

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES GENERAL MEETING**  
**31 MARCH 2015**

IN ATTENDANCE: 34 members, Patricia Kalnins (Assistant Dean), Jackie Osterman (Academic Advisor), Jennifer Richardson (Academic Advisor), Grace Pollock (Research Facilitator), Christine Kawerau (Recording Secretary)

REGRETS: 6 regrets sent

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 26 JANUARY 2015.**

Dr. E. Gedge MOTIONED and Dr. K. Kinder SECONDED the adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 26 January 2015. The motion CARRIED unanimously.

**BUSINESS ARISING**

There was no business arising as a result of the minutes.

**DEAN'S REMARKS**

Work on the budget remains ongoing. The presentation to the budget committee went reasonably well. The faculty projects a 2.475 million operating deficit for 2014-15, which is not far off from what was suggested (2.4 million).

Humanities I applications are down by 7%--last year they were down by 8%. Music I and Studio Art I are up slightly, but fell dramatically last year. This news is not particularly optimistic, but the fact that the faculty has been able to hold the line on its deficit given this is a good sign of positive actions and decisions.

At the next faculty meeting, the dean will be happy to announce new leadership in different departments. He thanked those taking on these tasks during this time. He also said he would have more details regarding the budget at the next faculty meeting when it should be through its preliminary stages.

Dr. C. Anderson asked if any progress had been made in the challenge of residence space. The dean replied it is still an issue for Humanities, but there is support across the university as it is also a university-wide issue. There have been efforts over the past year to alter the budget allocation formula. The concern is, if the province happens to change its BIU allocation formula, it will cause a problem for the entire budget model.

**ASSOCIATE DEAN'S REMARKS**

Some changes have been made to MSAF, including a maximum absence of 3 days for items of work worth less than 25%. Instructors can contact students as soon as they receive the notification and provide the accommodation, as opposed to waiting for students to reach out.

Another new item for this September is the Religious, Indigenous, and Spiritual Observances Policy (RISO). Students are to inform their faculty office at least 10 days before the beginning of term of any observances that may conflict with academic obligations. The faculty will then notify the relevant instructors. By and large, however, the idea is that students register before the start of term, unless it is something that cannot be anticipated.

The Specialized Minor in Commerce has been fully approved. Students can now apply for September 2015 entry if they qualify. A new combined degree in Humanities and Commerce is being discussed, but this is still in the planning stages. It will contain about 40% Humanities in it; the IQAP forms are going out on this right now.

In regards to the certificates that were developed as a result of the working groups, it has been attempted to bring them forward. However, the issue is the university policy on certificates was never intended for these kinds of certificates. So, there is no way for them to be evaluated. They will need to be taken back and revised. Right now, the certificate would cost a substantial amount and that is not the intention. Students were to be able to fulfill the certificate requirements within their degree program. They will be reviewed again and brought forward next year.

In March, a mental health initiative launched across campus. The dean of students oversaw initiatives on strengthening the university's offerings in terms of mental health. The academic advising office will be going for training in mental health; there are still some spaces left if any other staff or faculty are interested in attending.

Dr. Moro then thanked those who participated in the Majors Fair. An email regarding May @ Mac representatives will be going out soon.

She then called for any questions or concerns. A member suggested that in addition to information received on how to accommodate for grading purposes, it would be helpful to also receive support on accommodations in the classroom, such as participation strategies. Dr. Moro replied that this has been raised at various levels, and there are privacy issues involved. There was an incident earlier in the year where it was thought not disclosing information would have put the advisors in harm's way. This is a conflict that we are having trouble resolving. There is no firm answer at this point, but it is recognized that confidentiality issues can be a cause for concern.

Ms. Kalnins added that some students bring in a report from an outside agency where their needs have been evaluated, and so the accommodations that SAS pass on are often given to them from these external sources. A member commented that the problem is these are generic recommendations rather than looking at how the specific course(s) are designed. Further discussion ensued regarding communications between SAS and instructors. It was suggested that there be better communication between SAS, students, and faculty members. Dr. Moro reminded faculty that they are welcome to add items of accommodation if they are deemed necessary. Dr. Eilers added that he has often found some students don't feel they need to utilize all their accommodations. This is where conversation with them is often very helpful should students feel comfortable. Dr. Moro added that in such cases as this it is important to note when students waive their accommodations in order to protect yourself.

