SPECIAL SESSION
MINUTES

1.0 Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m.

2.0 Approval of Agenda
Academic Governance Council (AGC) reviewed the agenda for the February 25, 2014 AGC Special Session.

AGC-01-02-25-2014
Moved by R. Meleshko, seconded by B. Parker that Academic Governance Council approve the agenda for February 25, 2014 as presented.
Carried

3.0 AGC Review Task Team
3.1 Draft AGC Review Report

AGC-02-02-25-2014
Moved by P. Roccia, seconded by P. Moore-Juzwishin that Academic Governance Council resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole at 5:50 p.m. to consider and discuss the draft AGC Review Report.
Carried

Chris Hancock, Vice-Chair of AGC, assumed the role of Chair of the Committee of the Whole.

At 6:50 p.m., the Committee was required to rise and report. C. Hancock, Chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee of the Whole recommended that its comments, as recorded on February 25, 2014, be forwarded to the AGC Review Task Team for consideration in the final drafting of the AGC Review Report.

AGC-03-02-25-2014
Moved by K. Hood, seconded by M. Milner that the Committee of the Whole rise and report to Council at 6:50 p.m. regarding the discussion of the draft AGC Review Report.
Carried
AGC was asked to approve the Committee of the Whole’s report as presented, so that it could appear in the AGC Special Session minutes for February 25, 2014.

AGC-04-02-25-2014
Moved by A. Skye, seconded by T. Costouros to accept the Committee’s report as presented.

Carried

[Scribe’s Note: Normally, proceedings of the Committee of the Whole do not form part of the minutes of AGC; however, the discussions are summarized in the meeting notes of the Committee of the Whole, which form the Council’s recommendations on the draft AGC Review Report (Attachment 1).]

4.0 Report of the Provost and Vice President Academic

4.1 Draft Academic Foundation Plan

John Corlett, Provost and Vice President Academic, presented the draft Academic Foundation Plan (February 12, 2014), developed in response to the approved Strategic Directions, for discussion and feedback. The foundation plans will serve as the basis for the final integrated strategic plan that will guide the University’s activities from 2014-2019. He reported that the Academic Foundation Plan is the core element of the broader integrated strategic plan and is of direct importance to the governance role of the Academic Governance Council. The following points arose during discussion:

Goal 1: An undergraduate student experience of life-changing personal meaning and professional preparation.

- **Preamble:** There are no steps included in the plan for “international learning” and “providing opportunities for our students to study abroad.”
  - As we develop degrees and diploma laddering opportunities, we will need to integrate that with how we are thinking about academic achievement and opportunities, rather than separating them. The Student Services Foundation Plan will describe how the University will support international learning.

- **Step 1:** Regarding aligning academic requirements of existing diploma programs with first two or three years of an existing degree: Unfortunately, all faculty have not participated in the consultation process and they believe that certificates and diplomas will be eliminated if they do not fit into the current degree programs. How can we reassure them that isn’t the case?
  - MacEwan University plans to continue to be unique, to maintain the idea that there are many different ways for students to achieve the education they desire, and to offer programs unlike anything offered in Canada.
    - Some programs feel they would not be able to function if they have to mirror degrees. The industry doesn’t always want to hire employees with degrees.
  - D. Atkinson noted that from the beginning, it has been stated that if the diploma programs are successful, changing them would be a risk to the institution. Therefore, in such a case, a degree would need to be created that the successful diploma program would flow into.

- **Step 3:** Regarding new degree proposals: It only mentions the Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS).
  - The Provost noted that he mentioned FAS specifically, because there could be multiple opportunities specifically for FAS to offer new and distinct degrees. This does not limit opportunities for other Faculties/Schools to do so.

- **Risk 1:** It was suggested that the University also needs to promote externally, to those companies who hire MacEwan University students, the value to their organization/industry of our students completing a degree.
- **Risk 2:** How will the University ensure that the human resources are not overwhelmed with workload?
  - In order to accomplish the goals, a strategic approach to allocation and reallocation of resources is required.
  - D. Atkinson stated that as part of the budget exercise for 2014-2015, MacEwan University will be setting aside ongoing funding to specifically address the ambitions of this plan.

