

**Meeting of the GC Academic Policy Committee
Tuesday, November 18th 2014, 12:30pm–1:50pm**

Room 200, Graduate Student Centre, 6371 Crescent Road

Present: Brian Bemmels, Don Mavinic, Max Read, Susan Porter, Lisa Pountney (minutes), Larry Walker (Chair), Daniel Weary, Daniel Wood

Guests: Jenna Shapka (for Beth Haverkamp), Daniel Fritz (Curriculum Committee)

Regrets: Beth Haverkamp, Gail Murphy, Jenny Phelps, Michael Richards, Clive Roberts

Absent: Ljiljana Biukovic, Cindy Prescott, Thomas Chang, Colúm Connolly

1) Introductions and regrets

2) Adoption of the agenda

All } *That the agenda be approved.*

Carried

3) Minutes of the meeting held 14 October 2014*

All } *That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2014 be approved.*

Carried

4) Minute that the pro forma graduation vote held 12 November 2014 was carried without dissent.

That the candidates for degrees be approved and forwarded to Senate for approval, and that the Dean, in consultation with the Registrar, be empowered to make any necessary adjustments.

5) Chair's Remarks

Larry noted that, following the conversation at the previous meeting regarding doctoral re-examinations, we are now routinely informing Associate Deans in the event that we encounter re-examinations or negative reports.

6) Business Arising / Updates

a) clarification of status for non-registered, fee-per-course/credit students

These non-registered fee per-course/credit students are in the following online courses: MET, MRSc, MFA (CRWR). Typically there is very little concern about their status when they're not registered, due to the fact that they are not here to use student services.

However, there is a relatively new course, the Master of Laws in Taxation (LLMT) which is an on-campus program, in which students are registered and pay by the course. The concern here is that when these students are not registered for a course, what services are available to them? At the last meeting we decided it was inappropriate for these students to seek leaves of absence, they simply needn't register, but we're concerned about how this impacts their student status.

We received further clarification from the Associate Registrar, and when these students choose not to register the following key points are in effect:

- Not assessed student fees, they have no student status, and are not entitled to student services
- No UPass, not eligible for student housing, etc.
- Responsible for their own MSP coverage
- They can negotiate extended health coverage with AMS/GSS provider
- International students – may have to return to own country; letter confirming they are expected back for start of agreed-upon term
- but, traditionally, some student benefits accorded – library, email, CWL

The committee asked for further clarification on the following points:

- The library access for students not registered ends when their eligibility to register for courses ends (5 years). After this point they would lose access unless they receive an extension.
- Are international students aware that they may have to return to their home country during the course of their program if they're not registered? This would only be applicable for the LLMT course currently. It is detailed on the university website, however it is our intention to make this information as clear and transparent as possible.

7) **New Business**

a) role of UBC–Okanagan faculty in G+PS – for discussion ... see attached “UBC-O issue”

Larry noted that this item is for discussion, and that currently there is no action to propose.

This relates to a situation where a professor in Engineering nominated a University Examiner from UBC-O, who was declined due to two main reasons:

- This faculty member was not a member of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- Although this faculty member was being nominated to be the 'outside-program' examiner, he was also from the same specialization at UBC-O.

The supervisor here at UBC graciously accepted this decision and quickly came up with another nomination. However, the faculty member at UBC-O took some offence at being declined, and the situation escalated considerably. For this reason, we decided to bring it to this committee to be reconsidered. It should be noted that, in the process of talking about university examiners, the conversation expanded to include supervision in general by UBC-O faculty and their involvement in our Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Larry posed the following questions to the committee in order to facilitate the discussion:

- Should UBC-O engineering faculty be ordinarily eligible to serve as university examiners (because of the anomalous dual-campus administrative structure of the Faculty of Applied

Science), if they otherwise meet criteria? Should UBC-O faculty, in general, be ordinarily eligible to serve as UXs?

