

**Meeting of the GC Academic Policy Committee
Tuesday, February 10th 2015, 12:30pm–1:50pm**

Room 200, Graduate Student Centre, 6371 Crescent Road

Present: Ljiljana Biukovic, Beth Haverkamp, Gail Murphy, Jenny Phelps, Susan Porter, Lisa Pountney (minutes), Cindy Prescott, Max Read, Larry Walker (Chair), Daniel Wood

Guests: Tim Green (for Dan Weary)

Regrets: Brian Bemmels, Don Mavinic, Michael Richards, Daniel Weary

Absent: Thomas Chang, Colúm Connolly, Clive Roberts

1) Introductions and regrets

2) Adoption of the agenda

<i>All</i>	}	<i>That the agenda be approved.</i>
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Carried

3) Minutes of the meeting held 18 November 2014*

<i>All</i>	}	<i>That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014 be approved.</i>
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Carried

4) Chair's Remarks

Larry provided an update on doctoral exams, with regard to the increase of negative external examiner reports occurring in the last academic year. He was happy to confirm that these have calmed down slightly, and reported that last fall we had 4 negative reports, which on an annualized basis would be considered fairly typical. We also had 10 exams where substantial revisions were required. In total we held a total of 210 exams in fall, and this is up approximately 10% on the previous two years.

5) Candidates for degrees

<i>All</i>	}	<i>That the candidates for degrees be approved and forwarded to the Senate for approval, and that the Dean, in consultation with the Registrar, be empowered to make any necessary adjustments.</i>
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Carried

6) New Business

a) discussion of **G+PS membership and approval for supervision** (½ hour allotted for discussion)

Larry would like to raise a set of supervisory issues with which we've been struggling. At the last meeting we discussed the role of faculty at UBC-O, and we've dispensed with this issue, though the dust has not completely settled. The issues we would like to discuss at this meeting are as follows:

1. partner appointments
2. applying for membership in G+PS
3. requiring supervisory training / workshops / co-supervision
4. faculty without a PhD (or equivalent)

For information purposes, Larry presented the UBC Calendar policy on membership in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and of supervision of graduate students by other faculty:

Membership: "Members of the Faculty of G+PS must be tenured or tenure track (including grant tenured or grant tenure track) faculty members holding the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor. Members must be approved by their disciplinary faculty (or functional equivalent) for membership in G+PS and must meet the criteria established by the graduate programs with which they are affiliated. Members of G+PS may supervise graduate students, chair examining committees, and vote at Faculty general meetings.... Persons holding the following ranks are not eligible for membership in G+PS: adjunct professors, honorary professors, visiting professors, professors of teaching, UBC Okanagan professors, senior instructors."

Supervision of Graduate Students by Other Faculty: "Other appropriately qualified individuals (e.g., clinical professors, adjunct professors, professors of teaching, senior instructors, or visiting professors) who are actively engaged in research and experienced with graduate education may be approved [to supervise or serve on supervisory committees].... These individuals are not members of G+PS."

Larry continued by informing the group that Senate has recently approved a policy on partner appointments. Currently it is only the Faculty of Medicine that has these partner appointments, but we anticipate other faculties (particularly Pharmacy or Dentistry) may want to utilize this new category of appointments. Partner appointments refer to people that are employed by third parties (e.g., health authorities). They are not employed by UBC, not members of the Faculty Association, not tenured or tenure-track, and do not go through SAC. One of the reasons that this rank was introduced was to allow them to hold UBC-administered research grants. These are academic appointments typically made to physicians, health professionals, and researchers with qualifications equivalent to those in the tenure-track professorial ranks (≈ criteria for appointment and promotion). According to the policy, they need to identify themselves as Assistant Professor (Partner), Associate Professor (Partner), or Professor (Partner), as appropriate. It should be noted that they are members of the Faculty of Medicine, but, if participating on a department Appointment and Promotion Committee, voting rights are applicable to partner appointments only. According to policy, they are "are eligible to teach courses or supervise students and may be eligible to teach graduate students and graduate programs in accordance with the policies of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies."

This particular aspect of the policy was raised at Senate, as clarification was needed. Susan explained to the Senate that as per the policy, they are not members of G+PS and therefore the procedure would be for these people to seek supervisory privileges through G+PS, which we would then grant or deny.

