

Attendance at FGSR Council – January 23, 2019
Department/Unit Faculty Representatives

Agricultural, Food & Nutritional Science	Ben Willing
Anthropology	Andie Palmer
Art & Design	Lisa Claypool
Biochemistry	David Stuart
Biological Sciences	James Stafford
Business (non-departmentalized) - PhD	David Deephouse
Cell Biology	Andrew Simmonds
Chemicals & Materials Engineering	Vinay Prasad
Chemistry	Michael Serpe
Civil & Environmental Engineering	Dave Chan
Communication Sciences & Disorders	Karen Pollock
Digital Humanities	Maureen Engel
Drama	Piet Defraeye
Earth & Atmospheric Sciences	Murray Gingras
East Asian Studies	Tsuyoshi Ono
Educational Policy Studies	Jorge Sousa
Educational Psychology	Sophie Yohani
Educational Studies	Elaine Simmt
Elementary Education	Jennifer Branch-Mueller
Extension (non-departmentalized) (MACT, MACE)	Gordon Gow
Human Ecology	Rachel McQueen
Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation (non-departmentalized)	Normand Boule
Laboratory Medicine & Pathology	Monika Keelan
Library & Information Studies	Ali Shiri
Mathematical & Statistical Science	Jochen Kuttler
Mechanical Engineering	Chris Dennison
Medicine	Nadia Jahroudi
Modern Languages & Cultural Studies	Micah True
Music	Maryam Moshaver
Native Studies (non-departmentalized)	Adam Gaudry
Nursing (non-departmentalized)	Diane Kunyk
Obstetrics & Gynecology (Medical Sciences)	Denise Hemmings
Occupational Therapy	Shaniff Esmail
Oncology	Alan Underhill
Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences (non-departmentalized)	Scot Simpson
Philosophy	Ingo Brigandt
Physical Therapy	Mark Hall
Physics	Craig Heinke
Political Science	Jared Wesley
Rehabilitation Medicine - Rehabilitation Sciences	Patricia Manns
Religious Studies	David Quinter
Resource Economics & Environmental Sociology	John Parkins
School of Public Health (non-departmentalized)	Jeff Johnson
Secondary Education	Bonnie Watt
Surgery	Fred Berry
Women's and Gender Studies	Felice Lifshitz

Associate Deans (Graduate) Representatives for Departmentalized Faculties

Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences (ALES)	Anne Naeth
Medicine & Dentistry	Hanne Ostergaard
Science	Mark McDermott

Ex-Officio Representatives

FGSR Dean & Vice-Provost (FGSR Council Chair)	Deborah Burshtyn
FGSR Vice-Dean	Bryan Hogeveen
FGSR Associate Dean	Victoria Ruétalo
FGSR Associate Dean	Tracy Raivio
FGSR Associate Dean	Naomi Krogman
Senior Officer, Strategic Initiatives	Maxine Clarke
Vice-Provost and University Registrar (or Delegate)	Carlo Dimailig
Chief Librarian Delegate	Dale Askey
Chair, FGSR Academic Appeals Committee*	Andie Palmer

*Non-Voting

Graduate Program Administrators Committee (GPAC) Representatives

Extension	Eileen Crookes
Department of Anthropology	Heather Cook

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

GSA President	Sasha van der Klein
VP Labour	Beth Richardson
VP Academic	Masoud Aliramezani

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Council Representatives

Biomedical Engineering	Kevin Solar
Computing Science	Dylan Ashley
Electrical Engineering	Thomas Cam
Medicine	Saima Rajabali
Pharmacology	Andrew Woodman
Pharmacology	Zoë Dworsky-Fried
Radiology and Diagnostic Imaging	Martha Ruiz
Surgery	Mukt Patel
Surgery - Masters	Hayden Danyluk

Observers – Non-Voting

Assistant Dean, Advancement*	Meghan Unterschultz
FGSR, SFO	Sylvia Fong-Wong
GFC Secretary*	Meg Brolley
Graduate Ombudsperson*	Remonia Stoddart-Morrison
FGSR Executive Assistant & Operations*	Andrea Riewe
FGSR Governance*	Maria Chia
FGSR Operations Coordinator (Secretary)	Medha Samarasinghe
FGSR Professional Development & Community Volunteer Program Director*	Deanna Davis
FGSR Admissions & Program Services Supervisor*	Joyce Anderson
FGSR Admissions	Kelly Montgomery

*Non-Voting

FGSR Council January 23, 2019**1.0 Call to Order at 2:01PM****2.0 Approval of Agenda for January 23, 2018**

Moved/seconded: Tracy Raivio/ David Deephouse

Approved by a show of hands.

