

**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, October 24, 2017, in University Hall, MacDonald Building.

Present: S. Boe, V. Chappe, T. Currie, E. Denovan-Wright, A. Donaldson, M. Durier-Copp, J. Gahagan, T. Gordon, D. Groulx, L. Guibault, B. Johnston, B. Karten, A. Kirk (Secretary), J. Kozey, J. M. Lee, M. Leonard, M. Macdonald, H. MacFadyen, S. Parcell, M. Pegg, V. Simedoh, S. Stone, M. Yuksel

Regrets: J. Blustein, P. Duinker, P. Gardiner Barber, D. Iron, E. Joubert, H. Niu, E. Reeve, L. Robinson, S. Wells

FC17.18.12 Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

It was moved by M. Macdonald, seconded by E. Denovan-Wright to approve the Faculty Council agenda for October 24, 2017 as circulated. The motion carried.

FC 17.18.13 Approval of the Minutes of previous Faculty Council meeting

It was moved by S. Parcell, seconded by J. Kozey to approve the minutes from September 26, 2017 as circulated. The motion carried.

FC 17.18.14 Matters Arising

None

FC 17.18.15 Reports

i) Dean (Marty Leonard)

A donation was received from Dr. Don Hill, a Dal medicine grad, to fund three postdoctoral fellowships for three years at 55k/yr. The fellowships will be held in Computer Science, Medicine and FASS. Call going out soon, first applicants expected by February.

Preparations are underway for the 2018 3MT competition. Alicia Kirk will give a brief presentation next month. It's a good time to hold a mini-3MT at the department or faculty level. S. Boe, J. Kozey and L. Robinson have experience with this, talk to them or consult with A. Kirk if there are questions.

ii) Associate Dean (Adam Donaldson)

The new fellowships described by M. Leonard above are open to Canadian citizens and permanent residents. A memo will be sent out in mid-late November ahead of a February applications deadline.

SAPRC (Senate Academic Programs and Research Committee) and APSC (SAPRC Academic Programs Sub-Committee) are initiating a review of the framework for creation and granting of certificates. The Associate Dean will be seeking feedback from APCC on current framework. If anyone else has feedback around this topic, please contact him.

There are currently 13 ongoing program reviews in different stages of completion. (These will eventually come to Faculty Council for consideration.)

Senate is finalizing a policy for review of academic program. FGS has been involved in the process. The new policy will be going back to ADAC (Associate Deans' Academic Council) for finalization and up the chain of approval sometime in spring 2018.

Vanier nominees have been contacted. There were 4 SSHRC, 9 NSERC and 8 CIHR applications, allowing us to submit a full quota of nominations (3, 5 and 5 respectively).

NSERC doctoral applications are also currently under review.

iii) Associate Dean (Eileen Denovan-Wright)

The Dal postdoc society is organizing a Research Day (half day) event, which will follow the same format as last year's event. Invitations are going out to postdoctoral fellows this week. FGS and other faculties have offered financial support for the event.

iv) PDF Report

None

v) DAGS

None

FC 17.18.16 Presentation: Ombudsperson (D. Hawco)

Diane Hawco, Dalhousie University Ombudsperson, provided a presentation on the role of the ombudsperson. She noted that terms of reference for the position will soon be available on the website, as will an annual report. She noted that it is not the role of her office to solve problems for students, but rather to get the right people in contact and, thereby, enable a process toward solutions.

B. Karten inquired on how many students she regularly sees. D. Hawco responded that there will be full data in the annual report, but in her first 10 months there were 119 individual students visiting. She further noted that about 34% of this visits were from graduate students. The main issues causing the visits were conflict within a lab or with the supervisor / supervisory committee. Generally, across the wider student population including undergraduates, the visits were mostly due to academic reasons (dismissal, failed grade, waiver of regulations), staff/faculty/supervisor conduct concerns, discrimination, harassment, financial issues, accommodations and mental health. M. Macdonald

inquired if students see her regarding unsuccessful applications. D. Hawco acknowledged that there are visits for this reason, and the situation for graduate students is particularly interesting on this front because there is no appeal policy on admission decisions.

When questioned, D. Hawco also noted that students often come to her after a situation has already escalated; however, they would be better-served if they come to her earlier for guidance. In instances when students come to her early, she's well-able to help them navigate process.

