

Meeting minutes of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) held on June 1, 2021 remotely on Zoom.

**Present:**

George Agnes (Acting Chair, Associate Dean)  
Roxanne Panchasi (Associate Dean)  
Keshav Mukunda (designate for Library)  
Reese Muntean (GSS representative)  
Krista Gerlich-Fitzgerald (Associate Director)  
Daria Babeshko (Curriculum)  
Nicole Strutt (Secretary)

**Faculty Chair:**

Parveneh Saeedi (FAS)  
Sean Zwagerman (FASS)  
Philippe Pasquier (FCAT)  
Lucy LeMare (EDUC)  
Dongya Yang (FENV)  
Frank Lee (FHS)  
Michael Silverman (SCI)

**Guests:**

Chantelle Spicer (GSS)  
Harjap Grewal (GSS)  
Hannah Buteau (GPS)

**Regrets:**

Jeff Derksen (Dean)  
Andrew Gemino (BUS)

**AGENDA**

1. Approval of agenda
2. Review of the SGSC minutes of May 4th, 2021
3. Business arising from the minutes
4. Chair's Report

**Approved**

On behalf of Jeff Derksen, the Chair acknowledged the belated discovery of the unmarked grave of 215 children at the Residential School in Kamloops which is on the territory of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation. The Committee stands with the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc people and the staff, faculty and students at SFU, some of whom are from that community. This discovery makes educational reform even more vital.

The Chair informed SGSC that The Ministry of Advanced Education is requesting programs with “streams” which have not yet proceeded to full Ministry approval submit full program proposals. The SFU academic calendar entries for the programs affected are being updated for the Fall 2021. Students can continue, and may be admitted to, the core full program that received Ministry approval.

R. Panchasi joined the meeting

5. For Approval

**5.1 Faculty of Applied Sciences**  
School of Mechatronics

- 5.1.1 Program Change: Mechatronics Systems Engineering, PhD  
New Course: MSE 802 Engineering Research Methods

A committee member inquired if this program change was for doctoral students in SEE only. It was responded that the course is mandatory for the students in SEE PhD but other students in research-based programs may also be allowed to attend. This includes SEE master's students and students from other academic units.

Moved by P. Saeedi; seconded by L. LeMare

**Approved**

## **5.2 Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**

Department of Psychology

### 5.2.1 Course Change (repeat for credit): PSYC 882, PSYC 890

Moved by S. Zwaggerman; seconded by K. Gerlich-Fitzgerald

**Approved**

School of Public Policy

### 5.2.2 Program Change: MA Public Policy Courses Change (deletion): PLCY 808 Course Change (title, units): PLCY 809

Moved by S. Zwaggerman; seconded by K. Gerlich-Fitzgerald

**Approved**

## 6. For Discussion

### 6.1 GSS Presentation on SFU Policies & Student Complaints

SGSC was informed that GSS compiled a document with five key priorities based on the feedback of over 100 graduate students across seven departments. GSS emphasized the importance of creating accountability in policies and procedures for both faculty and students. GSS asked that these policies and procedures provide clear and robust support for students. The GSS recommend a centralized position to direct, mediate and solve graduate students concerns. The GSS acknowledged the substantial step taken in SFU's new bullying and harassment policy.

The committee recognized the concerns of the GSS and agreed to continue working with GSS and to support GPS in the process. Numerous suggestions were discussed by the committee.

C. Spicer, P. Saeedi and H. Grewal left the meeting

### 6.2 Graduate Units and Credit Hours

K. Gerlich-Fitzgerald informed SGSC that graduate courses are valued at different units. It was emphasized that many students were being affected by this, especially if they take courses outside of their program requirements. While a student's academic progress report indicated a lack of required course credits in order to graduate, awareness of this has often been too late to fix and the student wasn't able to graduate on time. The committee was presented with several options to solve this, and general consensus for an approach to adjust

any course in a research-based program to 6 units, 3 units, or 1.5 units each made most sense. The proposed change will not present a barrier for students taking courses outside of their program for credit.

In addition, the committee was informed that a similar re-structuring of undergraduate courses is also being reviewed at this time.

This change would only affect new students. Existing students would be grandfathered into their program requirements and the courses associated with that program. Revision to the calendar entry for a few programs may be necessary to ensure fair translation of prior program requirements to the new and identical/similar program requirements under the revised course credit proposal. GPS can facilitate.

The Chair asked that additional information regarding the unit numbers in different academic units be forwarded to the associate deans to be circulated in their academic units.

7. Other Business

**7.1** P. Pasquire informed the committee that the PhD in Contemporary Arts received official approval of the Ministry of Advanced Education. The department is looking forward to starting their first fall intake into the program.

8. The date of the next SGSC meeting is scheduled for July 6, 2021