UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

MINUTES

Council of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
Wednesday, October 16, 2019
2:00 to 4:00 pm
University of Alberta Council Chamber, 2-100 University Hall

Attendance at FGSR Council – Oct. 16, 2019

Department/Unit Faculty Representatives

Agricultural, Food & Nutritional Science	Ben Willing
Biochemistry	David Stuart
Biological Sciences	James Stafford
Biomedical Engineering	Alan H. Wilman
Business (non-departmentalized) - MBA	Michael Maier
Cell Biology	Andrew Simmonds
Chemicals & Materials Engineering	Vinay Prasad
Chemistry	Michael Serpe
Civil & Environmental Engineering	Selma Guigard
Communication Sciences & Disorders	Jacqueline Cummine
Computing Science	Greg Kondrak
Dentistry (Medical Sciences)	Patrick Flood
Drama	Stefano Muneroni
Economics	Heather Eckert
Educational Policy Studies	Jorge Sousa
Educational Psychology	Veronica Smith
Electrical & Computer Engineering	Marek Reformat
English and Film Studies	Mark Simpson
Human Ecology	Adam Galovan
Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation (non-departmentalized)	Jay Scherer
Laboratory Medicine & Pathology	Monika Keelan
Law (non-departmentalized)	Linda Reif
Library & Information Studies	Ali Shiri
Linguistics	Johanne Paradis
Mathematical & Statistical Science	Jochen Kuttler
Mechanical Engineering	Morris Flynn
Medical Microbiology & Immunology	Edan Foley
Medicine	Nadia Jahroudi
Modern Languages & Cultural Studies	Micah True
Native Studies (non-departmentalized)	Adam Gaudry
Nursing (non-departmentalized)	Diane Kunyk
Occupational Therapy	Shaniff Esmail
Oncology	Alan Underhill
Pharmacology	Frances Plane
Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences (non-dept)	Arno Siraki
Philosophy	Jennifer Welchman
Physical Therapy	Mark Hall
Political Science	Siobhan Byrne
Psychology	Chris Westbury
Rehabilitation Medicine - Rehabilitation Sciences	Patricia Manns
Resource Economics & Environmental Sociology	Henry An

Associate Deans (Graduate) Representatives for Departmentalized Faculties

Arts	Tom Spalding
Science	Mark McDermott

Ex-Officio Representatives

FGSR Dean & Vice-Provost (FGSR Council Chair)	Brooke Milne
FGSR Vice-Dean	Bryan Hogeveen
FGSR Associate Dean	Victoria Ruétalo
FGSR Associate Dean	Tracy Raivio
FGSR Associate Dean	Janice Causgrove Dunn
Vice-Provost and Registrar (or Delegate)	Carlo Dimailig
Chair, FGSR Academic Appeals Committee*	Andie Palmer

Graduate Program Administrators Committee (GPAC) Representatives

Extension	Eileen Crookes
Department of Anthropology	Heather Cook

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Directly Elected Officials (DEO) Representatives

VP Academic	Dylan Ashley

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Council Representatives

East Asian Studies, MA	Mei Nan
Educational Policy Studies, PhD	Alleson Mason
Human Ecology, MSc	Jon Lai
Mechanical Engineering, PhD	Samira Doostie
Medicine, MSc	Bishoi Aziz
Nursing, PhD	Saleema Allana
Pediatrics, MSc	Ronan Noble
Pediatrics, PhD	Kim Ho
Civil and Environmental Engineering, PhD	Jestril Ebaga Ololo
Pharmacology, MSc	Zoë Dworsky-Fried
Rehabilitation Medicine, PhD	Peter Jun
Surgery, PhD	Hayden Danyluk
Chemical and Materials Engineering, MSc	Diego Bugaiov Azurica

