

**DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
FACULTY COUNCIL**

These minutes have been approved.

A regular meeting of Faculty Council was held at 11:30 am, Tuesday, March 27, 2012 in the Lord Dalhousie Room, Henry Hicks Building.

Present: S. Bearne, B. Boudreau (Chair), G. Brown, M. Cada, Y. Fedortchouk, Q. Gao, J. Grant, S. Heaslip, K. Johnson, J. Kozey, R. Oomen, S. Parcell, D. Patterson, D. Pelzer, R. Robski, H. Whitehead, G. Kipouros, D. Tamlyn, K. Toughill, P. Tyedmers, R. Maitzen, M. Scott (Secretary).

Regrets: B. Baldrige, A. Fenety, N. Schepp, G. Scherkoske, Y. Zhao, A. West

In attendance: K. Humes (FGS)

FC11/12.39 Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

The Dean called the meeting to order. The agenda was approved.

FC11/12.40 Minutes of the Meeting

Approval of the minutes of February 28th. It was moved by S. Parcell, seconded by J. Kozey to approve the minutes of February 28, 2012 with corrections. The motion carried.

Matters arising from the minutes –

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

FC 11/12.41 Reports

i) Dean's Report (B. Boudreau)

- a) **Donation to FGS:** Dr. Boudreau indicated that a \$100,000 endowment was made to FGS from the Glen McCormick estate. Council will be consulted once the details of this scholarship have been established.
- b) **CIBC Scholarship:** Dr. Boudreau reported that CIBC has officially signed an agreement for \$500,000 over 10 years to go to two graduate scholarships in medical research, one being cancer-related. The area for the second one needs to be determined.
- c) **Nominating Committee:** Dr. Boudreau stated that FGS wishes to reinstate the nominating committee. Reinstating this group will help address the difficulty of finding suitable people to serve on committees. Dr. Boudreau asked for three people to serve, along with the Associate Dean. Those interested should let him know.

- d) **Additional membership still being required for FGS committees:** 1. The Prize Panel: This group considers the nominations that are submitted for a variety of awards at the international, national and Dalhousie levels. FGS is currently looking for a representative from FASS to assist with several competitions that are currently running. 2. The Appeals Committee: This group has recently lost one of the members, so FGS needs additional names in order to avoid creating situations of conflict of interest. Dr. Boudreau stressed how very important this committee is. Those interested in volunteering for either of these committees should let Dr. Boudreau know.
- e) **Student Leaders Dinner:** Dr. Boudreau and Dr. Pelzer would be attending a student leaders' dinner on March 27th. The VP Student Services office is hosting the dinner to celebrate students that have demonstrated excellence in leadership. DAGS Past President, Eric Snow is the winner of the FGS Faculty Student Leadership Award but unfortunately will not be attending the dinner.
- f) **Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools (NAGS) Master's Thesis Award:** Dr. Boudreau informed Council that Dalhousie's nomination for the NAGS Master's Thesis Award, Sarah Keeshan, from the Department of History won the prize for her dissertation. Ms. Keeshan will receive her prize of \$1000 at the NAGS Annual Conference being held here in Halifax in April.
- ii) **PDF Report (Adrian West)**
A. West was absent, so no report was given.
- iii) **DAGS Report (R. Robski)**
 - a) **DAGS Elections:** DAGS elections ended last week and the successors for several positions have already been chosen. They will officially start on May 1st. The President position has not yet been filled, but DAGS is working on this.
 - b) **Dal Presidential Search Committee:** Brett Taylor was elected as one of two student representatives on the Dalhousie Presidential Search Committee.
 - c) **MITACS Step Professional Development Workshop:** Ryan and Susan both discussed their experience at the MITACS Step workshops. They really enjoyed the event, felt that it ran very smoothly and appreciated the opportunity to meet graduate students from other faculties. They suggested holding another series of workshops in the fall.
- iii) **Associate Dean – (D. Pelzer)**
 - a) **Killam Postdoctoral Fellowships:** Dr. Pelzer indicated that the Killam Postdoc competition has completed and three offers have been made and accepted. Currently the Pre-doc competition is underway after having been temporarily deferred due to the possibility of a strike.
 - b) **SSHRC VP Visit:** Dr. Pelzer announced that Dr. Brent Herbert-Copley, Vice President-Research Capacity at SSHRC will be visiting Halifax in April. Dr. Herbert-Copley has requested meetings with faculty and administrators on April 18th from 1-2pm at SMU and from 3-4pm at Dal. Interested faculty members are welcome to attend either session.

