

Meeting minutes of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)
held on November 9, 2015 in the Thesis Defence Room, SFU Library

Present:

Ex-Officio:

Wade Parkhouse, Chair
Mary-Ellen Kelm (Associate Dean)
Nicole White (Library)
Abhishek Nanjundappa (GSS)
Shelley Gair (Program Policy, Curriculum)
Krista Gerlich-Fitzgerald (Secretary)

Faculty Chairs:

Faisal Beg (FAS)
Lisa Shapiro (FASS)
Ian McCarthy (BUS)
Zoë Druick (FCAT)
Phil Winne (EDUC)
Sean Markey (FENV)
Stephen Smith (FHS)
Peter Ruben (Designate for SCI)

Graduate Students:

Matthew Alteen (Regular)

Guest:

Joanne Curry (Lifelong Learning)

Regrets:

Peter Liljedahl (Associate Dean)
Mary Ann Pope (Director, Records)
Essya Mabrouka Nabbali (Graduate Student)

1. Approval of agenda **Approved**
2. Review of the SGSC minutes of October 5, 2015 **Approved**
3. Business arising from the minutes
4. **Chair's Report**

The Canadian Association for Graduate Studies annual conference "Rethinking the PhD 2" took place at the end of October. Data shows graduate students are more commonly obtaining careers outside the academy and therefore careers outside the academy should no longer be considered as an alternative career. Doctoral students are obtaining those careers with the professional skills and training they are receiving. SFU's professional skills training have improved and are now ahead or on par with other Canadian institutions. Career tracking would assist in SFU's expansion of professional skill development.

The monetary amount and number of students receiving tri-council funding while at SFU has decreased in all areas except with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). This is an area of concern as it appears, based on informal discussion, other institutions have not experienced a change in their students' success rate.

5. **For Approval**

5.1 **Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**

5.1.1 Department of Economics

[GS2015.37]

a) Program change: Doctor of Philosophy

b) Program change: Master of Arts

c) Course change (title, description): ECON 837, ECON 838, ECON 839

Motion moved by L. Shapiro, seconded by Z. Druick

Approved

5.1.2 School for International Studies

[GS2015.38]

a) Program change: Master of Arts

SGSC was informed that International Studies would like to keep IS 880 a graded course even though it is a capstone course.

Motion moved by L. Shapiro, seconded by M. Alteen

Approved

5.2 Beedie School of Business

[GS2015.39]

a) New course: BUS 782 Comprehensive Examination

b) New course: BUS 783 Entrepreneurship

c) New course: BUS 784 Special Topics

d) Program change: Master of Technology MBA

SGSC requested that the following four revisions be made to the documents:

- 1) The course title for BUS 782 should be changed to better reflect the course content. Comprehensive exams in other departments are quite different from the requirements of this course.
- 2) The tone and content of the course outline for BUS 783 as it includes information that may be confusing for students.
- 3) Remove the reference to "Seattle" in the course description on the outline for BUS 784 since the industry tour may take place at other locations.
- 4) Any commitment from the technological companies that will be visited should be included on the cover memo. Additional information regarding past trips that were successful should also be included.

Moved by I. McCarthy, seconded by P. Winnie **Approved subject to revisions**

6. For Discussion

6.1 GGR 1.8.3, 1.8.2

[GS2015.18]

Withdrawal from Courses and from the University, Review of Unsatisfactory Progress

No concerns with the revisions were raised at SGSC. Faculties are requested to review the proposed revisions with the academic units and email any concerns or feedback to Shelley Gair.

6.2 GGR 1.12

[GS2015.17, GS2015.20]

Maximum Time for Completion and Readmission

The revisions to GGR 1.12 have undergone consultation for over 30 months. A question was asked whether having maximum time limits for comprehensive exams and using progress reports would help with more timely completion. The Chair reported that due to part time students and departmental standards, setting a completion time for comprehensive exams was not incorporated in the GGRs. The new online progress report is currently being piloted by REM. SGSC will be updated

at the next stage.

It was clarified that extensions would not be automatic and that departments would be responsible for the criteria and length of time allowed for extensions. SGSC recommended adding explicit language to the GGR instructing students to confirm with their department the specific extension policy for their program. It was suggested that the Graduate Studies website include a timeline graph or flowchart to help students understand how the various regulations apply throughout their program. A typo was noted in the first paragraph on page SGSC 51; “affect” should be “effect”.

Even though this GGR was submitted for discussion, it was noted that if an SGSC member moved to approve these revisions, the documented revisions will be effective for Fall 2016. Although the maximum time limits will only apply to new students starting in Fall 2016, the process of reactivation and readmission will apply to all students, as stated in the document.

P. Winne moved

“ that SGSC approve the revisions to GGR 1.12 (Maximum Time for Completion and Readmission) and the creation of GGR 1.4.4 (Reactivation) and GGR 1.4.5 (Readmission) effective Fall 2016.”

Approved

6.3 Professional Graduate Programs

[GS2015.40]

The Chair reported that many new program proposals being submitted are not fitting the traditional formats. It was noted that academic units with the most career oriented programs receive the most applications. It was suggested that professional graduate programs tend to fall into three types: training, enhancement and upgrading. Many members of SGSC saw it as important that the type of program is made clear and distinct from traditional research-based graduate programs. The objective would be to offer programs that would preserve academic rigour and not dilute the value of other credentials at the same level. SGSC discussed options on how to mitigate risk and uphold the necessary rigour. It was noted that many of the professional graduate programs face the same challenges as regular graduate programs such as capacity, resources and oversight.

SGSC discussed the value of housing these programs in existing faculties and potential options for when the program does not fit within a faculty. While the demand for working professionals to upgrade their skills is increasing, SGSC deems it necessary that these programs have the correct academic and administrative support structure.

6.4 Graduate Co-op

[GS2015.41]

Work Integrated Learning is advocating that co-op for graduate programs be accredited so a co-op designation can be added to a student’s parchment. At the graduate level, if the program is more than 2 years, a student would need to complete

2 co-op terms for the designation. Only 1 co-op term is required in programs 2 years or less. The designation would not include students who complete practicums or internships.

The discussion focused on the benefits and needs of the graduate students participating in work terms through co-op. The Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE) requires students to start and end with an academic study term consequentially it prohibits a student from ending on a co-op term. SGSC discussed how this did not meet the needs of all academic units at the graduate level. Further information is needed on whether a program can opt out of the designation status in order to end on a co-op term or if that would jeopardize graduate accreditation with CAFCE.

7. For Information

7.1 Faculty of Environment

School of Resource and Environmental Management

[GS2015.42]

a) Course Reinstatement: REM 651

Approved under delegated authority

8. Other business

SGSC was informed by Joanne Curry that a survey will be sent to all SFU alumni in 2016 which may provide an opportunity for SGSC to include a few questions in the survey.

9. Next SGSC scheduled meeting 2:30pm December 7, 2015 (*Material deadline November 19, 2015*)