

(Approved January 25, 2012)

BROCK UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of December 14, 2011
2:00-3:30, Sankey Chamber

Present: K. Arnell, J. Atkinson, M. Berman, U. Brand, D. Butz, C. Federici, M. Hennigar, H. Junke, N. Klentrou, R. Kuchapski, H. McGarrell, J. Mercier, C. Merriam, B. Minor, T. Ogwang (for R. Dimand), G. Pepper, M. Plyley (Chair), M. Richards, S. Rothstein, K. Samokhin, D. Samson, C. Santos, S. Sekel, A. Smith, C. Tardif-Williams, S. Tilley, C. Ugolini (Admin Support), S. Vint (also representing J. Allard), M. Webber, M. Winter, J. Yuen

Guest: Barbara McDonald, Library

Regrets: J. Allard, R. Dimand, L. Duhaime, M. Feldman

Programs not Represented: Applied Disability Studies

1. **Approval of Agenda** - **MOVED** (S. Sekel/M. Richards) that the Agenda of December 14, 2011 be approved.

CARRIED

2. **Approval of Minutes of November 9, 2011** - **MOVED** (C. Merriam/D. Butz) that the Minutes of the meeting of November 9, 2011 be approved.

CARRIED (3 abstentions)

3. **Business Arising from Minutes**

We plan to have a link from Graduate Studies to Research.

4. **Dean's Report – Questions on circulated material**

The Dean's December Update, circulated prior to the meeting, provided an update on the IQAP, the roll out of electronic thesis program, new thesis defence spaces, enrolment target consultations, the 2011-2012 Mapping the New Knowledges Graduate Student Conference, and the Professional Development Workshops.

5. **Director's Report – Questions on circulated material**

The Director's Report, circulated prior to the meeting, provided an update on recruitment, applications and admissions, scholarships and awards, graduate student funding and Calendar submissions.

- S. Sekel asked if the FGS would re-look at admissions offers already processed for 2011-12 regarding the recently decided decrease in minimum average from 83% to 80% for any potential DGS Entrance Scholarships. G. Pepper's office will revise any letters.
- Comments with regard to TAs: one GPD noted that they would like to have a choice as to who gets TAs and does not feel that every applicant is deserving of TA support. Another noted that some students coming in do not meet the qualifications stated on CUPE postings. G. Pepper indicated that there is some flexibility with Graduate Assistantships. Some programs use Term 1 to get a sense of the student's capability and offer them something in the next term, or find something else for them. **ACTION: Dean Plyley will look into the issue of TA opportunities and report back to Graduate Council.**

6. **GSA Report** – no GSA report was presented

7. **General Discussion as Proposed by Members**

- a) ***Whither Graduate Council?*** – The Dean reported that some GPDs are anxious about the role of Graduate Council. Prior to 2003, Graduate Council existed as the advisory group to the Dean of Graduate Studies, and was used by the Dean to develop policy. SGSC is now responsible for the development of policy, on recommendation from Graduate Council. The former Dean, Marilyn Rose, used Working Groups of Graduate Council to assist in developing policy for recommendation to SGSC. SGSC currently has three sub-committees, one of which is the Policy Sub-Committee. Following discussion on policy development, it was decided that two members of Graduate

Council will be elected to serve on the SGSC Policy Sub-Committee commencing January 2012 for the term January 2012 to May 2012. Gail Pepper will send an email to GPDs inviting them to forward their names if they wish to serve on this sub-committee. The nominations will then be circulated so that Graduate Council members can vote to elect two representatives. The Dean would like to have a report of the representatives of the Policy Sub-Committee as a standing item on the Graduate Council agenda to promote the two-way flow of ideas and issues between the SGSC and Graduate Council.

A comment was made that there needs to be more communication with GPDs on issues such as gradebook, and that it would have been useful for feedback to be encouraged before changes were implemented to the IT pieces of admissions/applications.

It was also mentioned that it would be useful for Graduate Studies to offer information workshops more than once a semester, and that the past focus groups were a very useful means of sharing ideas and learning about best practices in other programs. **ACTION: Dean Plyley will come up with a communications plan that is workable.** It was also suggested that the agenda for SGSC meetings be shared with members of Graduate Council. **ACTION: G. Pepper will arrange for future agendas to be circulated along with SGSC Minutes.**

- b) **Enrolment Planning /Recruitment** - The Dean's Office is in the process of scheduling enrolment planning meetings to establish targets for next year. Tammy Woodhouse-Gilby has been communicating with programs regarding ongoing recruitment throughout the application and admission cycle. FGS routinely sends representatives to Grad Fairs and some units have sent representatives on their own. This year Ingrid Makus and Danny Samson made a recruitment trip to Eastern Canada, meeting with chairs, faculty members and small classes who were genuinely interested in our programs and small class size format. They have continued to dialogue with many of the students they were in contact with. Dean Plyley reported that FGS has the funds to work with programs on recruitment initiatives.

The Dean referred to the section "New IQAP territory" on the Dean's Update December 2011. He has been asked by ARC to rank individuals nominated by programs as Internal Reviewers. In doing so, he has noticed on a number of webpages that faculty profiles had not been updated for some time. In terms of recruitment, our profiles need to be updated, and the Dean asked for ideas on updating faculty profiles. Some departments are able to update their own webpages, though it was pointed out that not everyone has the IT access required to do this and that using a predesigned format is not always suitable. **ACTION: The Dean will address the issue of faculty access to webpages with Philip Wright.**

8. Other Business – E-thesis Update and Future Plan

As of January 2014, Library and Archives Canada will no longer accept paper theses. Barbara McDonald, Associate University Librarian, reported on the Electronic Thesis Pilot Project 2010-11. Documentation was circulated prior to the meeting. Gail Pepper and Barbara McDonald co-chaired the project. The Faculty of Applied Health Sciences volunteered to participate in the Pilot Project to test the viability of a university-wide E-Thesis Program. 28 theses were submitted online, and as of December 8, had been viewed 925 times. Feedback from students who submitted an e-thesis was overall very positive. Phase 2 will begin in January 2012 for all graduate programs who are interested in becoming part of the pilot project, and it is expected that all will be on board by September 2012. Past theses have been digitized for inclusion in the Library's Digital Repository. Gail Pepper noted that information on the E-Thesis Project and E-Thesis Submissions process is available on the FGS website. Discussion followed with regard to MRPs. Library Archives does not receive MRPs, and this would have to be driven from a source other than the Library. Barbara McDonald indicated that supplemental files such as sound recordings will be experimented with in Phase 2 of the project. **Please contact Gail Pepper if you would like your program to be set up to participate.**

9. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.