B. Karten wondered, given the confidential nature of the ombudsperson's interactions, if she had a role in mediation. D. Hawco responded that this happens often. She considers her role as "facilitating a conversation", and works to ensure students advocate for themselves. Nonetheless, she is always available when presented with a stalemate.

D. Hawco left her contact information, a "fairness checklist", and a presentation which will all be shared with Faculty Council members following the meeting.

FC 17.18.17 Physiology & Biophysics Review (V. Chappe, H. Rotermund, N. Morgunov)

H. Rotermund (FGS representative on the review committee) explained that what stood out from the graduate perspective was the relatively small number of courses required (3 for Master's students, no extra courses for PhD students). He also noted the relatively low teaching load for faculty members.

V. Chappe (P&B grad coordinator) explained that the course load and teaching responsibilities are standard for their type of program in the Faculty of Medicine. There is no direct entry into the PhD program, so physiology course background would be achieved at undergraduate and Master's level. She also noted that the department's graduate programs are research-dominated. For a time, there were proportionally more Master's than PhD students in the department; however, this has now evened out. Students have been very successful in securing extramural scholarship funding. She also noted that because there is no undergraduate major in physiology, there is no perceived need to have a wide course offering every term.

N. Morgunov (P&B chair) commented that another factor currently affecting the graduate program is the department's faculty complement. Four faculty have recently left or are imminently leaving/retiring—all without replacement. This has taken faculty numbers from 16 down to 12.

M. Lee questioned the comment in the report that there weren't enough courses offered to prepare students for their comprehensive exams. N. Morgunov replied that the comment is not logical. The comprehensive exam format in their department always focuses on the student's subject/research area, rather than on physiology broadly. Students are consulted on the topics to be considered and are given ample time to prepare. V. Chappe confirmed this approach.

D. Groulx wondered what sources of funding students are eligible for graduate students in the graduate programs. N. Morgunov listed NSERC, CIHR, Cystic Fibrosis and Heart & Stroke as being the big ones. D. Groulx further questioned why, with such strong funding, the student-to-faculty ratio was still only 1:1. N. Morgunov responded that some of the faculty with the biggest labs were those who have recently left/retired. While the grants are solid, it's not enough funding to run a lab and still fund a graduate student. The department has worked hard to get students to apply for extramural scholarships

and there has been great success lately. The department is also developing an entrance scholarship for PhD students which will cover 2 years of tuition.

H. Rotermund noted that one of the review recommendations was the requirement for TAship so students could also supplement their funding via this means.

J. Kozey questioned the report's list of names of faculty in the department, noting that the numbers don't seem to match. He suggested the report could use some clarity on faculty complement.

The guests were excused.

There was a brief discussion regarding TA duties, and if students were given enough of an opportunity for TAships. It was determined that it's not the purview of Faculty Council to decide how much graduate students should be teaching. J. Kozey suggested that while the program appears satisfactory, some further clarity is needed around some issues in the report. He suggested a revisit in 12 or 18 months.

It was moved by A. Donaldson seconded by M. Leonard that Faculty Council rate the graduate program in Physiology & Biophysics as satisfactory with a requirement to report back in 12 months. The motion carried.

FC 17.18.18 New Program – PhD Agriculture

M. Lee noted that APCC is very happy with the final version of the proposal. The endorsement to move on to SAPRC must come from this council.

A. Donaldson reported that the CLT assessment has recently come and is also positive.

It was moved by A. Donaldson, seconded by E. Denovan-Wright that Faculty Council recommend that the Program Proposal for the PhD in Agricultural Science proceed to SAPRC for consideration. The motion carried.

FC 17.18.19 Discussion: Oceanography Review – Update

M. Lee reported that, upon the conclusion of the last meeting, there remained concerns around the physical oceanography “sub-programs” with the undocumented requirement for additional courses (over those required of graduate students in other sub-programs) and the longer completion times.

A. Donaldson suggested that physical oceanography was clearly a separate stream, and should be formalized as a program modification beginning at APCC and perhaps proceeding to MPHEC process.

A brief discussion concluded that FGS (A. Donaldson) and FC (M. Lee) could meet with the department head to find a suitable resolution which ensured that students entering physical oceanography sub-program were fully informed via documentation of the differential requirements.

It's possible that a full program modification may not be required, but this needs to be explored. M. Lee will report back to Council at November's meeting.

FC 17.18.20 Other Business

None

FC 17.18.21 Next meeting –Tuesday November 28, 2017 in the B400, Killam Library

The meeting adjourned at 1:07p.m.