Observers – Non-Voting

FGSR Operations Coordinator (Secretary)	Medha Samarasinghe
FGSR Executive Coordinator*	Andrea Riewe
Assistant Dean, Advancement*	Meghan Unterschultz
FGSR, Senior Officer - Financial and IT	Sylvia Fong-Wong
Graduate Ombudsperson*	Brent Epperson
FGSR Governance*	Janice Hurlburt
FGSR Governance*	Maria Chia
FGSR Admissions & Program Services Supervisor*	Joyce Anderson
FGSR, Executive Assistant to the Associate Deans*	Dena Giroux
Educational Studies*	Scott Key

*Non-Voting

Regrets:

Department/Unit Faculty Representatives
Mike MacGregor - Internetworking (MINT)
Piet Defraeye – Drama
Jocelyn Hendrickson – Religious Studies

Associate Deans (Graduate) Representatives for Departmentalized Faculties
Leluo Guan (ALES)

Ex-Officio Representatives
Laura Beard – Vice-President (Research) (or Delegate)
Dale Askey - Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian (or Delegate)

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Council Representatives
Fahed Elian (GSA President)
Shanawaz Mohammad (GSA VP Labor)

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Council Representatives
Reed Sutton (Medicine, MSc)
Kevin Solar (Biomedical Engineering, PhD)
Fatemeh Razavi (Mechanical Engineering, PhD)

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FGSR Council October 16, 2019

1.0   **Call to Order at 2:03 PM**

2.0   **Approval of Agenda for October 16, 2019**
Moved/Seconded: Tom Spalding/Jon Lai
Approved by a show of hands.

3.0   **Approval of Minutes of September 11, 2019**
Moved/Seconded: Tracy Raivio/Dylan Ashley
Approved by a show of hands.

4.0   **Matters Arising from the Minutes**
None.

5.0   **Dean's Report**

Dean Milne noted an omission in the Dean's Report: Tim Gourlay, a 2018 MBA graduate, won the Alumni Innovation Award. Tim is an entrepreneur who seeks out opportunities to use his business to drive social change. He launched Fitset, creating a fitness cooperative out of 86 former competitors and embodying the belief that 'life is better when you are active'. Thank you to Mike Maier for bringing this omission to our attention.

FGSR is steadily working on the Bill 19 implementation and working on managing how this will impact admission offers for our International graduate students starting in Fall 2020. We are having regular meetings in FGSR to discuss how the changes will be communicated, the implications for GSMS, and other factors that will uniquely affect graduate student tuition funding guarantees.

Student/supervisory relationships have been a regular topic of discussion in many conversations Dean Milne has had since starting her position in July. FGSR Associate Deans Naomi Krogman (former) and Victoria Ruetalo have been working for several years to develop resources for faculty and students to help develop strong supervisory working relationships. Associate Dean Ruetalo continues to work on initiatives focusing on the supervisory relationship in graduate education, drawing on information from our peer U15 institutions. She will be bringing forward these plans later in the year for consultation and discussion at FGSR Council.

The issue of improving student/supervisor relationships has also been a concern for the UofA's Board of Governors since at least 2015. Further to FGSR's current initiatives that address supervision, we've developed some centralized tools to help administer the student/supervisor relationship, and to monitor student progress in their programs.

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Dean Milne briefly described two tools that she will bring forward to FGSR Council in November for consultation and discussion: Student-Supervisor Guidelines and Standardized Annual Progress Reports.

- The **Supervisor- Student Guidelines** build directly on the "Conversation Checklist for a New Graduate Student" that was developed a few years ago by FGSR. This new tool is for all supervisors to go over with their thesis-based students at the beginning of each academic year. It **formalizes the checklist** and provides ways for students and their supervisors to come to a shared understanding of issues such as student funding, intellectual property, co-authorship on papers, etc.

- These forms would be available in an electronic format so that a supervisor can meet with their new student to complete the form together; both would be required to "sign" the form, indicating its joint completion. Perhaps most importantly, the roles and expectations for both the student and the supervisor are clearly laid out so that both parties understand their obligations for the duration of the working relationship. This will provide an important mechanism for identifying problematic situations earlier on so that appropriate solutions can be devised.

