

MINUTES
Thursday, December 1, 2016
KNB 126, Main Campus 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Chair: L. Young
Recording Secretary: S. Larsen
Attendance:

Members Present

Abdelhafiz, A.
Afshar, A.
Aycock, J.
Azaiez, J.
Beattie, T.
Colpitts, G.
De Visscher, A.
Egberts, P.
Fang, Y.
Felske, L.
Goldstein, J.
Hagen, G.
Hansen, D.
Hansen, P.
Herremans, I. *for*
Balakrishnan, J.
Hossack, S.
Hughes, L.
Maher, D.
Matyas, J.
McCafferty, D.
Moorhead, G.

Norman, A.
Oddone Paolucci, E.
Offenbecker, A.
Radford, L.
Ryan, C.
Samavati, F.
Saweczko, A.
Sideris, M.
Srivastava, A.
St. George, S.
Thurbide, K.
Toohey, P.
Towers, F.
Ware, A.
Wen, J.F.
Wiley, P.
Wilson, R.
Winters, S.
Wright, M.
Wulff, D.
Yates, R.

Members Absent

Achari, G.
Braun, A.
Campbell, T.
Cannon, E.
Childs, S.
Colicos, M.
Curtin, S.
Dawson, P.
Donovan, E.
Fapojuwo, A.
Field, J.
Gadbois, D.
Hettiaratchi, P.
Hexham, I.
Jacobsen, M.
Johnston, R.

Kallos, M.
Kneebone, R.
Lenters, K.
Livesey, G.
Lucas, A.
Mains, P.
McDermid, G.
Mendaglio, S.
Monteyne, D.
Nelson, F.
Pexman, P.
Raffin Bouchal, S.
Sandalack, B.
Wright, J.
Zach, R.

**Faculty of Graduate Studies
Officers Present**

Nathoo, S.
Stiven, C.

**Faculty of Graduate Studies
Officers Absent**

Robinson, G.

Guests

P. Hartl
A. Visen-Singh

1.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chair called the meeting to order and asked for approval of the agenda:

MOTION: Moved /Seconded

That FGS Council Committee approve the agenda for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Council Meeting of December 1, 2016.

CARRIED

2.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**MOTION: Moved/Seconded**

That FGS Council Committee approve the minutes for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Council Committee Meeting of October 27, 2016.

CARRIED

3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters raised at this time.

4.0 Report from the Chair

The Chair provided a slide show to FGS Council members. Points on the following areas were noted:

- FGS Unit Review
 - This review is part of a regular, seven-year cycle.

- People have been invited to attend and provide feedback.
- FGS has requested feedback from the Unit Review Team regarding enrolment targets, funding practices, and quality assurance processes.
- Undergraduate Degrees
 - Institutions which can grant these degrees is changing (e.g. SAIT now offers undergraduate degrees).
 - If there is uncertainty or questions regarding the legitimacy of a degree, programs should contact their FGS Graduate Program Officer for information and assistance.
- Student Funding Issues – The Chair raised concerns regarding student funding for FGS Council members to consider. These issues will be worked on the new year. The following points were noted in the discussion:
 - Graduate students have raised concerns related to transparency and consistency in funding. They need to understand their financial situation prior to accepting admission.
 - Clarity around terminology is needed (e.g. *employment pay* versus *stipends*).
 - Issues to do with stipends need resolution.
 - We need to deal with issues of poor performance in appropriate ways (e.g. asking the student to withdraw).
 - Good use of scholarship dollars must be made.
 - There are two funding sources (i.e. Teaching Assistant money; Scholarship money) and their differences need consideration.
 - The Collective Agreement is in effect for students working as Teaching Assistants.
 - International differential is another area for upcoming discussion.
 - Situations are complex and there is not one way to work with funding. Considerable thought and discussion will be needed to solve these issues.
- Funding for 2017/18
 - Programs were asked to assume a -2% decrease in their Graduate Support Allocation. Scholarships may be exempt from this decrease.
 - Funding formula will stay the same, and the rule that the amount will not go up or down more than 10% will be maintained.
 - Graduate Support Allocation letters in be sent out in mid January.
 - Programs were asked to contact the Chair with any questions or for assistance in estimating their funding allocation.
- Welcomes and Goodbyes
 - Daniel Maher, new GPD for FISL and GSEA, was welcomed to FGS Council.
 - Alex De Visscher, GPD for ENCP, has accepted a position at Concordia University, and was sincerely thanked for his work with FGS.

