**MINUTES**

**Meeting of the GC Policy Committee**

**Wednesday, 2nd March 2022, 12.30-13.50**

Location: Zoom

 Present: Laura Sly (Chair), Susan Porter, Teresa Dobson, Brett Eaton, Michael Hunt, John Ries, Laura Sly (Chair), Mark MacLachlan, Jenny Phelps, Bhushan Gopaluni, Sean Smukler, Cheryl Dumaresq (guest), Shannon Hagerman, Jocelyn Stacey, Thomas Chang, Mopelola Akinlaja, Max Read, Arafat Safdar

1. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  *All* | } | *That the agenda be approved.* |

|  |
| --- |
| Carried |

1. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  *All* | } | *That the minutes be approved.* |

|  |
| --- |
| Carried |

1. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES**

**a. Joint PhD**

* A quick overview and updates about the Joint PhD program – (as mentioned in the document circulated)
* Thomas asked about the JDRF award – Jenny replied that the expectation is that Grad studies would seek to have a JDRF award established, which can be used by the faculty member to provide funding for the JDRF scholar
* Michael asked if there was any discussion around differences b/w supervisor privileges and full G+PS members – Jenny responded that in the administrative process, students will fill out a form and they will identify who their supervisor is. An assessment will be conducted by G+PS faculty members who have not been granted the privilege to supervise students.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *All* | } | *That the motion be approved.* |

|  |
| --- |
| Carried |

**Discussion items:**

**b. Board of Governance policy (n. AP7) regarding Graduate Students teaching**

* Susan presented her arguments for some proposed changes to the policy
* it should be a Senate policy instead of being a Board of Governance policy
* No academic policy restricts students’ spare time or employment
* Academic oversight/rules of student time (vs. academic progress) are not appropriate
* G+PS Dean – an inappropriate adjudicator of undergraduate course lecturer suitability
* Since course hiring decisions are made at the department level, all potential COIs, qualification issues, etc. should also be vetted there
* **Potential exploitation by the supervisor/program:** The general order of preference in terms of teaching a course runs like this: regular faculty > continuing sessionals > non-continuing sessionals > general (new students have to apply)
* **Use of lectureship as primary funding source for minimum stipend:** Unlikely to be a broad concern as few students currently teach the maximum they are allowed – TAship, other work is already a primary source for minimum stipend
* **Faculty Association concerns around prioritizing access to lectureships:** Should not be an academic/G+PS issue – Collective agreement improvements have been made since the creation of this polic.y
* Mark shared his concern around the abuse of this policy in the absence of oversight. Susan noted the order of preference, arguing it would come last to the students.

Mark asked if the oversight could be transferred to other faculties?

Susan said that it would be left it at the discretion of departments.

John asked about the role G+PS plays in regulating students who teach.

Susan noted that every student, who wants to teach, has to fill out a form and send to G+PS. Laura noted that G+PS points out any potential conflicts of interest and reported that she has approved almost all the requests she has received.

* Mopelola asked if the grad students would have to apply for teaching positions the same way as the regular faculty does?

Susan said yes to that and further mentioned that they’ll have to apply once the other faculty members have been asked about teaching the course. The Department Head (or anyone responsible for making such a decision) will make the decision based on the credentials of the applicant.

Mopelola asked If the policy were to be repealed and a student were then to apply for the position, what strand of the current policy would the application fall under?

Susan replied that it has to be settled at the department level.

* Laura asked if it would be appropriate to give a heads-up to the faculties, should the policy be repealed?

Susan said this policy will go to the board and a repeal notice will be posted after approval.

* Bhushan asked if grad students are allowed to teach grad courses

Susan said exceptions have been made (for approval) in the past. She also pointed out that G+PS does not play any role in hiring instructors for grad courses.

Jenny highlighted the educational and support role G+PS could play in terms of grad student teaching. She noted that the repeal of this policy could provide an opportunity to develop some guidelines for hiring graduate students for teaching courses.

**c. Number of References required for graduate school applications**

* Laura - Currently, we require three references for applications. There have been requests from some programs where they do not want any references at all. She also mentioned that one of the concerns around taking the number of letters down to 0 was due to the bias created in the application, which could at times be damaging to the applicant.
* Mopelola asked for the reasons for setting the numbers of reference letters at 3.
* Jocelyn said that her program has guidelines around the types of letters of reference. She did not support the idea of reducing the number of letters to zero.
* Thomas pointed out that his department finds the letters of recommendations extremely helpful for the research-based MSc and PhD programs.
* Sean noted that the number of letters we have to write is something to consider as well.
* Teresa said her program also finds them helpful and does not want to remove them. She said a lot of applications are removed automatically without looking at them as they do not meet standards within the unit. She suggested that something could be done to alter the process around that.
1. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:46pm.