

**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 24, 2015 in the Lord Dalhousie Room, Henry Hicks Building.

**Present:** J. Armstrong, W. Barker, P. Bodorik, N. Daizy, E. Denovan-Wright, A. Fenety, L. Fitting, S. Gadbois, M. Gibson, D. Groulx, J. Kozey, M. Leonard, R. Martin-Misener, R. Mullin, D. Patterson, D. Pelzer, M. Rahman, R. Singer (Chair), L. Spiteri, R. Stadnyk, S. Stone, S. Theriault (Secretary), P. Tyedmers

**Regrets:** H. Ali-Hassan, S. Bearne, A. Bucci, P. Ellis, S. Kimber, N. Morgunov, P. O'Brien, S. Ponomarenko, N. Schepp

**FC14/15.40 Call to Order and Approval of Agenda**

The Chair called the meeting to order.

**It was moved by L. Fitting, seconded by L. Spiteri: to approve the Faculty Council agenda for February 24, 2015 as circulated. The motion carried.**

**FC14/15.41 Approval of the Minutes of previous Faculty Council meeting**

**It was moved by A. Fenety, seconded by L. Fitting: to approve the minutes of December 16, 2014 as circulated. The motion carried.**

**Matters arising from the minutes** – There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**FC 14/15.42 Program Review – Interdisciplinary PhD**

R. Singer welcomed Dr. Michael Shepherd, Chair of the Internal Review Committee, and Dr. William Barker, Director of the Interdisciplinary PhD Program. Dr. Shepherd was invited to provide a brief summary of the Internal Review Committee's report.

Dr. Shepherd indicated that the committee conducted a thorough review and agreed that this is an important program. The three main concerns identified in the review are: 1) governance, 2) finance, and 3) sense of identity.

The Internal Review Committee made 11 recommendations. The major recommendations included: 1) that the IDPhD program remain in the Faculty of Graduate Studies, but with an appropriate governance structure, 2) that the IDPhD program receive its own base budget separate from that of FGS (and that once a base budget is set the appropriate size of the program could be determined), and 3) that there be space made available to the program for cohort building. Dr. Shepherd advised that the findings of the External Reviewer were similar to those of the Internal Review Committee.

W. Barker agreed that finances are a big issue for the IDPhD program. The identity issue is also crucial, as currently most students are housed within their supervisor's home department or are free floating as orphans.

A discussion followed in which D. Pelzer noted that these are long-standing issues, of which many were identified in the 2004 review. Members questioned what costs are associated with running the program. W. Barker advised that the costs are similar to those of other departments and include salaries for the Director and the Graduate Secretary.

In response to questions surrounding admission, W. Barker advised that there is no cap on admission; however, there are requirements for a minimum GPA of 3.7 and a master's thesis. The minimum GPA of 3.7 was imposed to ensure that students in the program are eligible to apply for competitive funding. It was noted that the success rate of IDPhD students in obtaining external funding has increased dramatically, since the former admission restrictions were implemented. Requirements for supervision and co-supervision were also discussed, but that requires a more in-depth review. There, recommendations from the Senate review of FGS in general may help guide this discussion.

It was questioned why an IDPhD program is needed, and what would happen if the recommendations fail to be met. W. Barker explained that there are areas in the university that need an IDPhD, as there are some unique research topics. Dr. Shepherd used Health Informatics students as an example. M. Leonard advised that funding is indeed the primary concern: currently funds to support the program are coming from an FGS carry-forward, which will run out in approximately three years. If the program is to continue, another funding source is required; otherwise, FGS will have to curtail spending on other currently available program support structures (e.g., travel grants, external PhD examiners, etc.) to maintain the IDPhD.

R. Singer thanked Dr. Shepherd for attending. There was no further discussion.

**It was moved by P. Bodorik, seconded by P. Tyedmers: that Faculty Council accept the Interdisciplinary PhD Program Review as satisfactory. Faculty Council accepts and fully supports all recommendations of the Internal Review Committee and the External Reviewer, and expects an update on the implementation of the recommendations within 12 months.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

