

## Minutes of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) Meeting held on June 14, 2022

### Present:

Jeff Derksen (Chair, Dean GPS and Associate Provost)  
George Agnes (Associate Dean, GPS, Students)  
Roxanne Panchasi (Associate Dean, GPS, Academics)  
Krista Gerlich-Fitzgerald (Associate Director, GPS)  
Nicole White (Designate for Dean of Library)  
Reese Muntean (GSS Executive Representative)  
John C. Foerster (Graduate Student)  
Hannah Buteau (Curriculum, GPS)  
Ruth Anyankpele (Recording Secretary)

### Guests:

Jill Sutherland (Director, University Curriculum and Institutional Liaison)  
Harjap Grewal (Advocate and Policy Advisor, GSS)

### Faculty Chair:

Parvaneh Saeedi (FAS)  
Sean Zwagerman (FASS)  
Dongya Yang (FENV)  
Frank Lee (FHS)

### Regrets:

Andrew Gemino (BUS)  
Lucy LeMare (EDUC)  
Philippe Pasquier (FCAT)  
Michael Silverman (SCI)

## AGENDA

### 1. Approval of agenda

The Chair proposed that the agenda be adjusted to accommodate the availability of some committee members. Therefore, agenda item 6.3 was moved to 6.1.

### 2. Review of the SGSC minutes of April 12, 2022

### 3. Business Arising from the minutes

### 4. Chair's Report

GPS initially planned for this meeting to be an Annual SGSC Retreat, but unfortunately, most committee members were unable to attend at the proposed time. However, one item from the retreat agenda was added to the current agenda, which is a presentation by representatives from the Graduate Students Society (GSS): Harjap Grewal and Reese Muntean.

The Chair emphasized the importance of discussing the effects of increased inflation rates and high cost of living on graduate students, and ways the university can offer support. A committee member received reports about graduate students getting part-time jobs to increase their income. These issues are reflected in the reports from the faculty external reviews conducted earlier in the year.

*H. Grewal joined the meeting*

5. Presentation

**Graduate Student Society Presentation by H. Grewal & R. Muntean**

Harjap Grewal, GSS Advocate & Policy Advisor and Reese Muntean, Director of Academic Relations, attended this portion of the meeting to speak on graduate student issues and bring the Associate Deans up to speed on the graduate student experience at SFU.

The committee discussed the affordability crisis faced by graduate students due to an increase in inflation rates and high cost of living in Vancouver. Harjap advocated for an increase in graduate student stipends to align with the high standard of living. GSS is also pushing for a change in SFU's stipend allocation model.

R. Muntean informed the committee that a Tuition and Affordability Subcommittee has been created on the graduate level. The committee's aims to examining SFU's stipend distribution model and providing feedback to the appropriate committees. Currently, a survey has been launched to compare graduate students living expenses to their income.

A committee member raised questions about the government's involvement in potentially increasing funding given to students. J. Derksen informed the committee about a nationwide petition, requesting that Tri-agencies increase graduate student funding across Canada. The Canadian Association for Graduate Studies is also pushing for higher funding at the Federal level.

6. For Approval

**6.1 Faculty of Applied Sciences**

School of Sustainable Energy Engineering

Program change: SEE MA

Moved by P. Saeedi; seconded by S. Zwaggerman

**Approved**

*P. Saeedi left the meeting*

*J. Sutherland joined the meeting*

**6.2 Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences**

Department of Political Science & School of Criminology

Notice of Intent: Master of Arts Dual Degree in Applied Security and International Policy

Item withdrawn by S. Zwagerman

**Withdrawn**

**6.3 Faculty of Environment**

School of Resource and Environmental Management

Course Change: REM 658 Energy and Materials Systems Modeling

Moved by D. Yang; seconded by F. Lee

**Approved**

*D. Yang left the meeting*

7. For Discussion

8. For Information

**8.1 Advertising of Proposed Programs**

SFU was informed of an amendment to the Ministry's policy, which precludes BC public institutions from advertising a degree for recruitment purposes in advance of ministry approval. J. Sutherland mentioned incidents across the province, where Universities have advertised proposed programs without the appropriate ministry approval. The committee was reminded of the 12 – 24month timeline, between when a full program proposal passes Senate to when the ministry makes a final decision

A committee member asked if the Ministry is keen on making collaborative announcements on new programs with the universities. J. Sutherland clarified that this has been done in the past and programs willing to collaborate can send requests to the Ministry.

The committee also discussed the Ministry's approach to new for-credit and not-for-credit programs, with feedback and approval times taking longer in the former. J. Sutherland emphasized that the Ministry expects higher Institutions to be more collaborative in their program offerings to create stability.

\*\* More than 40% of course changes need to be put through degree determination

9. The date of the next SGSC meeting is scheduled for July 5, 2022 (tentative).