FC11/12.42 Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Survey Report

Dr. Boudreau welcomed Dr. Byers, and Dr. Archibald from the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Dr. White, FGS Representative on the Survey Committee to discuss the department's survey report.

Dr. White reported that graduate students are major research contributors in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. There are approximately 40 students of high quality currently enrolled in the graduate programs.

Dr. White explained that the report lays out several recommendations for improvements to the department going forward, including: introducing new classes (specifically at the 5000-6000 level, considering the quarter-credit model from Chemistry), assembling a Graduate Handbook to communicate program requirements and expectations, providing more comprehensive orientation for PDF's, and looking at strategies to increase funding to graduate students. It was mentioned that the reduction in travel grants from FGS to B&MB has compromised the ability for students to travel to national/international conferences to present their work. FGS was asked to reconsider this change, and perhaps promote the use of video/teleconferencing research seminars as a way to reduce travel costs.

Dr. Pelzer mentioned that there is a matching fund program between FGS and the Faculty of Medicine that the department should look into. He suggested they discuss this with Dr. Marrie or Dr. Johnson. He also mentioned that Graduate Coordinators in other departments should be encouraged of check into this program.

Dr. Archibald said that one of the main issues they are experiencing is the limited number of quality graduate student applications in recent years. For example, only three students joined the program in 2011. Dr. Archibald noted that they are not sure if this is a temporary "blip" or a trend. He noted that similar departments across Canada are experiencing the same issue.

Dr. Pelzer thanked the guests for attending.

There was further discussion on recruitment, matching funds, and other funding. Dr. Pelzer reiterated that recruitment is a challenge throughout Dal, mainly because it is so decentralized and each department has its own strategy. He emphasized the best strategy is for FGS to come up with best practices and encourage departments to follow them. The recruitment issue will be one for the new department head to address when s/he starts on July 1st.

Dr. Pelzer said that the graduating and extended funding statistics for the B&MB department are positive and he does not feel the recruitment issue is indicative of any major problems within the department. However, since it is not clear if the recruitment issue is a one-time "blip" or a trend, it was agreed that an update should be requested in two years time.

It was moved by G. Kipouros seconded by P. Tyedmers: that the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Survey Report relating to their graduate programs be rated as satisfactory but with the request for a follow-up by September 2014. The motion carried.

FC11/12.43 Graduate Calendar Changes

A copy of the Graduate Calendar with recent changes highlighted was distributed to members prior to the meeting. Dr. Boudreau read through the changes and explained each briefly.

For section 3.2 (Master's Degree Program), part b, G. Kipouros suggested adding the point that 1 ECTS is equal to 7.5 credit hours to make the section more clear.

Section 3.4 (English Language Competency), there was confusion regarding what exactly constitutes an “English-speaking institution” and how this applies to Canadian Francophone Universities. Dr. Pelzer indicated the Registrar’s Office approved the section as written. Dr. Boudreau explained that this will be used as the rule and exceptions will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The rule will be revisited.

Section 5.4.1 (Parental Leave), G. Kipouros suggested adding “or adopted” to the new sentence to accommodate students that adopt babies during the duration of their program. A question came up about how this addition might affect a student’s health benefits, and Dr. Boudreau said he would look into this.

Section 6.1 (Conflict of Interest), K. Toughill questioned if someone who teaches one course is considered an employee, and if so, whether or not they can enroll in a course that she (i.e. the employer) is teaching. Dr. Pelzer said it would be fine, as long as the employer does not grade the student/employee’s paper(s). J. Kozey suggested that perhaps the word “sole” could be inserted in the first paragraph (i.e. “A faculty member is not eligible to act as sole supervisor for either...”) to address these unique situations. It was suggested that this point might need more exploration in the future.

Further discussion was deferred to the next meeting.

FC11/12.44 Other Business

There was no other business.

FC11/12.45 Next Meeting

- i) Faculty Council Meeting – Tuesday, April 24th, 2012, at 11:30 am, in the Lord Dalhousie Room, Henry Hicks Building.

The meeting adjourned at 1:06pm.

Bernard Boudreau, Chair

M. Scott, Recording Secretary