

**Summary Minutes of a Meeting of the  
COUNCIL OF THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
Held in the Council Chamber, University Hall  
Friday, January 16, 2009, 2:00 pm**

Attendance

M Shirvani in the Chair                      L McGann  
M Allen    P Schiavone

Department Representatives

N Kav, Agriculture, Food & Nutritional Sci	M Lipsett, Mechanical Engineering
G Forth, Anthropology	L Guilbert, Med Micro & Immunology
J Greer, Art & Design	E Le, Modern Lang & Cultural Studies
B Lemire, Biochemistry	H Bashaw, Music
J White, Business MBA	K Moore, Nursing
P Melancon, Cell Biology	Y Bhambhani, Occupational Therapy
B Hayes, Chemical & Materials Eng	A Shaw, Oncology
J Takats, Chemistry	P Cheung, Pediatrics
M Loewen, Civil & Environmental Eng	N Holt, Physical Education & Recreation
I Sywenky, Comp Literature Program	C Benishin, Physiology
I Nikolaidis, Computing Science	A Senthiselvan, Public Health Sciences
S Wilson, Economics	S Brown, Religious Studies
F Peters, Educational Policy Studies	P Blenis, Renewable Resources
C Rinaldi, Educational Psychology	N Krogman, Rural Economy
R McKay, Educational Studies	W Johnston, Sociology
J McClay, Elementary Education	C Boliek, Speech Pathology & Audiology
T Zackodnik, English & Film Studies	
M Adria, Extension (MACT)	
H Madill, Health Promotion Studies	
B Skrypnek, Human Ecology	
J Martin, Lab Medicine & Pathology	
M Yahya, Law	
S Rice, Linguistics	
T Hillen, Mathematics and Stat Sciences	

Graduate Program Administrators

S Campbell, Medicine

Graduate Student Representatives

B Whynot, GSA President	B Jensen, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences
C Levesque, GSA VP Academic	M Shahbakhti, Mechanical Engineering
D Manolescu, GSA VP Labour Relations	M Lamey, Physics
D MacRitchie, Biological Sciences	
J Marleau, Biological Sciences	

Ex officio

A Schmude, Office of the Registrar

Observer

D Johnson, Associate Dean Graduate Studies (Arts)

Guest

B Baron, Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President (International)

**1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as amended (Item 4 was removed).

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

a. Approval of the December 19, 2008 summary minutes

The minutes were approved as amended ('A guest from Electrical Engineering...' was amended to 'A guest from Mechanical Engineering...').

**U of A International (UAI) Update and Question & Answer**

B Baron provided Council with an update from UAI. An International Coordinating Committee (ICC) has been formed, composed of five regional councils – USA, Mexico, China, India, and Germany – plus one for Developing Countries. Recruitment events will be held in each country, and UAI invites assistance at these events from departments and individual professors traveling for recruitment or conferences. Information was circulated on UAI's new Sponsored Student Program, and the new initiatives being developed in collaboration with the governments of China, Vietnam and Egypt.

The Chair inquired as to what UAI needs from departments to help build international graduate programs, or in international recruitment. UAI asks departments to forward any international contacts, and for faculty to participate in international events if they are in the area at the time. UAI tracks potential international recruitment fairs, and U of A staff international travel.

A GSA councilor suggested looking into graduate program partnerships in the Netherlands, as English is the language of instruction in most programs.

B Whynot noted the need for clarification on why, if fees are being waived for sponsored graduate students, the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) was considering a proposal to merge domestic and international tuition fees together as one fee in view of information provided at BAC that there was a problem specifically with sponsors in understanding that both fees were in fact tuition fees. In response it was noted that this is possibly part of the initiatives for sponsored student programs, but as neither the FGSR nor UAI are involved in fees and did not initiate this proposal, this would need to be addressed with the Office of the Provost.

If international students need help (i.e. study permits or advice), International Student Services is their best resource.

### 3. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

#### Dean's Advisory Committee on Awards: QEII Graduate Scholarships: Department quotas update

The Chair and Assoc Dean P Schiavone shared the formula used to determine department quotas for the QEII Scholarships. [Sec note: Information on the three weighted factors used to calculate allocations, eligibility criteria, and the list of departmental allocations was sent to departments in an FGSR e-bulletin January 21.]

During the discussion, there was a suggestion that a sub-committee be formed to review the QEII formula and the core principles of the award. The Chair proposed the current Awards Advisory Committee might invite guests to the committee to discuss the questions surrounding this award. FGSR will review the formula after a year.

Appreciation was expressed to Council and to the Dean's Advisory Committee on Awards for their work on this matter.

### 4. INFORMAL BUSINESS

#### a. Question Period

M Loewen expressed concern about an issue in which students are not limited to registering in certain classes in Bear Tracks and are registering in courses that do not meet department-approved program requirements. Bear Tracks does not check students' registrations against their programs. The only current solution is to manually check each student's registration. The Chair will look into the potential to add a class approval program to Bear Tracks.

### b. Announcements and Reports by the Chair and Councillors

#### 1. E-thesis procedures

R Lievers reviewed the provided e-thesis procedures, highlighting the benefits to the student and the department (ie, no binding fee and fewer printed copies). Council requested theses retain the supervisor's name, and a list of committee members (no signatures). Students will have the option of submitting by paper or electronically. Departments will determine their own internal submission requirements. FGSR will provide e-thesis workshop for department administrators.

#### 2. Draft list of issues for review

The Chair provided Council with a list of issues to be reviewed by the Policy Review Committee and requested that FGSR be alerted of any other policies or issues that should be reviewed. In response to a question from the Chair, Council expressed preference that incremental, small changes be presented to Council on an ongoing basis, rather than waiting for large presentations, to allow time for discussion and to give immediate resolution.

#### 3. Chair's Show-and-Tell

In his presentation to Council, the chair noted that of the 2400 tri-council doctoral awards granted in 2008, the U of A received 109 (~4.5%), despite having ~9% of Canada's doctoral students. Council questioned if the U of A is receiving a lower average of awards on the basis of comparable grades, the stature of the people writing the letters of reference, or the U of A's higher number of international students. The Chair advised that he will be presenting information on graduate studies at the President's Executive Committee on January 22 and will update Council at its next meeting.

### c. Other Business

None.

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 pm.