3.0 Approval of Minutes of November 28, 2018

Moved/seconded: Jorge Sousa/ Ali Shiri

Approved by a show of hands.

4.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes

None.

5.0 Report from the Dean (Debby Burshtyn)

Dean Burshtyn introduced Maxine Clarke, FGSR's new Senior Officer - Strategic Initiatives. She will be working on strategic initiatives with the FGSR Executive. Maxine has a wide range of experience both in the university (Alberta School of Business) and most recently, Maxine has been an external consultant.

Janice Causgrove-Dunn joined FGSR with a planned leave of 6 months. She will be back in July.

Tracy Raivio, from BioSci, joined the Associate Dean team as of January for a 3 year term. Tracy will eventually take on the Awards & Scholarships portfolio as Bryan devotes more attention to other areas. Tracy will also represent FGSR on governance committees. She is working with Janice's portfolio of departments and will continue to do so even after Janice returns.

Dean Burshtyn reminded Council that Bill 19, which opened the PSLA and put tuition control into legislation, was passed late last fall and the Tuition Regulations were released shortly thereafter. Discussions are ongoing to determine how we can implement and comply particularly with the rule that we have to provide the "total program cost" for international students at the time of admission. Things will need to move quickly as this needs to be done for offers of admission for Fall 2020, which will start September 2019.

Our data from the upcoming enrolment report shows that course based masters are the most populous body. This is an indication of the changing demographic of our grad student body.

Dean Burshtyn noted that we have attached two reports for your review:

- The governance report is a compilation of all the changes that have happened in the last year. Both the Academic Standards Committee and the Academic Planning Committee have noted that the calendar compliance project is not only valuable, but also a very necessary project. We have the continuing support of the Governance Office in streamlining the approval process. We

are reminding you today that calendar compliance is mandatory. The calendar is our binding, timestamped contract with each student, (not your website or other documents). For departments who have yet to be in touch please contact Maria Chia (mchia@ualberta.ca) for guidance on next steps.

- The Ombuds report is also attached. The Associate Deans at FGSR work in tandem with the Office of the Student Ombuds on many cases and we value their insight into how we can improve what we do with and for students. The information in the report reiterated that Supervisory relationships play an integral role in the success of our grad students and aligns with the Associate Dean teams' desire to find the best solutions to resolve conflicts for students and explore using Restorative Practices when they are applicable.

Dean Burshtyn asked Vice-Dean Bryan Hogeveen to update Council on some changes to the Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarships.

Vice-Dean Hogeveen announced that the amalgamation of the following six scholarships will result in the Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship (AGES) available in 2019-20:

- Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship
- Graduate Student Scholarship
- Graduate Citizenship Award
- Alberta Ukrainian Centennial Commemorative Scholarship
- International Education Award – Ukraine
- Helen Hunley Public Policy Graduate Scholarship

The reason for this process change is 1) new graduate application processes and 2) consultations with key stakeholders are confusing and people aren't aware of what the awards entail. One umbrella term will help convey the high quality of students. This has been approved through a formalized proposal with CARU; there are currently more questions than answers. We continue to have some operational questions about the process and we will keep you informed as we learn more.

The awards criterion has relaxed residency requirements so now 25% of the awards can go to International students. We are unclear of how eligibility for this will be determined; however, it will not apply for students who are distance learners or those who are doing research elsewhere. We will seek clarity on this issue and communicate details we get them.

Our preliminary analysis suggests that the envelope of money (the lump sum that goes to the CARU institutions from the government) may not have changed significantly from previous years. It is likely based on the proportion of graduate student enrolment for 2017.

A Council member inquired about the adjudication process. At this time FGSR has not seen the new government Awards portal so it is unclear what the process will be or how FGSR will administer the funds. We hope to have a similar process to the current one.

The new amalgamation of awards means that the old ones do not exist; however, we should have more flexibility to use the money for various initiatives. Travel money and Indigenous awards will remain separate and distinct from the others.

Vice-Dean Hogeveen also noted that given that the number of course based masters students seem to be eclipsing other categories of graduate students, FGSR will be thinking about how to determine recruitment scholarships for this group.

