

Minutes of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) Meeting held on Dec 6, 2022

Present:

Jeff Derksen (Dean GPS and Associate Provost)
George Agnes (Associate Dean, GPS, Students)
Roxanne Panchasi (Associate Dean, GPS, Students)
Nicole White (Designate for Dean of Library)
Reese Muntean (GSS Executive Representative)
Hannah Buteau (Curriculum, GPS)
Stania Juriga (Recording Secretary)

Faculty Chair:

Valorie Crooks (FENV)
Lucy Lemare (EDUC)
Kate Slaney (FASS)
Arne Eigenfeldt (FCAT)
Lawrence McCandless (FHS)
Andrew Gemino (BUS)
Vance Williams (SCI)

Regrets:

Parvaneh Saeedi (FAS)

1. Approval of agenda

Approved

2. Review of the SGSC minutes of November 1, 2022

Approved

3. Business arising from the minutes

4. Chair's Report

Tri Agency awards:

The Chair informed the committee that GPS has seen a drop in the number of applications to the Tri-Agency applications and that we would like for more students to be applying. The Chair also encouraged the members of the SGSC to remind their faculties that these awards are available to their students and it is up to the supervisors to recommend them for awards.

Change of level of Dean of Graduate Studies:

The Chair updated the committee that Post-Doctoral fellows are moving over to the office of the Vice-President Research International.

5. For Approval

5.1 Beedie School of Business

New Courses: BUS 965, BUS 967, BUS 968, BUS 970, BUS 971, BUS 972, BUS 973

Course Changes: BUS 890, BUS 980, BUS 982, BUS 990, BUS 991, BUS 993

Program Change: Business Administration PhD

Motion by A. Gemino; seconded by K. Slaney

Approved

5.2 Faculty of Applied Sciences
School of Computing Science
New course: CMPT 825

Motion by J. Derksen; seconded by V. Williams

Approved

5.3 Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

5.3.1 Department of French
New Courses: FREN 840, FREN 855

5.3.2 Graduate Liberal Studies
Program Change: Graduate Liberal Studies MA

5.3.3 Department of History
New Courses: HIST 800, HIST 853, HIST 869
Course Changes: HIST 815

Program Change: Master of Arts in History
5.3.4 School of Public Policy
Course Change: PLCY 803

N. White, asked why the project course was only 5-units, when recently GPS standardized project and thesis course units. and the course should be within the standard 6 units for projects and extended essays (re. HIST 800). H. Buteau explained that the course was a part of the course-intensive stream and would not be examined as a project as defined in the GGRs. HIST 800 will not be a capstone, and will not be examined as per GGRs 1.7.2 a,b,or c. The course would fall under GGR 1.7.2 d). The revision to the course will be made.

Motion by K. Slaney; seconded by A. Eigenfeldt

Approved with revisions

5.4 Faculty of Environment

Ecological Restoration Program
Program Change (suspension of admission): Ecological Restoration MSc

The committee was presented with the proposal to suspend admissions for the Masters in Ecological Restoration, a program jointly administered between SFU and BCIT. After extensive discussion the past two years, it was decided that the program is not financially sustainable and along with a number of institutional differences, it is not viable to keep administering jointly. A proposal is expected to be submitted this spring for a stand-alone graduate program at SFU.

Motion by V. Crooks; seconded by L. Le Mare

Approved

6. For Discussion
Schedules & Temporary Course Changes

6.1 Course delivery

The committee discussed course delivery methods and reiterated that SFU had fully returned to in person teaching. If academic units within the faculties wanted to change their course delivery methods they should submit the changes to scheduling to ensure all students are aware of how the course will be offered to students.

Additionally, the Chair shared information on SCORE (Strengthening the Core) Fund for Innovation in Graduate Education. J. Derksen requested feedback and encouraged the committee members to apply to SCORE funding and how it could be used as a tool to strengthen current courses and to be used to help facilitate remote delivery.

L. Lemare, asked for the committee to clarify what the current message from the university is for remote teaching. J. Derksen explained that after the pandemic closures, the Universities focus was to get students back to campus, but did acknowledge that graduate students seemed to have more success with online classes as it offered increased flexibility. One committee member pointed to the memo on blended course delivery and information listed on the Provost and Vice-Academic University website on how to pursue this model of teaching.

6.2 Leave policy

The Chair brought forward a discussion about leaves, asking for feedback from the committee on gaps in existing policy. Specifically, in circumstances where students do not fall under the clear leave categories outlined in the Graduate General Regulations (GGRs). One committee member noted that some students who are required to take leaves for reasons out of their control, and then lose all access to university resources such as medical or library, etc. Another committee member brought up the possibility of being able to still retain University services while on leave.

One committee member clarified that this would impact tuition, as students are not paying tuition and other services while on leave, and this would require a large change. The committee agreed to get more information on the matter and review policies at comparable institutions to see if further amendments needed to be made to the leave policy.

6.3 Minimum Funding:

The Chair shared with the committee information from the most recent Senate meeting regarding the Universities strategic research plan shared by the Vice-President Research and International (VPRI) office. One of the highlights of this report was emphasis on graduate funding. The Chair explained that SFU should work towards models that support graduate students in more comprehensive ways

R. Muntean informed the committee that GSS is asking for minimum funding amounts of \$32,000 after tuition, explaining that the cost of tuition would take a significant amount of the funding. The amount requested ensured students would be above the poverty line.

One committee member brought up the concern about students who could be self-funded and how setting minimum funding for all students would work, when students had the means to fund themselves. Another committee member asked how the minimum funding works for incoming students who also work full time jobs but are still in researched based programs. The committee decided to bring up these concerns at a future meeting and to come up with viable solutions that would work across SFU graduate programs.

7. For Information
Accelerated Masters
8. The date of the next SGSC meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2023