

**Minutes of a meeting of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee
held on Monday, October 3, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. in Maggie Benston Centre 2212**

Present:

Wade Parkhouse, Chair

Margo Moore

Mary-Ellen Kelm

Peter Ruben

Peter Liljedahl

Darius Burbidge

Mary Ann Pope, Director, Records

Mike Soron, GSS

Megan Crouch for Gwen Bird

Sheilagh MacDonald, Secretary

Rob Cameron

Paul Budra

Regrets:

Colleen Collins

David Pereira

Marek Hatala

John Nesbit

Duncan Knowler

1. Approval of agenda
2. Approval of the minutes of September 18, 2011 *attached*
3. Business arising from the minutes – (Senate SGSC items) *attached*
4. Presentation on Graduate on-line Learning- Brian Naicker and John Whatley CODE
The CODE Director and Program Director met with SGSC to discuss various possibilities for graduate courses. While there are more costs associated with offering graduate courses, all indications are that this is the wave of the future. Graduate programming is currently offered successfully at SFU. The Masters in Applied Legal (www.sfu.ca/notaries) has 43 students in the cohorts and 7 on-line courses. J. Whatley indicated there were two aspects to the courses: Web CT for text-based and Collaborate for real time teaching and interaction use.

The Dean indicated that on-line graduate courses would serve some of SFU's smaller units; a student could take course offerings at two or more institutions to complete a degree in a cost-effective manner. P. Ruben noted that SFU would find this useful if the programming platform (ex-HTML-based) was available in all institutions concerned. Ex Cyber Bullying – Wandy Cassidy from EDUC and six other researchers across Canada are able to work together.

B. Naicker and J. Whatley will demonstrate CODE programming for next GPC meeting in November.

5. Chair's report
 - Graduate Program Chairs meeting – DGS videotaped a demo of the CMPT admissions process. Feedback was positive.
 - ORE tutorial on research ethics –J. Whatley, Program Director from CODE, discussed a tutorial CODE and ORE are finalizing that is aimed at improving the success rate of students who are

applying for ethics approval for work done using human subjects. As the head of SGSC, the Dean will decide if the course will be mandatory for students concerned. Some issues were raised related to types of research in FASS that aren't being approved by the Research Ethics Board. The Dean will meet with the Director of ORE to deal with this matter.

6. For Discussion:

6.1 English Graduate Bridge Program

[dgs 11-1]

LifeLong Learning is designing a program for students who are not eligible for admission because they do not meet the English Language requirements or who are struggling to stay at the university. In the case of those not eligible for admission, the Dean indicated that this program would address the significant number of appeals he receives from faculties who want to admit ineligible students.

Concerns were raised about effectiveness, length of program, timing, etc. The Dean will forward the SGSC comments and concerns to LifeLong Learning and will get back to SGSC.

6.2 PhD defense process

[dgs 11-2]

There are a growing number of concerns: an increase in the number of externals who are reporting that the thesis is not ready for defense as evidenced by complaints from Externals that the dissertation is not in their hands one month before the defense. This raises questions as to the role of the supervisory committee. There is a need to clearly articulate rules.

Bigger problems are: There is more pressure to clear the system because students are in their last year. Externals don't understand categories used for approvals following a defense.

Associate Dean P Liljedahl will look at all the paperwork and clear up language for the Externals to ensure the academic integrity of SFU is preserved.

SFU should eventually move to a fully electronic process in a similar manner to McGill. Once the Dean's office approves the examining committee document, the thesis will be sent to the External. There is a need to clean up internal processes to provide a more professional service. P. Liljedahl will report back.

6.3 General Graduate Regulation (GGRs):

[dgs 11-3]

Our SGSC retreat in the spring indicated a need to update a number of our GGRs. Most were crafted in 1980s and have not been adjusted since that time. Some preliminary issues were identified by the Dean.

Mandated change – 30 credits for the Master's credential to meet Teachers Qualifying Service (TQS) and international standards. Three or four programs made the adjustment. The change of credits will be mandated in 2012/2013.

6.4 Feedback re: Concurrent (Combined or Accelerated) Bachelors-Masters degree proposal

[dgs 11-4]

Feedback –Keep to 3.67 CGPA for admissions; appeal to small group of people and maintain the time frame. Tri Councils are sending a clear message that Masters are taking too long. SFU must scale back expectations for research element.

6.5 Feedback re: Non-joint degree concurrent programs

[dgs 11-5]

The Dean is using all feedback to craft new calendar language.

6.6 Faculty of Science

[GS2011.18]

Department of Mathematics

M.Sc Program and PhD program:

MATH 888-0 PhD Comprehensive Exam: Operations Research

This is a specific stream that needs to show up on transcript to acknowledge the work done.

Motion: Move to Approve MATH 888

P. Ruben/Mary-Ellen

Unanimous.

Motion Carried

7. Items for information- minor course changes previously approved:

7.1 Beedie School of Business

[GS2011.15]

Special Cohort (ABL EMBA)

Calendar language:

Repackaged; SGSC to look at reconfiguration of the program to clearly identify this as a special cohort of their EMBA.

The Dean will work with BUS to finalize the calendar language to be forwarded to Senate.

8. Other Business

Requests for course proposals with pass/fail rather than satisfactory/unsatisfactory. P/F has grade implications; F=0; U does not link to a grade. Please investigate which the units would prefer before getting back to SGSC

Mothballing inactive courses – there will be the same time limit for graduate as for undergraduates; if a course is not offered in six semesters, it will be mothballed. Please note that departments have to right to veto a mothball. The timeline for the mothball process is November to January.

9. Next scheduled meeting **November 7, 2011** (*material deadline –October 24, 2011*)