

Attendance at FGSR Council – May 9, 2018
Department/Unit Faculty Representatives

Agricultural, Food & Nutritional Science	Ben Willing
Anthropology	Andie Palmer
Biochemistry	David Stuart
Business (non-departmentalized) - MBA	Michael Maier
Business (non-departmentalized) - PhD	David Deephouse
Cell Biology	Andrew Simmonds
Chemicals & Materials Engineering	Richard Wozniak*
Chemistry	Vinay Prasad
Civil & Environmental Engineering	Mark McDermott
Computing Science	Dave Chan
Dentistry (Medical Sciences)	Janelle Harms
Drama	Pat Flood
Educational Psychology	Piet Defraeye
Educational Studies	Veronica Smith
Elementary Education	Elaine Simmt
History & Classics	Doug Gleddie
Human Ecology	Margriet Haagsma
Humanities Computing	Janet Fast
Law (non-departmentalized)	Maureen Engel
Library & Information Studies	Barbara Billingsley
Mathematical & Statistical Science	Ali Shiri
Medical Genetics (Medical Sciences)	Jochen Kuttler
Modern Languages & Cultural Studies	Sarah Hughes
Native Studies (non-departmentalized)	Micah True
Obstetrics & Gynecology (Medical Sciences)	Sean Robertson
Occupational Therapy	Denise Hemmings
Oncology	Lili Liu
Pediatrics (Medical Sciences)	Alan Underhill
Pharmacology	Sujata Persad
Physical Education & Recreation (non-departmentalized)	Amy Tse
Physics	Normand Boule
Psychiatry	Frank Marsiglio
Religious Studies	Ian Winship
Secondary Education	Felice Lifshitz
Surgery	Catherine Adams
Women's and Gender Studies	Fred Berry
	Felice Lifshitz

Associate Deans (Graduate) Representatives for Departmentalized Faculties

Medicine & Dentistry	Hanne Ostergaard
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Ex-Officio Representatives

FGSR Dean & Vice-Provost (FGSR Council Chair)	Heather Zwicker
FGSR Vice-Dean	Debby Burshtyn
FGSR Associate Dean	Bryan Hogeveen
FGSR Associate Dean	Robin Everall
FGSR Associate Dean	Naomi Krogman
FGSR Associate Dean	John Nychka
Senior Administrative Officer, FGSR (Secretary)	Amy Dambrowitz

*Non-Voting

Graduate Program Administrators Committee (GPAC) Representatives

Faculty of Extension	Eileen Crookes
Department of Mechanical Engineering	Gail Dowler

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Directly Elected Officials (DEO) Representatives

VP Labour – Alternate	Royle Feng
VP Academic – Alternate	Zhiong Fahed

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Council Representatives

Business PhD	Dasha Smirnow
Chemical and Mechanical Engineering	Abdulrahman Albeladi
Civil and Environmental Engineering	Mostafa Tawfeek
Educational Policy Studies	Julie Mooney
Electrical and Computer Engineering	Adan Wang
Medical Genetics	Istahil Abdullahi
Oncology	Clara Fallone
Pharmacology	Andrew Woodman
Surgery	Hayden Danyluk
Surgery	Jonathan Mora

Observers – Non-Voting

Assistant Dean, Advancement*	Meghan Unterschultz
FGSR Executive Assistant & Operations*	Andrea Riewe
Alumni Council - FGSR Representative*	Christopher Michell-Viret
Graduate Ombudsperson*	Brent Epperson
PD Instructional Design Specialist*	Deanna Davis
Supervisor, Admissions / Program Services, FGSR*	Joyce Anderson
Program Services, FGSR*	Maria Chia

*Non-Voting

FGSR Council: May 9, 2018**1.0 Call to Order at 2:07 PM****2.0 Approval of Agenda for May 9, 2018**

Moved/seconded: Normand Boule/ Christopher Michell-Viret

Approved by a show of hands.

3.0 Approval of Minutes of April 11, 2018

Moved/seconded: Robin Everall/ Jonathan Mora

Approved by a show of hands.

