

Meeting of the GC Academic Policy Committee

Wednesday, March 12, 2014; 12:30 pm – 1:50 pm
Graduate Student Centre, Room 200

Present: Colúm Connolly, Elizabeth Croft, Beth Haverkamp, Gail Murphy, Jenny Phelps, Susan Porter, Cindy Prescott, Max Read, Michael Richards, Larry Walker (Chair), Lisa Blomfield (minutes)

Guests: Brian Cairns

Regrets: George Furey

Absent: Brian Bemmels, Ljiljana Biukovic, Peter Leung, Clive Roberts, Daniel Weary, Marina von Keyserlingk, Kishor Wasan

1. Introductions and regrets

2. Adoption of the agenda

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

3. Minutes of the last meeting (January 15, 2014)

All	}	<i>That the minutes of the meeting held January 15, 2014 be approved.</i>
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Carried.

4. Chair's remarks

Larry informed the committee of an issue that G+PS has been working on recently, regarding special cIRcle license for Creative Arts theses. Typically we would like students' theses and dissertations to become publicly accessible as soon as possible. At the same time, we have a responsibility to balance that open access with students' commercial and publication interests. We usually manage this process by implementing a time-limited embargo on theses before they appear in cIRcle, the university's open access digital repository.

We have a unique situation with theses in the Creative Arts in that the creative work can very well be a commercial product. It would be very difficult for students to find a publisher for their novel or musical composition, etc., if the Library was providing access to it for free. Due to this issue, a special license was

implemented in 2008 for Creative Arts that outlined a number of provisions, and dictated that only a physical copy could be loaned. This license has not been working due to the fact that we've been collecting CDs and DVDs for the last few years, and these have remained uncatalogued and inaccessible. UBC is now going to introduce a new standard cIRcle license, which has prompted us to re-look at the needs of Creative Arts.

The issue with the CDs and DVDs that we've been collecting and loaning is that this technology will soon be obsolete and we need to create a permanent archive. The solution that we've tentatively come to, in collaboration with the Library and Creative Arts units, is to create limited access to these particular Creative Arts theses through the campus wide login system. This means that any legitimate researcher on campus can access these works from anywhere in the world, and any member of the public that is interested can access them if they are physically present on the UBC campus.

We're continuing to work on this project, and the writing of the new license will involve legal counsel. Our mandate is to make the research as assessable as possible, while protecting the commercial rights of students.

5. From January 2014: Updates

a. Visiting International Research Students (VIRS)

For some time we've been working on formalising and standardising the process by which international research students visit UBC. We are happy to report that the Senate has now approved this policy. As there is a fee associated with this, it will go to the Board of Governors in April. If the policy is approved by the BoG, there will be a communication plan implemented and disseminated by Go Global, as the administrative unit responsible for this process.

The policy will cover undergraduate and graduate students, and will be effective for any students visiting as of September 1st of 2014.

b. Continuous registration policy [we hope to get this on the agenda of the Registrar in order to explore alternatives]

Larry briefly reminded the committee of the issues surrounding our continuous registration policy. Graduate students in general are required to be continuously registered while they're in their program. The problem we have, especially with course-based masters students, is that in academic terms when they're not taking courses they feel like they're getting a raw deal by being required to pay another instalment of program fees. This also creates issues for G+PS as sometimes these students ask for leaves of absence to avoid paying fees.

There are a lot of complexities within this situation, and we are trying to compile a list of instances and examples where our masters programs are administered differently. A small number of our course-based masters programs are charged by the course or by the credit. In these cases, leaves of absence don't become an issue. We also have courses that are 'thesis optional', where students can choose to produce a thesis or do course work, and then we have thesis-based masters programs. Our most problematic category contains the programs which are course-based only and assess tuition by instalment.

We are continuing to work on this, and as it could have an impact on the tuition model we'll send a query to Strategic Decision and Support for their input and analysis.

6. Business Arising

- a. **Supervision by non G+PS members: two draft forms, one for the appointment of a supervisor or co-supervisor and one for the appointment of a committee member [documentation attached].**

Following the discussion held at our previous meeting, G+PS revisited the form that is used to recommend a non-G+PS member as a supervisor or supervisory committee member. One form became two recommendation forms (one for the appointment of a supervisor or co-supervisor and one for the appointment of a committee member) and they have been simplified and clarified, at the recommendation of the committee during the last meeting. The two new forms were presented to the group.

The committee was reminded that there is no change in policy, and that these forms are being presented more for information, but feedback is very welcome. Larry took the committee through the changes to both forms, and the rationale behind those changes.

Discussion followed:

- The approval period overseen by G+PS (either for 5 years or for an individual student) was discussed, and the potential implications of this. Perhaps there should be a section on the form where the graduate program can indicate what term they would prefer the appointment was for? Departments also have the power to implement their own policies to further restrict supervision of a non-G+PS member if they wish.
- Potential complications with partner appointments were discussed. What if they are approved to supervise for a 5-year term, and during that term things change and they become unsuitable as a supervisor? Larry commented that we're happy to take direction from the departments. If they would like G+PS to restrict supervision to just one student, and require subsequent applications for any further students, that is something we can do.
- The committee discussed the role of the disciplinary Faculty in these decisions, and the ability of each Faculty to impose further restrictions and/or policies if needed.
- The statement from the nominee (and what that should comprise) was discussed. There is a link to a template of such a statement on the G+PS website, and departments are more than welcome to take this and tailor it to their own needs.

Larry concluded the discussion by confirming that we will amend the form to include a place for the graduate program to indicate the approval term (5 years or per individual student) they would recommend.

- b. **Restructuring of Graduate Council: proposed Calendar entry and by-laws will be recommended to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies on March 13.**

At our last meeting in January we approved the new calendar entry and bylaws, as amended. These will be presented at the full faculty meeting of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies on March 13, 2014. Presuming that it is passed by the full faculty, it will go to Senate (via their Academic Policy Committee) and we are hopeful that it is passed and can be implemented in the fall.

7. New Business

No new business raised.

8. Forthcoming/proposed agenda items

a. Plagiarism and scholarly misconduct processes

With regard to Policy 85 there is some ambiguity about how to handle some cases of scholarly misconduct.

b. Thesis embargo policy

We're hoping to standardise this in some way. Essentially if a student and supervisor present a compelling case for an embargo, or an extension on an embargo, we will of course consider and most likely grant it, but we need students to stay on task.

c. Miscellaneous items raised:

Jenny informed the committee that, due to the changes the graduate admissions project will have on our processes, there will need to be some policy changes in the near future. Once the new system is in place, we will be making binding admission decisions based on unofficial documents, and graduate programs will be empowered to make binding admission decisions on behalf of graduate studies. As such, we'll need to take a close look at the policies on graduate admission, and revise them to fit the process that the university has agreed to.

Beth inquired into the status of program reviews, and whether Graduate Council would have any involvement. Unfortunately, at this time there is no appetite at the university executive level to involve Graduate Council. That said, G+PS are anxious to be involved in the process, both in providing data to programs, and meeting with the external review committees. We also want to be helpful when the recommendations come through.

Jenny announced that G+PS would be hosting a Graduate Symposium on June 5th and 6th. The overall theme is focusing on the innovations and changes in graduate education. Communications will follow shortly.

9. Adjournment

<i>All</i>	}	To adjourn the meeting.
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Carried.

10. Next meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2014.