



Education Policy - Submitted by Dana McFarland, 2023 April

At the last VIUFA AGM, our rep to Education Policy Committee reported that this committee of FPSE had been struggling to meet quorum and define its mandate, and that consequently there was discussion at FPSE about merging the Education Policy and Professional and Scholarly Development Committees.

In November 2022 a joint meeting was held between EPC/PSDC, and at this meeting it was decided that the two committees would merge with a mandate that should be inclusive of both, and be more generally concerned with matters of academic governance. It was agreed that the new committee should be called the Academic Governance Committee (AGC).

The November meeting concluded with next steps that included drafting terms of reference for the merged committee, and also identifying near-term priorities and deliverables. There was much discussion about priorities and deliverables before arriving at two focus areas:

- 1) motivating and supporting participation in academic governance, and
- 2) microcredentials in relation to faculty work.

Ashley Blaquiere (NIC) was acclaimed chair of the new AGC, and at the March 2023 meeting the chairship was affirmed through a vote of the merged AGC membership.

In March 2023 a main item of business was to review and agree on terms of reference for AGC, for review at the FPSE AGM. The committee generally affirmed draft terms that were circulated in advance by the Chair, with agreement that a contextualizing definition of academic governance should be developed and included. As part of the proposed terms, each local will be represented, and the term of membership of each rep is expected to be two years.

Next steps and actions included that following formal establishment of the AGC, expected at the AGM, the work plan will continue to develop, and that, coming out of Fall 2022 meeting, an awareness campaign related to microcredentials is in development, with materials to be made available for local customization and use.

The creation of an AGC rep as part of our VIUFA executive is a matter for the membership to decide at our upcoming AGM. As we consider this matter, please note this observation by our past EPC rep, which I think holds also for the new AGC portfolio:

... future reps for this portfolio would be best suited to the role if they also sat on joint governance committees at VIU with access to first-hand information on policymaking

Gaps in policy, cases where policy is misapplied, or situational issues related to a pandemic etc., seem to take several years to identify, understand, and address, which makes tracking these difficult if there is annual turnover in this role.”

(EPC Report to VIUFA AGM, April 2022).