



# MEDICINE HAT COLLEGE General Academic Council

## MINUTES

November 27, 2023

Crowfoot Room

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

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### CALL TO ORDER

- Kevin Shufflebotham (Chair) called the meeting to order at 10:04am.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Hearing no additions to the agenda; the motion for approval was called.

**Motion: (J. Openo)**

**“That the agenda of the General Academic Council meeting of November 27, 2023, be adopted as presented.”**

**CARRIED**

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 25, 2023

- Hearing no changes to the minutes; the motion for approval was called.

**Motion: (P. Kelly)**

**“That the minutes of the General Academic Council meeting of September 25, 2023, be adopted as presented.”**

**CARRIED**

### CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

#### Terms of Reference (current)

- Jana and Lily recently connected with Sandy Henderson regarding some proposed changes to the Curriculum Committee TOR.
- In past years, we’ve struggled to find the right balance with the Curriculum Committee and hope the changes presented today will help to solve this.
- Previously, a lot of curriculum changes were presented at GAC which was very time consuming and not effective. The Curriculum Committee was created to alleviate **all** changes being brought to GAC, and rather have them directed to a committee composed of the registrar, faculty, deans, etc. to review in detail, and approve. Any major changes requiring government approval are still presented to GAC for discussion/decision, before being referred to the Board of Governors for approval.
- After discussing the TOR with faculty and students; Jana and Lily brought the feedback to Sandy as each group felt there were some things removed from the TOR in the last round of revisions, that may need to be included again.

#### Proposed New Terms of Reference

- Proposed changes:
  - Purpose: added **standard program changes** back into this section
  - Membership: added **at least one student (nominated by the Student Association) to maximum of two**
  - Chair: **can be either the Dean of Student Services/Registrar or a member or Council appointed by the Committee at its first meeting of each academic year.**
  - Quorum: quorum is achieved if five members are in attendance with at least one faculty member, one member from administration **and at least one member of the Students’ Association.**

- In future we may need to define what is meant by a “standard program change”. Also need to specify how the dean is selected on the Committee.
- The proposed changes are presented today with notice that a vote will be conducted at the next meeting (January 22, 2024).

### **Curriculum Change Flow Chart**

- The Curriculum Changes Quick Reference/flow chart included in the meeting package was created to assist in determining the appropriate direction for the various types of curriculum/program changes.
- Before going to the Curriculum Committee with changes; inter-departmental collaboration/communication should take place as some changes impact various/ or sometimes all programs. Sandy will add this to the Curriculum Change Flow Chart and will also indicate where GAC and the Board of Governors fit within the process. Sandy will work with all areas to confirm the process and clarify the authority to approve vs recommend changes. The revised Flow Chart will be presented for review at the next GAC meeting.

## **UPDATES**

### **Executive Administration (Nancy Brown)**

- Enrollment: MHC currently has the highest enrolment than we’ve seen in the past 5 years; over 2000 FLE’s this fall and we’re predicting a bit higher by the end of the year.
- Academic Plan: Work is ongoing on the development of database learner profiles; some of these profiles have now been created for a number of programs. Work is also underway on developing some new tools for faculty, as well as additional supports for research & scholarship and an award ceremony/celebration which will allow this work to be showcased in the spring.  
The new Research & Scholarship Development Team includes both internal and external members, as well as the Team Lead (50% faculty secondment), with administrative oversight from the VPA office, and will focus on supporting research & scholarly activity at MHC.
- Communication/collaboration: Nancy connects with VPAs’ at other institutions monthly and visits other institutions to ensure the relationships and collaboration with them remains strong. Nancy is happy to meet with any program areas/departments, etc. here on campus as well.

### **Faculty Update (Jana Smith-Elford)**

- Jana met with faculty members of GAC to review the Curriculum Committee Terms of Reference and they’ve proposed some changes which Sandy referred to earlier. Jana is trying to meet regularly with faculty members in general to keep communication open around what’s happening at GAC, etc.

### **Student Update (Lily Schaerer)**

- Lily & Nikita recently attended ASEC Advocacy Week in Edmonton, advocating on behalf of the Students’ Association at the government level. They met with various MLA’s and Ministers which went very well and had some great discussion around some of the main concerns for students at the moment such as: amendments to the PSLA language re: mandatory non-instructional fees, increases in mental health funding/pursuit of additional funding in future, etc.
- There have been a couple of student appeals lately but overall, the number is lower than in recent years.
- Planning is underway for a few upcoming events (holiday food bank drive, etc.); also recognizing that exams will be starting soon.

## **DISCUSSION TOPICS**

### **Academic Policy Work**

- The response from CAQC regarding our institutional self-study contained a recommendation to update a number of our policies, which resulted in the development of a new policy framework. Since some policies were being reviewed as part of this project; the decision was made to review the entire suite of academic

policies as a whole. The goal is to have fewer overarching policies, with procedures that operationalize the work housed within those policies.

- For GAC, the way we bring policies forward for review will change slightly since they will be presented as a collective rather than each individual policy.
- Teresa and Laura provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Policy Development & Review Process which Paula will circulate to GAC for reference.
- All policies are currently available on Source and internal employees can access them. The new policy template is available on the website, but policies needing updated will not be accessible there and can be requested by contacting Teresa.
- The timeframe for the project is unclear at the moment, but the CAQC policy requirements and recommendations will be completed first.

#### **CAQC Degree Process/Institutional Readiness**

- Currently, MHC has the ability to award collaborative degrees only and cannot offer autonomous degrees. The MHC institutional self-study was completed in 2021 to begin the process of obtaining CAQC approval to offer our own degrees, which also entailed a site-visit at that time with the CAQC Team. Through the self-study and site visit, CAQC looked at various things to assess our institutional readiness to offer autonomous degrees.
- The report received after the site visit included a number of recommendations, and conditions which must be met. Some conditions have already been completed (i.e., Academic Plan) and some are just recommendations that we don't necessarily need to complete.
- Work is ongoing and once all conditions have been fulfilled, another update will be provided on next steps in this process.

#### **ADJOURNMENT / NEXT MEETING**

- The meeting was adjourned at 11:20am.
- Next meeting: January 22, 2024