

**MINUTES**  
**Meeting of the GC Policy Committee**  
**Wednesday, February 12, 2024, 12.30-2pm**  
Location: Zoom

Present: Michael Hunt (Chair), Laura Sly, Teresa Dobson, Jolanta Aleksejuniene, Shannon Hagerman, Thomas Chang, Curtis Suttle, Sumeet Gulati, Davide Elmo, Ayomide Akande, Jie Cheng, Julian Dierkes (guest), Jenny Phelps (guest)

**Staff:** Max Read, Arafat Safdar

**1. Introductions and regrets**

Laura Sly, Jie Cheng

**2. Adoption of the agenda**

*All } That the agenda be approved.*

**Carried**

**3. Motion to Approve the Minutes**

*All } That the minutes be approved.*

**Carried**

**4. Discussion**

**Follow-up on Data sharing from the last meeting (M. Hunt)**

- Michael started off with a general check-in on the updated data sharing communications being shared with the Associate Deans – there is a generally positive feedback from the group – Sumeet said that he intends to use the data to track the enrolment trends and identify issues in order to make better decisions about awards and scholarship decisions.
- Teresa asked if there is any way to share with the units the number of applying students who have indicated they would like to be considered for BIPOC funding? Julian said as the application deadlines are not uniform, it is difficult for G+PS to share that information on a regular basis. Starting next year, however, G+PS can share this information for a specific application cycle.
- Michael walked the group through the *G+PS Admission Report for UBC-V* to explain the access of information to different recipient groups – The Associate Deans can break this

data report apart at the department level and the Grad Advisors can do so by degree offer – this categorization has been introduced to avoid overwhelming each group of recipients with too much information.

### **Policy change discussion re: G+PS membership and supervision (M. Hunt)**

- Michael provided a brief context to this policy change proposal - In January 2022, UBC-O had changed the way they allocated the supervision, co-supervision, committee memberships for their faculty members - they introduced a UBC Policy 09, creating different categories of memberships and defining certain criteria for the faculty members to qualify for supervision, co-supervision and committee membership. This policy change had an impact on UBC-V as well, and a series of changes were introduced w.r.t supervisory membership at UBC-O – This policy change was approved by this committee in May 2022 and was subsequently sent to the UBC Senate but it was not discussed at the Senate – it was deemed to have employed an exclusionary language stating specifically who could not be a member of the Faculty of G+PS.
- Michael noted that the current Calendar entry has 3 main foci: 1) G+PS membership, 2) Supervision, and 3) Teaching of graduate courses, all under a single entry of “Members” within “Academic Staff”. He suggested splitting this into 3 separate entries, including a policy on supervision should be classified under ‘Academic Regulations’ ([G+PS page on UBC calendar](#)) instead of the previously suggested classification under ‘Academic Staff’.
- For the “Teaching” entry, it is proposed to categorize it under ‘Academic Regulations/Teaching of Graduate Courses’ – with ‘teaching’ in the text replaced by ‘coordination and delivery’, and with an addition that one does not have to be a member of G+PS to teach the graduate courses. There was broad support for this.
- G+PS Membership – a policy is in the works to introduce a standalone entry of ‘membership in the faculty’, rather than having it classified under ‘academic staff’.
- Michael listed the exclusive privileges of the G+PS membership:
  - Members do not need prior approval to supervise graduate students.
  - Member are listed in the academic calendar under the affiliated degree program.
  - Members can chair doctoral exams.
  - Members can vote at G+PS full faculty meetings.
- Jenny pointed out that the current document also offers an opportunity to define the responsibilities of the G+PS members. Michael agreed.
- Michael told the group that even though the original changes proposed in May 2022 were stalled at the Senate meeting, it appears that most of the suggested changes had been accepted and are reflected in the current Calendar entry. The only change about the membership that did not get through was that the Faculty in the Education Leadership stream was not eligible for membership in G+PS.
- Michael introduced the currently proposed entry which remains a work in progress.

