

**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, February 26, 2013 in the Lord Dalhousie Room, Henry Hicks Building.

**Present:** W. Barker, S. Bearne, B. Boudreau (Chair), M. Cada, A. Fenety, A. Fleet, K. Humes (FGS), R. Maitzen, S. Parcell, D. Pelzer, N. Schepp, O. Theou, S. Theriault (Acting Secretary), K. Toughill, E. Whelan, H. Whitehead

**Regrets:** K. Beazley, B. Bisset, G. Brown, S. Faridi, Y. Fedortchouk, Q. Gao, J. Grant, G. Kipouros, J. Kozey, N. Morgunov, D. Patterson, G. Scherkoske, M. Scott (FGS), D. Tamlyn, A. Vidovic, Y. Zhao

**FC12/13.34 Call to Order and Approval of Agenda**

The Chair called the meeting to order. The agenda was approved with no corrections.

**FC12/13.35 Approval of the Minutes of previous Faculty Council meeting**

**It was moved by H. Whitehead, seconded by S. Parcell: to approve the minutes of December 18, 2012 with no corrections. There were 2 abstentions. The motion carried.**

**Matters arising from the minutes –**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**FC 12/13.36 Reports**

**i) Dean's Report (B. Boudreau)**

- a) Graduate Student Boot Camp:** This professional development event for graduate students was arranged by Robin Nurse from the Dalhousie Career Services Centre. The session had an initial registration of only 3 graduate students. With some advertising assistance from FGS another 18 students registered for the event. The event has been rescheduled for April 2013, as there weren't enough graduate students registered to cover the expenses. FGS will work with Career Services to ensure that the event is better advertised for the April session.
- b) 3 Minute Thesis Event:** Registration closed on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> with 95 students signing up for the event. The event attracted students from across all disciplines. The preliminary heats will be held on March 6<sup>th</sup> and the final will be held on the evening of March 7<sup>th</sup>. Students will be competing for a first place scholarship in the amount of \$1000, a 2<sup>nd</sup> place scholarship in the amount of \$500, and the people's choice will win a \$250 scholarship. Dr. Boudreau asked members to encourage their undergraduate and graduate students to attend this event.

- c) **Implications of a Senate Appeal:** A student from Engineering appealed the results of his/her comprehensive exam on the grounds that (s)he did not have a supervisory committee. Senate ruled that the student be permitted to re-write his/her comprehensive exams and that the faculty/department is obligated to provide the student with a new supervisory committee. The new supervisory committee must be appointed within 1 year.
- d) **New Associate Dean Position:** Dr. Boudreau reminded members that the application deadline for the new Associate Dean position is March 1<sup>st</sup>.

ii) **PDF Report (O. Theou)**

- a) **Research Appreciation Day:** Planning has started for the 2013 PDF Research and Appreciation Day. The plan includes using a 3 minute format for presentation of research this year.
- b) **CIHR Meeting:** The PDF society will be meeting with the President of CIHR and will address a number of issues that have been raised by PDFs working at Dalhousie.

iii) **DAGS Report (A. Fleet)**

- a) **Upcoming Events:** Graduate students have expressed an interest in attending informal events that will create opportunities for students in different faculties to come together and discuss their research and identify opportunities for collaboration. DAGS is focusing on planning more events that allow students to learn what their peers in other departments are working on. DAGS will be sending representatives to the upcoming CASA conference and the annual general meeting of the G-15 in April.
- b) **Elections:** DAGS elections will be taking place online from March 16<sup>th</sup> to March 18<sup>th</sup>. All student society elections are being tied to the DSU elections going forward in an attempt to get a better student participation in the voting.

iv) **Associate Dean – (D. Pelzer)**

- a) **SSHRC:** SSHRC allocations in the master's competition are calculated based on the number of undergraduate degrees awarded in the social sciences and humanities and the number of master's students enrolled in the social sciences and humanities at a given year. The numbers provided to SSHRC by Statistics Canada do not match institutional data. Dr. Pelzer has already made an inquiry to SSHRC. At this point FGS has not received a reply from SSHRC. The issue will be followed up.
- b) **Killam Predoctoral Scholarships:** There potentially will be a decrease in the number of new predoctoral scholarships being offered this year based on the funds available. Options regarding funding are being explored, and it is expected that this will be a major point of discussion at the Spring Killam Trusts meeting.