4.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

5.0 Student Presenter: Danish Dar (UAlberta 3MT Winner)

Danish Dar of Chemical and Materials Engineering was the winner of the 2018 3MT competition at the University of Alberta with a talk called *The Fuel of the Future*. While he didn't win it all, Danish did a fantastic job representing his research and the UofA at the Western Regional Finals on April 27. UAlberta 3MT runner-up honors went to Katherine Bishop from Anthropology for a talk called *Food For Thought: A Biochemical Study of Ancient Greek Shepherding*. The People's Choice Award went to Nada Alshumaimeri from Biochemistry for her presentation entitled *The Locked Door in Genetic Blinding Diseases*.

Danish reprised his presentation, *The Fuel of the Future*. In just three minutes, he conveyed his passion for finding a way to produce a new fuel source, dimethyl ether (DME), which burns with relatively few harmful emissions and can be made from waste, at a low cost and high purity.

6.0 Report from the Dean (Heather Zwicker)

Grad Research Impact Week: From April 9-13, 2018, UAlberta joined with fellow CARI institutions, the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (AB-GPAC), and Graduate Student Associations at UAlberta and UCalgary to promote the inaugural Grad Research Impact Week. Awareness for this week was supported by robust media and social media coverage. A highlight was an opportunity for the Dean to participate in the Ryan Jespersen call-in show at 630 CHED with three 3MT finalists: Rory Waisman, Michiko Maruyama and Erin McDonald.

The week was anchored around the **3-Minute Thesis Finals**, which were a huge success! Convocation Hall was full (200) and the live stream garnered 663 unique views and 993 total views. You can still watch the livestream recordings of one or all the students on our website: [3MT Finals](#).

FGSR Satisfaction Survey: In June, we will be conducting a short survey of FGSR Council members to ask what is going well, what we can improve, how we can best support you, and how we can best support grad students. A parallel survey will be sent to GPAC Members. We will report back on the results in September.

GSMS Survey: We have completed a survey of all end-users of the GSMS Admission system to determine their preferences for 9 potential changes to the system. Two clear choices emerged, including improvement of the external referee portal which is important for our external reputation. The other was improvement of the admission decision (“pink slip”) system. User preferences will be used to guide development of the system over the next few months.

Environmental scan: As we approach the two-year anniversary of implementing the Professional Development requirement for all graduate students, we at FGSR are taking the opportunity to conduct an environmental scan. The goals of this environmental scan are: to catalogue departmental/faculty PD and Ethics training and student progress tracking; to assess what offerings would complement, rather than duplicate departmental/faculty efforts; and gather and share best practices across the university. We have hired two graduate student interns to conduct the scan: Mostafa Tawfeek and Benjamin Denga.

Action on OHS Legislation and Supervision: Work is underway to address the new Occupational Health and Safety legislation which mandates the protection of the mental health and safety of all workers. Two working groups have been formed: one on policy (led by Debby Burshtyn) and one on developing good training materials for supervisors (under direction of Philip Stack and Naomi Krogman). Training material for graduate supervisors will be available in January 2019 with expectations that it will be completed by June 2019.

Conflict of Interest Policy: As people who are graduate program leaders, we need to be highly disciplined in how we address COI issues in our departments and programs. Conflict of interest and conflict of commitment do extend to engagement with graduate students. Disclosing a conflict does not mean that you cannot pursue an activity: it means that someone else knows, that the issue is being managed appropriately, and that the situation has been considered in advance of issues arising. Council members are encouraged to think about real or perceived conflicts, and encourage colleagues to do the same. If you need assistance, the Associate Deans are available as resources.

Change to Registration at the end of program (January deadline): We have revised FGSR policy for registration in thesis at the end of program in January, changing the deadline for the submission of the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form from the Add/Delete deadline to the last working day of the month in January (which is 10 days later than the current deadline). If this deadline is met, students will

not have to register for the winter term. The formal calendar change will come to council in September with other calendar changes, so that the new deadline will be in place for January 2019.

Doctoral Microgrants Call – NEW DEADLINE, June 15, 2018: The [4th call for submissions](#) is now open. The duration of the project is up to 9 months with a value of up to \$25,000. The deadline to apply is 4:30 pm MDT on June 15, 2018. To submit your [2-page proposal](#), please email a PDF of the application to: Dena Giroux, dgiroux@ualberta.ca with subject line: "FGSR DMG 4th Call."

Spring Doctoral Receptions: Invitations have been sent for the receptions. We have given students a choice of which date works for them, so both receptions will celebrate all the grads in attendance that day (we have not split it by faculty, or by which convocation ceremonies are on which week). The events will be held at Alumni House on Wednesday, June 6, 2018 and Wednesday June 13, 2018 from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Please RSVP by May 23, 12 p.m.

Thanks to outgoing FGSR Council members: Thank you for your participation; FGSR Council is a body that only works by constructive collaboration. Your service on the council, and your work as graduate coordinators is deeply appreciated.

Robin Everall Retirement: Robin Everall's last day at FGSR will be June 30. Robin's work at the University of Alberta has benefited students across our campuses, and she will be missed.

Farewell to Council: As this is my final meeting with FGSR Council, I want to tell you that I am deeply grateful for the care you give to our graduate students. Thank you for your patience as we have tried new things, your engagement as we approached Council discussions differently, and for providing feedback on our experiments. The relationships that I have made with you have made this the best job that I have ever done. I will miss you tremendously.

Debby Burshtyn will take the lead at FGSR on August 1st. All of her work at FGSR means that she deeply understands what all of you do. Her leadership of the Policy Review Committee, her work on Learning Outcomes, her knowledge of students, programs and cases, and her efforts to entice you to participate fully in Quality Assurance have prepared her for this role. I am happy to leave FGSR in her capable hands.

7.0 Expressions of Interest for PRC Members 2018-2019 (Debby Burshtyn)

Those interested in being a member of the Policy Review Committee are asked to indicate their interest to Debby Burshtyn. Ratification of the committee membership will happen at the FGSR council meeting in September 2018. We would like to see broad representation.

Thanks were extended to all who served in 2017-18: Heather Zwicker (Chair), Debby Burshtyn (Vice-Chair), Robin Everall (Associate Dean, FGSR), Sujata Persad (FoMD), Samira ElAtia (Faculté Saint Jean), Mark Hall (Rehab Medicine), Tracy Raivio (Science), Gail Matthew (GPAC Representative), Firouz

Khadyari (GSA VPA), Alleson Mason (GSA FGSR Council member), Amy Dambrowitz (FGSR, non-voting), Janice Hurlburt (FGSR, non-voting).

A special thank you was extended to Brent Epperson for the many years that he has served on the committee and as the Student Ombudsperson. He has made a huge contribution to the work of the PRC, in particular, ensuring policies are relevant and fair to students.

**8.0 Proposal: Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Accounting, Alberta School of Business
(Michael Maier; Alberta School of Business)**

Summary: The Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Accounting is a free-standing certificate program for those who have a prior business degree and want to obtain the knowledge and pre-requisites for a Master's in Accounting or the CPA PEP program. The certificate program provides students with knowledge that can bridge the gap between their existing business education and professional accounting knowledge. The certificate consists of a total of 12 credits equivalent to four courses chosen from a set list of pre-existing, regularly offered courses. This certificate program represents a pathway into the accounting profession.

***MOTION:** Be it resolved that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council approves the proposed Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Accounting offered by the Alberta School of Business.*

***Moved/Seconded:** Michael Maier/ Robin Overall*

Discussion of the motion:

It was noted that the proposal described 2017-18 fees, and did not accurately reflect what the fees will be in the upcoming year (on page 12 of the proposal). The error will be corrected before further circulation.

The motion was approved.

9.0 Proposal: GTLP Calendar Change (Deanna Davis and John Nychka, FGSR)

Summary: The Graduate Teaching and Learning Program (GTLP) undergoes periodic review to identify needs and potential changes to improve quality and delivery. The review process includes feedback from students in the program, instructors of the program, and graduate teaching and learning coordinators in academic programs across campus.

Over the 2017-2018 academic year, a number of key observations were made about the GTLP including: students needed more clarity as to how the levels worked in terms of ordering, requirements, and tracking; the learning outcomes of the GTLP were not clearly communicated; pathways through the programs were unclear resulting in low confidence of base knowledge; students were inconsistently prepared to complete some deliverables in the various levels; and tracking of attendance and times to completion was both burdensome and inaccurate.

