


GFC Attendance Policy		
Parent Policy: Related Policies: Approving Body: Passed: Amended:	Union Bylaw N/A Students' Legislative Council April 1, 2014 (71.76) March 30, 2021 (78.34)	

History

In 1968, the Universities Act was amended to allow for two students appointed by the Students' Union on General Faculties Council (GFC). That same year, as the result of student protests, GFC meetings were made open to the public. In 1972, the SU established an informal Student GFC Caucus and made a successful proposal to GFC asking that one student be chosen from each school and faculty to sit on GFC, in addition to the two ex-officio seats for the President and Vice President Academic.

Definitions

Family Emergency refers to a sudden event that requires the presence of the affected SLC member. Such events may include, but are not limited to, a death in the family, a family member's funeral, or a family member's medical emergency.

Formal Declaration means a signed written statement submitted by an Elected Official to the SU which they affirm to be honest and accurate.

General Faculties Council (GFC) refers to the governance body responsible for the academic affairs of the university, subject to the authority of the Board of Governors, as established in the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*.

GFC Term Excusal refers to SLC approval for an individual to miss all specified GFC meetings in a given semester.

Illness or Medical Emergency refers to an acute illness that prevents an SLC member from participating in their regular duties or an illness that would be contagious to other people, as well as an acute injury or illness that poses an immediate risk to one's life or long term health. The Students' Union may ask for supporting documentation to confirm repeated absences excused on the basis of illness or medical emergencies.

Required Course Component refers to a scheduled course component that directly contributes to one's grade in a course, including mandatory labs, tutorials, and exams. Study groups, review sessions, optional tutorials and field trips are not included in this definition. Supporting documentation is required to demonstrate that a course component is required.

Religious Convictions refers to a demonstrable religious responsibility or obligation, such as participation in a ceremony or religious holiday.

SU Business refers to instances or occasions where a faculty representative attends an event or represents the SU in an official capacity as part of one's roles and responsibilities as an SLC member.

Authority

- 1 (1) Section 93(3) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act legislates that the Students' Union shall provide for the administration of student affairs at the University of Calgary, including the development and enforcement of rules relating to student affairs and the promotion of the general welfare of the students.
 - (2) Article VI, Section B of the Constitution establishes the Students' Legislative Council (SLC) as the policy making body of the Students' Union.
- 2 (1) The Union Bylaw states that the roles and responsibilities of a faculty representative include representing student constituents of their faculty on university committees.
- 3 (1) Students' Union faculty representatives are considered appointed members on the University of Calgary GFC under section 23(d) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act.
 - (2) One faculty representative from each faculty and school is appointed to sit on GFC during each academic term.

Purpose

- 4 (1) The purpose of this policy is to:
 - (a) Emphasize the importance of GFC attendance; and
 - (b) Ensure reasonable student representation on GFC.

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- 5 (1) The Students' Union believes that:
 - (a) Student involvement on GFC has a significant impact on the quality of education and student experience at the University of Calgary; and
 - (b) Faculty representative attendance and participation on GFC is essential for undergraduate student perspectives and concerns to be presented to the university's highest governing academic body.

Faculty Representative Duties & Responsibilities

- 6 (1) All SLC members shall be responsible for:
 - (a) Actively participating in General Faculties Council Caucus discussions; and
 - (b) Consulting with students within their faculty on matters of academic importance being addressed at GFC.

- 7 (1) One faculty representative from each faculty shall be designated to sit on GFC each term.
 - (a) In faculties where there is only one faculty representative on SLC, that individual shall be designated to sit on GFC.
 - (b) In faculties where there are multiple faculty representatives on SLC, those faculty representatives must come to an agreement regarding who shall be designated to sit on GFC each term at least ten business days prior to the first GFC meeting in a given term.
 - (i) In the event that faculty representatives are unable to come to an agreement and one or more is ineligible for a GFC Term Excusal from SLC, SLC shall appoint a Faculty Representative to sit on GFC for the given term by a simple majority vote.
 - (ii) If all representatives in a given faculty are eligible for a GFC Term Excusal and none are able to attend, they shall come to an agreement on who will be the GFC designate, and one term excusal motion shall be put forward for that individual.
 - (c) Regardless of if a GFC designate has been excused from attending a GFC meeting, all designates are expected to review distributed GFC Caucus materials and assess the potential impact of GFC agenda items on the students they represent.
 - (d) In the event a GFC designate has questions or concerns regarding distributed materials for a meeting they are absent from, they shall arrange with the President or Vice-President Academic to speak at GFC on their behalf.

- (2) SLC may grant GFC Term Excusals for faculty representatives who are unable to attend regularly scheduled GFC meetings. Term Excusals may be granted for faculty representatives who are enrolled in a course that is required for the completion of their degree program and is not offered at another time.
 - (a) GFC Term Excusal requests for required course components can only be brought forth to SLC during the four weeks before the relevant course add/drop date.
 - (b) Faculty representatives shall provide SLC with sufficient supporting documentation outlining the basis for a GFC Term Excusal request.
 - (c) SLC shall decide each GFC Term Excusal by simple majority vote on a case by case basis.
 - (d) In the event that a faculty representative has a required course component which partially, but not substantially, conflicts with regularly scheduled GFC meetings, SLC may grant GFC Term Excusals for specific periods of time during GFC meetings, enabling a faculty representative to leave early or arrive late without penalty under section 11 of this policy.

- 8 (1) An excusal for a faculty representative's absence may be granted for an individual GFC Meeting for the following reasons:
 - (a) Illness or Medical Emergencies;

- (b) Family Emergencies;
- (c) Religious Convictions;
- (d) A Required Course Component; or
- (e) Reasonable accommodation as required or permitted by law or SU policy.

- (2) A faculty representative's absence from GFC will be formally excused if it meets the criteria of s. 8 (1) through the following process:
 - (a) Excusal requests must be submitted to the SU Policy Analyst either in advance of the GFC meeting or prior to the first SLC meeting that follows the GFC meeting.
 - (b) The faculty representative must submit a statement, in writing, which provides an explanation for their excusable absence, as well as any relevant documentation.
 - (c) The SU Policy Analyst will log and validate the excusal request, and respond to the faculty representative in writing to confirm that their absence has been excused.
 - (e) The SU Policy Analyst will communicate excused absences to the Vice President Academic in advance of the first SLC meeting following the GFC meeting.
- (3) Faculty representatives shall be required to provide supporting documentation outlining the basis for their absence if requesting a term excusal.
- (4) Faculty representatives will be required to sign a written, formal declaration outlining the basis for their absence if requesting an excusal from an individual GFC meeting, and may be asked to provide supporting documentation if more than two individual excusals from GFC meetings are requested in the same term.

9 (1) Attendance at GFC shall take precedence over other SU Business.

Accountability

- 10 (1) The Vice President Academic shall report GFC attendance at each SLC meeting directly following a regularly scheduled GFC meeting, or at the earliest reasonable opportunity.
- 11 (1) A faculty representative shall be subject to discipline as per the Union Bylaw by SLC if the member accumulates two unexcused absences at GFC meetings in either the Fall or Winter session.
 - (a) Faculty representatives may be considered absent in the event that they arrive late or leave a GFC meeting early without having obtained a GFC Term Excusal as outlined in section 7(2).
- (2) In accordance with the Union Bylaw, SLC may impose sanctions on a faculty representative for failing to fulfill the duties and responsibilities outlined in this policy at the next regular SLC meeting.

Amendment History: January 26, 2017 (74.09); March 21, 2017 (74.45); June 13, 2017 (75.05); January 30, 2018 (75.27), March 30, 2021 (78.34).