

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**Minutes of the October 23, 2006 meeting**

**In attendance:** M. Richards (Chair), M. Rose, V. Woloshyn, C. McCormick, A. Shome, C. Burton, K. Jaipal-Jamani, M. Kropf, A. Domanski, B. Jeynes, G. Pepper.

**Regrets:** Steve Graham.

**1. Approval of the Minutes of the September 25, 2006 Meeting**

- It was **MOVED** (Shome/Jeynes) that the minutes of the September 25, 2006 meeting be approved.

**CARRIED**

**2. Business Arising from the Minutes/Chair's Report**

- Both the Library and the Calendar Review Sub-Committees have been set up and meetings for the Fall term have been scheduled.
- Graduate student [firstname.lastname@brocku.ca](mailto:firstname.lastname@brocku.ca) email addresses should be completed within the next two weeks. Graduate Studies will notify graduate students and Graduate Program Directors when completed.

**3. Dean of Graduate Studies Report**

**A. Appraisals**

History and Geography consultants' visits are scheduled for early November and early December, respectively. Next funded (by government) new program will probably be PhD Humanities, which may be ready for submission to OCGS by spring 2007.

**B. CGPSS**

The Graduate and Professional Student Survey will be administered in all Ontario Universities during the Winter term – approx. February. Pat Beard will be managing the survey itself. G. Pepper and Dean Rose met with him about the exercise and agreed on certain procedures. A faculty committee will be struck (as with NSSE) to look at the questionnaire, oversee the process, and then, most important, recommend ways of organizing and interpreting the data and recommending to SGSC policy changes on the basis of the survey's findings.

**C. Graduate Council**

The revised discussion paper from the Working Group on Governance (on the Consultant's Report) has been tabled at Graduate Council and will reach SGSC

after its next meeting, where that report will be discussed. The recommendation has not changed, although there is a recognition that the decision-making bodies of the university may wish to opt for “School” rather than “Faculty” – but the argument for a GS “faculty unit” is made much more strenuously in light of the need for Brock to generate respectability and reputation for its Graduate Studies offering both within the academy amongst the wider public, from whence our future grad students will come.

#### D. COU

Executive Heads Retreat of September 29/06 - Minister Bentley spoke. The Ministry is firm on its graduate growth targets but the Minister indicated that he will not claw back unused spaces at the end of the 2-year period and redistribute those not filled. On the other hand, if we don't fill our places we don't get the graduate student money and the capital expansion money attached to graduate growth.

The Minister will not allow Visa students to be counted towards the graduate growth figures (STEM) disciplines, because the government wants these places to be filled by Ontario (or Canadian) students to demonstrate accessibility to the Ontario public.

The Executive Heads are worried about increased accessibility demands at the UG as well as G level impinging on the quality mission of their universities. The Minister thinks the public has no appetite for more than \$6.5B going to the universities during this government's terms but will keep trying (vis-a-vis his cabinet colleagues).

A Graduate Expansion Task Force of COU to continue to work on some of the outstanding issues has been struck, chaired by Paul Davenport (UWO). The Dean will serve on that committee as the OCGS representative.

#### E. OCGS:

OGS money has not increased but there are more applicants for it, so there will be a flood of applicants and a lower rate of success for applicants. OCGS has been trying to get action on this, but it is stuck at the Ministerial level. There may be quotas in place next year to deal with this, involving university ranking of all OGS applications that come forward from departments.

Presentation by Susan Pfeiffer of U of T on European Conference - Transatlantic Dialogue on Doctoral Education. It is clear that European Universities are moving towards a North American organizational model, involving increasing research degrees, more formal supervision of graduate research programs, appointing Deans of Graduate Studies, and setting up Graduate Schools – they are looking at requiring a finished Master's (2 year) to be followed by a 3-year PhD

program - five year model in accordance with Bologna protocols now under development.

#### F. Graduate Expansion at Brock

The Ontario government believed that the double cohort population and increasing participation rates in general would lead to a need for more graduate school spaces starting in 2006-7. So they have promised (to the public -- and they are getting ready for an election next fall) the creation of 12,000 new graduate school places in Ontario between approximately 2006 and 2011.