### **Supervision of graduate students**

*The existing policy does not explicitly mention that the students have to have supervisor and to be supervised by a committee. The spirit of this in-progress policy change is to make it clear that the students need to have a supervisor while enrolled in a thesis-based graduate program at UBC.*

- Michael tells the group that in case of a loss of supervisor G+PS currently gives approx. 6 weeks to the graduate students to find a supervisor – if they cannot find anyone within that duration, they are required to withdraw from the university. That was not specified anywhere on the calendar.
- Jie quoted a recent case in her faculty where a student could not get a committee for about a year and asked if G+PS offers any guidelines as to when should a student get a supervisory committee? Michael said this is a program-specific issue, and some programs do not require a supervisor upon program entry. At the very least, a PhD student should have a committee set up before their comprehensive exams.
- Laura – I have requirements from my program that I use. I don't want to be prescriptive to the extent where we stop practices which are already in place. It would require some data gathering if we want to be explicit about this across UBC. Max suggested going for the latest possible date and leave it at that.
- Tom pointed out that according to one of the entries on the G+PS website, the frequency of the committee meeting should be once a year – Going by that, a student should be having a committee meeting by the end of the first year. Teresa said that could be problematic for a number of programs in the Faculty of Education - a lot of students end up taking a while to identify their research topics. The supervisory committee is not established until the topic is finalized.
- Shannon asked about the student engaged in the interdisciplinary studies – what does it imply for co-supervision? Michael recognized the need to set boundaries around how many people can act as supervisors for an interdisciplinary student. Curtis also agreed with this saying a lead supervisor should be identified to keep track of the funding, and comprehensive exams for the student. Michael agreed and said that the goal here is to define responsibility among the supervisors and support the student as much as possible.

### **Eligibility to Supervise, co-Supervise, and serve on Supervisory Committees**

*A new section is being proposed in order to offer clear guidelines around the following questions - How does one become a supervisor or a committee member? What does that imply for UBC-V as a whole? What are the impacts on membership in the G+PS? This entry is being introduced to set some expectations and responsibilities around the supervisory role at UBC.*

- Michael clarified that just because one has been approved to supervise one or more student(s) in one program does not mean that one is authorized to supervise in another program or that one is granted membership to G+PS.

- Michael asked the group if the faculty members associated with UBC-O should supervise in UBC-V programs without G+PS approval?
- On the [policy requirement](#) (under 'UBC Okanagan') that the sole supervision of the UBC-V Master's and doctoral students by UBC-O faculty is considered an exception and requires the approval of G+PS, Ayomide asked the rationale behind this policy when such an arrangement is not allowed in general. Michael suggested removing the exceptions text in the UBC-O section as it is confusing. Laura and Sumeet agree.
- Curtis asked if there are any faculty members jointly appointed at UBC-V and UBC-O. Michael says there are some, and they are by definition COGS Supervisory and G+PS members.

### **Supervision of Graduate Students by other Faculty**

- Michael suggested that the [Supervision of Graduate Students by Other Faculty](#) section in the calendar lumps different qualified individuals under into the same paragraph, which needs to be changed – for example, faculty members with a lot of experience in supervision are not the same as a newly-appointed clinical professor – different categorization is needed.
- Davide pointed out that there is a requirement of 'actively engaged in research and experienced with graduate education' in this paragraph which already qualifies the supervision eligibility. Sumeet agreed.
- Curtis said separating this paragraph into two different sections based on the supervisory and co-supervisory roles would make sense because there is a lot of nuance between the two roles. Ayomide agrees.
- Michael asked what the committee thinks about research associates and postdoctoral fellows co-supervising? Should they also be considered for supervisory and co-supervisory roles? Curtis says that the research associates could be considered based on their experience with supervision but the same cannot be said about the post-doctoral fellows due to their own time limitations in that role.

### **5. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 14:00.