

Summary of a Meeting of the
 COUNCIL OF THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
 Held in the Edmonton Clinical Health Academy, Room L1 490
 Wednesday, October 17, 2012, 2:00 pm

AttendanceEx Officio

M Shirvani, Dean & Chair
 J Harrington, Assoc Dean
 P Melançon, Assoc Dean

R Poliquin, Vice-Dean
 L Rose, Manager, HR and Finance

Department Representatives

A Palmer, Anthropology
 S Harris, Art & Design
 D Stuart, Biochemistry
 Heather McDermid, Biological Sci
 D Deephouse, Business PhD
 T Simmen, Cell Biology
 K Cadien, Chem & Mat Engineering
 M McDermott, Chemistry
 J Sander, Computing Science
 C Flores Mir, Dentistry
 T Chacko, Earth & Atmospheric Sci
 A Commons, East Asian Studies
 B Humphreys, Economics
 R McKay, Educational Studies
 G Jamieson, Elementary Education
 C Harol, English and Film Studies
 Y d'Entremont, Faculte Saint-Jean
 D Sweeney, History & Classics
 D Williamson, Human Ecology
 S Smallwood, Humanities Computing
 R Brown, Law

M Mackey, Library & Info Studies
 D Beck, Linguistics
 T Hillin, Mathematical & Statistical Sci
 S Hughes, Medical Genetics
 D Burshtyn, Med Microbiol & Immun
 A Nahachewsky, Mod Lang & Cultur
 H Bashaw, Music
 P Paul, Nursing
 S Persad, Pediatrics
 E Posse de Chaves, Pharmacology
 A El-Kadi, Pharm & Pharmaceut Sci
 S Petersen, Phys Ed and Rec
 L Kline, Physiology
 T Spalding, Psychology
 G Jhangri, Pubic Health Science
 F Lifshitz, Religious Studies
 M Horn, Secondary Education
 G Thomas, Secondary Education
 K Haggerty, Sociology
 P Schneider, Speech Path & Audio
 T Spalding, Psychology

Graduate Program Administrator Representatives

J Forslund, Agriculture, Food & Nutri Sci

Graduate Student Representatives

A Bernier, GSA President
 N Andrews, GSA VP Academic
 B Epperson, GSA VP Labour Relations
 A Abdelmoneim, Pharmaceutical Sci
 C Cortes, Elec and Comp Engineering
 J Lee, Medical Genetics
 J Meston, Educ Policy Studies
 T Paton, Comm & Tech MACT

P Alexander Reid, Phys Ed & Recreation
 A Schlacht, Cell Biology
 A Shchepetkina, Earth & Atmosph Sci
 J Stolar, Renewable Resources
 J Strautman, Neuroscience
 N Syskova, Modern Lang and Cultural Studies
 S Varga, Human Ecology
 M Zeng, English and Film Studies

Guests/Observers

E French, Linauistics
 T Checkmita, Psyciatry

1. Approval of the Agenda

A presentation from Acting Provost, Dr. M. Ferguson-Pell was added as agenda item #2. The agenda was approved with the revision.

2. Improvements to the Graduate Student Experience – Martin Ferguson –Pell
 Acting Provost, M Ferguson-Pell explained the general concept that he has in mind for improving the Graduate Student Experience. He noted that FGSR has implemented improvements over the past 5-6 year and stated that the proposal for new improvements were augmenting what is already in place and not focused toward starting over.

Consultation will occur over the next couple of months to determine what, if any, administrative aspects should be delegated by FGSR to the teaching faculties. In particular, changes to the administration of student admissions may be considered. He noted that the consultative process may indicate that no changes are needed.

FGSR is responsible for maintaining the quality standards of graduate education at the University and the FGSR will continue to monitor this. Quality measures exist but may need to be sharpened. A working group of the FGSR Council will be established to review and adjust outcome measures for measuring the quality of graduate education at the University. These measures will need to include immediate measures, as well as longer term (i.e. success in Tri-Council competitions, graduate student publications and career success of alumni from U of A Graduate Programs).

The University will also focus recruitment efforts at the teaching Faculty level to recruit top graduate students to the University.

Additional career programming for non-academic career paths will also be developed for graduate students.

Catherine Swindlehurst has been seconded to the Provost's Office to manage the consultative process on improvements to the graduate student experience and she will be meeting with faculties and departments to discuss these ideas further.

Discussion regarding the possible improvements followed.

- Concerns regarding downloading of work to departments as a result of a delegation of duties were raised.
- Comments regarding a memo that was sent to Faculty Deans from the Acting Provost were shared. It was agreed, that as only some Graduate Coordinators had seen the memo, a copy of the memo would be circulated to FGSR Council.
- Concerns regarding the current level of TA and RA allocations to departments, as the amounts have remained mostly static since 2006 regardless of changes to program enrolments.
- Concerns were raised regarding the consultative process and the inconsistency in messaging to date regarding the project and the proposed future role of the FGSR. A member asked where this proposal was coming from, what the goal was and what the metrics for doing so were based on.
- Concerns were raised regarding the impact on disciplinary cases if the role of the FGSR was changed.
- Concerns were raised regarding possible variations in standards and measures for students if some faculties were exempted from FGSR oversight.

3. Approval of the Minutes

- a) September 19, 2012 Minutes
Moved by R Poliquin, seconded by L Kline.

The minutes were approved.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Selection of the new Members of the Academic Appeals Committee

48 valid ballots were cast at the FGSR Council meeting of October 17, 2012. There were also two blank ballot papers. No hanging chads or other irregularities were observed.

The four new members of the FGSR AAC are:

Dr. David Beck (Linguistics)
Dr. Anne Commons (East Asian Studies)
Dr. Brenda Spencer (Educational Policy Studies)
Dr. David Stuart (Biochemistry)

6. Report of the Graduate Students' Association

The pre-circulated report of the GSA was presented. There were no questions from Council members.

7. Draft discussion paper on time to candidacy rules

J Harrington presented the draft discussion paper on time to candidacy (see attached). She explained that the paper is based on a review of peer policies on this subject. Statistics show that many students do not sit the candidacy exam until years 5 and 6. However, the current FGSR policy states that "The candidacy examination is normally held within two years of the commencement of the program..."

A period of questions and answers followed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

INFORMATION ITEMS

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