Meeting minutes of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) held on January 8, 2018 in the Thesis Defence Room, SFU Library

Present:
Jeff Derksen (Acting Chair)
Nicole White (Library)
Chantal Turpin (GSS Representative)
Shelley Gair (Associate Director)
Daria Babeshko (Secretary)

Faculty Chair:
Lisa Shapiro (FASS)
Andrew Gemino (BUS)
Stuart Poyntz (FCAT)
Allan MacKinnon (EDUC)
Dongya Yang (FENV)
Stephen Smith (HSCI)
Mehrdad Moallem (FAS)
Peter Ruben (SCI)

Graduate Students:
Erin Hogg
Sarah Lord Ferguson

Regrets:
Krista Gerlich-Fitzgerald (Curriculum)

Special Guest:
Richard Zhang (Computing Science)

1. Approval of agenda **Approved**

2. Review of the SGSC minutes of December 4, 2018 **Approved**

3. Business arising from the minutes

4. Chair's Report

    The Chair reported on the budget numbers for the upcoming fiscal year. There has been a slight increase in the amount of funding due to shifts in the Provincial Government.

5. **For Approval**

    5.1 Faculty of Applied Science
    School of Computing Science
    1) Program change (addition of specialization): MSc in Computer Science
    2) New course: CMPT 742 Practices in Visual Computing 1
    3) New course: CMPT 743 Practices in Visual Computing 2
    4) New course: CMPT 757 Frontiers of Visual Computing

    R. Zhang introduced the submission and informed the committee that University Research Associates (URAs) will be teaching new courses. SGSC was informed that the fee structure will be the same as the Big Data stream.
    A committee member noted that long course names and short course names are not consistent. Only one name will be visible to students once courses are added

to course catalogue and, therefore, should not cause any confusion among the students.

R. Zhang left the meeting

Moved by M. Moallem; seconded S. Poyntz   **Approved**

5.2   **Faculty of Communications, Art and Technology**
School for the Contemporary Arts
1) Course change (prerequisite): CA 813
2) Course change (description and prerequisite): CA 829, CA 822
3) Course change (prerequisite removal): CA 821, CA 822, CA 823, CA 825, CA 826, CA 827, CA 888

It was suggested to change course number from CA 822 to CA 830 to make the numbering chronological based on when a student would take the course in their program. S. Poyntz informed the committee that course numbers at the department of Contemporary Arts are commonly listed by the field or area and they do not necessarily follow chronological order. Concern was raised regarding students producing essays and prematurely submitting them for publication in journals in CA 822. S. Poyntz confirmed that the students get encouraged to submit work for publication; although this kind of work places burden on peer reviewed structures and editorial boards, the benefits gained by students are much greater than the drawbacks.

Moved by S. Poyntz; seconded E. Park   **Approved**

5.3   **Faculty of Education**
1) New program: Graduate Certificate in Education

A. MacKinnon informed the committee that the new certificate has been designed to allow students who are interested in applying into Master's program in Education but do not have the necessary qualifications. This certificate will allow the students to ladder into a Master's program more easily as it offers more flexibility than the existing certificates. A question was raised whether this certificate will be advertised and direct admissions will be allowed. SGSC was informed that this was not the purpose of the certificate. Approval of this certificate will also help to reduce the number of admission exceptions requested by the Faculty.

Moved by A. MacKinnon; seconded C. Turpin   **Approved**

A. MacKinnon left the meeting

5.4   **Faculty of Environment**
School of Resource and Environmental Management

1) Program change (addition of specialization): Master of Resource Management
2) New course: REM 697 MRM Thesis
3) Course change (units): REM 699
4) Course change (units): REM 899

Concern was raised that the large discrepancy in the number of units between the thesis and project streams might create confusion and wrong expectations among the prospective students. It was either recommended to decrease the difference in units or a more detail description needs to be added to inform the students of the workload in both streams.