- Should UBC-O engineering faculty be eligible to supervise, co-supervise, and serve on the supervisory committees of UBC-V graduate students without seeking G+PS approval? Should UBC-O faculty, in general, be eligible to supervise ... UBC-V graduate students?
- Should the inclusion of UBC-O faculty in these examining committee and supervisory roles necessitate their inclusion in the membership of G+PS? What would be the implications of such a move?

Larry also commented further on the dual-campus structure that UBC has. It is important to note that:

- Tenure and promotion decisions for faculty from both campuses are handled by a single Senior Appointments Committee and University President.
- Initial appointments and reappointments at the assistant professor rank are handled by Faculty deans locally.
- Faculty at Okanagan University College were “grandparented” when it became UBC-O in 2005.
- The relationship of UBC-O faculty members with UBC-O students is governed by the policies and procedures of their CGS and, accordingly, by the academic standards and expectations that prevail there.

The scope of the graduate programs at UBC-V, and at UBC-O, the latter of which is considerable smaller, were presented for the committee’s information. Both campuses are governed by their own Senate, however the Faculty of Applied Science follows a dual-campus model for administrative purposes.

For information purposes, Larry summarized and circulated the key points (from our policies) with regard to the eligibility and role of the University Examiner, as well as the supervision of graduate students by other faculty:

Role of the university examiners -

- to assess the quality and significance of the dissertation
- to evaluate the performance of the candidate at the final oral defense
- to represent the broad academic standards of UBC – to evaluate whether the candidate’s work and presentation meet expectations for UBC’s standards of excellence
- to contribute to the consensus recommendation to the Dean regarding the conferral of the degree

Eligibility of the university examiners -

- well-qualified (should have expertise in a field closely related to the dissertation research) and objective
- faculty member must hold an academic (not clinical) appointment as a full, associate, or emeritus professor in a graduate program that offers doctoral degrees, or have proven experience in the supervision of doctoral students at UBC
- normally, at least one UX should have no affiliation with the graduate program(s) of either the candidate or supervisor
- UXs must not be (or have been) members of the supervisory committee or connected with the dissertation research in any way

- UXs should not be associated with the candidate (outside of the usual contact in courses or other non-thesis activities), nor be related to the candidate or supervisor
- except in special circumstances, a UX should not be a close collaborator with the supervisor
- *note*: We have been acting on the presumption that only members of G+PS are eligible (six exceptions from UBC-O in the past decade).

Supervision of graduate students by other faculty ([Senate policy](#))-

“Members of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies may supervise graduate students, chair examining committees, and vote at Faculty general meetings.”

“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, upon the recommendation of the head, director, or dean (or functional equivalent) of the graduate programs with which they are affiliated and the approval of the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, to supervise or co-supervise master’s and doctoral students and/or serve on doctoral student supervisory committees provided they meet the relevant criteria. These individuals are not members of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.”

- *note*: Approval of UBC-O faculty in supervisory roles has been routine if recommended by program and meeting criteria.

Discussion from the committee followed:

- The number of requests we receive for UBC-O faculty members to serve in supervisory roles is relatively small, but the vast majority of requests are approved.
- The main reason the UBC-O Engineering faculty would like to be automatically eligible to serve as university examiners, supervisors or co-supervisors is due to the fact that their tenure and promotion comes from within the same Faculty of Applied Science (dual-campus model – common Dean for both UBC-V and UBC-O).
- A common theme raised by the committee was that the College of Graduate Studies at UBC-O is governed by a different Senate and governance structure, and thus their faculty are essentially governed by different policies.
- It is important to note that while the engineering faculty appointment process follows the same model as UBC-V and is approved by the common Dean of Applied Science for both campuses, the UBC-O graduate programs are approved by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies at UBC-O, and their institutional governance and policies could be different.

The committee then reviewed the Senate policy concerning faculty membership in G+PS:

Faculty membership in G+PS ([Senate policy](#)) -

“Members of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies 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 the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and must meet the criteria established by the graduate programs with which they are affiliated. Members of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies may supervise graduate students, chair examining committees, and vote at Faculty [of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies] general meetings.”

