A Point of Order does not require a seconder, it is not debatable (except in the circumstance noted above), it is not amendable, and cannot be reconsidered. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

A Point of Order should not be raised which has nothing to do with procedure and is merely a tactic to say something which would not normally be allowed. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Question Period Procedure

General Faculties Council has approved the practice of a Question Period of one half hour in length, which is a regular standing item on the Agenda of each regular meeting of General Faculties Council.

Written questions may be submitted to the Secretary at any time before a GFC meeting. If a written response is required, then written questions must be received at least SIX working days before a GFC meeting. The questions should contain no argument or opinion or facts other than those necessary for explanation.

The administration will make every attempt to submit written responses to University Governance in time for mailing to GFC members (normally by the Thursday before a Monday GFC meeting). Supplementary questions may be asked during the Question Period providing they relate to the subject matter of the question under discussion.

The answer should contain no argument or opinion or fact other than those necessary for explanation. The answer is not debatable.

After written questions and replies have been received by Council, questions from the floor will be permitted. The total time for Question Period is 30 minutes, unless Council, at the end of that time, votes to extend. If GFC members want to have an issue debated, they are asked to submit the issue to the Executive Committee.

Questions may be submitted in writing in advance of GFC meetings. In such cases, the Secretary will direct it to the appropriate officer(s) of the University for a reply. Questions must be factual in nature and contain no argument. (GFC 24 FEB 2003)

If the recipient considers that a question is not factual, contains argument or opinion or facts other than those necessary for explanation of the question, or is outside the scope of GFC responsibilities, or that an excessive amount of time, effort, expenditure and/or resources will be required to provide an answer, the recipient shall return the question to the questioner and work with the questioner to narrow the scope of the question. (GFC 24 FEB 2003)

In cases of dispute between the recipient and questioner, or where no agreement can be reached, the recipient or questioner may refer the question to the GFC Executive Committee for a ruling on whether the question is proper. If the Executive Committee deems that the question is not proper, the question will not be answered – the Executive Committee's decision is final and binding. (GFC 24 FEB 2003)

Where a question is submitted from the floor during the Question Period, the Chair will rule on whether or not it can be answered expeditiously from the floor. If it cannot, the question will then be referred to the appropriate officer as if it were a written question. (GFC 24 FEB 2003)

In order to provide more time for Administration to submit an answer, the Secretary to GFC will:

1. Mail the answer to GFC members if the Secretary to GFC receives it in time for the mailing.
2. If the Secretary to GFC receives the answer after the mailing but before the GFC meeting, the Secretary will set the answer out on the tables at the meeting and e-mail it to members prior to the meeting.

Quorum

A quorum is the minimum number of members who must be present for business to be transacted legally. In the case of General Faculties Council this is one-third of the total membership, except in the months of April, May and June when the quorum shall be one-quarter of the total membership. (GFC 28 OCT 1974) (GFC 20 SEP 1982) (GFC 03 APR 1995) (GFC 18 MAR 1996)

Voting Procedures

When the electronic voting system installed in the Council Chamber shows a difference of five or less in the votes counted for and against a Motion, there shall be a second electronic vote. The second vote shall be the final result. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

Voting shall be by majority vote except on a Motion to Rescind without previous notice, when a two-thirds vote of those present is required. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

The results of all votes taken at GFC meetings shall be announced by the Secretary. The results of GFC votes shall **not** be recorded in the Minutes. (GFC 28 OCT 1974) (GFC 28 APR 1980)

All members of GFC are charged with the responsibility of examining issues before Council and voting as they judge fit on such issues. No member of GFC, regardless of how that person gains membership on Council, is an instructed delegate. (GFC 28 OCT 1974)

The Secretary

The following are the main duties of the Secretary:

- To serve the General Faculties Council and its Executive Committee as Secretary by arranging all meetings, preparing agendas and ensuring that comprehensive documentation, including an outline of the issues, is distributed.
- To take whatever action is necessary in order to implement all decisions made by General Faculties Council and its Executive Committee.
- To ensure that minutes concerning all meetings of General Faculties Council and action summaries concerning all meetings of the GFC Executive Committee are available. (EXEC 30 AUG 1999)
- To ensure the rotation and replenishment of student and staff members on General Faculties Council and all its Standing Committees.
- To act as the Officer responsible for the operation of procedures established for the approval of all new or altered courses at the University and for the approval of changes to existing programs. (In the case of course challenges, the Secretary to GFC shall bring the parties together with a view to resolving challenges informally.)
- To keep under revision the GFC Policy Manual and the computerized database of all issues which have come before General Faculties Council and its Executive Committee.
- To keep under revision the Register of GFC Committees.

- To act as a resource person where information may be obtained on any matters which fall within the purview of General Faculties Council.
- To perform any duties required by the President as Chair of General Faculties Council and its Executive Committee.
- To set the reporting dates of GFC committees.

5. Additional Reporting Requirements

None.

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