



FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES MEETING MINUTES

25 January 2024 | 12:30 pm | Zoom

A meeting of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies was held on Thursday, 25 January 2024 at 12:30 pm. M. Hunt was the Chair.

ATTENDANCE

D. Clemens, J. Dierkes, D. Elmo, J. Fannin, J. Fletcher, D. Grecov, S. Hagerman, N. Hodges, M. Hunt, J. Karim, J. Locher, B. Morey, J. Phelps, N. Phin, M. Read, C. Roskelley, R. Sharma, P. Shipley, R. Starkey, M. Taiebat, B. Weber, K. Mazure

1. CALL TO ORDER

M. Hunt called the meeting to order at 12:34 pm.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – M. Hunt

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Approved by
general consensus

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That the agenda of the 25 January 2024 meeting of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies be approved.

Carried.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Approved by
general consensus

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That the minutes of the 14 December 2023 meeting of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies be approved.

Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS – M. Hunt

- M. Hunt introduced himself as the Dean *pro tem* for a term of one year starting on January 1, 2024. He noted that the previous Dean, Susan Porter, did an excellent job during her term and he thanked her again for her years of dedicated service.
- M. Hunt stated his goal is to continue to maintain momentum within the Faculty, and that he wants to and needs to rely on input and collaboration with Faculty members during his term.
- The IRP launch is upcoming and will likely create some challenges over the next year.
- M. Hunt noted his main priorities include addressing concerns over funding, supervision, and graduate student wellbeing. He emphasized his first few months in this position are an opportunity for him to listen and engage with the community.



7. POLICY CHANGE PROPOSAL: ACADEMIC PROGRESS DEFINITION FOR MASTER’S DEGREES, GRADUATE DIPLOMAS, AND GRADUATE CERTIFICATES – J. Phelps

Calendar Changes:

- Revise wording of Master’s degree minimum academic progress requirements to clarify.
- Establish entries in this section for Graduate Diplomas and Certificates.

Approved by general consensus	}	<i>That the policy changes be approved.</i>
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Carried.

8. POLICY CHANGE PROPOSAL: GRADING PRACTICES FOR MASTER’S DEGREES, GRADUATE DIPLOMAS, AND GRADUATE CERTIFICATES – J. Phelps

Calendar Changes:

- Remove unnecessary wording in Master’s degree entry on grading practices.
- Establish entries in this section for Graduate Diplomas and Certificates.

Approved by general consensus	}	<i>That the policy changes be approved.</i>
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Carried.

9. POLICY CHANGE PROPOSAL: RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS AND PROGRAM DURATION FOR MASTER’S DEGREES, GRADUATE DIPLOMAS, AND CERTIFICATES – J. Phelps

Calendar Changes:

- Remove reference to ‘one year of full-time study’ for Master’s programs, as some are shorter than one year in duration.
- Clarify that there is no on campus minimum residency requirement for Master’s.
- Establish entries as appropriate in this section for Graduate Diplomas and Certificates.

Approved by general consensus	}	<i>That the policy changes be approved.</i>
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Carried.

10. POLICY CHANGE PROPOSAL: WITHDRAWAL AND REINSTATEMENT IN GRADUATE DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES – J. Phelps

Calendar Changes:

- Minor wording changes to be inclusive of Graduate Certificates and Diplomas, and remove gendered language.

Approved by general consensus	}	<i>That the policy changes be approved.</i>
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11. DISCUSSION: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT STUDY PERMITS

