

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

**Present:** S. Bearne, K. Beazley, B. Boudreau, E. Denovan-Wright, S. Faridi, A. Fenety, M. Gibson, S. Kimber, J. Kozey, R. Martin-Misener, S. Parcell, D. Patterson, D. Pelzer, M. Scott (Secretary), I. Sharma, R. Singer (Chair), R. Stadnyk, O. Theou, S. Theriault (FGS), E. Whelan, Y. Zhao

**Regrets:** W. Barker, P. Bodorik, J. Grant, R. Maitzen, J. Makani, N. Morgunov, S. Ponomarenko, G. Scherkoske, D. Tamlyn, B. Taylor, L. Turculet, A. Vidovic, H. Whitehead

**FC13/14.20 Call to Order and Approval of Agenda**

The Chair called the meeting to order.

**It was moved by K. Beazley, seconded by J. Kozey: to approve the Faculty Council agenda for November 26, 2013 as circulated. The motion carried.**

**FC13/14.21 Approval of the Minutes of previous Faculty Council meeting**

**It was moved by S. Parcell, seconded by E. Denovan-Wright: to approve the minutes of October 22, 2013 as circulated. The motion carried.**

**Matters arising from the minutes –**

R. Singer advised that Dalhousie Legal Counsel was contacted regarding the request from the Department of Earth Sciences to deviate from the standard procedure for PhD oral defences. Ms. McLay from Legal Counsel noted that there is a procedure outlined in the Graduate Calendar that suggests the order of questioning at a PhD defence. The Regulations also indicate that requests to deviate from the normal procedure are to be sent to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval. It is suggested that the discussion by Faculty Council be used as guidance when the Dean responds to requests to deviate. Members questioned whether the regulation required the student to consent to the deviation; R. Singer responded that the regulation did not require the student's consent. However, the Dean in his response to the request could insist on receiving the student's consent. B. Boudreau advised that FGS could create an informal set of guidelines which could include the requirement for student consent. This information would also be included in the Chair instructions.

## **FC 13/14.22 Reports**

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

**Killam Meeting** – The annual Killam Meeting was held in Montreal at the beginning of November. The Killam Trustees advised that the Killam logo will be changing. It was also announced that Killam Scholars will now be referred to as Killam Laureates.

**Killam Prize Symposium** – B. Boudreau attended the Killam Prize Symposium at Rideau Hall on November 18<sup>th</sup>. The event was broadcasted by CBC and included interviews with all the Killam Prize winners.

**Killam Funding** - B. Boudreau advised members that cuts to Killam funding are coming. The Trustees would like to see spending from Killam accounts decreased from 4.75% to 3.3%. Dalhousie has been in talks with the Trustees and is trying to extend the timeline for implementing these cuts to five years. Once FGS knows the details of the cuts and the timeline, a strategic plan will be brought to Faculty Council for discussion. Members asked whether the Killam master's scholarships would be cut next year. D. Pelzer advised that Dalhousie is the only Killam institution to offer master's scholarships, so that would potentially be a logical place to start cuts. D. Pelzer reminded members that Dalhousie has the most Killam funding of all the Killam institutes.

**MITACS** – 44 applications were received for 30 positions in the November professional development workshop; 29 of the 30 participants showed up for the session. Three participants were from Saint Mary's University and the remainder were from Dalhousie. The Dalhousie participants included one graduate student from the Truro campus, five postdoctoral fellows, and students from most disciplines, with the exception of FASS. In March 2014 an additional three courses will be offered by MITACS.

### **ii) Associate Dean (D. Pelzer)**

**Atlantic Deans of Arts, Science and Graduate Studies** – D. Pelzer attended meetings last Friday with Deans from other Atlantic Universities, at which a hot-topic discussion item was the distribution of Tri-Council Master awards to universities.

**CAGS** - The annual CAGS conference was held in Montreal at the beginning of November. As anticipated, there were many questions regarding Tri-Council changes. There was also emphasis across Canada on interdisciplinary programs.

**NSERC** – A discussion took place regarding the composition of the NSERC master's selection committee, the need for students to use non-specialist language in their applications, and the role of the departments in assessing and ranking applications.

**Killam Selection Committees** – D. Pelzer reminded members of the numerous openings on the Killam Selection Committees. Three members are required for the Killam Predoctoral Scholarship Committee and five members are required for the Killam Postdoctoral Fellowship Committee. If members want to volunteer or would like to recommend a colleague for one of the committees they are asked to contact Marsha Scott or Stephanie Theriault at FGS.

### **iii) Associate Dean (E. Denovan-Wright)**

**CAPA** – The annual Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Administrators meeting was held in Montreal at the beginning of November. The meeting had representatives from all major Canadian universities. It was clear from the meeting that PDFs are an integral part of universities. Benefits (EI, CPP, medical, and dental) were brought up as challenges faced by many university administrators: paying benefits from a grant is relatively easy, whereas paying benefits from a scholarship proves more difficult. It was decided that a small group be

established to work with the Tri-Council to communicate the challenges universities are facing with regulations on payment of benefits, and to also work with universities to try to devise work-around solutions.