#### **FC 14/15.43 Reports**

- i) Dean (Marty Leonard)**

- a) **3MT Date** – M. Leonard advised that the third annual Three-Minute Thesis competition will take place on April 9. FGS is looking for judges (Faculty, Staff or Postdocs), and would like to have representation from all Faculties. The final will take place the evening of April 16.
  - b) **FGS Review** – M. Leonard reported that the internal review report is expected to be submitted to FGS in the next few weeks for review and correction of any factual errors.
  - c) **PDF Unionization** – Bargaining will be beginning soon. M. Leonard advised that she has been asked to sit on the bargaining committee, which will be visiting with Faculty Councils and seeking feedback.
  - d) **Professional Development** – The Centre for Learning and Teaching has agreed to sharing costs of buying a licence for “MyGradSkills,” an online tool with 18 modules focused on professional development topics.
- ii) **Associate Dean (Dieter Pelzer)**
- a) **KPDF** – D. Pelzer advised that the Killam Postdoctoral Fellowship competition has now finished, with four offers made. The offers were made to three females and one male, 2 of whom are Canadian, one who is from the US and one from the UK. Six applicants have been wait-listed.
  - b) **NSRIGS** – D. Pelzer advised that the second round for this competition closed on February 15. As anticipated, about twice as many applications were received in the February competition than in the December competition. D. Pelzer noted that students who applied for, or hold, a NSRIGS are eligible to apply for a Killam Predoctoral Scholarship.
- iii) **Associate Dean (Eileen Denovan-Wright)**
- a) **PhD Defences** – E. Denovan-Wright reported that in 2014 there were 81 PhD defences. There were 13 requests for remote participation of the external examiner, and 22 requests for remote participation of a member of the examining committee. Of these 35 defences, seven had two members participating remotely at the same time. There were also two defences that had last-minute remote participation due to unexpected circumstances. Students are not permitted to defend remotely. Adobe Connect is used for these remote participations, and challenges still exist with remote participants who do not use a ‘land line’ despite this request from FGS. Certain members of the Chair Panel request not to Chair defences that have remote participation.
- iv) **PDF Report (Josh Armstrong)**
- a) **Introduction** – J. Armstrong advised that he has been elected as the new president of the Dalhousie Postdoctoral Society (DPS). He expressed his thanks to out-going President Olga Theou, and indicated that he looks forward to working with Associate Dean Denovan-Wright.
- v) **DAGS (Naznin Daisy)**
- a) **Grad House** – N. Daisy advised that renovations at the Grad House are now complete.

- b) **Professional Development** – N. Daisy advised that DAGS has organized three professional-development workshops for graduate students.
- c) **Provincial Budget** – DAGS is working with DSU to prepare a report on the impacts of the Provincial budget cut on student services and students' on-campus experience.
- d) **Diversity and Inclusiveness** – DAGS board members and DAGS councillors have met with the University Committee looking into diversity and inclusiveness.
- e) **Election** – The 2015-16 DAGS election will take place from March 21 to March 24.

#### **FC 14/15.44 Major Modification – Master of Public Administration (Management)**

D. Pelzer advised that the proposal for the major modification to the MPA (M) program was reviewed and approved by APCC. The major modification includes decreasing the number of required courses from 14 to 13, introducing a requirement for nine core courses plus four electives, and the introduction of a diploma in Public Administration (Management). The diploma will require six core courses plus one elective.

A brief discussion followed in which members questioned the reduction in course requirements. D. Pelzer explained that this decrease would put the program more in-line with other programs of its kind across Canada.

There was no further discussion.

**It was moved by APCC, seconded by P. Tyedmers: that Faculty Council approve the major modification to the Master of Public Administration (Management) program, and approve the creation of the graduate diploma in Public Administration (Management). The motion carried. The proposal will be forwarded to SAPRC for consideration.**

#### **FC 14/15.45 Academic Date Changes**

R. Singer welcomed Mairead Barry, Acting Registrar, to the meeting and invited her to present the proposed changes to academic dates.

Ms. Barry advised that the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) was approached by the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) with a request for a fall-term break. In response, the SLTC established a task force that started public consultations last year. The committee received a wide variety of responses, and after consolidating all responses they mapped out two options. Copies were provided to Council members.

Proposed changes would come into effect in the 2016/17 academic year. The autumn break will try to incorporate Remembrance Day. The committee is striving to establish consistency in the number of days of the week with scheduled classes each term (i.e., and equal number of Mondays and Thursdays each term).

Ms. Barry advised that feedback is welcomed over the next two weeks. The proposal is planned to go to Senate before June.

R. Singer thanked Ms. Barry for attending.

**FC14/15.46 Other Business**

- i) **Faculty Council Vacancies for 2014/15** - There are still 2 vacancies on Faculty Council, with a need for representatives from Law and from Arts and Social Sciences.

**FC14/15.47 Next meeting - Tuesday, March 24, 2015, Lord Dalhousie Room, Henry Hicks Building.**

**L. Spiteri put forward a motion to adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

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R. Singer, Chair

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S. Theriault, Recording Secretary