- M. Hunt stated that the next program check-in on February 8 and more details will be known, and that implications are currently still unclear. It is still early days, and things may change in the coming weeks/months.
- M. Hunt detailed that the cap for international student study permits is 350,000 a year across Canada, which is a 35% decrease. This means we will have fewer international students this year than in previous years. This amount will be distributed according to population; BC is 12.4% of the Canadian population. This means BC should be getting around 43,000-44,000 international study permits in the year. We do not know how these permits will be allocated.
- M. Hunt stated that students in masters and doctoral degree programs are exempt from this cap, which is good news. As a whole, we should be minimally impacted because UBC is a very large institution that should be getting a large proportion of these permits, but again the full impact is not known.
- M. Hunt also noted that a lot of private institutions have facilitated post-graduation work permits to draw student into their programs. This will no longer be allowed through public and private institutions, which is good. Open work permits will also now be linked for spouses of masters and doctoral degree students, which will be good for recruitment.
- M. Hunt added that there will now be issuing of three-year post-graduate work permits irrespective of the length of the program. He noted that he believes the minimum used to be a two years master's program to be able to qualify for a post-graduation work permit. This time length requirement has now been removed. Please note this information could change and is unofficial.
- J. Locher stated that currently, we are operating under the assumption that, for example, even someone with a nine-month master's program could get a three-year permit.
- M. Hunt explained that he brought this topic up because he expects to see a proliferation of different master's programs offerings through other institutions in coming years as a means to maintain/grow enrolment numbers outside of the impending cap.
- D. Clemens added that there is palpable attention in the program from students on the increase of the overall threshold for financial requirement for re-permitting. This has put everyone in Year 4 and up in his PhD program in a very high state of tension because many students are not funded past their fourth year, and we are increasingly seeing students complete their programs in their sixth year. Students do eventually receive funding that would cross over this threshold, but they will not have this funding confirmed at the time they apply to re-permit. For example, students are particularly concerned that they will not have an RAship at the time they are re-applying, and thus will not be able to demonstrate that they have income. This is creating significant stress.
- M. Hunt responded that sending these issues to ISD is the best approach as of now. He also noted that many of these changes are not applicable to current students, but he does not know where re-permitting fits into these changes.
- J. Dierkes appreciated that D. Clemens called attention to this issue. As a side note, the Faculty is beginning to look at fifth- and sixth-year funding mechanisms, which would be particularly relevant to international students.
- J. Locher mentioned that the Faculty needs to start thinking about the calendar rules around duration. What we may be lacking is the actual approved duration from a curriculum perspective for each program, which is actually printed on offers letters. This could result in students needing to apply less for re-permitting because they would get longer permits from the beginning.
- J. Locher stated more information has been added to the Faculty website page on study permit updates. He is willing to take suggestions to make the items listed on the website clearer if necessary.
- M. Hunt noted that the website will continue to be updated as more information comes in.

12. DISCUSSION: IRP STUDENT

- B. Morey stated that Launch 2 will be a phased approach and will begin on February 26, with several weeks of data stabilization will occur. In May, students will first be able to access Workday Student.
- J. Phelps added that many faculty members and staff have received a link to the Institutional Readiness Assessment. She encouraged everyone to fill out this assessment.



- M. Hunt noted that he believes faculty will be impacted indirectly by the launch of IRP Workday, but that all preparation possible are being made to ensure the transition is smooth. Students may be impacted negatively, so flexibility and patience will be required.

13. DISCUSSION: ADVERTISEMENT OF DOCTORAL EXAMINATIONS

- M. Hunt noted that Dr. Laura Sly is the current Associate Dean, Policy *pro tem* for five months until mid-June. He thanked her for agreeing to resume this role that she previously held.
- M. Hunt explained that UBC is removing any sort of identifiable public information as it relates to courses as a policy change. This is due to incidents in Ontario where people have been finding course schedules and then attending classes with topics they found controversial, which has resulted in class disruption and even physical violence. UBC will now require campus-wide log-ins for this type of information.
- M. Hunt noted this policy change will impact graduate courses to some extent across campus, but one area of interest to G+PS is doctoral exams. Doctoral examinations are a celebration and are an opportunity for research to be shared with the public. The Faculty currently advertises upcoming doctoral examinations, including the location, date, time, the name of the student, the name of the program, and the title of the dissertation. If a student approaches the Faculty with a concern regarding safety or disruption, this information will then not be made public. Does the Faculty want to reconsider its practices regarding providing the public with this information?
- S. Hagerman stated that there is significant value in these exams being public, but that she is also concerned about safety. She suggested having the titles of dissertations being public knowledge, but then requiring an additional level of security for people to gain access to information about times and locations of exams.
- M. Hunt stated that one previous suggestion was taking the information off the website and instead, if people are interested, they can approach the student or supervisor to inquire. The issue with this is: how would people know who to approach if they do not know what is available? How would students know if they are giving out information to someone who is potentially dangerous or disruptive? M. Hunt is not convinced a full removal of all the information will solve this problem.
- R. Starkey noted that for Zoom exams, rather than posting links publicly, people are redirected to her office if they would like to be included in the audience. Another option could be asking the student if they want their exam information posted publicly when booking the exam.
- M. Hunt agreed there are a lot of considerations to be made. The integrity of the exam, the protection of the student, the celebration of sharing research, and the public facing side of the exam, all must be balanced.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

15. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:34 pm.