

**Summary Minutes of a Meeting of the
COUNCIL OF THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
Held in the Council Chamber, University Hall
Friday, February 13, 2009, 2:00 pm**

Attendance

M Shirvani in the Chair P Schiavone
M Allen

Department Representatives

N Kav, Agriculture, Food & Nutritional Sci	L Guilbert, Med Micro & Immunology
G Forth, Anthropology	P Lacy, Medicine
B Lemire, Biochemistry	E Le, Modern Lang & Cultural Studies
D Ali, Biological Sciences	J Després, Music
I Gellatly, Business PhD	K Moore, Nursing
P Melançon, Cell Biology	A Shaw, Oncology
J Takats, Chemistry	A Jordan, Physical Education & Recreation
M Loewen, Civil & Environmental Eng	A Joyce, Psychiatry
I Sywenky, Comp Literature Program	N Galambos, Psychology
K Berg, Computing Science	P Blenis, Renewable Resources
P Defraeye, Drama	N Krogman, Rural Economy
D Ryan, Economics	T Carson, Secondary Education
C Rinaldi, Educational Psychology	W Johnston, Sociology
T Zackodnik, English & Film Studies	C Boliek, Speech Pathology & Audiology
Y d'Entremont, Faculté Saint-Jean	
H Madill, Health Promotion Studies	
F Swyripa, History & Classics	
J Martin, Lab Medicine & Pathology	
M Yahya, Law	
A Samek, Library & Information Studies	
S Rice, Linguistics	
T Hillen, Mathematics and Stat Sciences	

Graduate Program Administrators

F Hey, Public Health Sciences
G Mathew, Anthropology

Graduate Student Representatives

B Whynot, GSA President	J Marleau, Biological Sciences
D Manolescu, GSA VP Labour Relations	K Cameron, Educational Psychology
H Zeinali, GSA VP Op & Services	M Shahbakhti, Mechanical Engineering
L Sutherland, AFNS	S Ahmed, Pharmacy
R Shott, Biochemistry	E Omosa, Rural Economy

Observer

D Johnson, Associate Dean Graduate Studies (Arts)

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved as amended (Item 3b Terms of reference for selection committee for FGSR and Item 4b1 Report on nanotechnology and ICT scholarships were added).

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

a) Approval of the January 16, 2009 summary minutes

Under *U of A International (UAI) Update and Question & Answer*, it was amended to read, *B Whynot noted the need for clarification on why, if fees are being waived for sponsored graduate students, the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) was considering a proposal to merge domestic and international tuition fees together as one fee in view of information provided at BAC that there was a problem specifically with sponsors in understanding that both fees were in fact tuition fees. In response it was noted that this is possibly part of the initiatives for sponsored student programs, but as neither the FGSR nor UAI are involved in fees and did not initiate this proposal, this would need to be addressed with the Office of the Provost.*

The minutes were approved as amended

b) Matters arising

The Chair stated he had looked into M Loewen's student registration inquiry. FGSR will develop a query that will produce a list of all graduate students within a department and their course registration to assist those departments that wish to monitor registration of program-approved courses and full-time course loads.

3. FORMAL BUSINESS

a) **Proposal to remove requirement to submit CV**

Councillors had before them background information on the requirement for students to submit a CV with their thesis and a recommendation from the FGSR Council Policy Review Committee that the requirement be discontinued.

MOTION It was moved by N Kav and seconded by H Madill that it no longer be a requirement for thesis-based students to submit a CV to the FGSR.

Discussion noted the following:

- CVs are submitted by only thesis-based students. There are no data collected for course-based students.
- The intent was to use a CV the student had already prepared, resulting in non-standard information presentation.
- Publications are being counted twice or more when all co-authors have it listed, resulting in inaccurate counts. More accurate counts may come from the department.
- Students should be submitting yearly summaries of work to their department in their annual reports.
- Statistics are being done, but there is no end use for these numbers.

VOTE The motion was PUT and CARRIED, 44 – 2, 2 abstentions.

b) **Terms of reference for FGSR dean selection committee**

An excerpt from GFC Policy on the composition of Individual Committees: Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research was shared with Council. The Provost's Office has requested a review of the composition of this committee and that proposed revisions be supplied to them by February 25, 2009. As the next Council meeting follows that date, Council agreed that any proposals by Councillors may be emailed to H Hogg. Any motions will be circulated to all Council members followed by an e-mail vote.