- Many departments across campus already use their own versions of **annual progress reports;** however, the information contained within these reports remains at the department level and separate from the official FGSR student file. Further, not every department has a requirement for an annual progress report, which can lead to problems with student expectations of appropriate feedback from their advisor and committee.

- The standardized progress report would be completed at least once per year. For PhD students, it would be completed during the required annual meeting between the student, the supervisor, and the committee.

- We are working on the IT component for both documents, but for now, it seems that both can be hosted and stored using the EDRMS platform (both departments and FGSR can access the forms). Ideally after consultations, feedback, and approvals, both would come into effect for the 2020-2021 academic year.

- Dean Milne will be bringing both tools forward to Council for consultation in November. PRC, GEFAC, GPAC, and the GSA will be consulted, and the Provost's office will be kept informed. These tools will be presented to the Board of Governors subcommittees in late November.

- If there are any departments interested in participating in a pilot of these tools, we invite you to reach out.

Dean Milne reminded members that the bi-annual FGSR Supervisor Update will be sent out next week and will include resources and information specifically for supervisors.

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Questions/Discussion:
- A Council member asked why implementing these tools would be necessary when some departments are already doing their own versions. Dean Milne replied that the intent of standardizing these forms and processes is to ensure consistency across programs as well as to house them in a central place (FGSR). When FGSR Associate Deans work through student cases, we often don't have access to the background information. This will ensure that we have a full understanding of the issues, and will give us the opportunity to deal with issues as they emerge rather than when things get very serious (which is what currently happens).
- Dean Milne stated that the information collected in the forms will not require disclosure of sensitive matters.
- The Member of the GSA commented that the GSA is very pleased to see this moving forward as they hear about the many concerns graduate students have that are directly related to the breakdown of the student-supervisor relationship.
- In response to a question, Dean Milne assured council members that the new tools would not be duplicating the existing checklist; rather, they would build upon it. We are working to eliminate redundancies while incorporating best practices.

6.0 AGES Update

Associate Dean Tracy Raivio was thrilled to announce that the Provincial Government has finally launched the AGES scholarships. She provided a brief overview of the review that Advanced Education undertook of the previous scholarship program. The review concluded that compared to other provincial portfolios, the UA had significantly more scholarships, which complicated the administration of awards. They decided to consolidate and simplify criteria with an end goal of offering scholarships that are large enough to have more impact and attract the best students to Alberta.

The new scholarship, called AGES (Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship), consolidates 7 previous graduate scholarship programs. The seven scholarships are: Alberta Ukrainian Centennial Commemorative Scholarship, Graduate Citizenship Award, Graduate Student Scholarship, Indigenous Graduate Award, International Education Award – Ukraine, and Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship. Awards may have a minimum value of $11,000 and a maximum value $15,000, and must be awarded to students in one payment. A new highlight is that a maximum of 25% of funds may be disbursed to international students.

To meet the eligibility criteria as set by Advanced Education, students must: live in Alberta and be enrolled at the UofA; be registered in Fall 2019 and/or Winter 2020; demonstrate academic excellence; and be in good standing. Institutions may set our own additional criteria.

Through consultations over the past several months we have determined our criteria. The value of our awards will be $12,000, which aligns approximately with 1.5 terms of a full-time TA/RA contract as per the GSA collective agreement. This amount is on the low end of the $11-15K envelope, so we can award more.

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- We anticipate opening the competition in late October or early November with a deadline in early February. We have until the end of the fiscal year (March 2020) to spend the funds.
- FGSR will process the award nominations as we receive them from Departments and Faculties who wish to take advantage of funds earlier.
- As was done with QEII disbursements, award allocations will be given to Departments; all Departments will get at least 1 allocation.
- The current plan for managing the international quota is to have Departmental nominations approved at the Faculty level in order to give Departments with small allocations an opportunity to make awards to international students. This may mean that Departments have to nominate "alternate" winners so that numbers can be balanced before submission to FGSR.

Associate Dean Raivio clarified that FGSR has been considering various models to manage the international quota, since the distribution of international students is variable across programs.