- **Risk 4:** What does “cohort models of courses on a separate net revenue model” mean?
  - The Provost clarified it means creating a different model where the total costs of teaching are covered by the fee structure of the program, allowing money to flow back into the Faculties/Schools.
• Risk 8: What does “three-term annual calendar of course and program availability” refer to?
  o The Provost clarified that the University will be looking at ways to increase learning opportunities for students in the Spring and Summer terms, so that the University does not appear to be “empty” from May to August.

Goal 2: A thriving culture of faculty scholarship as the basis for excellence in teaching and learning.
• Step 2: Regarding annual reviews: how does this step link to faculty workload?
  o Workload includes service and scholarship, and step 2 attempts to capture faculty achievements in their annual review. The University wants to know what faculty have contributed and how that was accomplished.
• Step 3: Is this defining a specific research direction at MacEwan University?
  o We are attempting to link scholarship to the undergraduate learning experience. Faculty will be asked to show that students are participating in their research.
• Step 4: Regarding aligning internal support for scholarship: this step should include visionary leadership and mentoring.
• Risk 5: It is the role of the dean or program chair to identify faculty problems, not the Centre for Advancement of Faculty Excellence.

Goal 3: An academically, socially, environmentally sustainable, and responsible university of local and global significance, relevance, and value.
• Goal: How can MacEwan University be relevant both locally and globally at the same time?
  o We can immediately affect change locally and over time, invite international participation or interest in our programs and projects.
• Step 1: Regarding Aboriginal education: It is important to not lose sight of this goal.
• Measure 4: What is the mandate of the Centre for Sustainability Studies?
  o The Centre creates a cohesive direction for the University, based on one of the strategic pillars.

Other comments:
• It was requested that the Provost provide a feedback list on the Academic Foundation Plan, to indicate it was taken into consideration in drafting the Academic Foundation Plan, as well as other consultations planned.
• The Chair reminded that AGC and the University have already made the commitment to change its operating strategy, through AGC’s recommendation that the Board of Governors approve, and the Board of Governors’ subsequent approval of, the Strategic Directions.
• The timeline will be distributed to AGC members via email after the meeting.

5.0 Next Meeting – March 18, 2014
The next meeting will be held on March 18, 2014, at 5:45 p.m. - 8:45 p.m. in Room 9-201 City Centre Campus.

6.0 The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

ATTACHMENT
  1 Committee of the Whole Minutes: February 25, 2014

Approved by Academic Governance Council
March 18, 2014 (motion AGC-02-03-18-2014)
DRAFT PROCEEDING NOTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Academic Governance Council Meeting, Tuesday, February 25, 2014
Reference: Minute 3.1

The Committee of the Whole observed the presentation by David Atkinson, Chair of the AGC Review Task Team (RTT), on the draft AGC Review Report. The Committee made the following points during their discussion on the following recommendations.

AGC Membership

A3. Regarding AGC membership composition:

- **Two faculty members per Faculty/School (10)**
  - What is the fifth Faculty/School included in this total?
    - The new School of Continuing Education is included.

- **Eighteen faculty selected according to representation by population (18).**
  - See discussion under recommendation A4.

- **Two staff (2).**
  - What is general practice for populating General Faculty Councils with staff members?
    - The Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) has a category for appointed members. There has always been a place for a small number of senior staff to participate in academic governance.
    - It was confirmed that the current staff members on AGC are elected.

A4. That MacEwan University create a formula for an equitable distribution of seats to be occupied by academic staff affiliated with their respective Faculties/Schools: 18 faculty seats will be allocated on a proportionate basis according to the number of probationary and continuing full-time faculty per Faculty/School.