4. **INFORMAL BUSINESS**

a) **Question Period**

K Cameron inquired as to the status of the policy review on a graduate course grading system as some course outlines indicate professors are grading on a curve, and requested that FGSR communicate policy to instructors. The Chair indicated that in the absence of formal policy, FGSR can only refer instructors to GFC policy. Typically, departments remind their instructors up to two times per year that the relative grading scale is not recommended for graduate-level courses. The FGSR Policy Review Committee will commit to review this policy, or need for policy, at their next meeting.

b) **Announcements and Reports by the Chair and Councillors**

1. **Report on Nanotechnology and ICT scholarships**

P Schiavone reported that the FGSR has been provided with a one-time allocation of funds from the Alberta Ingenuity/iCORE Graduate Student Scholarship program to support up to 15 PhD recruitment scholarships in the areas of Nanotechnology and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). The four-year scholarships, subject to review each year, are valued at \$41,000 (\$36,000 stipend from FGSR and a \$5,000 research allowance provided by the supervisor and/or department) for each year of the award.

Nanotechnology (approximately 11 awards available) and ICT (approximately four awards available) are both broad-based, enabling discipline crossing in many research fields. Departments with areas of research related to either field are encouraged to nominate students recruited for admission for Fall 2009 or January 2010. There is no department nomination quota, and the nomination criteria are similar to those of the Killam Awards (ie: 3.8 GPA, full-time status, annual renewals). There will be three nomination deadlines: March 2, March 16, and March 30. P Schiavone is striking a committee and expects it to be functional by March 3. Information and nomination forms will be available on the FGSR website next week.

2. **Chair's Report**

The Chair reported that the President's Vanier Advisory Committee met two weeks ago. The President's impression is that of the 166 national Vanier scholarships, not all will be awarded as the overall caliber of nominees was not as high as expected. Next year it is expected that there will be a stronger focus on recruitment, a single application form, and the same deadline of mid-November.

The Chair indicated that the impression that unsuccessful Vanier nominees will be awarded an automatic CGSD is inaccurate. There is interest from the Offices of the President and the Provost to find funding for U of A nominees, but nothing has been confirmed yet. He noted the U of A does not offer backup funding for other similar national awards such as the Trudeau Doctoral Scholarship. The FGSR is creating a short pre-application to include GPA, publications, leadership examples, and research. The form will be created over the next few weeks, and will be used to create a short-list of potential applicants over the summer. Students with a high ranking based on the pre-application will be asked to complete a full application.

During the Chair's visits to several Chinese Universities, some institutions requested an exchange of professors to sit on examining committees and to be involved in research collaboration. The institutions were willing to provide a list of willing, English-speaking professors. There is minimal funding available from FGSR for examiner travel. In response to Council's feedback, when FGSR receives any lists from interested international institutions, they will be circulated to departments. Departments can choose whether to approach individuals from these institutions.

The China Scholarship Council (CSC) agreement with the U of A stipulates that recipients will not be required to pay the international differential fee. Once CSC funding is confirmed, the FGSR will nominate the student for a Provost Doctoral Entrance Award to cover the international differential fees. The deadline for department admission recommendations to FGSR is February 27, 2009. It was noted that students who come to the U of A to only conduct research may be invited by the department and then register with the Academic Visitors Office.

FGSR is delaying e-thesis implementation to allow time to train staff and make final arrangements with the library. The process will be implemented after the April 17, 2009 thesis submission spring deadline, and will be available to all students for fall convocation. Departments are asked to review their own policies for department thesis copies and communicate them to the students.

The President's Doctoral Prize of Distinction (PDPD) and the Walter H Johns Graduate Fellowship are awarded to students who have won one of the eligible major scholarships. From current statistics, it appears the PDPD might not be as helpful as a recruitment tool as expected.

M Allen will chair the new Dean's Advisory Committee on Recruitment. Members will soon be contacted regarding the first meeting.

The Chair added several reminders from FGSR for departments:

- The FGSR's policy regarding international transcripts is to make a copy for internal use and to return the originals to the student. No additional copies will be made or sent by FGSR. If students need copies made, there are services available on campus. If students have concerns about this policy, they can contact the Dean, FGSR.
- The Chair requests that departments allow time for FGSR to process Applications for Admission prior to sending students to FGSR.
- The FGSR asks that departments provide exam notices three weeks in advance, allowing FGSR time to deal with any committee composition issues.
- As FGSR is in peak application season, staff members may take longer than usual to return e-mails or phone calls.

The Chair shared a summary of the information presented to the President's Executive Committee. The document will be emailed to Council.

c) **Other Business**

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.