

## MINUTES

### Meeting of the GC Policy Committee Wednesday, 19 September 2018, 12:30–13:50

Room 200, Graduate Student Centre, 6371 Crescent Road

**Present:** Teresa Dobson, Thomas Chang, Matthew Evenden, Zhaoming Xu, John Ries, Karin Mickelson, Susan Porter, Larry Walker (Chair)

**Regrets:** Wendy Robinson, Mark MacLachlan, Yousry El-Kassaby

**Staff:** Max Read, Virginia Hourihane (minutes)

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#### 1. Introductions and regrets

New member: Karin Mickelson (Law)

New member: Teresa Dobson (Education)

Lutz Lampe's (Applied Science) teaching schedule conflicts with the Policy Committee meetings this year, therefore a new representative from that Faculty will need to be appointed.

#### 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 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018\*

<i>All</i>	}	<i>That the minutes of the meeting held on March 14, 2018 be approved.</i>
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Carried

#### BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

#### 4. Revision to policy regarding duration of program

Larry provided an update on the policy regarding program duration. This policy was approved at the last Graduate Academic Policy meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, and was sent to the Senate's Academic Policy Committee, but it has run into problems there, which have not yet been resolved. The revised policy would add increased time to completion for part-time PhD students, but would also clarify that students who have run out of time to complete their program are not required to withdraw because they have lost eligibility to continue unless an extension has been granted. The outstanding issue is how to notate on the transcript that a student has not been permitted to continue because the time allowed to complete the program has lapsed. This policy will come back to the Grad Policy Committee once Enrolment Services provides direction on the transcript notation.

## 5. Revision to admission appeals policy

A second item, the Graduate Appeals on Admission or Readmission Decisions policy, which was approved at the previous Committee meeting, has needed some revisions before being forwarded to Graduate Council and then on to the Senate. Two paragraphs have been added (regarding the procedure for appealing the Dean's decision, as well as the rescission of offers of admission if falsified documents are submitted).

<i>John Ries</i> <i>Thomas Chang</i>	}	<i>That the revised policy regarding graduate appeals on admission or readmission decisions be approved.</i>
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Carried

## 6. Approval of candidates for degrees (N = 846)

<i>Karin Mickelson</i> <i>Zhaoming Xu</i>	}	<i>That the candidates for degrees (September conferral) 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

## 7. Doctoral exams report (2017-18)

Larry provided a report on doctoral exams conducted in 2017-18. A total of 556 exams were held, with 13 negative external examiner reports (9 of which were in the summer term) and 27 dissertations requiring substantial revisions post-defense. Some issues arising this year included: an external examiner submitting a negative report based on his objection to manuscript-based dissertations rather than a scholarly analysis of the work, a re-examination required when a student was disciplined for extensive plagiarism in his dissertation and required to undertake thorough revisions, cursory introductory and concluding chapters in theses and dissertations, transitions in the coordinator position, building renovations requiring more off-site examinations, and supervisors interfering with the process for identifying the external examiner.

There was one special off-site examination held in Port Alberni recently for a First Nations student who wanted to defend her thesis in front of her community. This was a one-off event and ordinarily the logistics involved mean that examinations will be carried out in a convenient location for the examiners.

Susan suggested that a review of academic misconduct be included in one of the upcoming Graduate Policy meetings.

## 8. Process for Program Reviews

Larry noted that currently departments are not always following the guidelines for the self-study. G+PS is currently working with the Provost's office to regulate the self-study with a web-based document containing mandatory fields.

The government is examining how program reviews are being conducted and with this Quality Assurance Process Audit comes an increased need for an effective process.

## **9. Policies on diplomas, academic-credit certificates, and non-credit credentials**

The University offers numerous non-degree credentials (diplomas, academic-credit certificates, and non-credit certificates) but the general requirements for such credentials and how they are differentiated have not been regularized and these non-degree credentials typically receive minimal curricular oversight. This is of concern to G+PS because some diplomas are earned in conjunction with a graduate degree and some graduate certificates ladder into master's degrees. The UBC Okanagan Senate is currently considering policies that would regularize these non-degree credentials, and it is hoped that UBC Vancouver will follow suit, with the initiative led by Extended Learning.

## **10. Report of, and response to, the G+PS external Review**

G+PS recently underwent a program review, the results of which have been circulated with the documents for today's meeting. Dr. Porter presented an overview of the review. The main conclusions were that G+PS was functioning well but that it needed to do more for postdoctoral studies, and should also have a louder voice in strategic decisions.

The question of whether UBC should increase its enrolment of graduate students was generally not agreed with; most Deans believe that their departments are at full capacity. UBC's enrolment of postdoctoral student numbers are lower than those of its peers but funding would need to be found in order to increase the intake of postdoctoral fellows.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:52pm.

*Lunch provided*

\*Minutes of previous meetings are available here:

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