- It was noted that a table in Appendix One was added to outline various calculation methodologies for representation by population.
- Did the RTT consider an equivalent calculation based on student enrollment, given that some Faculties/Schools rely heavily on sessional instructors?
  - The RTT considered different models for determining membership. There was fulsome debate regarding one model recommending that membership be distributed per Faculty/School full-time equivalent (FTE) relative to the total FTE to determine the number of seats on AGC. However, the RTT decided to recommend using the standard practice of populating General Faculty Councils in comparable post-secondary institutions.
  - In Appendix One, how will the recommended “% full-time headcount” translate to rounded numbers of seats per Faculty/School? If proper rounding methodology is used, then the calculation totals 17 seats instead of the proposed 18 seats. Which Faculty/School would be given the 18th seat?
    - The RTT will review the calculation.
  - The dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Communications noted that the calculation based on % of total Faculty/ School headcount (column 3 in Appendix One) was preferable, given the large number of sessional instructors in some Faculties/Schools, as it more accurately represents the size of the Faculties/Schools.
    - D. Atkinson suggested that the FTE calculation would be the one to use to address this - the number of positions available rather than headcount, which can be misleading.
- It was suggested that it is also up to faculty members in smaller Faculties/Schools to put their names forward to ensure they are considered for AGC vacancies, including in the new member-at-large and sessional member categories.
- How often will the representation by population calculation be reviewed for appropriateness?
  - This will be guided by section 7.2.5 in the AGC Bylaws.
• What happens if representation changes while current members are serving two-year terms?
  o The new composition would be reflected during the following Spring Election or Fall By-election.
• A concern was expressed that sessional instructors are allowed to be nominated for and to vote in AGC elections for the following academic year? What voting rights do sessional instructors have?
  o It was confirmed that sessional instructors have always been included in the nominations calls and the voters lists for AGC elections.
  o D. Atkinson noted this was a secondary issue, for discussion another time.
• It was requested that the final report clarify recommendation A4 succinctly before it is brought back to AGC for approval.

The Chair of the AGC Review Task Team asked AGC if they were willing to participate in a straw poll on each section of recommendations as presented, to give an idea whether or not the AGC Review Report generally reflects the view of AGC. AGC did not agree to a straw poll.

AGC Committees
B2. That MacEwan University create a standing Faculty Innovation and Excellence Committee (FIEC) through the combination of the Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC), Faculty Development Committee, and the Sabbatical Leave Committee (SLC).
• How will students be involved in this new committee, since they have not previously participated on the MacEwan Sabbatical Leave Committee?
  o D. Atkinson reported that some universities involve students on all committees, including sabbatical leave, tenure, and merit committees.
  o It was noted that since no students are currently invited to sit on the SLC, then it is a peer-review committee, and a decision must be made regarding student participation on FIEC.
• A concern was expressed about including FEC in the larger FIEC, because the mandate of the new committee as described in the Report does not reflect the current role of FEC.

B4. That AGC recognize that the Information and Technology Management Committee (ITMC) is an administrative committee that routinely provides updates to AGC, but is not an official AGC committee, and that some of its academic-related work should be incorporated within the mandate of the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee.
• It was noted that the wording in B4 above states ITMC “routinely provides updates to AGC” is not reflected in the discussion on p.7 of the Report, which states: “…[ITMC] could provide periodic reports to AGC…”
  o The wording will be aligned.

B6. That AGC retire the Academic Policies Committee and adopt a new policy development process that seeks relevant input from other AGC committees.
• See discussion under Policy Development (E recommendations).

AGC Committee Membership (including Executive Committee)
C4. That the Provost serve as Vice-Chair of AGC.
• A faculty member should be Vice-Chair of AGC.
• Because the AGC Vice-Chair also sits on Nominations Committee, Nominations Committee had concerns regarding the appropriateness of the Provost being involved in the selection of faculty members for AGC committees; and, in consideration of recommendation C12, that the President and Provost will serve as ex-officio members of all AGC standing committees, requested that the current AGC Vice-Chair position be replaced by faculty membership.

C5. That the Nominations Committee’s membership be amended to include one faculty member from each Faculty/School.
• Nominations Committee agreed that broad representation from all Faculties/Schools is essential and suggested the wording be revised to say that at least one faculty member from each Faculty/School should sit on the Committee.
C7. That the Nominations Committee develop a rubric for the selection of committee members that emphasizes competency-based criteria and other factors, such as diversity.
   • Nominations Committee is currently developing a rubric that emphasizes such criteria as diversity, experience, previous work, etc. It is intended that the rubric will be sent to unsuccessful individual nominee(s) only and will not be distributed as part of the slates to AGC.

C8. That AGC committees review their membership to ensure that faculty, students, and senior administrators are the only voting membership categories, as may be appropriate. Each committee shall have one designated ex-officio member from senior administration who provides executive advice and support as needed.
   • It was requested that staff also be included as a voting membership category.

C11. That AGC adopt the principle that, in all cases, at least 50% of committee members be faculty members.
   • Why can’t we follow the 60% faculty membership ratio?
     o It was noted that for smaller committees, it was difficult to have the 60% faculty ratio, and therefore, 50% made more sense in that instance.
   • Perhaps change the wording to: “the majority of committee members be faculty members.”
   • The Report should include a definition of “faculty member”.

