

**Council of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research**

Wednesday, January 11, 2017

2:00 to 4:00 pm

University of Alberta Council Chamber, 2-100 University Hall

**Attendance at FGSR Council –****Department Council Rep**

Anthropology, Pamela Willoughby  
Art & Design, Dawn McLean  
Biochemistry, David Stuart  
Bio Sci, Tracy Ravio  
Business – PhD, David Deephouse  
Chemical & Materials Engineering, Vinay Prasad  
Chemistry, Mark McDermott  
Computing Science, Jia You  
Dentistry, Pat Flood  
Earth & Atmospheric Sciences, Tom Chacko  
Educational Policy Studies, Evelyn Steinhauer  
Educational Psychology, Veronica Smith  
Educational Studies, Bill Dunn  
Elementary Education, Doug Gleddie  
English and Film Studies, Julie Rak  
Faculté Saint-Jean, Samira El Atia  
History & Classics, Margreit Haagsma  
Humanities Computing, Maureen Engel  
Laboratory Medicine & Pathology, Monika Keelan  
Library and Information Studies, Ali Shiri  
Mathematical & Statistical Sciences, Jochen Kuttler  
Med Sci-Medical Genetics, Sarah Hughes  
Medical Microbiology & Immunology, Edan Foley  
Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, Carrie Smith-Prei  
Native Studies, Sean Robertson  
Obstetrics & Gynecology, Denise Hemmings  
Occupational Therapy, Lili Liu  
Oncology, Alan Underhill  
Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, Scot Simpson  
Philosophy, Ingo Birgandt  
Physical Therapy, Mark Hall  
Physics, Richard Marchand  
Physiology, Greg Funk  
Political Science, Cressida Heyes  
Psychiatry, Esther Fujiwara  
Rehabilitation Medicine, Trish Manns  
Resource Ec & Envir Sociology, Henry An  
School of Public Health, Jeffrey Johnson  
Sociology, Amy Kaler  
Women and Gender Studies, Michelle Meagher

**Associate Deans Graduate**

Arts, Tom Spalding  
Education, Jill McClay  
Medicine & Dentistry, Hanne Ostergaard

**Ex-Officio Representatives**

FGSR Dean & Vice-Provost, Dean Zwicker  
FGSR Vice-Dean, Debby Burshtyn  
FGSR Associate Dean, Bryan Hogeveen  
FGSR Associate Dean, Suzanne Kresta  
FGSR Associate Dean, Naomi Krogman  
FGSR Associate Dean, John Nychka  
Senior Administrative Officer, FGSR, Amy Dambrowitz  
Vice-Provost and University Registrar, Thomas Hidson  
Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning, Janice Miller-Young

**Graduate Program Administrators (GPAC)**

Faculty of Extension, Eileen Crookes  
Department of Mechanical Engineering, Gail Dowler

**GSA Representatives**

Sarah Ficko, GSA President  
Sasha van der Klein, GSA VP Labour  
Firouz Khodayari, GSA VP Academic  
Lebogang Disele, Drama  
Clara Fallone, Medical Physics  
Ted Han, Medical Physics  
Chongdan Luo, Chemical and Materials Engineering  
Jennifer Ann McGetrick, Public Health  
Andrew Woodman, Pharmacology  
Philip Oel, Biological Sciences

**FGSR**

Debby Burshtyn, Assoc Dean  
Bryan Hogeveen, Assoc Dean  
Suzanne Kresta, Assoc Dean  
John Nychka, Assoc Dean  
Naomi Krogman, Assoc Dean  
Heather Zwicker, Vice-Provost and Dean  
Medha Samarasinghe, Executive and Operations Assistant  
Andrea Riewe, Executive and Operations Assistant  
Dena Giroux, Executive Assistant to Vice Dean & Assoc Deans  
Janice Hurlburt, Governance and Policy Coordinator  
Joyce Anderson, Supervisor, Admissions & Programs  
Kelly Montgomery, Admissions Evaluator  
Maria Chia, Grad Student Services Advisor  
Katya Joshi, Awards Advisor  
Rita Ho, Admission Business/Functional Analyst

**Guests/Observers:**

Christopher Michell-Viret, Alumni Council  
Brent Epperson, Graduate Ombudsperson  
Joan White, Ed Policy Studies  
Michael Rausch, Strategic Analysis & Data Warehousing  
Christiana Huggins, Computing Science  
Andrea Hayes, Modern Languages and Cultural Studies  
Jonathan White, Surgery

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## **1.0 Call to Order 2:04 PM**

