



## FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES MEETING MINUTES

27 January 2025 | 12:30 pm | Zoom

A meeting of the UBC Graduate Council was held on Monday, 27 January 2025 at 12:30 pm. M. Hunt was the Chair.

### ATTENDANCE

J. Aleksejuniene, D. Clemens, H. Cote, J. Cragg, D. Elmo, A. Frank, M. Gordon, D. Grecov, S. Hagerman, N. Hodges, B. Howard, M. Hunt, M. Jessri, J. Karim, A. Lister, J. Locher, B. Morey, D. O'Donoghue, J. Phelps, R. Price, M. Read, J. Ries, C. Roskelley, R. Sharma, P. Shipley, A. Summers, P. Unung, B. Weber

Staff: K. Mazure

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

M. Hunt called the meeting to order at 12:33 pm.

### 2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – M. Hunt

### 3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Approved by  
general consensus

}

*That the agenda of the 27 January 2025 meeting of the  
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies be approved.*

*Carried.*

### 4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Approved by  
general consensus

}

*That the minutes of the 16 December 2024 meeting of the  
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies be approved.*

*Carried.*

### 5. CHAIR'S REMARKS – M. Hunt

- Provincial attestation letter (PAL) allocations arrived on Friday and they appear to be sufficient for the needs of graduate programs in the upcoming year based on our projections for the number of incoming graduate students. Graduate degree-seeking students are also a specific category for the PALs (graduate PALs cannot be converted into undergraduate PALs), thus reinforcing the important role that international graduate students play in the research and academic missions of UBC. Further information on these will come soon.
- Application numbers are being tracked by G+PS on a continuing basis. Compared to January 2024, graduate applications as of January 2025 are down 12% overall, comprised of a 23% decrease in international applications and a 10% increase in domestic applications. This is most likely due to recent IRCC policy changes, including capping the number of study permits to be issued. It is important to note that the total number of applications are in line with pre-COVID numbers, and that application numbers are not predictive with enrolment numbers.
- Graduate ecosystem assessment:



- The Provost has called for an informal high level high level assessment of the graduate ecosystem from G+PS down to the individual graduate programs. The proposed dates are February 3 and 4, and Graduate Council members will be invited to participate in the assessment process.
- This is intended to examine the structure and operation of the G+PS and the resources necessary to fulfill these roles.

## 6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

## 7. POLICY CHANGE PROPOSALS – A. Frank & M. Hunt

Program Duration for Masters Students:

- The current maximum program duration for Masters degree students is five years, compared to six years for doctoral students. The average time to completion for these students at UBC-V is approximately 2.7 years, with 93% of students completing within four years and 97% within five years. It is proposed to reduce the maximum program duration to four years to account for the reality of completion times, to separate the expected duration from doctoral students, and to be consistent with recent changes at UBC-O.

M. Hunt

}

*That the changes to the Program Duration for Masters Students be approved.*

*Carried.*

Academic Progression Policy:

- The current academic progression policy is focused mainly on performance in coursework as measures of satisfactory academic progress. The proposed changes aim to clarify which courses, if failed, are required to be re-taken, update time limits for doctoral students to reach candidacy based on statuses other than full-time, and provide specific expectations related to assessment of progress in thesis and dissertation research.

M. Hunt

}

*That the changes to the Academic Progression policy be approved.*

*Carried.*

## 8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Fraudulent Application Documents – M. Hunt

- M. Hunt inquired as to how graduate programs currently deal with fraudulent application documents, in particular what they do immediately if fraud is detected, and how subsequent re-applications from the same individual would be handled.
- J. Aleksejuniene stated that further applications should not be considered after an applicant submits a fraudulent document.
- D. Clemens noted that an internal list of people who have submitted fraudulent reference letters is maintained in their graduate program, which is helpful. There is also a common practice of contacting referees to confirm. Catching these instances is quite successful.
- M. Hunt noted that fraudulent reference letters are typically the most common type of fraudulent document seen in applications. Transcripts or English test scores are also sometimes inauthentic.
- A. Lister and C. Roskelley stated that not all programs are always on the lookout for fraudulent documents, nor do they come across them often.



- B. Howard stated that there are companies that assist applicants with fraudulent applications. She encouraged faculty to reach out to G+PS if they need assistance with checking potentially fraudulent applications.
- M. Hunt noted that technology is improving and that admissions are becoming more competitive, so now is probably not the time to be lenient.

#### G+PS Membership – M. Hunt

- M. Hunt outlined some proposed ideas to make G+PS membership rules more clear and inclusive, as well as to reflect current practice.
- G+PS membership is currently limited to research stream faculty members at UBC-V, and carries the following privileges:
  - Can hold any supervisory role (primary, co-, committee member) with only program-level approval.
  - Count towards the 50% G+PS member requirement for supervisory committee composition.
  - Are included in program listings in the UBC Calendar.
  - Can chair doctoral exams.
  - Can vote at G+PS Faculty meetings.
  - Can retain membership upon retirement.
- M. Hunt noted that the current policy language creates much confusion regarding sole and co-supervision of graduate students (especially PhD students); specifically, there is a misconception that only G+PS members can supervise and co-supervise graduate students. This is not the case; instead, non-G+PS members are frequently permitted with justification and evidence of experience in the supervision (including serving as supervisory committee members) of graduate students.
- M. Hunt asked the group which level of approval should be required for certain supervision roles. The general consensus relating to the question “should individuals in certain groups be permitted to hold roles without G+PS approval?”:
  - Sole supervision: yes to G+PS members; maybe to COGS members; no to other groups.
  - Co-supervision: yes to G+PS members, COGS members, UBC Education Leadership faculty, clinical/adjunct faculty at UBC; maybe to non-UBC research faculty and non-UBC non-faculty scholars; no to research associates at UBC and non-UBC non-Faculty non-scholars.
  - Committee member: yes to all groups.
- A. Summers stated he would support sole supervision eligibility for UBC Educational Leadership. M. Hunt noted that UBC Education Leadership are frequently approved on a case-by-case basis, they just require G+PS approval. According to policy, they are not excluded.
- M. Gordon stated that all groups being eligible to be committee members without G+PS approval is a bit concerning. A. Lister echoed this.
- M. Hunt indicated that further engagement will take place in the coming months, and updates will be provided to Graduate Council.

## 9. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:12 pm.