These calendar changes have been suggested to address those issues. At a high level, the changes are: altering the language to support a four-level program, and sequencing of the levels into a tiered structure where completion of the previous level will be prerequisite to moving to the next; changing deliverables to address background preparation and communication about the GTLP; introducing an IDP-Teaching document and replacing the Teaching CV with a Teaching Philosophy at the “Practicum” level; changing the language to indicate that course development will be pursued (not a part or a full course) and including a Teaching Dossier in the “Practicum” level; and removal of FGSR as the tracking centre of completion of levels. More changes will follow. This is an interim measure.

***MOTION:** Be it resolved that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council approves the Calendar changes to the Graduate Teaching and Learning Program.*

***Moved/Seconded:** Deanna Davis/ John Nychka*

Discussion of the motion:

A concern was expressed that the proposed approach will reduce flexibility for students who might like to take the program out of order, or complete level two before they teach. While the concern was noted, the benefits of this more linear approach were explained: it allows participants to be better and more consistently prepared (as a group) and thereby take more value from the program.

The motion was approved.

10.0 Proposal: Academic Standing (Debby Burshtyn)

Summary: There are a number of FGSR policies that must be migrated from the Graduate Program Manual to the university calendar. Some also need to be updated to reflect best practice. The update to the academic standing section of the calendar will reflect current practice and add failure to progress in research as a reason that a student can be required to withdraw.

***MOTION:** Be it resolved that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council approves the proposed changes to enter Academic Standing Policy from the Graduate Program Manual into the Calendar.*

***Moved/Seconded:** Debby Burshtyn/ Sujata Persad*

There was no discussion of the motion.

The motion was approved.

11.0 Discussion on Graduate Student Mental Health (Robin Overall)

Introduction: Graduate student mental health is a contentious issue. Post-secondary institutions are being asked to consider how to manage these issues. It is important to note that not all graduate students are affected by mental health struggles, and we are not asking graduate administrators, graduate coordinators or supervisors to become mental health practitioners. We do, however, want to raise awareness of the issue, and we do ask that staff and faculty point students to resources when they are needed. There is (and will continue to be) increasing scrutiny from the government and the public on the issue of student mental health. This is the result of an overall increase in societal awareness of mental health issues.

2016 National College Health Assessment results for UAlberta graduate students indicate that our graduate students have different mental health problems than undergraduate students. Due to their age, graduate students have the issues that come with life as an adult. Many graduate students are balancing life responsibilities including financial commitments, work, parental and family demands. Surprisingly high numbers are reporting depression, anxiety and unmanageable levels of stress. Numbers at the University of Alberta are comparable to other research intensive universities.

Graduate students are our research work force and Graduate studies are expected to be a time of intensified stress. High levels of stress and challenge can drive success, but skills, growth and success can be impeded if these are unmanageable. We need to think about the influence of the work environment on our students as they are our research work force. If we are overwhelming students with the combined effects of social isolation, uncertain career opportunities, demanding work loads of teaching, undertaking research, and coursework, and constant evaluation by supervisors, the cumulative effects can inhibit success. Graduate students are 6X more likely to experience stress and anxiety than the general population.

We need to provide mental health supports and counselling, but that is not sufficient: we need to consider the influence of the work environment. This change in approach is happening across the globe. Supervisory relationships have been highlighted as being critical to all aspects of the graduate student experience and an emphasis toward improving supervisor/supervisee interactions is gaining momentum. Mentorship programs, like the one at the University of Alberta, are being introduced to address these expectations in a changing academic culture. Supervisors need support to join the cultural shift towards seeing graduate students as junior colleagues and colleagues in training.

We need to consider the full spectrum of mental health from severe mental illness to emotional adjustment problems to mental wellness. We want our students to leave feeling that they are capable, competent and successful. It is no longer acceptable to ask graduate students to simply endure their experience. It is imperative that we push back against the longstanding philosophy that graduate students are expected to endure excessive stress and high levels of distress. FGSR is committed to driving this culture change.

Discussion:

It was noted that 5000 UAlberta students (undergraduate and graduate) were invited to participate in the 2016 National College Health Assessment. The response rate was high. Responses were extrapolated to the whole student population.

Clarification was sought as to what we are shifting our culture to. It was acknowledged that stretching our students is important, and graduate studies will always require endurance. The difference is about treating graduate students as junior colleagues, and putting in place the supports that they need, like writing supports. In all cases, aggression, bullying, hostility and diminishing people are not acceptable behaviours with any colleague, including graduate students.