## **2.0 Approval of Agenda for January 11, 2017**

Moved/seconded: Christopher Michell-Viret/Debby Burshtyn

Approved by show of hands

## **3.0 Approval of Minutes of November 23, 2016**

Moved/Seconded: David Deephouse/Suzanne Kresta

Approved by show of hands

## **4.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

None

## **5.0 Report from the Dean**

Introductions: Andrea Riewe (Executive Assistant & Operations) and Amy Dambrowitz (Assistant Dean (Administration))

Farewell (but not goodbye): Medha Samarasinghe

### **Important FGSR Web Resources for Administrators**

The primary purpose of FGSR is to help the council to help our graduate students to succeed. One way that we reach out is through our website. Two key locations are:

1. The Resources for Graduate Coordinators Page

<https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/about/resources-for-faculty-and-staff/resources-for-graduate-coordinators>

2. The FGSR Contacts Page - to find your departmental contacts, scroll down and click the accordion buttons on the Staff and Service Directory

<https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/about/contact-us>

### **International Student Tuition Increases:**

Tuition fee increases for international graduate students were approved at the Board of Governors' meeting on December 16, 2016. The increase has two parts: an increase of 3.03% based on the academic price index and the separate \$4000 (\$2000 for PT) increase. The \$4000/\$2000 increase will be offset and will not be charged to students.

This information was communicated to all affected students by the Provost on December 16 and was communicated to all graduate coordinators and administrators by FGSR on December 19. Council members should ensure that these messages have been shared with key stakeholders in their faculties and departments.

### **New model for supporting research**

Canadian University Presidents (under the auspices of Universities Canada) are advocating for a research funding model that supports the full costs of research, rather than separating direct from indirect costs. This represents an opportunity to advocate for support for graduate students.

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Possible recruitment opportunity: changing global political landscape

Recent events, including the US election and the decision that Britain will withdraw from the European Union, may present opportunities to recruit excellent student who would otherwise have been considering US and UK destinations for graduate studies.

Government of Alberta Update:

1. There is an ongoing review of tuition models for Campus Alberta institutions. Public consultation has now closed.
2. There is an ongoing review of the funding model for Campus Alberta. The review does not include the possibility of new funding, but is focused on how to more effectively distribute the existing funds.
3. The Government continues to drive labour relations change, including de-designation of those in senior administrative positions and an ongoing consideration of unionization of graduate students.

For the Public Good update:

1. The Signature Areas development process is underway. Signature Areas proposals are due on January 28, 2017.
2. Several other initiatives are already underway. FGSR will actively participate in multiple areas including interdisciplinary, professional development, graduate student supervision and program reviews.

Funding Agency News:

1. Dr. Alain Beaudet, President of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), will retire from the public service and the CIHR at the end of March 2017.
2. Representatives of the Alberta Innovates corporations were unable to attend the FGSR Council meeting, due to uncertainty around their future plans. It remains unclear when or how the AITF Scholarships competition might proceed this year.

*Question: Will a previously awarded scholarship be honoured? Reply (K. Joshi): we expect that they will not be affected.*

Doctoral Curriculum Microgrants

1. On June 21, 2016, the FGSR announced the first call for applications for Doctoral Micro-Grants (DMG). Those hoping to develop innovative ideas for doctoral curricula were encouraged to apply by November 21, 2016 for awards up to \$10,000 per year. The first set of four awards will be announced shortly.
2. The program will run again in the 2017-2018 academic year: it is a quick and easy application, with a quick turnaround and very few limitations - just send us your bold ideas.

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## FGSR Satisfaction Survey

We received 15 responses to the second annual FGSR satisfaction survey. There were two prominent themes:

1. Staff has asked us to continue with our efforts to improve our website. We have hired a graduate student intern to help us with this task.
2. A significant thing we can do to support students is to continue our efforts to support student mental health. Our first Mental Health Training Day will be Feb 22 and 23. The sessions are full, with a waitlist. Other sessions are in planning.

## Restorative Justice Workshop (Bryan Hogeveen)

The December 5th workshop initiated a discussion on how to better deal with conflicts without formal complaint processes. 55 participants from across campus examined alternative ways to deal with conflict in graduate studies and find ways to repair relationships, to intervene, and to prevent escalation of conflicts. Video from the event will be shared with the campus community. A second, larger event is currently being planned for some time in the spring.

## Professional Development

1600 students have participated in IDP (Individual Development Plan) sessions since August 2016. If you would like to hold a session in your department, Dr. Deanna Davis (Professional Development Instructional Design Specialist) is available to facilitate. She can be contact by email at: [deanna.davis@ualberta.ca](mailto:deanna.davis@ualberta.ca) or by phone at: 780.248.5742.

## GSMS (the new graduate admissions system)

To date 55 departments have been added to GSMS for Fall 2017, and 16 additional departments will be onboarded this term (Jan, Feb. Mar). As the recruitment season has begun, the system has experienced a number of problems. The joint team from FGSR and IST is working to address issues as efficiently as possible.

If staff and faculty are having trouble using GSMS, they should contact the IST help desk. This can be achieved by filling in the online form (<https://ist.ualberta.ca/contact-us>), emailing ([ist@ualberta.ca](mailto:ist@ualberta.ca)), or by phone (780.492.9400). This is the contact point for both "business" and "technical" issues. The Help Desk Staff will review the input and direct it to either FGSR and/or IST staff as appropriate.

If applicants, referees or external parties to the University of Alberta are having trouble using GSMS, they should contact FGSR at [grad.webadm@ualberta.ca](mailto:grad.webadm@ualberta.ca). FGSR will respond to their requests directly.

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## February Council Meeting: Format for Doctoral Dissertations

The Canadian Association for Graduate Studies has published a report ("The Doctoral Dissertation - Purpose, Content, Structure, Assessment") designed to promote discussion on the format of the doctoral dissertation in the 21st Century. FGSR Council will be holding a facilitated session at the February meeting to explore the questions posed by the study. The report will be distributed in advance of the meeting.

## Best Practices Corner

We would like to revive this part of the council meeting. All council members are encouraged to nominate speakers.

## Upcoming Events

Images of Research - the second annual competition is accepting submissions

3MT - The U of A finals for the Three Minute Thesis competition will be held on April 13, 2017

The Graduate Teaching Awards ceremony will be held April 11, 2017 from 2:30 to 4:00

*Question: How can we ensure that we are financially supporting our graduate students?*

*Reply (H. Zwicker): Posed the question of supporting grad students in ways other than financial, since we cannot expect to see additional funding. Challenged the group to think of ways of assisting students who cannot get to campus during working hours, or to host events that include family members.*

## **6.0 Program Review Overview - D. Burshtyn**

The value of program review comes from taking the opportunity for a thoughtful and reflective analysis of the programs and how they can be improved.

Program Reviews are primarily managed through the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic). Coordination and support are provided by Michael Rausch (Strategic Analysis), Tonya Hawthorn (Office of the Provost) and Dena Giroux (FGSR). Volunteers will be needed from FGSR Council to participate in program review committees.

A brief overview of the process was provided, including an explanation that the final results of reviews will be published to support transparency and will be shared with the GFC-APC. Council was reminded that program review reports will also be shared with the Campus Alberta Quality Council, upon request. A key component of the review cycle will include follow up: the Provost will follow up annually with the Deans, and FGSR will follow up with programs as required.

An overview of the program review dataset was provided. Michael Rausch was introduced.

*Question: Does the self-study include student testimonials? Reply (D. Burshtyn): That would be welcome. The materials should be appended to the report and summarized in the appropriate sections.*

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*Question: How does this report coordinate with other reports required across campus, for example, those required within faculties? Reply (D. Burshtyn): We have not asked the faculties to change their review processes. (H. Zwicker): There is deliberate alignment between the set of reviews being coordinated with the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) to avoid duplication of work.*

*Question: What sort of comparator data is required? Who will provide it? Reply (D. Burshtyn): We are not insisting on it for graduate reviews, but we would like to see comparisons of program structures. Do not forget that the external reviewers will provide context.*

*Question: Will the reports and feedback be entirely public? I would caution that complete transparency could hamper communication. Reply (D. Burshtyn): The full information will not be published, only summaries.*

*Question: Will the data be sufficiently detailed to meet our specific programs' needs? Reply (M. Rausch): The level of detail can be tailored, and we will work to meet the needs of the faculty.*

*Question: Will financial information be included? Reply (D. Burshtyn): Financial information is not included in the reports as they are currently structured. The focus should be on the quality of the student experience and the program delivery. If this information is relevant to understanding the circumstance of your program, you may wish to include it.*

*Question: What are the timelines? Reply (D. Burshtyn): The scheduled will be posted for the seven-year cycle of reviews, showing which programs are up for review in each year. Within a given academic year, the reviews will be spread throughout the year to accommodate review logistics.*

*Question: Will programs have input into their review schedule? Reply (D. Burshtyn): This is at the discretion of the Dean of your disciplinary faculty.*

## **7.0 The Annual FGSR Graduate Enrolment Report**

There is no such thing as a typical grad student. Our student body, which represents one fifth of the students on the University of Alberta campus, is: half women (more than half women in course-based Master's), half visible minority groups (plus Aboriginal), and one third international (from dozens of countries). More than half of our graduate students are married or partnered, and one quarter of them have at least one child.

