

**Minutes of a meeting of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee  
held on Monday, June 13, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. in Maggie Benston Centre 2212**

Present:

Wade Parkhouse, Chair

Sheilagh MacDonald, Secretary

George Agnes

Paul Budra

Regrets:

Colleen Collins

Mary Ann Pope, Director, Records

Ron Wakkary

Gwen Bird

John Nesbit

Rob Cameron

Wolfgang Haider

Derek Bingham

1. Approval of agenda- approved.
2. Approval of the minutes of April 11, 2011 – approved
3. Business arising from the minutes
  - SGSC items from the last meeting all cleared Senate.
  - **Full Program Proposal for a PhD in Health Sciences effective Fall 2011** passed Senate. An amendment was passed by Senate to remove the following phrase from p. 28 in the Doctoral Thesis section: (at least one must be accepted for publication at the time of the defense, and the other two must have been submitted).
4. Chair's report
  - Semesterly meeting with President: Three substantive issues were discussed: the large number of graduate students for which SFU receives no provincial funding; financial support for students; and international students.

Aboriginal student initiative - to increase the number of aboriginal students and faculty. There was a discussion of ways to attract and support aboriginal students. The committee expressed substantial support for special initiatives in this regard

SGSC Retreat Summary – The Dean will prepare a report for the President for the fall.

IT admissions process – DGS SIMS Specialist, Marilyn Dueckman, will move to the project.

5. For Discussion:

**5.1 SFU Exchange Program: Outbound Graduate Students**

SFU has a number of exchange programs but no policy for relationships with partner institutions. This is an attempt to clarify procedure. The Dean answered a number of questions for the Senate Committee on International Activities (SCIA). The committee will draft a proposal that will come back to SGSC to vet and revise as necessary. SCIA will take this to Senate.

Some of the requirements: student will “normally” have a 3.5 minimum GPA, must have satisfactory progress in the program

## **5.2 Faculty of Science**

**[GS2011.14]**

### **a. Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology**

- 1) Master Program (thesis option):
  - i) Change to number of required courses
- 2) Doctoral Program:
  - i) Changes to the Comprehensive Examination Process

**Motion:** Move to approve with the recommendation that the nature of the comprehensive exam be moved from the calendar to the website to aid revisions of non-substantive matters.

(W. Haider/R. Wakkary)

**(Unanimous)**

**Motion Carried**

### **b. Department of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry**

- i) New course proposals:
  - MBB 746-3 Cell Death and Cell Survival
  - MBB 761-3 Comparative Genomics
  - MBB 762-3 Human Genomics

**Motion:** Move to approve

(P.Budra/J. Nesbit)

**(Unanimous)**

**Motion Carried**

### **c. Department of Physics**

- i) New course proposal:
  - PHYS 833-3 Biological Physics Laboratory

**Motion:** Move to approve

(C. Collins/P.Budra)

**(Unanimous)**

**Motion Carried**

SGSC noted that the piggyback course was well explained; an effort will be made to get all departments to articulate the expectations for graduate student in the same clear manner. New course forms have been created that ask that all piggyback courses be clearly identified. The changes will be advertised to all the units.

## **6. Items for information- minor course changes:**

### **6.1 Beedie School of Business**

**[GS2011.12]**

#### **a. Master Program, Business Administration (MOT MBA Program)**

- i) Calendar changes to application requirements
  - Grade Basis change from graded to Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory: BUS 772-2 Special Topics

**Not approved.** SGSC determined that this course is a placeholder and should be regularized.

- ii) Calendar changes to project requirements
  - Change of units from 3 to 1: BUS 781 Applied Project

**Tabled** because of policy implications. The BUS SGSC member will need to work with DGS to find the best way to deal with the issue of helping students wrap up applied project.

## **6.2 Faculty of Health Sciences**

**[GS2011.13]**

- i) Change of title and prerequisites: HSCI 900-0 FHS Research Seminars

**Minor course change- previously approved**

7. Other Business
  - Education Diploma-the Dean asked the SGSC to review the current process. No grades are assigned while students are in the diploma. This lack of gpa is problematic in terms of entry into a Masters and for degree completion. SGSC discussed various ways to improve upon and legitimize the current practice.
  - Video-conferencing for PhD defenses – a web survey will be created for graduate program chairs to find ways to improve the current system and to identify locations available at various SFU campuses.
  - Graduate programs- all course based without a capstone – SGSC indicated it is worth exploring the concept further in terms implications for students and faculty
8. Next scheduled meeting **July 11, 2011** (*material deadline –June 27, 2011*)