**iv) DAGS Report (I. Sharma)**

**Conference Support** – DAGS approved a \$1000 grant to students from the School of Public Administration to attend an annual Atlantic Conference.

**Graduate Seminar Series** – The seminar planned for November 28<sup>th</sup> has been moved to the winter term and will now consist of two events taking place mid-January and mid-March.

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

**CAPA** - O. Theou reported that she also attended the CAPA meeting in Montreal. Although Dalhousie is doing much better than most Canadian universities in terms of administration of PDFs, there is still work that needs to be done. Better communication is needed with PDFs, and there needs to be more focus on professional development.

**Elections** – Elections for the new Dalhousie Postdoctoral Fellow Society executive will be taking place in two weeks.

**FC13/14.23 100 Days of Listening**

R. Singer welcomed Dr. Richard Florizone to the meeting and invited him to comment on his 100 Days of Listening initiative.

Dr. Florizone indicated that he started his presidency with the “100 Days of Listening” as a structured way to get out and meet the university community. He has attended over 500 meetings and has received over 700 submissions. He plans to prepare a report of his findings by the end of December.

Some discussion followed Dr. Florizone’s presentation, where he addressed all the issues mentioned by FGS Faculty Council members.

R. Singer thanked Dr. Florizone for attending.

**FC13/14.24 Concept Paper – MSc and PhD in Medical Neuroscience**

R. Singer welcomed Dr. William Baldrige to the meeting and invited him to provide the rationale for the proposed MSc and PhD in Medical Neuroscience.

Dr. Baldrige advised that the Department’s name has changed from Anatomy and Neurobiology to Medical Neuroscience. The concept paper for the MSc and PhD programs in Medical Neuroscience is also being proposed to reflect the Department’s principal research area.

Students would complete a thesis after spending the first year completing four required courses, and would also have rotations through labs and relevant clinics, where they will learn first-hand about neurological diseases. The size of the program will remain comparable to what the Department has now; about 24 graduate students.

A discussion followed in which it was clarified that students would complete only a quarter credit of rotations, not an entire year. Students would have a home lab, but would have opportunities to work in other laboratories, as all members of the department would be obligated to have their labs participate in the rotations. The host lab would be responsible for paying for research-related expenses, while the student continues to be paid by her/his primary supervisor. The department is also planning to approach other departments looking for partnerships to provide additional opportunities for students in the program.

D. Pelzer thanked Dr. Baldrige for attending. There was no further discussion.

**It was moved by E. Denovan-Wright, seconded by S. Bearne: that Faculty Council recommend that the concept paper for the new MSc and PhD degrees in Medical Neuroscience proceed to SAPRC for consideration. The motion carried.**

#### **FC13/14.25 Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Progress Report**

R. Singer invited S. Bearne to provide members with the highlights from the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Progress Report.

S. Bearne acknowledged the assistance from the graduate coordinators, Dr. John Archibald and Dr. Richard Singer, in addressing the survey recommendations.

In response to survey concerns, the Department has developed new 5000-level courses, as well as 6000-level courses that are specialized courses based on the students' areas of research.

Although the review recommended a paper copy of the department handbook for graduate students, the Department has opted to place the information on their website. They have also devoted a section of their website to housing information for postdoctoral fellows. The department meets with graduate students and PDFs to get their input.

Although the Department has one of the highest graduate stipends in the university (\$20-\$21K), they are considering an increase of \$500 to reflect the increase to the cost of living.

The Department has found that grading of students is not consistent if there is more than one TA marking, and is looking at options to remedy this inconsistency.

The Department will continue to encourage students to pursue professional development opportunities through the Interdisciplinary Health Research Training Program (IHRTTP).

Concerns had been raised over the drop in enrolment, but enrolment is back up this year.

R. Singer thanked S. Bearne for the update. There was no further discussion.

#### **FC13/14.26 Other Business**

i) **Three Minute Thesis (3MT)** - B. Boudreau advised that at the CAGS annual conference Dalhousie was asked to host the Atlantic Regional 3MT competition. The details still need to be

finalized, but the regional competition will likely take place the end of April or the beginning of May 2014.

- ii) **Nominating Committee** – R. Singer advised that the Nominating Committee has been defunct for about 7 years. FGS would like to see the Nominating Committee re-established, with senior and outgoing members of Faculty Council sitting on the committee. Members thought this was a good idea. R. Singer advised that members would be contacted to serve on this committee.
- iii) **Professional Development Speaker Series** – I. Sharma asked members to inform students in their departments that DAGS and the Centre for Learning and Teaching will be co-hosting a professional development speaker series on Dec 5<sup>th</sup> from 5pm to 6pm in room B400 of the Killam Library, with a reception to follow at the Grad House.

**FC13/14.27 Next meeting - Tuesday, December 17, 2013, Lord Dalhousie Room.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:55p.m.

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R. Singer, Chair

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S. Theriault, Recording Secretary