Note: DGS did a review of programs with multiple streams and confirmed that the MA in Gerontology has a similar unit differential, which the department has confirmed has not created major problems for their students or confusion. Consequently, it was recommended to add a more detailed description in REM's program description to clarify expectations for the students. The following sentence was added in the Program Requirements: "The thesis stream is more research intensive, producing a final thesis document that is larger in scope than a project and that makes a distinct original contribution to knowledge."

Moved by D. Yang; seconded by C. Turpin   **Approved subject to revisions**

5.5   Faculty of Health Sciences
 1) Course change (temporary withdrawal): HSCI 838

Moved by S. Smith; seconded by A. Gemino   **Approved**

2) Program change: Master of Public Health
3) Program change: Master of Science
4) Program change: Doctor of Philosophy

Moved by S. Smith; seconded by L. Shapiro   **Approved**

5.6   Special Arrangements Program
1) GGR 1.3.5 (Admission Under Special Arrangements)
2) Creation of new acronym INS
3) Course changes (acronym): SAR 890, SAR 891, SAR 892, SAR 893, SAR 894, SAR 895, SAR 896, SAR 897, SAR 898, SAR 899

It was clarified that the name change will affect all the students and they will not be able to choose between the names. SGSC requested that the new changes get clearly communicated to all of the current SAR students.

Note: The new program name will not appear on transcripts or parchment. The current practice where it states the credential type with the name of their home

faculty will remain in place.

Moved by E. Park; seconded by P. Ruben   **Approved**

5.7   GGR Revisions
1) GGR 1.3.5a (Cohort Special Arrangements), GGR 1.4 (Enrollment), GGR 1.9.4 (Preparation for Examination of Doctoral Thesis) and GGR 1.9.6 (Notification of Doctoral Thesis Examination)
2) GGR 1.9.1 (Preparation for Examination) and GGR 1.9.3 (Examining Committee for Doctoral Thesis)
3) GGR 1.9.5 (The Role of the External Examiner)
4) GGR 1.10.2 (Classification of the Thesis)

A committee member questioned if there could be a possibility for external examiners having additional options pre-defence without deeming the thesis as not ready for defence. This will be brought up as a discussion item at a future SGSC meeting.

5) GGR 1.10.3 (Recommendation for the Award of the Degree)
6) GGR 1.10.4 (Submission of the Thesis to the Library)

Further rationale was provided that the deadline for thesis submission to the Library is intended to create clear expectations among the students and their senior supervisors. Once approved, all GGR changes will be advertised to departments and students highlighting the changes.

7) GGR 1.11.3 (Postponement of Publication)

E. Hogg left the meeting

Moved by E. Park; seconded by S. Smith   **Approved**

6. **For Discussion**

7. Other Business

a) P. Ruben inquired whether there are any formal guidelines regarding the protection of students from the financial stand point in case they have a falling out with their senior supervisors. The Chair has responded that although there are no written guidelines, Graduate Studies typically recommends that the Faculty treats the letter of admittance as the contract and continues to hold the agreement even if there is a change in supervisory.

C. Turpin left the meeting

In the event that the funding comes from the ex-senior supervisor's grant, Graduate Studies has a discussion with the Faculty. SGSC suggested creating a guideline to strengthen contractual obligations for students, research assistants and Faculties

N. White left the meeting

b) The committee discussed the possibility of turning the office of Graduate Studies into a Faculty to provide it with more authority. The Chair has informed the committee that it has already been attempted twice previously and both times the proposal got tabled. The Chair will look into the reasons behind it and provide more information to the committee during one of the following meetings.

c) S. Poyntz brought the problem of co-authorship to the attention of the committee and inquired whether there has been any discussion, policy or practice around it. The Chair will look into the issue and seek advice from Dugan O'Neil, Associate Vice-President, Research and provide the committee with more information during one of the following meetings.

8. Next SGSC meeting scheduled for 2:30 PM on February 5, 2018 *(Material deadline January 18, 2018)*