Associate Dean Raivio confirmed that the AGES is a yearly contract, and that eligibility criteria do not preclude students from receiving these awards in addition to other funding, however, students should speak with their Departments about how these awards are managed within the context of guaranteed funding at the Departmental level. The Indigenous awards are part of this portfolio, and FGSR will continue to handle the adjudication within the same timelines. Scholarships are open to all areas of research, and are open to students in specific years. We would follow the procedures laid out in the Grad Awards handbook. We are moving towards a more flexible way for departments to use these.

Questions/Discussion:
In response to a Council member's question, AD Raivio confirmed that as per the provincial mandate, it is not possible to split these amounts. Students will, however, be able to hold the awards in combination with others; there are no restrictions around this.

7.0   GSA Monthly Report
VP Academic Dylan Ashley thanked Brooke for attending the recent GSA Board meeting and said he looked forward to having her at the upcoming GSA Council meeting.

8.0   Proposal: GSC Membership 2019-2020 Membership

Motion: Be it resolved that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council approves a three (3) year extension of appointment to the members of the Graduate Scholarship Committee (GSC) listed.

Moved/Seconded: Morris Flynn/ Tracy Raivio
Questions/Discussion: None

Motion Carried:
      Approved: 57
      Abstained: 3
      Opposed: 2

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9.0   Proposal: Joint Doctoral Agreement with Four (4) Post-Secondary Institutions in India

Danielle Scott, Director of International Relations, presented the proposal. President Turpin is travelling to India and wanted to have FGSR approval before taking the next steps in order to expedite the approvals process.

India is UA's second-largest source of incoming students. We currently have many Indian citizens registered as students -- 50% of them at the graduate level. In addition, India is an important player on the world stage, so it is important for our students to have the ability to travel and gain experience there.

The institutions with which we are seeking joint doctoral agreements are among the top 10 in the country. We have experience with joint agreements with other institutions in India. The UofA is also ahead of other Canadian institutions in hosting interns, professor engagements and producing joint publications with Indian counterparts.

Ms Scott outlined the rationale for developing joint doctoral degree programs with the top IITs. They will allow the UofA to further advance and solidify our profile as the leader in Indo-Canadian academic relations. It will also help attract top graduate students to the UofA both through the program itself and indirectly by further building the UofA's brand in India through association with the IITs. The UofA will build research connections with these elite institutions through the professors' collaboration on joint projects and joint supervision of students.

The Provost's Office and UAI have committed 3 years of funding to support the incoming IIT students (2 students/institution/year), with the host professor also needing to contribute. Outgoing UofA students would have basic costs (accommodation and food) covered by the host Indian Institution. We expect to increase the number of students participating in the future through funding from the Science and Engineering Research Board of India (SERB), (in 2016, the UofA was the first university worldwide to sign an agreement for visiting PhD students with SERB).

Going forward, UAI would work with FGSR and Faculties as needed to facilitate the process, but Faculties would be the ones assessing student applications, as with other shared credentials programs. Each participating faculty would have to sign off before students could participate. The joint degree would be reflected as notations on the student's transcript (bilateral).

Motion: Be it resolved that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council approves, in principle, the proposals for Joint Doctoral Degree Programs between the University of Alberta (Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research) and the following Post-Secondary Institutions in India:
>   *A.   IIT Roorkee*
>   *B.   IIT Bombay*
>   *C.   IIT Kharagpur*
>   *D.   IIT Madras*

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FGSR Council delegates authority to the Dean, FGSR, to make final approvals to these agreements once complete details on each institutional program are provided, and they are signed by the noted institutions and the FGSR. Each agreement will take effect upon final GFC approval.

