

(Approved February 29, 2012)

## BROCK UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of January 25, 2012  
2:00 - 3:30, Sankey Chamber

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**Present:** D. Antwi-Amoabeng, K. Arnell, U. Brand, D. Butz, R. Dimand, L. Duhaime, C. Federici, M. Feldman, M. Hennigar, H. Junke, N. Klentrou, R. Kuchapski, I. Makus, H. McGarrell, C. Merriam, G Pepper, M. Plyley (Chair), M. Richards, K. Samokhin, D. Samson, C. Santos, S. Sekel, A. Smith, C. Tardif-Williams, S. Tilley, C. Ugulini (Admin Support), A. Van Der Est, M. Webber, M. Winter, J. Yuen

**Guest:** Meron Hrycusko (University Marketing and Communications)

**Regrets:** M. Berman, J. Mercier, S. Vint

**Programs not Represented:** Biotechnology, English, Philosophy, Popular Culture

1. Approval of Agenda - **MOVED** (C. Santos/R. Dimand) that the Agenda of January 25, 2012 be approved. **CARRIED**
2. Approval of Minutes of December 14, 2011 - **MOVED** (C. Santos/D. Butz) that the Minutes of the meeting of December 14, 2011 be approved. **CARRIED** (2 abstentions)
3. Business Arising from Minutes - None
4. Dean's Report – Questions on circulated material

The Dean's January Update, circulated prior to the meeting, provided a reminder that two GPD volunteer representatives are needed for the SGSC Policy Sub-Committee, a report on admission targets/recent meetings, an announcement for the 7<sup>th</sup> Mapping the New Knowledges Graduate Student Research Conference, an update on thesis defence and graduate student advisory committee meeting space, and reported on a career development report for graduate students.

- In response to a question regarding the GSA initiative to have Mapping the New Knowledges conference presentations published, Daniel Antwi-Amoabeng indicated that the GSA is looking into obtaining the software required for publishing these in an online journal.
- Dean Plyley extended thanks for the time spent by members to prepare for the recent admission targets meetings. We are waiting to hear back regarding the data we presented to the Provost, and once this has been received, the Dean will share the information with the Associate Deans.
- The Dean reported that work will begin soon to upgrade D350 L and Plaza 312 for use as thesis defence rooms, and that work on C206 will begin at the end of this semester.

#### 5. Director's Report – Questions on circulated material

One member reported the issue of "ghost" registrations, apparently an IT problem, whereby students who have dropped still remain on the class list. **ACTION: G. Pepper will look into rectifying this problem** (note: it was an isolated problem specific to only one student).

#### 6. GSA Report – Oral Report

- Daniel Antwi-Amoabeng indicated that he meets bi-monthly with President Lightstone. Daniel presented a recruitment initiative to the President, which was well received, that would involve creating a database of programs, noting which faculty members are accepting graduate students. It would be activated on the portal for third and fourth year students so they could be aware of what is available. Daniel consulted with IT, and this would be fairly simple to implement. With the support of the Dean of Graduate Studies and the President, this initiative can go forward. G. Pepper indicated that a research database had been launched at

one time, and that maintenance was a huge issue. Programs would have to be on board with this. The FGS and the GSA will discuss this further.

- Mental Health Awareness Campaign – Daniel reported that antidepressants have remained in the top two prescription claims categories for graduate students. The GSA is trying to encourage students to talk more openly about mental health issues, to become involved through GSA socials, and to take advantage of the Zone memberships. GSA will present a Workshop on Mental Health at the Mapping the New Knowledges Conference on April 11. It was noted that workshops on Mental Health are available through HR's Focus on Learning series.
- GSA has a new logo.
- GSA is working on a web-based online voting system for the election of the new executive in March.

## 7. General Discussion Items, as Proposed by Members

- a) **Sabbaticals** – Several units will have a number of members on sabbatical this year, and this will have a huge impact on undergraduate and graduate programs. Dean Plyley would like to know how many are involved in any given program as this will impact significantly on a program's supervisory capacity, and asked the questions "Should programs accept students when faculty are on sabbatical? What is the best practice to get students moving forward?" One GPD noted that Limited Term Appointments are sometimes used in these cases. Another noted that in the case of ID programs, sabbaticals present a problem that is beyond the program. A GPD indicated that faculty research is dependent upon graduate students, and that many faculty are doing sabbaticals at Brock rather than elsewhere for this reason. Another GPD stated that BUFA leaves it to the discretion of the individual, and that his program discourages faculty who will be away in the second term to take on a supervisory role.
- b) **Faculty Webpages** – At the last meeting, updating of faculty profiles was discussed. The Dean invited Meron Hrycusko of University Marketing and Communications to answer questions with regard to difficulties faculty have experienced in updating their profiles. Some members are able to access their own webpages, and some have very limited access, having to go through their "program administrator." Meron indicated that the new CMS system gives individuals the power to update their own webpages, and that access is available upon request and usually approved by Faculty Deans. One-on-one tutorials are also available, including assistance to write content and to create webpages, and users are encouraged to take the training to become familiar with the helpful tips and tricks. Meron can be contacted if assistance with obtaining access is required.
- c) **ARC** – Several GPDs expressed dissatisfaction with the new academic review process, for example
- revisions to a program's self study were requested to be complete within two weeks despite the fact that ARC had received their initial document several months earlier
  - another program was told they had submitted too many tables, then after providing prose, were asked for more tables
  - a program was informed that they would have to be reviewed by external reviewers, after being told they were approved to add a co-op option

Dean Plyley responded that the OCGS process was cumbersome, but it worked, and that next year should be a smoother process as there is now a "how to" manual from Program Reviews, and there is a plan to "pre-populate" some of the required tables via institutional analysis. The SGSC is still working with ARC to examine issues pertaining to "jurisdiction", which should be clarified over time as ARC sees the types of Program changes that come for processing. The Dean asked members if they would like a representative of ARC (M. Knuttila or G. Finn) to attend a future Graduate Council meeting.

## 8. Other Business – None

## 9. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.