

(Approved March 30, 2011)

## BROCK UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting of February 16, 2011 Sankey Chamber 2:00 pm

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**Present:** D. Antwi-Amoabeng, K. Arnell, D. Butz, L. Duhaime, C. Federici, M. Feldman, H. Fuks (for J. Yuen), D. Hayes, M. Hennigar, H. Junke, R. Kuchapski, I. Makus, J. McNamara, C. Merriam (also representing R. Parker), B. Minor, T. Ogwang (for R. Dimand), G. Pepper, M. Plyley, M. Richards, M. Rose (Chair), S. Rothstein, K. Samokhin, D. Samson, C. Santos, S. Sekel, S. Tilley, C. Ugulini (Admin Support), S. Vint, M. Winter (for S. Houghten)

**Regrets:** J. Allard, M. Berman, F. Fueten, S. Houghten, R. Parker, M. Webber

**Programs not Represented:** Biotechnology, Earth Sciences, English, Philosophy

1. Approval of Agenda - MOVED (D. Butz/S. Tilley) that the Agenda of February 16, 2011 be approved as amended, noting reordering of items as follows: 4. GSA Report; 5. Director's Report; 6. Dean's Report. It was also requested that the topic of averaging be added under Agenda Item 7. **CARRIED**
2. Approval of Minutes of January 26, 2011 - MOVED (S. Tilley/M. Hennigar) that the Minutes of the meeting of November 24, 2010 be approved. **CARRIED**
3. Business Arising from Minutes – Information provided by the GSA with regard to the Conference Assistance Bursary was circulated.
4. GSA Report
  - a) Daniel Antwi-Amoabeng noted that the GSA travel bursary is retroactive for this year.
  - b) GSA is working with Graduate Studies on their agreement. Program-based focus group discussions have been arranged to identify information that may be an impediment to graduate students and to identify the University's responsibilities to the GSA and the GSA's responsibilities to the University. Daniel has agreed to stay on with the new Executive to see this agreement through completion. The Dean noted the challenging learning curve due to a changing executive every year and expressed thanks to Daniel for his willingness to be resourced during the transition.
5. Director's Report
  - a) Gail Pepper made reference to an email sent to GPDs regarding FHB evaluation changes which will be implemented effective Spring 2011. Under the new evaluation option, A+

will be attached to grades of 90-100 for graduate courses. The new Credit/No-Credit grading option for designated graduate courses will also be implemented. Programs are asked to advise G. Pepper if they have identified courses to be evaluated using this Credit (CR)/No-Credit (NC) option. Heather Junke will add details to the FGS E-Bulletin.

- b) Course authorization screen: We are currently set up to display all the courses the student has completed. GPDs should let Gail know if they would like the undergraduate courses suppressed.
- c) G. Pepper noted that Brock undergraduates moving on to Brock graduate study often assume that the same academic policies and regulations hold at the graduate level as they did for the undergraduate level. GPDs could mention to students that they should become aware of the rules and regulations around graduate studies.
- d) G. Pepper has had a follow-up meeting with Finance regarding assessing fees and getting cheques to students. Please pass on any concerns you have with Gail and she will work with Finance to resolve any issues.
- e) Applications & Admissions: We have supplemented our staff with temporary short-term help to keep the admissions process moving. Please keep G. Pepper informed of any concerns. We are fine-tuning our mail merge process, and as we migrate towards an electronic process, we hope to remove possibilities of human error.
- f) Calculation of undergraduate admissions average: As revised by SGSC/Senate, programs are receiving admission averages calculated on courses completed during the last two years of full-time undergraduate study. Discussion ensued on problems encountered with this change, including one Faculty being in the middle of their recruiting program when the change was implemented. Dean Rose noted that the changes evolved from GPDs expressing concern that 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year courses were counted in the averages, and that we may have to look at anomalies and difficulties encountered this year.
- g) In response to an inquiry regarding the number of funded PhD students, Gail Pepper provided the following information for noting in the Minutes: MTCU allocated target for PhD domestic eligible is 50.83.

6. Dean's Report

- a) The Dean's February 2011 Update was circulated with the Agenda and Dean Rose drew attention to the upcoming events of Mapping the New Knowledges 2010-2011. The third Research Café, Connecting to the World: International Research at Brock is scheduled on March 3 at 4:30 pm in Pond Inlet. The online submissions process is now open for the April 14 Oral and Poster Presentations all-day event. Please urge students to consider presenting. A completed research project is not necessary in order to participate; students may present on work in progress.
- b) The Dean noted that the shortlist for the Dean of Graduate Studies position has been publicized. GPDs are urged to voice their recommendations to the Search Committee.

- c) Working Groups: A number of working groups have been struck under Dean Rose's leadership, the most recent being:
- Working Group on Exit Requirements/Thesis Completion (A. Reynolds, M. Berman, S. Rothstein, S. Sekel, D. Butz, M. Pyley, C. Santos) has had their first meeting, sharing documents on different processes, and is planning to prepare a document featuring good practices and recommendations. If GPDs have exit procedures written for their Program Handbooks, it would be helpful if these could be sent to the Committee.
  - Working Group on Internationalization and Graduate Studies was established (S. Sekel, M. Richards, D. Hayes, R. Kuchapski, C. Federici, M. Winter). The first meeting of this group will be arranged shortly.
  - The Working Group on TA Placement for Interdisciplinary Students will discuss mechanisms or practices regarding the placement of graduate TAs who are registered in Interdisciplinary programs.
- d) New program initiatives in the Graduate sector in the near future: The President would like to see 5-6 new PhD programs developed over the next five years. We need to think about resources especially given budgetary constraints. The Government of Ontario will be looking at everyone to reduce expenses and there is no talk of raising tuition. Yet the university wishes to expand graduate programming, and probably needs to, since we have many programs now that are at capacity. New initiatives might include, in addition to new PhD programs, new kinds of Master's programs, particularly of an applied nature (cost recovery, course-based programs?), graduate diplomas (equivalent to approximately ½ degree) are possibilities. The Dean is having a document compiled listing of graduate diplomas currently offered as a way of stimulating thinking in this regard. We need to think about how the graduate sector needs to evolve in the future in positive ways and the development of Faculty strategic plans that will include highly developed thinking and involvement in Graduate Studies.
7. General Discussion Items, as proposed by Members:
- a) Averaging – addressed in Director's Report, 5(f).
8. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.