Unfortunately the Faculty of Medicine is not happy with this, and thinks that these partner appointees are being regarded as second class citizens. We've been going back and forth with Medicine on this over the last year, and they would like a blanket approval or pre-approval of some kind. Additionally, they would like this process to be as invisible as possible.

Lengthy discussion from the committee followed:

- Given that these people are not University employees, if there are problems with a supervisory relationship or complaints of any kind, what accountability structures are they contractually bound to within UBC? What's our expectation? Whose liability insurance covers them if something goes wrong? How do we protect the students?
- It is important to note that not all of these partner appointees would want supervisory privileges.
- One of the issues is that with our current systems, we are unable to track supervision, and that means this is not a very enforceable process.
- Perhaps if there was a more rigorous internal process for determining who should or shouldn't have supervisory privileges, we might consider delegating authority.
- Compared to other universities, we are a minority in that we don't approve every member centrally; we have a default approval for all tenure-track faculty. Most other universities require every faculty member (tenure track or otherwise) to apply centrally.
- It must be noted that these are 'no cost' appointments, and do not cost the university anything, as opposed to tenure-track positions where the candidate has to apply, and face substantial competition etc.

Susan asked if the committee was comfortable with the following course of action: treat all faculty in Medicine equally, but ensure that each program has a rigorous process whereby appointments are approved by a committee. There was some resistance to this idea.

Further discussion from the committee followed:

- Ultimately G+PS is responsible. We're the ones who have to intervene when there are problems.
- The idea of requiring co-supervision for any faculty 'new' to supervision was raised.
- This is more complex than it appears on the surface, and what we're really looking at is the role that G+PS plays in setting policy around supervision.
- The 'Request to Supervise' form is very simple, and prompts the person seeking supervisory privileges to acknowledge supervisory responsibilities and expectations.

Susan asked the committee if delegation of authority, with regard with partner appointments, would trouble them. Concerns were raised from several members of the committee. If we were to look at the possibility of delegating this authority, we would need to negotiate the criteria used and this could be a lengthy process.

In conclusion the committee was unable to find a resolution. We will continue to explore avenues of how to manage this scenario.

b) review of parental accommodation policy (V-303) – attached

This policy (along with the Leaves of Absence policy) is due for review, as mandated by Senate. This is an option for students who bear a child, and the key points are noted below:

- as an option to taking a parental leave of absence
- students continue to be registered and to pay tuition and student fees
- students retain full value of any G+PS fellowships or awards
- academic deadlines and expectations are to be flexible and are to be modified to accommodate the student's new parental responsibilities
- + 4 mths automatically added to G+PS deadlines (same expected for program deadlines)

Larry has not encountered any complaints or problems, and if the committee agrees he will report to the Senate Academic Policy committee that we have reviewed it and saw no need for changes.

Discussion from the committee followed:

- We did investigate (when this policy was first created) whether it might be an option to create a paid parental leave. It was costed out at close to \$½ million and as such we did not pursue this at the time.
- We need to keep in mind that a couple of the Tri-Council agencies do provide a paid maternity leave.
- If we do want to look at a paid maternity leave, we'll need to consider all the ways in which students are funded (Tri-Council, TAships, etc.)
- It would be useful to gather data on how often this policy is used and, in addition, it is important to note that if we did have a paid maternity leave, this policy would likely become redundant.
- It was raised that universities in Ontario do offer funding, but it is our understanding that the Ontario government mandated paid maternity leave for graduate students.

To conclude the committee feels the policy is working at this point in time. Larry will however gather the data and report back to the group on just how often this policy is used. We'll also keep the issue of parental funding on our radar.

c) review of leaves of absence policy (V-302.1) – attached

This is unfortunately not a stable policy. The two most problematic elements of the policy are:

1. types of leave
2. use of university facilities or resources

Larry summarized the types of leaves currently defined by the policy:

- parental (PRTL) – bearing a child or having primary responsibility for the care of an infant or young child
- health (MEDI) – encountering a health problem that significantly interferes with the ability to pursue his/her course of study
- professional (PROF) – undertaking professional work relevant to his/her program
- personal (PSNL) – encountering personal circumstances that significantly interfere with the ability to pursue his/her course of study
- second program of study (CONC) – pursuing a second program of studies (concurrently)

At our next meeting Larry would like to review the data we have for leaves of absence, and where particular programs are using them more than others. Additionally we would like to review what comparative Canadian universities are doing with regards to the leaves they have, including their policies and procedures.