Dean Burshtyn shared a few reminders:

Mentorship Academy

The next one is: Wednesday February 27, 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

Presented by Roger Graves

["Effectively guiding your students for different writing projects."](#)

Friday March 22, 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

Presented by Megan Strickfaden

["Fostering creativity in your graduate students and in your productive relationship."](#)

3MT:

- A competition where grad students are challenged with explaining the impact of their research in just three minutes (and with one slide). uab.ca/3mt
- Departments may host their own Dept specific events if interested. – Contact Charity Slobod (cslobod@ualberta) for info.
- Semi-Finals: February 25 – March 1, 3:00-5:00 pm
- Save-the-Date: UAlberta Finals - March 26, 5:00 - 7:30 pm at Convocation Hall

Images of Research:

- An opportunity for current graduate students from all disciplines to capture, share, and present the essence of their research in one image.
- Submission Deadline: Friday, Feb. 8
- Cash Prizes – 1st, 2nd, 3rd, honorable mentions and a people's choice. Details can be found here: library.ualberta.ca/images-of-research
- You're Invited: Winners will be announced during a public reception on April 3, 2019.

Academic Integrity and Ethics Training Series

This 8 hour series covers some of the integral parts to being a graduate student -- what you need to know to complete your thesis correctly, pursue your research ethically and conduct yourself accordingly. Feb. 21 – 22

6.0 Program Learning Outcomes:

Dean Burshtyn announced that the group has had their 2nd meeting, formed subgroups to divide the workload, and will return to Council with more information in the spring. The group is now focusing on articulating the FGSR mandated program requirements.

7.0 GSA Monthly Report & AB-GPAC

Sasha Van Der Klein, President of the GSA, stated the monthly report is as submitted.

8.0 New Joint PhD with Saarland University (SU):

***MOTION:** Be it resolved that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council approve the proposal for a Joint Doctoral Degree Graduate Program, University of Alberta (Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry) and Saarland University, Germany.*

Since 2012, the NSERC-CREATE funded training program, International Research Training Group in Membrane Biology (“IRTG”; based in Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry), has partnered with SU professors to train graduate students in our research area through annual joint meetings and exchange research visits.

Students in this Joint Doctoral degree program may obtain a doctoral degree in Physiology or Biochemistry from the University of Alberta or a doctoral degree in Natural Sciences from Saarland University.

The joint degree program would recognize the international research experience of graduate students with a parchment notation stating the program was jointly offered, naming both of the partner institutions. The Home institution will confer the degree.

Moved/Seconded: Hanne Ostergaard/Alan Underhill

Discussion of the Motion / Questions: None.

The motion was approved.

9.0 Admissions GPA Calculations Discussion

Dean Burshtyn introduced the item by stating that this was an opportunity to discuss the processes departments and FGSR use to calculate Admissions Grade Point Averages (AGPAs) using the weighted average calculator (WAC) tool. The goal of the discussion was to hear what departments are doing,

share some context and data related to FGSR's process, and provide transparency about the various uses for AGPAs.

Medha Samarasinghe, the Operations Coordinator for FGSR, presented some key points to establish context for the discussion.

- The Weighted Average Calculator (WAC) was developed in 2011 to create consistency in how FGSR does the AGPAs; the tool is also available for departments to use. The scales continue to be updated as we come across new institutions. The FGSR offers training sessions and one-on-one training for how to use the WAC.
- In 2013, FGSR delegated admissions authority to departments with the understanding that they would do their own WAC calculations to ensure applicants were admissible.
- This past summer FGSR underwent a process review of the Admissions unit and received a recommendation to explore what appears to be a duplication of efforts between departments and FGSR staff for WAC calculations. FGSR staff complete a WAC for each and every application that we receive.
- FGSR's process for calculating the AGPA is to consider the last 60 credits (or the last equivalent credits to UA) or the last two full time years for AGPA. We understand that departments might be 'eyeballing' the AGPA and giving more weight to the courses that are specific to the area of study. The total percentage of applications coming to FGSR with AGPAs below 3.0 is very small. These applications require a memo from the department with a plan for addressing the low AGPA (usually these become admissions conditions).
- FGSR staff calculate the AGPA using the WAC which is then uploaded into GSMS and the AGPA is recorded in Campus Solutions. This becomes the definitive AGPA that is used to determine scholarship eligibility, and for reporting in enrolment reports and program reviews (as mandated by the CAQC). While departments may use the AGPA to determine admissibility, the final, formal AGPA that is calculated/ verified by FGSR has uses well beyond the admissions decision.
- The average number of apps FGSR receives is approximately 450 per month. We are on top of the workflow until about February and then the incoming apps get backlogged due to our resources and ability to turn them around. Of the total applications we received in 2018, 27% of the WACS were done incorrectly; 21% were not done/not attached; and 52% were done correctly. In reviewing our processes, it is more consistent and efficient for us to redo all the WACS rather than review some for mistakes.

