

# DEPARTMENT OF EARTH SCIENCES

## Departmental Meeting

Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 1:30 pm

In attendance:

Diana Allen, Kevin Cameron, Shahin Dashtgard, Gwenn Flowers, Dan Gibson, Cindy Hansen, Dirk Kirste, James MacEachern, Derek Thorkelson, Eileen van der Flier-Keller, Brent Ward (Chair), Glyn Williams-Jones, Matt Plotnikoff, Tarja Vaisanen, Bonnie Karhukangas, Snowy Haiblen (Grad Rep), Miranda Walters (Undergrad Rep)

Excused: Robbie Donald

Absent: Andy Calvert, Dan Marshall, Reid Staples, Doug Stead

### 1. Guest – VPA Peter Keller

Welcome to Peter Keller, new VPA. Introduction of those present. Brent presented a brief summary of EASC to update Peter (biggest issue/concern: space and replacement of CRC John Clague)

Peter Keller:

Going around to meet with all the academic units. Brief background of previous experience at UVic, and reasons for taking this position at SFU.

- SFU mission and vision was a draw
- Willing to listen and learn.
- 2 months in – to learn more about SFU culture and to bring in a fresh perspective to SFU
- Strategic priorities...eg: big data, aboriginal,
- Student experience-room for improvement
- SFU 3 campus...how do they work together?
- Resources – SFU is doing quite well when compared to other Canada universities
- The new academic plan is a goal for the Provost.

Questions:

Resources – where are we positioned?

-We are pointed in the right direction (collective agreement negotiations played a bit of a factor with added costs)

Election year: any change forthcoming with any grants?

-Other universities have grouped to team up for lobbying with government.

What direction is the university going in terms of major development? What the collective consensus strategically works towards going forward.

-Probably going to see more pressure to move into the professional school side of things.

Faculty allocation model (FAM): still negotiations going on to fairly distribute the funding?

-For the next years cycle will stay with FAM but will be having a very healthy discussion with the Dean's for future direction. Performance based model should not just be based on 'Bums on Seats' – should include other dimensions for evaluation performance.

Cost of living in Vancouver: Grad students effected and are struggling – something to keep on the radar for future recruitment.

-Ongoing conversation with government about increasing student residence, can't do that because would look like we would have a deficit.

Faculty replacement: it doesn't seem to translate into timely action plan to move forward with the replacement. Should be looking ahead in advance anticipation of upcoming retirement etc.

-We have a structured process for upcoming hire plan – Peter would need to let it play out for a year to analyze and see if any changes would be needed.

Student experience...how do we change the metrics of what is out there, as an Engaging university.

-Working on that going forward

-We are a community university where many students live at home, compared to a destination university

-Mountain possible barrier – do we need to have students physically up here?

-SFU reputation...the perception out there needs to be improved?

-SFU offerings – overwhelming for new students. Need to clearly articulate what are the options. Perhaps change curriculum to help with timely access to needed courses

2. **Approval of Agenda:**

*Motion to approve revised agenda*

Approved unanimously

3. **Approval of Past Minutes:**

*Motion to approve minutes of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 D. Allen, Seconded: G. Williams-Jones*

Approved unanimously

4. **Business from previous minutes:**

No business from previous minutes.

5. **Chair's Report:**

- i. Chair report: CCCESD meeting in Toronto, NSERC came and gave a talk, RTI may have a higher success rate. Murray Cook – goldsmith: who is looking to set up a trust of \$10k a year each for EASC and ARCH (\$20k total) possibly to help out with our mineral collection (reasonable distribution may be: \$5000/yr for display cases etc \$2500 for grad and undergrad)

6. **Undergraduate Committee:** G. William-Jones

- i. EASC415 New Course Proposal – DISCUSSION: Do we need clearance from geography? Nice to have another 4<sup>th</sup> year course in the spring. Course Description needs to be 50 words or less.
- ii. All in Favor – motion to accept EASC 415 New Course Proposal passed
- iii. EASC416 Title Change from **Field Methods in Hydrogeology** to **Field and Lab Techniques in Hydrogeology**. Change from a field school to a term course. Modify rationale based on the fact that we will no longer be having it in conjunction with UBC.
- iv. All in favor – motion to change EASC 416 Title passed with modified changes

7. **Graduate Committee:** G. Flowers

- i. EASC Criteria for Extensions and Readmission: subject to DGS requirements. Grad committee agreed on the wording. Role of supervisory committee that drives the reasons...should point 3 be first? Please notify Grad Chair by Friday if any comments or concerns. Could be modified in the future if there is a need.

All in favor – motion to accept the EASC Criteria for Extensions and Readmission passed.

- ii. EASC MSc Program Description: no geotechnical processes included. Please notify Grad Chair by Friday if any comments or concerns.

- iii. EASC PhD Program Description: should BSc or equivalent be an option for admission? Thesis credit updated. Transfer MSc to PhD end up having the same amount of coursework?

All in favor – motion to accept EASC MSc and PhD Program Description passed with minor amendments

- iv. EASC 800: Is the MSc Colloquium actually necessary? A huge amount of time and effort to have a project at the MSc level. Would need to bring up at the departmental level. Open or closed? Should mirror the PhD. Satisfactory/ unsatisfactory vs complete.

Action: Tabled

- v. EASC 800 & 900 New Course Proposal: formalize procedure with form to fill out. The strict arms length requirements do not apply to candidacy exam – leave wording in. Any will to rid the impartial chair? No, good idea to keep for objectivity. Chair will not vote in case of a tie – a majority vote should apply.

All in favor- motion to accept EASC 800 MSc Colloquium & 900 PhD Candidacy Exam passed with minor amendments

- vi. Will all be circulated by Grad chair for review

8. **Outreach:** E. van der Flier-Keller

- i. Will collect information about what we are doing for outreach activities and will create a calendar of events. Will be a good idea to collate what we are doing for reference.

9. **ESSU:** T. Vaisanen

- i. Reminder to submit Time Use Guideline (TUG) forms – week 5 review comes up Sept 30<sup>th</sup>.
- ii. Please go over the TUG Review form with your students at the beginning of the semester so they know what they will be reviewed on.
- iii. Miranda Walters mentioned that if there are any sponsorship opportunities within the industry, please forward to Sarah Ellis.

10. **Overhead:** B. Ward

- i. Currently we are the only dept. in the FoS that actually gives overhead back to the researchers – other science depts. apply overhead towards other things within the dept. Brent will meet with the Dean about how best to proceed – there could be some changes coming.
- ii. The Dean also mentioned with the upcoming financial crunch that this could be money to help offset possible cutbacks. Research money should be put back into research equipment etc.

11. **Adjunct Proposal:** G. Williams-Jones

- i. Not enough for a quorum to vote on adjunct - will send around an email vote for faculty approval.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Unanimous

Meeting ended at: 3:10 pm