

## FACULTY OF HUMANITIES MEETING

### 22 March 2017

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IN ATTENDANCE: 23 members, Jackie Osterman (Assistant Dean), Grace Pollock (Research Facilitator), Christine Kawerau (Recording Secretary)

REGRETS: 13 received

### MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF 8 NOVEMBER 2016 AND 1 FEBRUARY 2017

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A member **MOTIONED** and another member **SECONDED** the motion to approve the minutes from the meetings of 8 November 2016 and 1 February 2017. The motion **CARRIED** unanimously.

### ASSOCIATE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH'S REMARKS

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In regards to graduate studies, Dr. Bonny Ibhawoh said admissions are going well. He met with graduate chairs a few weeks ago. It is felt right now that the numbers will hold steady. No significant growth is expected. The faculties each received \$80,000 from the provost for graduate recruitment. It was at each faculty's prerogative to determine how best to use their funds for recruitment. Humanities chose to use it to match offers in order to attract top students, after which funds will be used to support new and current programs.

The dean of graduate studies is looking for a projection of numbers due to their relevancy for the Strategic Mandate Agreement. This has also been discussed with graduate chairs, and the outlook is cautious optimism to keep the numbers steady.

### FACULTY OF HUMANITIES STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN

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Dr. Ibhawoh spoke to the Humanities Strategic Research Plan, which was 2 years in the making and discussed extensively at the Dean's Advisory Committee. The vice-president of research is working on the university's Strategic Research Plan, where the spirit is to emphasize our strengths. He noted the emphasis that will currently be placed on the digital humanities. There has already been work done in this area through collaboration with the Sherman Centre.

Dr. Ibhawoh then called for any questions and welcomed discussion on the faculty's plan. A member said that, though she understands the difficulty in setting priorities when there is varying research, she wondered why digital humanities was highlighted over other areas. Dr. Ibhawoh clarified this is not meant to make one particular area of higher priority than another, but rather to give particular focus. Digital Humanities has been set as the focal point for 2016-2018, so the faculty is already part of the way through this period. If there were a competition in which the faculty wanted to participate, this would help act as a guide on how we would proceed.

Another member asked about details on the nature of the support. Dr. Ibhawoh said that during discussions he had the opportunity to look at how to leverage the research funding from the university. The purpose of this document is to guide how best to spend our funding.

One member asked if this would have any effect on the adjudication of graduate scholarships. Dr. Ibhawoh confirmed it would not. It may affect grad students where supervisors are in a position to hire research assistants, but it has no bearing on scholarships.

Some members expressed surprise that there was not as much emphasis being placed on Indigenous research and study. It is one area where we can have much interest and contribution. Dr. Ibhawoh concurred, agreeing it might be an opportunity to show the faculty's commitment to Indigenous studies. Dr. Cruikshank added that the faculty already has made a significant financial commitment to the university wide McMaster Indigenous Research Institute.

A member inquired about collaborative work being validated and documented as some of the principles are in line with Career Progress Merit or Tenure and Promotion. Dr. Ibhawoh said he understands this line of inquiry but this isn't a rubric for those processes. Discussion took place on the need for a plan if everyone is doing interesting and varied research. Dr. Ibhawoh said a plan of this nature is needed should the faculty be asked about how decisions are being made about research funding. The hope is to go beyond guiding only the Dean's Office and help inform, but not prescribe, how chairs and directors look at what sort of research the faculty conducts.

The dean noted it is a challenge to evaluate collaborative research, but it has never been the faculty's position to be unsupportive of this. CP/M will always be a crude but flexible process for recognition and evaluation of many activities. Chairs and directors can always make a case if extra credit is due in certain places.

Members of the faculty discussed exploring ideas around digital technologies and their impact on the global world. It would also be valuable to see an effort put into how this information gets put into material that effectively visualizes and explicates these ideas. Dr. Ibhawoh said the research working group has suggested an electronic faculty newsletter that can disseminate information such as this to the university as a whole. Dr. Cruikshank added that the university's rebranding exercise will influence the design aspects; everyone must wait and see what visual identity the university will have.