5.0 Reports from the FGS Assistant/Associate Deans

5.1 Lisa Hughes, Associate Dean (Scholarships)

L. Hughes reported on the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Award adjudication application and adjudication process. In addition, the following information was provided:

- Applications for SSHRC have closed and adjudication is underway. 124 applications were received and the quota is 48.
- Graduate Award Competition is next with a February 1st deadline.
- Scholarship workshops have been taking place and the final one is on Tuesday, Dec. 6.

5.2 Dave Hansen, Assistant Dean (Supervisory Development)

Regarding workshops and assistance to supervisors and students, D. Hansen provided the following information:

- A guide has been created to assist supervisors in working successfully with students in labs. It was put together by a group of highly successful researchers and mentors at UCalgary. A workshop on this topic, with these researchers involved, will take place early in the new year.

- Workshops of how to assist students in distress have been well attended and more are being scheduled.
- Most PhD recipients will not work as academics, and D. Hansen, upon invitation, will attend program or faculty meetings to share information on how supervisors can mentor students considering other career options.

5.3 Jalel Azaiez, Associate Dean (Policy)

J. Azaiez reported:

- All programs now have proposed candidacy regulations submitted, though they are at varied stages of completion.
- Programs were encouraged to ask for assistance should it be needed in any way.

The Chair noted that the candidacy regulation development process began over two years ago and all programs need to be completed by the end of the 2016/17 academic year. Programs cannot admit PhD students if the program does not have approved candidacy regulations.

5.4 Robin Yates, Associate Dean (Student)

R. Yates reported on the status of academic misconduct cases and reminded FGS Council members to contact him if a case is brought forward.

6.0 REPORT FROM THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

S. Hossack reported that the GSA Executive has been working on and involved in the following:

- Strategy planning and the GSA Annual Survey, which closes at the end of January 2017.
- Projects such as "What is a Graduate Student?"
- Changes taking place on the advocacy front (e.g. Post-Secondary Learning Act).
- Tuition and fee discussions are underway and there are on-line opportunities for student input.
- Information to assist students in dealing with stress is being provided on-line.

FGS Council members were asked to direct students who are struggling (e.g. academically, financially) to the GSA as they will offer support.

7.0 REPORT FROM THE GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

The Chair reported that results of the Eyes High consultation was discussed and safety information on winter driving was provided at the November 17th General Faculties Committee meeting.

8.0 REPORT FROM THE GRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE

The Chair reported that the Combined MBA/NURS has been approved by APPC and that the Calendar Working Group is very busy right now.

9.0 QUESTION PERIOD

No questions were asked at this time.

10.0 NEW BUSINESS

10.1 MBA MPlan Combined Program Proposal – M. Wright

Documents for review were circulated with the agenda.

M. Wright explained that the MBA/MPLAN is one in a series of joint programs with the MBA and provided a brief overview of the proposal.

MOTION: Moved/Seconded

That the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) Council recommend the creation of a combined Master of Planning/Master of Business Administration (MPlan/MBA) degree, to be offered jointly by the Faculty of Environmental Design and the Haskayne School of Business, effective September 2017, as set out in the proposal provided to the committee.

CARRIED

10.2 Delegated Admissions for Externally Funded Students – L. Young

Documents for review were circulated with the agenda.

L. Young explained the background of delegated admissions for externally funded students, and then requested feedback and questions. The following points were noted in the discussion:

- Situations for some externally funded students are very clear, however, for others they are not and problem situations have arisen. Verifying student funding can be challenging.
- With the proposed method of handling externally funded students, FGS would never admit a student which the program did not want. Programs would send FGS applications of any students they are interested in who will be externally funded. A Graduate Program Officer and Associate Dean would review each application, and send it back to the program with information gained and admission recommendations. FGS is likely in the best situation to verify some funding information. This is the same process as for low GPA admissions, only with different context, information and documentation.
- The goal is to provide and assist GPDs and programs by doing a double check to avoid fraudulent documents and poorly administered funding situations.
- If a student is not sponsored or if their funding is unstable, FGS would not recommend admission. If the program wanted to accept the student after this recommendation was received they would need to confirm their ability to backfill funds.
- Admission letters will still come from the programs and conditional letters of admission will remain as they are.
- With these admissions coming through FGS, expertise will be developed regarding the types of documentation which can be expected from different groups of potential students.
- FGS assumes responsibility if problems arise following an admission it has recommended.
- Suggestion was made to add "This is a change in policy" to the draft letter.
- If we succeed in admitting students who are adequately funded we don't need to worry about how to handle loss of funding.