This is important to consider, because we are entering a period of fiscal restraint and an active recruitment phase. Money is always good for graduate students - but it may not be the most important thing for your students. It may be that what they need is for the graduate chair to be available after hours, or it might be writing support groups, or buddies or mentors. They certainly will not flourish in an intolerant environment. You know your students better than I do - and I encourage you to know them well.

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The report contents:

1. This is a year of restatement. These new figures are sustainable and drawn from the institutional data warehouse. If your figures seem significantly different from those you expect, please contact us.
2. There are three big enrolment trends in this report: PhDs seem to be recovering; thesis-based Master's are at steady state; and course-based Master's is the area of biggest demand. Strategically, and for all kinds of reasons, building up our professional and other course-based Master's programs makes sense. APPLICATIONS ARE UP, which is very good news.
3. New data for this year: undergrad to grad ratios. 1 in 5 UofA students is a GS.
4. New data for this year: graduate student to faculty ratios for the last five years. The data shows a dynamic relationship between doctoral students, research funding, and the size (and demographic shape) of the professoriate. That dynamism is reflected here: in most cases, student numbers are declining more rapidly than professors. Exactly the opposite in some cases for course-based Master's students.
5. Attrition and time to degree. We have restated this year, so you will see differences from last year. Please note that international students consistently finish their programs faster.
6. We looked at the U15 data to give a sense of national comparison and used a narrative approach because the U15 data cannot be shared publically. The key takeaway is that we are above the U15 average in program completion, but our students take a little longer than average to complete.

*Question: These data do not show the full complement of faculty from the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry. Reply (H. Zwicker): We have excluded contingent faculty.*

*Question: Why are the completion times different between domestic and international students? Reply (H. Zwicker): This is consistently true, but we can only speculate about the reasons.*

*Question: Can this data [student completion times] be reported at the faculty or departmental level? Reply (H. Zwicker): To be meaningful, it would also likely need to include the median and mode. This is beyond the scope of the current project.*

*Question: Why has the time to complete expanded by a full year over the past decade? Reply (H. Zwicker): We don't know at this point.*

*Question: In table 1.9, why are the ratios not all to the same number of decimal places? Reply (H. Zwicker): That can be corrected in the next draft.*

*Question: Who are the students shown as students of FGSR? Reply (H. Zwicker): The academic exceptions.*

*Question: What are we looking to do with this data? Who are these women (and those who identify as women)? What departments are they in? Where are the indicators of program success? Where are our students succeeding? Reply (H. Zwicker): Pleased to note that we will be able to track a gender*

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*category of “other” going forward. Further study about success would be interesting, but it is beyond the scope of the current project.*

*Question: The total number of students from the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry is incorrect (p. 22).*

### **8.0 Proposed new second-level specialization of Surgical Education for the MSc in Surgery - Jonathan White**

This program will meet the need for advanced training in surgical education, ensuring that the University of Alberta remains a national and international leader in this field.

*No questions/comments*

### **9.0 Proposed new Embedded Graduate Certificate in Communicable Diseases offered by Public Health - Jeff Johnson**

This 9-credit embedded certificate will target current students in Master’s programs and provide training that is parallel to existing program content. It will also be open to students in other programs. The program material will enhance employment preparation.

*No questions/comments*

Moved/Seconded: Jeff Johnson/Deborah Burshtyn  
Approved (50 approve, 1 abstain)

### **10.0 FGSR Governance Update**

*Comment: The governance update is appreciated. It is good to see what things are moving.*

*Response (D. Burshtyn): It shows that our internal governance processes are moving well.*

### **11.0 GSA Monthly Report - Sarah Ficko**

This executive is entering its last four months. During that time, they will focus on graduate student supervision, funding for graduate students, student mental health, the Indigenous Graduate Student Network, graduate student homelessness, daycare, preparation for collective bargaining, and residence issues.

On February 9, from 5:30 to 7:30, the GSA will host a Winter Social mixer. There will be games and food, and all are welcome.

*Comment: The Office of the Student Ombuds sees cases of graduate student homelessness every year. We are equipped to help, so please refer students to us. We have current and correct information about services including the food banks and community social workers.*

### **12.0 Meeting Adjournment at 3:57 PM**