Moved/Seconded: Mark Simpson /Samira Doostie
Discussion: None

Motion Carried:
> Approved: 53
> Abstained: 7
> Opposed: 2

10.0 Proposal: IELTS Increase

Associate Dean Janice Causgrove Dunn presented the proposal. FGSR sets a minimum standard for English Language Proficiency; however, departments may set their own ELP standards higher than that required by FGSR. FGSR Council has been discussing raising the IELTS minimum band score from 5.0 to 6.0 since February 2018. In October 2018, FGSR Council approved an increase in the IELTS minimum band score to 5.5 to align with the minimum requirement for undergraduate students. It was felt that graduate students should meet at least the same minimum requirements as the undergraduate students whom many of them teach. The current motion proposes to raise the IELTS minimum band score from 5.5 to 6.0 on the same grounds as the previously approved increases. FGSR's minimum band score of 5.5 is among the lowest requirements of our comparators, so raising our minimum band score to 6.0 would better align with them. Our current overall requirement of 6.5 puts us level with the majority of our comparators, although three require higher scores. The Registrar's office is proposing increasing the undergraduate IELTS minimum band score to 6.0. It has been established at FGSR Council that graduate students should meet the same ELP standard as undergraduates.

Motion: Be it resolved that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council approve the proposed increase to the FGSR English Language Requirement for implementation for Fall 2021 admissions and to be published in the 2020-2021 calendar.

Moved/Seconded: Jorge Sousa / Andrew Simmonds
Discussion: None

Motion Carried:
> Approved: 59
> Abstained: 2
> Opposed: 1

11.0 Proposal: Changes to the FGSR calendar

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Associate Dean Janice Causgrove- Dunn presented this motion. The changes are to update the FGSR's regulations in the calendar.

Changes include:
- Repetitive content has been removed;
- Specific sections that were previously included under more general headings have been parsed out and identified;
- Registration regulations have been linked to the University Regulations section, which applies to all university students;
- Regulations on Readmission and the Tuition Deposit have been moved to the Admissions section of the FGSR Calendar; two existing sections have been renamed, as the previous headings were based on previous tuition models and practices: Minimum Units of Course Weight Registration is now Minimum Registration Requirements, and Registration in Thesis at the End of Programs is now End of Program Deadlines for Thesis-based Programs.
- Registration information unique to graduate programs under the different program types and tuition frameworks has been maintained and clarified: Registration Status, Maintenance of Registration, Minimum Registration Requirements, Graduate Project Course and Thesis Registration, and End-of-Program Registration Deadlines for Thesis-based Students.
- Supplemental regulations from the Graduate Program Manual have been imported for Registration, Courses Extra-to-Degree, and Registration in More than One Degree Program.
- Regulations from the Graduate Program Manual have been imported for new calendar sections on Registration at the Completion of the Program, Change of Program, and Approved Leaves of Absence.

All changes and regulations in this document represent current FGSR practice.

Motion: Be it resolved that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council approve the proposed changes to the University of Alberta Academic Calendar section on Graduate Policies and Regulations, as set forth in attachment one (1). Upon approval, these changes will take effect immediately and move forward for publication in the 2020-2021 University of Alberta Academic Calendar.

Moved/Seconded: Morris Flynn/ Dylan Ashley
Discussion: None

Motion Carried:
> Approved: 56
> Abstained: 0
> Opposed: 1

12.0   Workplace Impairment Policy as it relates to Grad Students and Grad Students as Employees.

Dean Milne asked Council to approve a friendly amendment to the agenda and move item 13 ahead of item 12. Council approved.

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Dean Milne introduced Marj Cayford, Senior Human Resources Partner, from Human Resources Services. Ms Cayford began her presentation with a reminder to Council that while the Impairment policy is new to the UofA, the ways in which the University handles these issues are not new. The policy has formalized the process to outline expectations and processes. In the context of this presentation, the term "supervisor" referred to employment supervisors (those directing the work of others) rather than academic ones. Supervisors of graduate students, however, may be included in this category if they are directing the research or lab work of their students.

Occupational Health and Safety legislation requires that the University of Alberta provide a safe, healthy and productive work environment for all faculty and staff. The use of drugs, alcohol, medications or other substances and/or physical or mental health conditions can impair work performance and create significant risk to people, property, research and reputation.

Impairment is meant to be broadly defined as anything that impairs a worker's ability to be productive/safe.