Universities were asked to request the number of student places they would be able to fill. These graduate students would be fully funded by the government -- "fully funded" means that there would be no unfunded BIUs as per the old formulae -- which made the spaces desirable. After each university made its proposal, the Ministry would divide up the available positions. There would be two rounds of bidding (one for 2006/7 and 2007/8 and a second for 2008/9 and 2009/10).

For the period 2006/7 and 2007/8 Brock was awarded a total of 318 FTE spaces (FT students = 1 FTE, and PT students = .3 FTE) in the government-funded programs. By this is meant an increase of 318 new FTE enrollments over our 2004/5 numbers. We have just been asked to bid for 2008/9 and 2009/10 spaces -- how much we want to increase over the 318 FTE spaces that we have currently been awarded (estimated 3% per year for each of those two years).

Forecasting enrollments is a very difficult thing to do on the graduate side because the admissions have to correspond to course and supervisory "vacancies" and because the programs make the admissions cut, not the central admissions body (in this case Graduate Studies). On the undergraduate side, the Registrar's office admits students directly, but on the graduate side it is a much more complex process.

The bad news is that although our graduate enrollments increased in 2006-7 as of fall 2006 (that is w/o January/Winter registrations), we have not increased our numbers in these funded programs, in the way that the Ministry counts the bodies, in 2006-7, and in fact have declined by 10 FTE positions (over the base year 04/05). Hence we still have the balance of 318 FTE spaces to make up after we take into consideration what we already grew in 2005-6, a year which counts towards that target as well (the base year being 2004-5).

We have been given clear direction. The President wants Brock to achieve its Ministry target by fall 2007. This is because he believes that the university will be strengthened in fact and reputationally by an increase in the grad student population and an intensified "graduate and research culture." There is also considerable money on the table for graduate growth which the university feels it

needs to access. There is the revenue attached to graduate enrollments on a per FTE basis, but in addition the Ministry has tied capital funding to graduate growth. Capital funding will be made available on the basis of graduate enrollment figures -- and this money rolled out over 25 years would amount to something like \$9M in capital projects support. In a university strapped for space, esp. research space, this is pretty high stakes.

Whether there is a "profit" to be made on graduate enrollments in any clear and direct way is a good question. We pay out a great deal in fellowships and support, and that will counteract to a large extent what we bring in. However a healthy graduate culture does contribute to a healthier research funding picture as grants are easier to attract, especially in the sciences and related fields, if graduate student "training" is involved. There is also the reputational gain that comes from being known as having a strong and vibrant graduate culture. Many students come to Brock because Brock professors are known by professors from elsewhere who send their students to specific Brock professors for specific kinds of study. But the majority of students come to us through direct applications, and they tend to have learned of Brock in other ways, through the web or through publicity materials leading them to the web for further info.

In looking for graduate growth space, we will have to work with programs and Faculty Deans, using current numbers, flow-through and capacity (which has resource questions attached to it, of course) in trying to identify places where there can be growth. There certainly are programs where there is room for more students; in other programs there may not be room for expansion. We'll have to work on this to the best of our combined abilities.

In Graduate Studies we are continuing and expanding a campaign of great intensity using advertising materials developed for this purpose, contacting students by direct recruiting, following up on inquiries to the university re: graduate programs, and working with a number of strategies and incentives to encourage programs where there is space to find and accept more qualified students between November and May/June this academic year.

#### G. Proof of English Language Proficiency

Dean Rose reported that Dean Kusy has sent an email expressing concern that the required score on the ITEL P test as Proof of English Language Proficiency is too high for the International Cohort students and he requests that the SGSC review this as part of their review of the English Language Proficiency Faculty Handbook regulation.

G. Pepper will contact J. Sivell the creator of the ITEL P test and ask him for comment/information regarding the reliability/validity of the test and the equating of the ITEL P test score with other tests of English Language Proficiency e.g. TOEFL.

#### H. Course Availability

Dean Rose also noted that at the request of Associate Dean Mike Plyley the SGSC should look at the issue of graduate course availability across graduate programs.

#### 4. **2007-08 Graduate Calendar Submissions**

- The revised format of the submissions was handed out to members for their information.

#### 5. **Faculty Handbook – Proposed Revision, Sections 1 and 2**

- G. Pepper provided committee members with a proposed draft of sections 1 and 2 of the Graduate Studies section of the Faculty Handbook for review and discussion at the next meeting.
- G. Pepper also provided the committee with background information re: admission requirements at other Ontario universities.

The meeting was adjourned.