Admissions for self-funded students and circumstances for acceptance will be discussed in 2017.

10.3 Future Grad Students' Webpace –P. Hartl /A. Visen-Singh

P. Hartl and A. Visen-Singh thanked everyone who worked with the webpace development team to test aspects of the new Future Grad Students' Webpace and provide feedback. A prototype of the webpace, presenting the user perspective, was shown. The following points were noted from the presentation and related discussion:

- Each program will be asked to identify 3 – 5 programs related to their own to be listed on their webpage. Reciprocally, their program will be included on the web pages of the identified programs.
- Through interviews with supervisors it was determined that the supervisor pages need to contain quality content, be simple to complete, provide prompts for updates/changes, and have the adjustability to add specific information.
- Due to malware issues students will not be able to upload their CV.
- FGS will be responsible for making calendar changes as required to this website.
- Typical funding packages will be included and FGS will request an update each year.
- The website will be fully mobile accessible, and a view of this was demonstrated.
- Yearly updates will be required to keep the website current. Communications and calendar staff will need to spend significant time on this year each year.
- It will be possible to make urgent updates.
- Given that the new website is cloud based, changes cannot be simply lifted and applied to existing

websites. Each website must be rebuilt from the beginning.

Information was provided on what will be required of programs by the end of January 2017.

- A template will be sent out to GPDs in mid-December with program specific information entered for program review and completion as needed.
- GPAs will be sent this information as well, but GPDs will need to sign off on the content.
- Information requested will include:
 - Description of each degree offered and how they differ
 - Program highlights
 - List of related degree programs (3-5)
 - List of real world applications connected to the program
 - List of research keywords related to program.

FGS will follow-up with supervisors in early 2017 to gather information for the Supervisor Detail pages.

10.3 Feedback on Supervisory Renewal – L. Young

All information received from an anonymous survey on Supervisory Renewal process was included in the meeting package. This feedback showed it was a mixed experience for Graduate Program Directors. A small group of people, including D. Hansen, L. Young and a few people who met with a large number of supervisors will discuss the input and decide on how to go forward with the supervisory renewal process. The goals are for the process to be useful and for people to be prepared to do their part.

The Chair requested that anyone who indicated that a formal review was required on the Supervisory Renewal Form to please contact her.

10.4 CGPSS Program Level Results – L. Young

The Chair provided a slide show with information on the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey. Data, provided by Office of Institutional Analysis, will be sent to programs. The hope is to provide meaningful, helpful data showing results over time, as well as in comparison to U15 universities.

10.6 Student Issues – R. Yates/J. Dixit

R. Yates, FGS Associate Dean (Student) and J. Dixit (FGS Graduate Academic and International Specialist) shared information on how they work together to handle student issues. They also reviewed the metrics and information gained over the last year in their work with students. The following points were noted:

- Of 107 students assisted, about one half were PhD with the other half split between thesis and course-based Masters.
- Half of the students assisted were international, which is significant given that only one quarter of graduate students are international.
- Most common student concern relates to supervision while other concerns include: leave of absence advising, funding concerns, academic misconduct, program advising, and the option to voluntarily withdraw.
- With experience, processes are now being created which follow due diligence and focus on achieving the best possible outcome.
- Council members were encouraged to call R. Yates or J. Dixit to discuss any student situations.
- Wellness informs and is informed by academic outcomes. The Academic Performance Review was suggested as a good place to start a discussion with a student.
- The most difficult cases involve intellectual property disputes, and meetings (e.g. with VPR office) are underway to discuss these issues.
- A request was made to send anonymous examples of confidentiality and IP contracts to R. Yates.

11.00 Scholarships

Information on a new scholarship was provided to FGS Council members for information in the meeting package.

12.0 ADJOURNMENT

The Chair concluded the meeting by inviting all FGS Council members to attend the FGS Open House on Wednesday, December 14th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.