

Jenny Phelps raised some administrative considerations: FoGS will not have these students' records to determine whether or not they met the minimum FoGS admission requirements. Students may need to re-submit basis-of-admission transcripts for analysis. Architecture may have kept records.

Noted that there is no precedent for students earning graduate degree without being admitted to FoGS. To be eligible to change, applicants must have met FoGS minimum admission requirements in force in their time.

Concerns raised in discussion:

- ⤴ We may open ourselves to charge of degree inflation especially as students weren't admitted to FoGS.
- ⤴ Nine credits is normally 117 hours, so the proposed 9-credit project is a token only.
- ⤴ BArch is second undergrad degree – e.g. Law, MD, other professional undergrad degrees. Was reconstructed in 1993 as master's. Will other professional undergrad programs want to do the same for their past students?
- ⤴ Changing the degree will change the contract made with students upon entrance to UBC. Agreed that University Counsel should be consulted.
- ⤴ It's difficult to see how the degrees can be identical, as the change BArch to MArch went through all approvals and Senate; should changing the degree have same level of approval?

Straw vote: on general principles, is this change possible? Majority in favour; two opposed

Of those who think change is possible, should this be with or without the 9 additional credits? Majority says "without"; one vote for additional credits as "essential".

One "no" vote clarified: voted on proposal as it stands. Doesn't agree that one weekend is worth 9 credits.

***Actions:** Philip will ask Leslie Van Duzer to consult with Faculty of Applied Science, and will consult with UBC Counsel about changing student contract. Max will consult with Enrolment Services about administration they will need to do.*

b. Parental leave for graduate students

First discussion looked at an academic policy change – decoupling parental leave from terms and using an 8-week period. This led to a discussion of paid parental leave, as other universities are apparently offering this. Jenny found out information about universities offering bursaries: Queen's and Waterloo. Queen's offers a maximum of \$5,000. They started offering this in January 2011 so they don't know average annual uptake yet. Waterloo has had range of 15 – 30 students apply per year. For the first two years their bursary was for \$4,000 maximum; this has now been extended to \$8,000. Waterloo has 4,300 grad students – less than half of UBC. Cost of this bursary for 2010-2011 was \$140,000, which comes from their central administration fund. We can use this information if we decide to approach UBC central administration for funding.

Jenny will bring proposal to next Policy meeting re. academic aspects, changing how we do a parental leave to make it more flexible – not coinciding with start of term. Philip is intending to advocate with Anna Kindler about whether Central Admin is willing to support this financially.

Jenny added that at both Queen's and Waterloo, funding only goes to students who are otherwise receiving funding from the university. Some Tri-Agencies have parental leave funding so university contribution goes down in such cases.

Beth noted that proportions of men and women in different Faculties vary. If central administration downloads the cost of this program to the Faculties, the additional burdens on Faculties will also vary considerably.

Curtis noted that one possible funding model (favoured by central administration in other cases) would be to have a percentage cost added on for every graduate student. These funds would go to a central pool to fund the parental leave. This effectively downloads the cost to the researchers.

c. Report on WriteCheck and student access to Turnitin

Max reported that WriteCheck was developed by the same people who developed Turnitin, but it is aimed at students. It enables them to check for plagiarism without going through their instructor. There is a fee for using it. UBC's licence only covers faculty and staff. WriteCheck and Turnitin produce the same sort of originality report. Costs were listed on a handout distributed at the meeting.

Susan raised the option of requesting all departments to set up a Turnitin account – many don't have one.

A member recalled a recent issue with Turnitin privacy. Max clarified: this was to do with using WebCT to submit papers to Turnitin, but that was because WebCT was submitting too much information including student numbers.

Is there a problem with papers being stored on servers in the US? UBC is not concerned about this – the document can go across the border, but not the student numbers.

Graduate students have expressed concern about their material being held on US servers and thus being subject to the US Patriot Act and retrievable by the US government. Seems from Turnitin that you lose the Intellectual Property (IP), can't get it back, so there are concerns about submitting their own IP and thereby losing it. Would like a Canadian equivalent that's not subject to US privacy laws. Max clarified that Turnitin will not show student papers to others; if something is submitted to Turnitin and the originality report shows that it contains material from an unpublished student paper, the submitter gets a pop-up telling him or her that the paper is private. Then there's an opportunity to ask the person who submitted the student paper, through Turnitin (preserving student anonymity), for permission to see the paper. Perhaps the US government could request a paper from Turnitin; they would likely get it.

***Action:** Max will check into IP issues and accessibility to US government for material submitted to Turnitin.*

Susan noted that Turnitin misses a huge amount of material from scientific and scholarly journals, and there are other databases that do pick those things up. Susan couldn't remember the name but they use different search engines that do check scholarly journals.

Discussion: students may see Turnitin as a tool to tell them which words they have to change to avoid charges of plagiarism. Instead, need to instill in students the idea of not plagiarising. This may be why students can only get access to Turnitin through faculty or staff.

Jaime noted some grad students may be plagiarising because of outside stresses and pressures – doesn't want to move towards Turnitin as best practice for catching plagiarism without ensuring that the information and tools are available to educate and assist students. Workshops in avoiding plagiarism (and ethical academic conduct generally) are being offered and will continue to expand.