The Workplace Impairment policy applies to employees, and graduate students are captured within this policy when they are performing work as employees (such as lab or research work). In such cases, they fall under this policy as well as the Student Code of Conduct.

Supervisors are obligated to:
- Identify safety sensitive positions and ensure employees are aware that their roles are safety sensitive;
- Ensure that adequate training is provided;
- Promptly address actual or perceived impairment in the workplace; and
- Support employees who are seeking assistance.

Supervisors may need to reassign, remove, or replace duties with new ones should safety become a concern in a specific situation.

Employees are obligated to:
- Report fit for work and remain fit for work during work time;
- Disclose to their supervisor if they are unfit to work for any reason;
- Disclose to their supervisor if medication or authorized drugs could be expected to cause impairment; and
- Report their observations if they have reasonable basis to believe that a co-worker or other employee may be impaired.

Examples of scenarios might include students taking over-the-counter medications for cold and flu, and students not getting sufficient sleep due to issues at home (such as a new baby or a sick partner). In such cases, the supervisor might have to send the student home to get some rest. If a student comes to work hungover, it may be necessary for the supervisor to lead a conversation about expectations and

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send the student home. It is important to note that employees are required to disclose that they are taking meds if their duties carry safety risks; the UofA might have to accommodate for short-term or long-term chronic issues for which meds causing impairment are required. Employees are required to report if they observe or have reasonable basis to think a co-worker or other employee is impaired.

Questions/Discussion:
A Council member noted that it is important to use some caution when determining impairment, as medical conditions such as seizures may present as impairment but they are actually medical episodes.

Ms Cayford directed a Council member who was concerned about the work environment (no sunlight, poor air circulation, etc.) to contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, as it is possible that the environment itself could contribute to impairment.

13.0   Graduate Scholarship Committee Report
Associate Dean Raivio presented the Annual Graduate Scholarship Committee (GSC) Report. She thanked all of the individuals who serve on this committee, stating that she was very grateful for their time and effort supporting the graduate student and broader university community by ensuring that we consistently put forward our strongest, most competitive students.

She provided a brief overview of the adjudication process: Every scholarship, prize, medal or award application is read and reviewed by at least two GSC members and discussed in person at a final adjudication committee overseen by the GSC Chair.

Associate Dean Raivio acknowledged all of the students who submit applications to the many competitions adjudicated by the GSC. The GSC is consistently amazed by the exceptional accomplishments and proposals put forth by our graduate students.

In May 2019 a new sub-committee of the GSC, the Graduate Scholarship Advisory Committee (GSAC), was established to review and approve the terms of reference for new graduate awards. Thirty-nine new awards were approved in the 2018-19 period. Associate Dean Raivio thanked Tom Churchill, Esther Fujiwara, Pirkko Markula-Denison, Sujata Persad, Tom Spalding, and Guillaume Tardif, for their time and thoughtful attention in reviewing the terms of reference for new awards expeditiously. This enables competitions to be launched quickly and results in more money in the hands of graduate students.

Finally, she thanked the FGSR Awards team for their efforts as the GSC would not function without the hard work, dedication and expertise of the FGSR Awards Team. She thanked Amanda, Christine, Dana, Emma, Jennifer and Trish, who all work hard to make sure that awards competitions and GSC adjudications run smoothly.

Questions/Discussion:
A Council Member asked if the new GSMS Awards system can track student application status. The system will notify those who are listed as an approved nominator when students have won. They will

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get copies of the offer letters as well as see the emails in the Tri Council portals. FGSR will notify nominators through GSMS. Some awards, such as Vaniers, are embargoed until announcement.

14.0   Question Period

- Amanda Brown, Supervisor of the Awards unit, clarified that the FGSR Awards team doesn't have any additional contact with Tri Council staff members to help students in addressing technical questions. The generic email is the main point of contact for everyone.

- A member of Council asked if sponsored students are eligible for the 25% AGES allocation. Associate Dean Raivio encouraged the student to discuss their specific situation directly with their department and grad chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:29 PM.