C12. That the President and Provost be ex-officio members of all AGC standing committees.
   • See the discussion under recommendation C4.

Page 10, the last full paragraph: regarding voting of “middle-level” administrators.
   • What is meant by ‘middle-level’ administrators? It is not clear if, for example, Associate Deans have the right to compete for faculty seats on AGC.
     o D. Atkinson clarified that “middle-level” managers does not refer to administrators who are also faculty members.
     o This was addressed by the RTT on page 19 of the Report, under Faculty and Decanal Categories of Membership on AGC Committees.
   • It was recommended to use the term “non-academic” rather than “middle-level” administrators.

Delegation of Authority
D2. That the revised AGC Bylaws, as well as amended Faculty/School/Division Council Bylaws, contain a section headed “Relationship of the Academic Governance Council to Faculty/School/Division Councils,” which will parallel to some extent the current AGC Bylaws, section 5.0, that articulates in general terms the relationship between the Council and the Board.
   • Should include some language on the feedback process when the relationship is defined.

D6. That AGC identify specific academic areas for the delegation of authority to Faculty/School/Division Councils. Two possible areas include curriculum development (the program and course approval process) and academic regulations regarding student progression through programs of study.
   • The discussion on page 13, regarding a second area for potential delegation: the autonomy of Faculties/Schools to set their own standards for relating to the assessment and examination of students, academic residency, academic standing, program time limits, and graduation is not included in the recommendation. If there are different standards between the Faculties/Schools, where does responsibility lie to communicate the differences to students? There should be a minimum standard that is met, so there is some consistency between Faculties/Schools.

Policy Development
E1. AGC work with other areas of the institution in developing a comprehensive process for institutional policy development, coordination, and approval.
   • What is the role of the Policy Advisory Group?
     o They are a coordinating body that will review proposals to create policies, including if it has the proper executive sponsor signoff, does it include appropriate stakeholders to be consulted, and they will provide templates to assist with development of the policy. Once the policy is drafted, it will be reviewed once more by PAG to confirm it has used the proper template, has consistent wording with other policies, if it fits within another policy, etc.
     o The PAG does not review the content of the policies.
In the Schedule A flowchart, the use of the “decision diamond” symbol should be changed to a rectangle to avoid confusion.

Further Items for Consideration by AGC Executive Committee (November 7, 2013 memo)

Nominations Committee Election Procedures
Nominations could be reviewed during an open or closed session of AGC, whereby those nominees not chosen for a slate would be aware of the process used by AGC. AGC will receive a full list of the nominees. Those not recommended by the Nominations Committee will receive the Committee’s evaluation rubric explaining how the candidate was reviewed. If the faculty member wishes, he/she can appeal the recommendation of the Nominations Committee on the AGC floor by submitting a request to an AGC member who would submit a Nomination-from-the-Floor form prior to the meeting. AGC would then review all eligible nominations received, including the appellant's, and an election by AGC members would take place to resolve the appeal.

- In response to the above, Nominations Committee felt that there are two courses of action for the AGC Review Task Team to consider: 1) dissolve Nominations Committee and have AGC take over responsibility for AGC committee nominations; or, 2) Nominations Committee will provide the unsuccessful nominee(s) with a more precise explanation of why they were not chosen (via the aforementioned rubric), advising them of the appeal procedure at the same time.
- It was suggested that the AGC Review Task Team should recommend in the final AGC Review Report that AGC place its confidence in the Nominations Committee to continue its role.

Faculty and Decanal Categories of Membership on AGC Committees
The Task Team concluded that Deans should not be counted as faculty members on AGC committees. In the AGC report all references to faculty members exclude Deans. For example, the recommendation that most standing committees of AGC are chaired by faculty members does not include Deans.
- See discussion under AGC Committee Membership (including Executive Committee), regarding page 10 discussion regarding 'middle-level' administrators.

Other comments:
- It was suggested to eliminate the use of acronyms in the report.
- Will AGC be voting by recommendation letter or on the final report at the March 18 meeting?
  o AGC will be asked to vote on the report as a whole.
- Does that preclude a motion to divide the report?
  o No, it does not preclude that.

D. Atkinson thanked the AGC Review Task Team and J. Friesen for their work on the AGC Review Report.