Noted that all plagiarism by graduate students should be reported to FoGS so that it can become part of the student's complete record.

At enrollment students give permission to UBC to submit their work to agencies such as Turnitin. Students are not individually notified when their work is submitted. Clive noted that there is some very useful and specific information about plagiarism and Turnitin on the FoGS website.

4. New Business

a. Doctoral exam review

Proposals circulated. Highlights:

Arm's length requirements for External Examiners: FoGS would like to change them to be slightly more forgiving but still require standards higher than or equal to the ones imposed by any of the Tri-Agencies. Looked at Tri-Council regulations and took the strictest rules from all of them.

Comments:

"Mentor" is a very broad category; should it be more defined? Perhaps "official mentor" would clarify this? Change "former thesis supervisor" to "former advisor", and remove "or mentor". Some flexibility needed, as in some fields everyone will interact over a period of six years. There's space on the form to disclose and describe the relationship if you are nominating someone who technically does not qualify. Add "normally" before the eligibility requirements. These requirements will all go on the actual form as well as on the explanatory handout.

Invitation to External Examiners: Doc Exams team often sends emails to prospective External Examiners and receives no reply. This proposal is designed to enable supervisors to encourage colleagues to serve as External Examiners without compromising the "arm's length" requirement. After FoGS invites an External, supervisors will be invited to follow up and encourage

participation. After the External Examiner agrees, all contact between supervisor and External Examiner will be terminated.

Comments:

This change is needed in order to keep the process running smoothly and in a timely manner. Selection of potential external examiners varies across campus; some supervisors believe that students should be involved in choice, others don't. Officially the form for recommending external examiners comes from the supervisor, approved by the graduate advisor.

Form has been modified so that nominators must check box confirming that they have read the arm's length requirements.

Comment from Susan: purpose was to streamline, but this seems more complicated. Philip – we're downloading work to the programs and this is good for FoGS. Now the program will help through supervisor contact. Used to be people would ignore requirements; now they must check a box and take responsibility for making correct recommendations. Getting it right the first time will prevent frustrating situations, e.g., doc exams having to return a form and ask for more nominees because the first ones were not arm's length.

Examining Committee Numbers: The idea of reducing the number of exam committee members did not go well with focus group. Therefore we are not proposing a change.

External Review Duration: Time allowed for reading thesis has been reduced from five weeks to four weeks – this is considered to be the minimum time allowed.

Alternate Exam Locations: Will now try to hold exams at locations other than FoGS. This will make it easier for faculty and students in some programs to attend their program's exams.

Exam Instructions Document: Exam instructions have been updated. Instructions for Chair will now be sent to whole exam committee. Roles and responsibilities are clearly stated at the beginning of the instructions. Also states clearly that latecomers will not be admitted. There was discussion clarifying who is and isn't considered a member of the exam committee, and what constitutes quorum. Confusion arose when the word "Chair" was used; does this refer to Chair of supervisory committee ("supervisor") or to the Chair of the examination (represents FoGS; is not a member of the exam committee)?

GSS members were very concerned that these procedures should all be considered in light of reducing student stress and anxiety. Forms will be tweaked to provide clarity.

Chair's Report Form: The Chair's report form has been revised. Assessment now de-couples the amount of revisions required and the duration required to do them. Used to be that students given minor revisions were allowed a month to complete them; for major or substantive revisions students were allowed six months. Length of time required for revisions has major repercussions for registration and scholarships; the form is now very clear about the time expectation. Categories are now clear; how many and type of revisions, and who must sign off to confirm that the revisions have been done and are satisfactory. Then choosing the amount of time allowed is done separately from this.

Doctoral Dissertation Approval Form: this form must now be signed by [at least] one supervisor, one University Examiner, and another committee member. Requiring a UX's signature is a change from past practice.

Voting: a simple majority can be obtained by members of the supervisory committee overruling the University examiners. Now if there are two or more negative votes at the exam, then the process stops and a conversation with FoGS is initiated. FoGS determines what level of re-examination is required. Discussion of procedure in the event that there are two negative votes at an exam which is not a clear fail. FoGS Dean would meet with exam Chair, then with other examiners as needed.

FoGS has heard from University examiners and Chairs that there are cases in which the University examiners have been outvoted and their opinions have not been given adequate weight. This new protocol allows the University examiners to have more influence.

Jaime expressed concern about the length of time this might take (at least a week). Philip emphasized that determining the outcome of the exam is a major decision requiring much investigation and reflection, and therefore time is needed.

Need an additional box on report sheet to indicate that two or more examiners have withheld their approval, the exam is adjourned, and the situation will need review by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The changes above (with revisions as discussed) will be brought to Grad Council at the next meeting, except for the in-camera voting procedure. This is to be revised and re-presented at the next Policy Committee meeting.

5. Adjournment of the meeting

<i>Clive Roberts</i> <i>Beth Haverkamp</i> }	To adjourn the meeting.
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Carried.

6. Next meeting: October 25, 2011