Medha took a poll of the FGSR Council members to determine how many were considering AGPAs in their admissions decisions, how many were waiting until they had shortlisted applicants before calculating AGPAs, and how many didn't know what their department processes were. The majority of members' departments do calculate AGPAs as part of their admissions evaluation process.

Discussion:

A Council member notes that she appreciates all the expertise and support FGSR offers departmental staff with the admissions process. Much of the work is done by grad administrators; FGSR will be bringing this same discussion to the next GPAC meeting.

A member suggested that the scales in some countries might be too strict compared to our own and we could be shortchanging some applicants. Dean Burshtyn will consider next steps to striking a group of Council members with expertise on various institutions to stay calibrated with institutions.

FGSR will look into creating a WAC with 2 decimal points for Physical Therapy as they require it for determining admissions with highly competitive applicants.

Members of smaller departments suggested that they rely on FGSR expertise to serve as a backstop.

Some members suggested that their program or discipline specific grading systems are not conducive to the last 60 credits rule (examples include some Fine Arts programs or Education). Dean Burshtyn suggested that these exceptions could be considered by the working group to establish some parameters.

FGSR will consider charting AGPAs with grades in program coursework to see if there is a correlation between the two; however, we know there are also other qualities and factors that departments look for when considering admissibility.

Next steps include taking this same discussion to GPAC, and then determining next steps to create a working group, to provide more targeted training to departments, and to measure the performance of our streamlined processes. We will report back to Council on this issue in the coming months.

10.0 Problems that arise during the exam - follow up to discussion in Oct.

As part of the ongoing three-part series on Exams, Associate Dean, Victoria Ruetalo led a discussion on what to do when things go wrong during candidacy and final exams.

Scenarios:

1. Internet connections not working:
 - When anticipating members skyping or calling in anticipate issues by having backups including: an alternate contact for example a phone number if skype/internet fails; having an IT resource person readily available to support any tech emergencies; asking remote examiner to email questions in advance; and having established contingencies in place for common emergencies.
2. Examiner is MIA or must leave the exam/not attend due to emergency
 - Request a ProDean from FGSR. This will ensure the right number of examiners and FGSR can provide oversight if things don't go well.

- Adjourn the exam.
3. Plagiarism discovery during exam
- Adjourn the exam.

In all these scenarios it's important to be able to use good judgement and common sense but recognizing that these things aren't consistent from chair to chair and exam to exam, best to call FGSR as soon as possible. The Associate Deans at FGSR are available to provide guidance and resources for how to handle situations. It's best to call Andrea Riewe (780-492-2816) or Dena Giroux (780-492-5235) as they will know how to reach an Associate Dean as quickly as possible.

Council members suggested that some sort of consistent guidelines for Exam chairs would be a valuable resource. A document outlining common scenarios, next steps, and contact information would be helpful. The recourse might also include some baseline parameters to determine if the exam can continue on or if it must be adjourned.

The discussion included more steps to ensure inappropriate situations such as tensions between examiners, inappropriate lines of questioning, etc. Suggestions included:

- Have experienced or senior Chairs so they have the standing to reign in any inappropriate behaviour
- Ensure students are informed of their rights before the exam.
- Create consistency within departments about what kind of support supervisors can and should offer their students in preparation for exams.
- Consider what actions the Chair might want to take after the exam to mitigate similar situations in the future, and complete an exam process debrief.
- Have Chairs try to identify potential issues before the exam.
- Ensure that the thesis is reviewed before the exam.

Associate Dean Ruetalo will take these points and work with the rest of the Associate Deans and Grad Student Advisors at FGSR to create some resources and general guidelines. A discussion on what to do when things go wrong after the exam will follow in the spring with some resources being available by the end of the winter term.

11.0 Question Period (Debby Burshtyn)

A Council member reported that in her department the Chair has a meeting with each student in preparation for the exam, in which she provides an overview of the exam and outlines what the student should expect. This ensures consistency within the department of how students are prepped and the exam process.

12.0 Adjournment

Council of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

2:00 to 4:00 pm

University of Alberta Council Chamber, 2-100 University Hall

The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 PM.