... [retired faculty members] ...

“Persons holding the following ranks are not eligible for membership in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: Adjunct Professors, Honorary Professors, Visiting Professors, Professors of Teaching, UBC Okanagan Professors, Senior Instructors.”

After providing key information on policy and procedure, Larry re-focused the committee on the major issues, questions and implications at hand:

If UBC-O faculty are to be routinely approved to serve as UXs -

- If from a similar department/specialization, would they be considered an “inside” or an “outside” UX?
- Who would be responsible for paying the travel expenses of UBC-O faculty to attend final university defenses in Vancouver?

If UBC-O faculty are to be eligible to supervise, co-supervise, and serve on the supervisory committees of UBC-V graduate students without seeking G+PS approval -

- How to preclude confusion for both students and supervisors regarding whether the policies and procedures of G+PS or CGS prevail?
- Would G+PS have any jurisdiction over UBC-O faculty members beyond the removal of supervisory privileges for UBC-V students?
- What about UBC-O faculty from other than doctoral-level programs? And what about “grandparented” faculty?
- Would it be acceptable for UBC-V students to be resident at UBC-O? Would it be acceptable for an entire cohort of students to be at UBC-O?
- Would it be acceptable for the entire supervisory committee to be from UBC-O?
- Who would be responsible for paying the travel expenses of UBC-O faculty to attend supervisory committee meetings and final university defenses in Vancouver?

If UBC-O faculty are to be members of G+PS -

- How to facilitate their full participation in meetings of the Faculty of G+PS, Graduate Council, and the various standing and ad hoc committees (Policy, Curriculum, Scholarships, etc.)?
- Who will be responsible for paying the travel expenses of UBC-O faculty to attend G+PS meetings in Vancouver?
- Might this be perceived by UBC-O as an attempt to appropriate their CGS?

Discussion from the committee followed:

- It seems like we have a good ad hoc process for identifying the people that we need on committees/exams and sourcing them from the community, as long as they meet the standards of this Faculty. It comes down to governance: We can only control the policy for people that fit within and under it.
- Rather than make a blanket rule for all UBC-O faculty, could those who apply be approved to become members of G+PS? With a lifetime membership so they don’t have to be re-apply?

Some of the committee had concerns with this – it's important to renew approval so that we can maintain/control quality of supervision, and to ensure that faculty continue to meet requirements.

- Note, when we receive requests for faculty to supervise, departments have the option to choose from a blanket approval to supervise for '5 years' or for 'this student only'. Interestingly the majority of requests are for 'this student only'.

Larry asked the committee if they thought we should change our current policies, or to create a blanket approval process. The consensus was "no."

Further discussion followed:

- This is really to do with governance, policy and institutional support, not the individuals.
- If we are not willing to approve them to be members of G+PS, then are our current policies sufficient? With regard to supervisory committees, should these requests from Applied Science at UBC-O be treated differently to any other outside faculty? Larry commented that right now, any UBC-O faculty member that is recommended by their unit is approved.
- Is it possible to grant an exception to Applied Science in that once they are approved to supervise they don't need to reapply? This could create issues further down the line.
- Would it be enough to say we don't need to see the CV of the faculty member? For Applied Science or any UBC-O faculty member? Concerns on this point were also raised.
- There is also the concern regarding the perspective of UBC-O faculty outside of Applied Science. When they see Applied Science getting automatic approval, they will expect the same treatment as they also go through the central Senior Appointments Committee.
- The committee is firm that a lifetime 'approval' is not appropriate.

In conclusion, the committee was not able to find a resolution, and will leave it in the capable hands of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The committee agreed that the current process is adequate, and there was no support of any kind for a blanket approval or change to policy. It will continue to be a judgment call on a case-by-case basis by G+PS.

8) Forthcoming agenda items

a) **leaves of absence**

9) Adjournment

Lunch provided

*Minutes of previous meetings are available here:

<http://www.grad.ubc.ca/faculty-staff/graduate-council/academic-policy-committee-previous-meetings>