## DEAN'S REMARKS

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The Strategic Mandate Agreement draft is due soon. The university will have an opportunity to review it before negotiations begin. It does appear that graduate and undergraduate enrolments are going to be capped. There is a more conservative holding pattern, which may be fine for our faculty given our numbers, especially compared to other faculties. The enrolment caps would be somewhere close to where our enrolment is right now. However, we may be looking at a period where there is no major expansion in graduate or undergraduate programming. The dean added that there will be conversations with the provincial government surrounding this. In terms of strategic enrolment, some universities have talked about lowering undergraduate and expanding graduate enrolment, although it is unclear that the system will allow for that, at least in the immediate future.

The official CV of the university is going forward to Senate. There will be significant changes made to help recognize research creation and artistic contribution, work that previously was placed in an 'other' research category. These changes will assist in better recognizing the research activity of some of our faculty members. The use of existing terminology from SSHRC strengthened the case for the university to adopt these changes.

#### ASSOCIATE DEAN'S REMARKS

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Dr. Moro thanked all those who participated in the Majors Fair. The faculty won't have program enrolment numbers until later. Nathan Nash will be contacting departments soon regarding involvement for May @ Mac.

Right now offers are going out, and students have until June 1<sup>st</sup> to accept. Application numbers seem comparable to last year.

#### SHEPHERD BOOK PRIZE IN HUMANITIES

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Drs. Daniel Coleman and Paula Gardner presented the prize. Sixteen books were considered, all showing impressive results of deep thinking and critical writing. In a competition such as this, the committee worked hard to create an objective process. It was a challenge to reach a consensus as all works deserved recognition and left the committee in awe.

Dr. Amber Dean has been chosen as this year's recipient, with her work entitled, *Remembering Vancouver's Disappeared Women: Settler Colonialism and the Difficulty of Inheritance*.

[The full citation is available on the Faculty Meetings webpage.]

#### BUDGET PRESENTATION

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The dean gave the budget presentation, stating we are projecting a surplus for the next three years. This can be attributed to our fixed supplement and increases in our revenues, while containing cost increases. The new budget model rewards the increased service teaching that the faculty has been doing. A member expressed concern that Humanities may end up purely as a service faculty and move away from research. The dean replied that we have continued to invest in research, but we also need to recognize the rewards for playing a vital role for the rest of the university. The MELD program is also generating high revenue. It cannot be denied that part of our success is due also to the reduction of our faculty complement. All departments have been affected and there should be no expectation of growth. Sessional costs have gone up slightly, but part of that is related to the need to hire more sessional instructors to support the increasing enrolments in the MELD program. MELD has several permanent staff members, and our approach to paying instructors as sessionals is much better than the approach adopted by many similar programs. Discussion ensued about sessional instruction and support unit costs.

[The full budget presentation is available on the Faculty Meetings webpage.]

## MOTION FOR AMENDEMENTS TO FACULTY BY-LAWS

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Relatively minor changes are being proposed for the Undergraduate Reviewing Committee to be consistent with how tasks are already being done and to better align with the processes of the other faculties. A change to the Dean's Advisory Committee will reduce staff expected to attend regularly. They can still be called upon on an ad hoc basis.

Dr. C. Quail **MOTIONED** and Dr. C. Eilers **SECONDED** the motion that the faculty adopt the proposed changes to the Faculty of Humanities by-laws. The motion **CARRIED** unanimously.

## UPDATE FROM SENATE

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The major item was the conversation of the future of McMaster. The president asked everyone to participate in exercises exploring ideas of what the role of the university is in Ontario. There was also discussion of new and closing programs, as well as efforts to increase the number of international students on campus.

The dean added that the faculty will likely hold an event to invite undergraduate and graduate students to participate in conversation about the future and role of universities.

## CHAIRS' AND DIRECTORS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Dr. Mactavish made note of Dr. David Ogborn's talk, 'Secret Life of the d0kt0r0', taking place on April 7 at 3:30 p.m. in the Black Box Theatre.

## OTHER BUSINESS

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There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at approximately 3:15 p.m.