This is a change that needs to happen at the level of departments. There need to be incentives for departments to change and students will need options for recourse outside the department. Students needing assistance can go to the Student Ombud Service, the Office of Human Rights and Safe Disclosure, Associate Chairs, and Associate Deans. The GSA also has an important role as the union representing graduate students. Students and faculty need to address the problems when they are small, and address them early when resolutions may be fairly straight forward. One key motivator for change will be that supervisory culture affects reputation and the quality of students that we can attract. This is critical to the University of Alberta.

Graduate students do have access to mental health services: on campus services are free and graduate students have paid for access to the mental health services provided by Homewood Health.

Longitudinal data for the National College Health Assessment shows that our results in 2016 are about the same as in 2013. The raised profile of mental health issues, may make it difficult to interpret the causes of changes in reporting over time. Some of the questions in the survey are very subjective, and it is difficult to understand what the answers mean. In the case of "anger", students may be expressing a sense of injustice. Anecdotal evidence suggests that injustice and powerlessness may indeed be driving feelings of anger.

There will be no one-size-fits-all solution to addressing these issues. It will be important to identify the places where we can make an impact.

Concluding comment (Debby Burshtyn):

FGSR is developing a set of recommendations based on this work. Over the summer, members of FGSR Council are asked to consider how FGSR can lead the needed culture shift.

12.0 Discussion: Supervisory Guide (Naomi Krogman)

Introduction: FGSR is developing a handbook to provide more guidance for supervision. The primary intent of the document is to help supervisors (especially new supervisors) to understand the landscape of supervision from the point of view of best practices. We also want the guide to be a useful resource/reference for Chairs, Deans and other administrators as they deal with complex or new situations around supervision.

This is a part of the culture shift proposed in the previous item. Supervisory relationships have a very important influence on graduate mental health and supervisors need support to be great mentors to our students, including advice on how to build and sustain a supportive environment.

FGSR has been seeking input to refine this document to include the nuances that will make it more useful to our whole supervisory community. We have already visited faculty councils, and will be consulting the Mentorship Academy Taskforce and GPAC over the coming weeks.

Planned revisions include: the addition of an executive summary, clarification of what is required and what is aspirational, including key messages for each section, adding case studies/quotes to enliven the document, drawing connection to policy and regulation (including OHS legislation), clarifying the audience, including parental issues for men, and expanding the explanation of the responsibilities of the student in the relationship. Based on feedback so far, we have realized that we may need a companion document for students (a project for next year).

Discussion:

It was noted that the guide reviews appropriate boundaries between the professional and personal realms.

A suggestion was made that one method for conveying examples might be the use of scripted videos. This would allow the inclusion of additional information without making the guide excessively long.

It was suggested that the material regarding modelling respectful behaviour could be improved by adding more resources for faculty members seeking assistance.

In addition to discussing research integrity, the guide should also include Research Ethics. Supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that their graduate students have relevant research ethics approvals and to monitor that they are operating within them.

It was noted that the current guide is a practical guide and is ADVISORY in nature; it is not currently designed to support ACCOUNTABILITY. Over time, it may evolve to being an accountability document. The guide is part of a longer term strategy to address graduate student supervision. There is a long term goal of having a supervisory college that would serve as an administrative structure to manage supervisory privileges.

A council member requested that the guide be released with a presentation that can be used as a method to introduce the guide to faculty members. A presentation will be developed.

It was noted that there is currently no comprehensive listing of services for graduate student parents. The ParentLink site is currently a placeholder for that site, which will be delivered over the coming months.

Council members were invited to submit any further revisions directly to Naomi. The updated guide will be presented to FGSR council for endorsement in September 2018.

13.0 GSA monthly report

The GSA report was submitted as written.

A council member asked for more information about ThinkGrad. The full details about this emerging group are not yet known. This nascent think tank has emerged as a body that intends to act as an unofficial lobbying and brainstorming group for Canadian graduate student associations, but its intent is still not clear. The GSA has not yet committed to membership but is participating as an observer until the intent and scope of the organization becomes more clear.

14.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:39 PM.