

**Summary of a Meeting of the
COUNCIL OF THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
Held in the Council Chamber, University Hall
Wednesday, January 20, 2010, 2:00 pm**

Attendance

M Shirvani in the Chair
M Allen

Department Representatives

A Palmer, Anthropology	D Burshtyn, Medical Microbiology & Imm
S Caulfield, Art & Design	E Le, Modern Lang & Cultural Studies
J Chang, Biological Sciences	H Bashaw, Music
D Cooper, Business PhD	D Collins, Neuroscience
P Melançon, Cell Biology	P Koop, Nursing
T Lowary, Chemistry	A Shaw, Oncology
I Sywenky, Comp Literature Program	P Cheung, Pediatrics
R Greiner, Computing Science	B Linsky, Philosophy
P Defraeye, Drama	S Petersen, Physical Education & Recreation
T Chacko, Earth & Atmospheric Sci	B Martin, Physical Therapy
CR Lindsey, Economics	N Galambos, Psychology
G Buck, Educational Psychology	J Volden, Rehabilitation Sciences
R McKay, Educational Studies	P Blenis, Renewable Resources
J McClay, Elementary Education	S Jeffrey, Rural Economy
M Adria, Extension (MACT)	K Hughes, Sociology
M Cavanagh, Faculté Saint-Jean	C Boliek, Speech Pathology & Audiology
H Madill, Health Promotion Studies	
F Swyripa, History & Classics	
J Martin, Lab Medicine & Pathology	
L Reif, Law	
H Julien, Library & Information Studies	
S Rice, Linguistics	
T Hillen, Mathematical & Stat Sci	

Graduate Program Administrators

S Campbell, Medicine

Graduate Student Representatives

M Rahman, GSA VP Academic	N Romaniuk, Chemistry
B Jensen, Earth & Atmospheric Sci	B Farnesi, Pediatrics

Ex officio

G Pavlich, Office of the VP (Research)
A Schmude, Office of the Registrar

Guest

B Luth, Provost's Fellow

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

a) Approval of the December 16, 2009 summary minutes

The minutes were approved.

b) Matters arising

There was no new information on the QEII allotment for the U of A. Details are not expected until after the provincial budget is released (early February).

3. FORMAL BUSINESS

Assessment and Grading: Policy, Practice and Directions?

Provost's Fellow B Luth addressed Council regarding his six-month project reviewing U of A grading policies and practices. His assessment will include a literature review, and research of both Alberta and peer institutions' policies. It is not a review of the current grading system but an assessment to determine if current needs are being met with an appropriate system. Both undergraduate and graduate policies will be reviewed.

Any feedback can be sent to Bob Luth at robert.luth@ualberta.ca or 492-2740.

4. INFORMAL BUSINESS

a) Discussion Topic

Next Internal Vanier Selection Process

The Chair outlined the updated procedure provided to Council. Major changes include:

- A June deadline for the submission of the Preliminary Assessment Forms (PAF) to FGSR.
- Adding a step allowing departments time to review PAFs and be involved in the decision-making/ranking process. Departments may use their own internal adjudication system.
- If time and the online system allow, supplying editorial feedback on final Vanier CGS applications and supporting letters.

The U of A Vanier adjudication committee will increase to include four adjudicators for each of the Tri-Councils.

The 2009 Vanier winners have offered to mentor 2011 applicants. If it is possible to prepare sample letters of reference without breaching privacy, FGSR will provide sample letters.

Details for the 2011 Vanier Scholarship competition have yet to be released from the national committee. The nomination deadline is expected to remain in November, but there is a chance that it may move to September.

The U of A's remaining quota for award nominations over the next two years are: 26 NSERC, 26 CIHR and 23 SSHRC.

Council is reminded that the Vanier CGS competition uses a two-step process. The nominee must first succeed at the tri-agency level before advancing to the Vanier level adjudication, where leadership is the main criteria.

Any feedback may be sent to the Chair (mazi.shirvani@ualberta.ca)

b) Question Period

A GSA Councilor inquired as to FGSR and FGSR Council's position on the U of A's proposal to the provincial government regarding tuition increases.

Discussion included:

- The FGSR has not been an active participant in meetings, rather has served as an advisor to the Provost's Office and the student body representatives.
- Worries that increased tuition could hurt recruitment, as low tuition is an incentive.
- Outside of Quebec institutions and UBC, current U of A graduate program fees are low. As the provincial government has access to comparable tuition numbers, when approached for funding, it questions why U of A tuition is so low.
- Current plan is to spread the fee increase across the length of the program, acting as an incentive for early and on-time completions.

- Departments are cutting back on students and numbers of assistantships, although they have pledged higher enrolment numbers. Some departments pay international students' differential fees, which will create a greater impact.
- The latest proposal is an equal fee increase across graduate departments, with no difference based on post-convocation earning potential (as in the undergraduate plan).
- If the provincial government holds the U of A to its agreement to increase enrollment, the U of A will need to carry unfunded students.
- New Enrolment Planning Envelope (EPE) funding is no longer available. If using EPE funding, new programs will not be approved at the provincial ministry level.
- Councilors have requested that any studies regarding increasing tuition and international enrollment be shared.
- The Chair will circulate a spreadsheet of graduate student support that flows through the university, ie, scholarships, teaching assistantships, operating- and trust-funded research assistantships. (Secretary's note—Attached to Feb 17, 2010 Agenda as Item 2.b)
- Details on the outcome of the U of A's tuition proposal to the provincial government should be available by the next Council meeting.

c) **Announcements and Reports by the Chair and Councilors**

1. Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council: Teaching Ethics

M Allen is gathering information on teaching ethics across campus, particularly in relation to supervision guidelines. If Councilors could identify ethical questions / concerns / policies that have been raised, please contact her at marion.allen@ualberta.ca

d) **Other Business**

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm.