

Department of Educational Studies  
**Department Meeting MINUTES**  
Thursday, March 14 2019 12:30 to 2:45 pm

**Present:** Mona Gleason (chair), Shermila Salgadoe, Zuzana Jackuliakova, Michael Marker, Taylor Webb, Jason Ellis, Carolina Palacios, Cash Ahenakew, Amy Metcalfe, Fei Wang, André Mazawi, Jude Walker, Michelle Stack, Pierre Walter, Rob Vanwynserghe, Wendy Traas, Mary Kostandy, Daniel Jordan, Jonathan Turcotte-Summers, Ali Mojdehi, Mary Bryson

**Regrets:** Vanessa Andreotti, Jennifer Chan, Garnet Grosjean, Sam Rocha, Claudia Ruitenbergh, Tom Sork, Alison Taylor, Sharon Stein, Petra Mikulan, Bathseba Opini

**Absent:** Wendy Poole, Ebru Öztürk, Leslie Roman, Kapil Regmi, Gerald Fallon

### **Announcement before agenda**

The Department head acknowledged our presence on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. With this acknowledgement, Mona encouraged everyone to attend a Panel Discussion *Making the Case: Recognizing and Assessing Indigenous Scholarship in Higher Education*, which is happening tomorrow on Friday, March 15.

#### **1. Approval of agenda**

The agenda was approved.

#### **2. Approval of minutes (meeting of February 21, 2019)**

The minutes were approved with one change; it was suggested to use Master instead of MA in four instances during our Self-study discussion.

#### **3. Feedback from the Summative Peer Review of Teaching Procedures (Dr. Bryson)**

Dr. Bryson came to give us feedback on the proposed faculty-wide summative peer review of teaching process which is used for employment decision making purposes; typically for reappointment of the lecturer or tenure and promotion. During the monthly meetings with the dean, heads and directors, one of the items that came up in last 6 months was the request to have a faculty-wide approach to summative review of teaching. D. Bryson presented a draft, which is a response to this request. One of the important recent changes is that Ontario Labor Relations board now prohibits universities from using student evaluation of teaching for promotion and tenure files. It is better for us to be proactive in this matter. In 2019, there was a task force for peer review of teaching at the university. They suggested a number of significant recommendations, which were unevenly taken up in Faculty of Education. The very important recommendation, which is now in collective agreement, is that Promotion and Tenure or cannot be based on student evaluation data alone.

#### *Discussion*

A faculty member expressed excitement to see this document and asked what is included in training around how to properly conduct PRTs and if it is happening in all departments. Mary responded that it is already happening in most faculties. Mona said that one of the biggest changes is to have an outside

faculty member on the Peer review of teaching Committee. Mary explained that there is a perception that we need to be more objective than we are at present and including an extra person from outside will bring this to next level. There are generalizations about the effective supervision, teaching and good syllabus design that are quite broad and teaching is not only about a specialized expertise. Otherwise, only a colleague in the same area could review teaching practice and that might be a problem for small very specialized areas. Another question was if student evaluations still count for promotion and tenure. Dr. Bryson said that University is still committed to use them in the way they are. So yes, they still count, but we need to be proactive about recognizing the full significance of all the data and what surveys says. We need student evaluation, but we should not connect it to tenure and promotion or reappointments. Students might provide valuable insights that a person coming only for an hour-long job review might miss. Another department member brought up the issues regarding the conditionality of evaluation. If a person with certain specialized area and background looks at course outline in different area, they might look at it in the way that might not be accurate or useful. It might bring the same issues as with student evaluation. Mary was wondering if there is a way to create a series of tags and then choose reviewers within similar disciplinary and methodological areas as the colleague being reviewed.

Another faculty member wondered if there are more meaningful and valid ways to involve students in hiring decision. Can we include students on hiring committees? Mary said that we can, but if there is only one student, the opinion might be biased.

Mona asked how it is going to move forward. Mary will make improvements based on our feedback and then they will get back to heads and directors.

#### **4. Library Report (Wendy Traas)**

Wendy reminded everyone about Library university-wide survey for students, faculty and other members of the UBC community. Survey asks about their needs, expectations, and experiences and it is closing tomorrow. She encouraged everyone to participate, because the results will help UBC Library improve existing services and plan for the future. Wendy also mentioned new titles based on the recommendations.

#### **5. Presentation on safety in PCOH with Campus security personnel (Ali Mojdehi)**

Ali from Campus security opened his presentation on safety and security with some background. UBC represents the most exciting and challenging place for security. We have corner stores, museum, labs, we have 55 000 students, 14 000 faculty and staff, 400 buildings and 3000 alarms. We have 80 full time staff in our static sites and 3-4 people driving or biking around the campus during the day. Campus security personnel do not have capacity to do it all and they need everyone to be alert. Ali mentioned that for such a large campus we have quite a safe campus; our biggest challenge is bike theft. Ali encouraged us to have some department policy, such as an ID policy. We have beautiful wide-open welcoming campus, which might be an attraction for criminals. Certain areas can have visitor access badges, although Ali is not sure about our building.

To ensure our safety we should follow these rules: (1) Number one rule is not to jeopardize your safety, because your safety always comes first. Security starts with you and always trust your instincts.

(2) Always provide “customer service” and follow through. The simple question *Can I help you?* can make a huge difference. It can either make people super comfortable or quite the opposite. Anyway, they will see that you are paying attention to them.

(3) Let the person leave, never try to stop them, but alert police or security. They will need full description of the person. One tip is always to look down as suspects might change their tops/hats, but never shoes or pants. What you can also do is to register your bike and provide direction where the person is heading.

### *Discussion*

Mona thanked Ali for his presentation and appreciated reminders to keep awareness about who is around, because there are people who need help. We had some incidents in the building before, where there was a theft or some strangers entered our premises and the staff members did not feel safe. With more people around, it seems to be better for now but we need to be more diligent about locking our doors. Ali explained three causes of crime: motivation, opportunity and need. We cannot do anything with need or motivation but certainly can do something about opportunity.

Another department member asked if the campus security resources increased with the increased number of building and people. Ali said that they could never have enough personnel, but they had an increase in resources, especially after the break-in in Museum of Anthropology. They are constantly reviewing campus security and they are trying to push towards the smart security, so hopefully we will be seeing more changes soon.

Another department member asked if the staff members go through cultural safety training. Ali responded that they are constantly training people in this regard. They are inviting people from different backgrounds and they are here to help everyone.

## **6. Topics for discussion/decision**

### **a. Head's report (Mona)**

Mona highlighted several great developments in our department: Bathseba accepted a position of an Instructor in Teacher education; Jason published a new book; Shan and Sharon were successful in receiving external grant funding and Rob secured a visiting fellowship. Congratulations to all of you for your success!

Mona mentioned several reminders: (1) Our second self-study session is happening on April 16. (2) Enhanced CWL is coming with two-factor identification, so please keep an eye what is happening. (3) Our department retreat is happening in May 2th, so please save the date.

### *Discussion*

Department member asked question regarding the Task force on Racism. Mona responded that The Dean has announced the establishment of a Task Force on Race, Indigeneity and Social Justice in response to the external reviews of both our Teacher Education and our NITEP. They have not released any details yet except that Jan Hare and Marianne McTavish will be co-chairs. A department member suggested that it would be great if we could include faculty hiring and focus on what we are doing in that regard instead of

just curriculum. Mona thinks that it is important to keep an eye on this Task force and she hopes that people in this department will be involved in it in central way. Heads and Directors meeting is happening next week and they will have further discussion there. Another department member added that the task force was also discussed at First Nation Education Council on Friday and one of the issues seems to be an increasing number of teachers who resent the emphasis on Indigeneity in the content of their program. This is not only just faculty, but is particularly throughout the Teacher Education program. This is raising some troubling questions, when we talk about a new hire in Indigenous Education in our department and our involvement in Teacher Education program, there is a disconnect and an important conversation needs to happen. Another department member said that this task force should offer more transparency and discussion. Mona agreed saying that there is a lot of things going on and if there is anything you want to make sure we hear, you need to make it visible. It has always been important to get consultation done and Mona wants to make this a priority. If you have a feedback, even bullet points, it needs to be circulated and shared.

#### **b. Graduate advisor report (Pierre in lieu of Alison)**

##### ***Admissions***

Alison was not present, but Pierre encouraged everyone to read her report, where she mentioned several highlights.

##### ***Discussion***

- **Motion for Category 2 change recommended by GPACC (Pierre)**

Category 2 changes comes from EdD program and they just want to make some changes to the language of the representation of the program. It was already approved in GPACC and there was not much of a discussion, so they brought it to department meeting for vote. Everyone received the draft prior the meeting and since there were no comments or discussion, Pierre brought the motion forward to vote. The vote was unanimous.

- **Proposed policy on Retired Faculty Serving as Supervisors (Mona)**

The policy *Role of Soon-to-Retire and Retired Faculty on Student Research Supervisory Committees* came to our department on May 13, 2004 but it was not ratified. Tom and Alison asked us to revisit this old policy and have a look at new language of GPC to make sure it is the same. The proposed policy contains some adjustments to new language of GPC, otherwise the spirit stayed the same. A department member wanted to highlight the significance of this document. Yesterday they were sitting on PhD defence committee and there were only two members who were emeritus. This shows that in particular case the roles of emeritus are highly important for the university. Mona brought a motion forward to vote: in favour 11, oppose zero, abstention 1.

#### **c. Operations report (Shermila)**

Shermila provided a staff update. We conducted interviews for two staff position this week. Regarding the Head's assistant position, we made decision before this meeting to repost this position for the fifth time. Regarding the Graduate assistant position, we held interviews, which were more successful and we

are in process of vetting the references. Our fiscal year end is on March 31 so we can provide the financial update next month.

#### **d. GAA report (Mary)**

Mary shared some announcements. Dr.Ozlem Sensoy confirmed to be a keynote speaker for our EDST Research day and we will have 13 presentations and 3 panels. There are a few events lined up. Today we have a session on Career Directions for Education Graduate Students hosted by Danielle Berkley, who is a Graduate Educator with the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers. We had 34 people registered, which is great. Amy Metcalfe and Bernard Chan are organizing a panel with MEd Alumni on the role of scholarship in professional life in Higher Education. This is very exciting because it is in line with what we talked about last time. We are also hosting *Book + Clothing swap & Budget tactics circle over pizza*, which was suggested by students.

- **Support for writing and publications**

Mary brought to department forum a topic to discuss and gather ideas from department members regarding support for writing and publications. This issue was also brought up by students during the survey. She asked if there are any ideas and resources. Some international students also asked about the tools for proofreading. Other students asked about the support for publication and if we could have a form of review from others faculty members beside supervisors. Students have received enough support from their supervisors, but they think that having a different faculty member to review their work might push them further.

Mona met with GAA's recently and they had some good discussions regarding challenges and opportunities. We edited the Progress report and we are thinking about having a section on the form where students could talk about what was working well or not and what was challenging about supervision. Mary was wondering if the department could offer any ideas specifically about writing and publications. Mona identified two issues, which are connected- (1) proofreading and writing support and (2) is it ready to go to publisher or journal. Mona said it is a good to have ideas here in department forum but if GAA have some specific ideas or proposals, this would be great to place to bring it. Mary is discussing with GAA getting proofreading software that would be available faculty-wide for students.

Another department member mentioned that good reason to attend the Panel with MEd Alumni on the role of scholarship in professional life is that each Alumni that will be on panel work in strategic places in our university. Therefore, it could be an interesting place to ask good questions. We have three people who did very engaging and scholar activist work in their graduate papers and now they continue the same positions they had and carry forward on our ideas from the University and it would be interested to see what they could say. Mary is thinking about having a session in summer and they are trying to bring Alumni.

### **7. Announcements**

#### **a. Update on sustainability cohort in Teacher Education- Rob Vanwysberghe**

Few years ago, we initiated this effort to start Teacher Education Office cohort on sustainability. We were successful of getting this cohort and this is its first year. There are 35 students and three quarters of the students have chosen the EfS cohort as their first choice. The idea is that this cohort will support, inform and inspire teacher candidates, and their students and mentors, to develop deeper knowledge,

understanding and competencies related to education for sustainability. Practicum and community field experience are part of this as well and are done by people who care about these issues and mentors. Cohort members will develop rich, innovative and effective teaching practices through practicum, field experiences and other professional development opportunities in partnership with Lower Mainland school districts and established community partner organizations. Mona asked Rob to talk about how the cohort might be better integrated into the departmental program offerings.

## **6. Department Forum Discussion**

### **a. PhD and MA Admissions: funding policies and equity concerns**

Andre brought the discussion from GPACC. This discussion is concerning mainly PhD committee, but it might affect also MA committee. The purpose of having this on our agenda is to make it more transparent regarding what we understand by equity in the context of our work in the department. We have been discussing it over several years, one of the policies we discussed at GPACC dates to 2008. However, it remained floating without particular grounding and operationalization.

Pierre provided a background. There is a document from 2008, which they started with the last time that they came up with Principles and Criteria for evaluating PhD admissions. Ten years later in 2018, they decided to have a look at the document and discuss how they can update it. The document is comprised of substantive principles and then criteria for adjudication based on these principles. The first substantive principle states that PhD admission should follow policies related to equity, diversity and representation of EDST doctoral student body and the members of groups traditionally denied education and opportunity should be given particular consideration. However, when we turn to criteria for evaluation of PhD files, it disappeared. Therefore, we decided to add criteria coming from this first principle. It is now criteria number six called *Equity, diversity and representation*. They look into what marginalized group means according to the BC Human Rights Code and how they should apply these in our adjudications. The consensus was that they look at first five criteria and then they start checking themselves to make sure that they are not applying colonial mindset and white male positionality. They are looking at different ways that people can express their qualifications and asking questions what data we have and how can we do this, if candidates are not asked to disclose these ideas.

A department member asked, that now that committee undergo entire specific process and finished the adjudication, what could we learn about the entire process. How did discussion have an impact from this process?

Another department member wanted to state that the premise that lowering the numbers of PhD offers leads to less equity or fewer offers to candidates from equity seeking groups is not correct.

Another department member mentioned that there was an attempt to bring in more Indigenous students. The Indigenous Awards Committee chaired by Jan Hare makes decisions for Indigenous students across the faculty but it might be better to allow individual Departments to make the decision to award these awards to students who apply.

Another department member brought up few important points for consideration. (1) How can we calibrate application paperwork and what kinds of categories we want people to answer, because some of these forms and questions might cause prejudice and people might not want to answer them. We need to assure the publicness and transparency of criteria. (2) There should be a broader discussion in

department plenum regarding the criteria and decision. The same way as is our Self-Study discussion or our Internal review. It is not ethically democratic to throw burden of articulating operationalizing this aspect of what equity means on PhD and MA Committee when it should be tied to a larger discussion of who we are as a department. That kind of large discussion can provide more broad foundations for committees to start articulating decision that they need to do. Another department member agreed with this statement; there needs to be broader discussion and decisions cannot reside only on these two committees.

Mona was happy to hear that department members realized the need for deeper discussion regarding our identity, equity, goals and directions. She hopes that when she offers this kind of opportunities for discussions, that faculty members understand that they must show up and do the work. If people cannot show up, then they should send letter/ideas/recommendation/feedback. It is exciting time to be here, because we have this moment when our department is changing.

Department member agreed and added that understanding question of equity within admission committee does not mean that we are limiting judgement of the committees. It means to help them and give them some space within which they can apply their judgement to our best interest.

Another issue is that some of these forms do not make visible equity consideration with regard to some groups that are not mentioned, such as stateless people, refugees, migrants, etc. Therefore, we need to rethink this, but first we have to start from ourselves. We need to commit to supporting our students from the moment they show up, to the point that they successfully graduate. It is not enough to simply invite them in to our department.

Mona encouraged all of us to think about the structure of our department, program areas, degree trajectories and whether they support our goals and values? If not, we should rethink them. A department member suggested that it will be difficult to have these conversations and have all department members agree on everything. However, Mona answered that we cannot think only about our individual interests and freedom as academics, because then we are not doing our jobs as members of a community of scholars. We need to think about what is the common good that we share, our ethics and about what we hold each other accountable for.

*Meeting adjourned at 2:44pm.*