**FC12/13.37 New Programs, Minor Modifications and Curriculum Changes**

**i. Concept paper for new PhD in Epidemiology and Population Health**

Dr. Boudreau welcomed Drs. Kathleen MacPherson and Susan Kirkland, Department of Community Health and Epidemiology. He explained that the version of the concept paper being presented today incorporates edits suggested by APCC on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

K. MacPherson explained the rationale behind the new proposed program. Currently CH&E have a number of students completing their master's degrees that indicate a desire to continue their education and would like to pursue a PhD in Epidemiology. These students either pursue a PhD at another

university or move on to medical school. A new PhD program would help the department retain some of their master's graduates. There is only one other program in the Maritime provinces that offers a PhD in Epidemiology (PEI), and it has a veterinary focus. There are 14 PhD programs in Epidemiology across Canada.

S. Kirkland added that the department has the maturity and strong leadership to be able to take on this new program. They have a strong Department Head and a small but engaged faculty who bring in a lot of external funding. There has been a shift in CIHR funding from the health of the individual to the health of populations and the healthcare system as a whole. Employment prospects for students are strong.

This program would provide students with the scientific knowledge and methodological skills to become researchers. There would be a variety of focuses for students to choose from. Students that do not have a CH&E background would be eligible to apply but would have to take required courses to upgrade their skills and knowledge.

The anticipated start date is September 2014. The department anticipates accepting 6 new students per year to the PhD program and will not have to hire new faculty.

Dr. Boudreau thanked Drs. MacPherson and Kirkland for attending the meeting. There was a further short discussion regarding the impact on point values for 2<sup>nd</sup> round allocations.

**It was moved by K. Toughill, seconded by A. Fleet: that Faculty Council recommend that the concept paper for the new PhD in Epidemiology and Population Health proceed to SAPRC for approval. The motion carried.**

#### **FC12/13.38 New Mission and Vision for Faculty of Graduate Studies (for discussion)**

Dr. Boudreau explained that FGS is undergoing Senate review next year and all governance documents are being reviewed, including the mission statement and vision.

Members discussed the drafts and had the following suggestions: make the mission statement and vision more emotive and inspiring, and less wordy. Use more active language, own the comments, and be specific about what FGS does and where it wants to be in the future. FGS does not provide classes and research opportunities; state what FGS's role is to students.

Some specific language changes that were suggested were: in the last sentence of the mission statement change "...best University in Canada" to "leading" or "excellent"; something that reflects the goal of providing a better experience for students. In the last sentence of the vision, change "leaders and innovators" to be more inclusive of all students' career goals. Not all move on to be leaders and innovators, some become scholars and work to "advance knowledge".

Dr. Pelzer asked that any further comments be emailed to him prior to the next meeting. The final versions of the mission statement and vision will be presented at the Full Faculty meeting in May.

### **FC12/13.39 Terms of Reference for Faculty Council**

The Faculty Council Terms of Reference are also being revised in preparation for the Senate review of FGS. Dr. Boudreau explained that the Terms of Reference were revamped to more closely match the Senate model, and have been vetted by Legal Counsel.

Under the new Terms of Reference Faculty Council would be chaired by an elected member of Council rather than the Dean of Graduate Studies. This would allow the Dean and Associate Dean to participate more objectively in discussions and votes. This model has been successful in other faculties, such as Medicine and Engineering.

The elected Chair would have to do more work to prepare for meetings, but administrative support would be provided by the Assistant to the Dean. Chairs would serve for a two-year term and would have to be a previous member of Faculty Council. The Chair would also be an ex-officio member of APCC, however program modifications and curriculum changes will still be part of the FGS Associate Dean's portfolio, as Chair of APCC for reasons of continuity.

The importance of having a strong chair was discussed. It was suggested that a clause be added to the Terms of Reference stating that members can vote to impeach a weak Chair. According to the Dalhousie Conflict of Interest policy, if a conflict of interest arises during a meeting the Chair may defer his/her role to the co-chair.

To get people more engaged in meetings, it was suggested that "for information only" items be distributed to members ahead of time, and only the items that require discussion and voting be included on the agenda. It was also recommended that the definition of quorum be examined.

Dr. Pelzer asked members to think about the changes, discuss the document with their colleagues, and email any further suggestions to him before the next meeting.

### **FC 12/13.40 Other Business**

With Keith Johnson's departure, there is currently a vacant position on APCC. Dr. Boudreau asked for a nominee from Faculty Council. Dr. William Barker, Director of the Interdisciplinary PhD Program was nominated.

**It was moved by A. Fenety, seconded by R. Maitzen: that Faculty Council recommend Dr. W. Barker to fill the vacant position on APCC. The motion carried.**

### **FC12/13.41 Next meeting – Tuesday, March 26, 2013, Lord Dalhousie Room.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

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B. Boudreau, Chair

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S. Theriault, Recording Secretary