

(Approved May 5, 2010)

BROCK UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of April 14, 2010 Sankey Chamber 2:00 pm

Present: K. Arnell, M. Berman, R. Dimand, F. Fueten, H. Fuks, A. Glazebrook, D. Hayes, J. Helleiner, J. Koustas, W. Mathie (for M. Hennigar), B. Minor, G. Pepper, M. Plyley, E. Robb, M. Rose (Chair), S. Rothstein, K. Samokhin, B. Seeber, S. Sekel, C. Ugulini (Recorder), M. Webber

Regrets: D. Butz, L. Boldt, L. Duhaime, M. Hennigar, M. Knuttila, V. Woloshyn

Programs not Represented: Applied Disability Studies, Biological Sciences, Biotechnology, Child & Youth Studies, Computer Science, Education, Geography, History, Popular Culture, Studies in Comparative Literatures & Arts

1. Dean Rose welcomed members and guest Jill Brindle, Manager of Student Development Centre Learning Skills Services, and introductions took place.
2. Approval of Agenda - **MOVED** (M. Webber/F. Fueten) that the Agenda of April 14, 2010 be approved. **CARRIED**
3. Approval of Minutes of March 3, 2010 - **MOVED** (K. Arnell/S. Sekel) that the Minutes of the meeting of March 3, 2010 be approved noting the following changes: J. Helleiner also represented the Critical Sociology program, and M. Webber should be added to the list of regrets.

CARRIED

4. Business Arising from the Minutes – None
5. Guest presentation by Jill Brindle, Manager, Learning Skills Service, Student Development Centre

Jill Brindle provided a detailed handout outlining writing support that is available to graduate students and talked about trends and directions that support for graduate students is taking in American and Canadian universities. Learning Skills Services offers tailored programming to support the needs of graduate students. Services are offered for individual students, groups of students, or professors. Learning Skills instructors have at least an MA degree.

Drop-in Service, located in the Learning Commons (ST 231), is operated on a first-come, first-served basis. These sessions are monitored by student staff who are trained in peer review and writing strategies. The hours of operation are Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am – 9:00 pm and Friday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm.

Jill noted that graduate students can request access to Essay-Zone on an individual basis, and that faculty can request specific workshop topics. A suggestion was forthcoming for a workshop on academic integrity for graduate students. Dean Rose noted that the Graduate Students Professional Development website, which lists all services/workshops offered to graduate

students, has been updated with a new format [www.brocku.ca/graduate-studies/current-students/professional-development].

6. Dean's Report

- a) Mapping the New Knowledges: On April 22, the full-day oral and poster presentations event will be held in Plaza levels 3 and 4. As well, the Graduate Students' Association will sponsor a professional skills workshop. Faculty are urged to attend.
- b) Our annual Graduate Student Awards and Donor Recognition Reception will take place on May 11 at 10:00 am – 12:00 noon in Pond Inlet. Again, we are hoping for a good turnout on the part of Graduate Program Directors or alternates from the various programs.
- c) New Graduate Supervisors Workshops: We are considering developing a series of two-hour workshops for faculty focusing on the supervisory experience. Please contact Dean Rose (mrose@brocku.ca) if you are interested in participating and what topics you would like to see developed.
- d) Issue of Professional Skills for Graduate Students: What kinds of skill development are necessary? How can they be offered? The FGS would like to hear from graduate faculty on this matter. Over 50% of graduate students do not go on to academia according to recent statistics. CAGS (Canadian Association for Graduate Studies) has reported that graduate students are asking for professional development in areas such as communications skills, presentation skills, time management and management skills including project management, teaching and knowledge transfer skills, and more clarification around ethics.
- e) Summer offerings: Dean Rose noted that there is a problem with no courses being offered in some programs in SP/SU sessions, and the FGS has received appeals to waive fees when this is the case. Students need to have something they can work on each term of the year and many, especially part-time students, are unable to maintain continuous registration if courses are not offered in the Spring term.
- f) Dean Rose indicated that we are under a great deal of pressure to meet our graduate enrolment targets. The President would like our 10/11 domestic eligible enrolment to at least match that achieved in 09/10. Two programs expressed concern that applications have not been processed in a timely way. The FGS will investigate those concerns. A question was forthcoming in terms of future recruitment as to whether we have a contingency plan for direct admission to the PhD bypassing MSc as is being done at other institutions for some programs. Dean Rose responded that the issue of direct admission to PhD programs is being dealt with by SGSC and will be brought to the next Senate meeting.
- g) Concern was expressed over funding packages and the shortfall in TA positions owing to budget cuts in the students' home Faculties. Dean Rose noted that she raised this issue in her meeting this morning with the VP Academic and hoped that additional funds could be found for TAships where admissions would be possible if more TAships were in place.

7. Director's Report

- a) G. Pepper reported that a survey will be going out to the graduate student body to determine what they would like to see offered in the way of Graduate Student Professional Development.

b) Scholarship competition results:

Vanier NSERC – 1 forwarded; unsuccessful
Vanier SSHRC – 2 forwarded, 2 successful

NSERC – Quota 18 + 1 Aboriginal (not awarded)

10 awarded:

- 6 CGS Master's
- 1 CGS Doctoral 3 years
- 3 PGS Doctoral 3 years

c) International Entrance Bursary Program: As a pilot program for 2010/11, thirty \$3,000 awards will be available to augment the existing funding package for incoming Master's students in funded programs. These will be distributed among Faculties, on a percentage basis determined by the number of funded programs they have that intake international master's students. GPDs will invite students to apply. Information and application will be sent to the GPDs.

d) G. Pepper noted problems with coding of extra courses. Courses which students are allowed to take above and beyond their degree that are not related to their degree should be coded as extra courses. Students who have been taking courses within the degree should not be coded as extra. The language surrounding this has been amended for more clarity.

8. GSA Report

On behalf of Ellen Robb who left the meeting prior to adjournment, Dean Rose reported that GSA is sponsoring a professional development workshop at Mapping the New Knowledges conference on April 22. Ellen has 21 days left in her term as President of GSA, and they are in the middle of elections. Dean Rose applauded Ellen for her outstanding year and accomplishments as President of the GSA and also as a researcher.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.