Dr. Moro went over the new Religious, Indigenous, and Spiritual Observation (RISO) policy. A member inquired as to why some versions of the policy have included funerals on the list. Dr. Moro said the RISO form is more for things we know will fall on particular days, but it can also include unexpected circumstances. Jackie Osterman added that in some cultures a death in the family requires commitments beyond a funeral, including travel and other ceremonies.

A member asked if the new changes in MSAF require instructors to contact the student. Dr. Moro clarified that the change is, instead of instructors needing to wait until the student follows

up, they have the option to email students immediately with the accommodations. Concern was expressed that this is putting more of a burden on instructors. Ms. Osterman said students are still supposed to reach out to instructors--this has not changed. This just ensures that due diligence is being practiced. Dr. Cruikshank added that the previous practice of the students being responsible for follow-up is still happening. The only change is instructors do not have to wait to hear from students to inform them of the accommodation. Some members brought up concerns regarding the MSAF tool, such as the number being submitted from students, requirements for use, and misconceptions regarding its purpose.

### ASSOCIATE DEAN GRADUATE STUDIES & RESEARCH'S REMARKS

The scholarship budget has been released and passed on to the graduate chairs. Offers are beginning to go out, and it looks like numbers will be down this year. This will be monitored and hopefully we can recover the numbers next year.

Two new programs in Music Cognition and Education, and Communication Studies and Critical Theory are making their way through the IQAP processes. These are examples of how we can be creative in regards to our graduate programs. It is time to think about space in the faculty for a professional doctorate, which has taken hold elsewhere. Dr. Ibhawoh emphasized that he is open to any discussions regarding this.

ROADS will be organizing a faculty development workshop on 13 April for those considering partnership grants. Any faculty interested in applying for the Ontario Research Fund: Research Excellence should speak with Dr. Ibhawoh or Grace Pollock.

New research centres in the faculty are making their way through the approval process. Feedback is encouraged once the information is made available.

### MOSAIC: A HUMANITIES PERSPECTIVE

Ms. Kalnins announced that Mosaic went live for students on 23 March. Faculty members can now access their faculty centres, which is the biggest change for faculty members. This has changed many elements, and we wish to be diligent on support for people. This isn't a training session, but there are many happening for faculty members on campus.

The advising office, especially Jennifer Richardson as the UAT tester, has been working on the implementation for the past two years. Kim Squizzato has been working as a trainer and as faculty support. The SAMS help line is x21100. There is an option for grade submission support.

SOLAR used to shut down for sectioning, but students now have access to all sections and create their own schedule. This will affect faculty because at any point in time you can see who is registered in real time as students drop and add courses.

Ms. Kalnins then walked faculty members through the different elements of the faculty centre, including items such as finding class rosters, and new terminology. Discussion followed regarding the switch to separate fall and winter terms, exam questionnaires, and personal exam schedules.

Ms. Osterman then spoke to entering grades in the system. Faculty can now save partial grades entered and come back to work on it. Once submitted the faculty office and chair of the department can give approval. Grades are posted immediately to student records. There are drop-in labs and demonstrations on online grade submission coming up for faculty members.

Ms. Kalnins stressed that the last day for grade submission for this term is 7 May. It is crucial that they are submitted on time. The process used to approve program selection will assume a failed grade if there is a blank in the system. Ms. Osterman then spoke to the process for incomplete grade submission.

#### REPORT FROM SENATE

Dr. Sarah Brophy gave the report from senate. At the 11 March meeting, the president confirmed the proposal to CFREF. It is focussed on microbes and infectious diseases. The president also spoke to the new mental health strategies. The university's sexual violence policy is under review with amendments coming forward in the next few months.

A motion was approved that McMaster becomes a signatory to the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge. The university has been undergoing a year-long campaign on the issue of open access. Tri-Council will require open access to things such as journal articles. In the course of discussions this raised issues regarding hefty fees often charged to authors.

Approvals of undergraduate and graduate curriculum changes, as well as new appointments, took place. There was also discussion surrounding the new changes to MSAF and its seeming abuse by students.

There was also a presentation from Dr. Arshad Ahmed on the expansion of teaching support units and its strategic plans.

#### CHAIRS' AND DIRECTORS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Elisabeth Gedge congratulated Dr. Stefan Sciaraffa for receiving the MSU teaching award.

Dr. Cruikshank announced that the dean of Social Sciences will fulfill the role of provost at the University of Guelph in the beginning of August, and extended congratulations to her as well.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.