

Department of Educational Studies  
**Department Meeting MINUTES**  
Thursday, April 18 2019 12:30 to 2:35PM

**Present:** Vanessa Andreotti, Alliance Babunga, Mark Edwards, Jason Ellis, Mona Gleason (chair), Garnet Grosjean, Zuzana Jackuliakova, Jolanta Lekich, Michael Marker, André Mazawi, Bathseba Opini, Ebru Öztürk, Carolina Palacios, Wendy Poole, Maria Angelica Guerrero Quintana, Kapil Regmi, Sam Rocha, Leslie Roman, Shermila Salgadoe, Tom Sork, Michelle Stack, Sharon Stein, Tracy Strauch, Alison Taylor, Wendy Traas, Jude Walker, Taylor Webb,

**Regrets:** Cash Ahenakew, Mary Kostandy, Amy Metcalfe, Petra Mikulan, Jonathan Turcotte-Summers, Jennifer Chan, Pierre Walter

**Absent:** Gerald Fallon, Daniel Jordan, Claudia Ruitenbergh, Rob Vanwynserghe, Fei Wang

### **Announcement before agenda**

The Department head acknowledged our presence on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.

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

The agenda was approved – moved and seconded by Andre and Mark.

#### **2. Approval of minutes (meeting of March 14, 2019)**

The minutes were approved with no changes.

#### **3. Jola Lekich, Program Director, the UBC Mastercard Foundation Scholarship Program**

Mona introduced Jola to address the meeting – on Amy and Alison’s request – to speak on the Mastercard Foundation and its relationship to the Faculty and Department.

The Mastercard Foundation Scholarship is a ten-year \$5 Million global initiative to create change in the continent of Africa, targeting student with high financial need and academic talent – leadership, giving back to communities are top qualities. This program will be extended. It is at UBC, U of Toronto, McGill as well as selective universities in the United States, Ghana, South Africa etc. Foundation is based in Toronto. UBC’s largest donation of \$25 Million in 2015 with a total of 163 Scholarships over a 10-year period for 80 Undergraduate and 83 Masters students. Currently moving in year 7, with 85 scholars here on the Vancouver campus – 21 graduate and 64 undergraduates from 18 different countries over 8 faculties on campus. The current priority is to award more graduate applicants as there is a higher number of undergraduate recipients. *There are 18 graduate scholarships available for 2020 school year.*

Graduates application steps: applicants reviewed for academic eligibility (meet minimum requirement); committee selects top 5 candidates for each of the departments; awaits the department to review the 5 candidates and reply back with their top candidates of choice. Goal is to ensure it’s the department’s top priority or choice to ensure success of the candidates.

Scholars will benefit from academic and social support program (i.e. room and board, medical, immigration, application fees, flights, comprehensive wellness program).

Faculty of Education was of TOP priority and that informed a decision to expand the scholarship funding beyond faculties with STEM programs including sustainability, agriculture and business in 2018. Goal is to nurture careers in education such as Science teachers, administration leadership in secondary school, and Higher Education. Educational Studies and Curriculum and Pedagogy were the departments of most interest upon the UBC MFS discussion with the Dean, Dr. Frank.

Currently, there are 2 incoming scholars from Ghana who applied and offered admission to Master of Education In HIED in EDST for September 2019.

The UBC MFS will work closely with the departments for career support as well as collaborative support, checking how the students are doing and discuss how they can help the student achieve success in the academic program.

The deadline to apply to be considered for **2019** school year was **Feb 8<sup>th</sup>**.

- Faculty encouraged to forward applicants for consideration if competitive.
- Only applicants in M.Ed in Higher Education (HIED) and Education Administration and Leadership (EDAL)
- Send in the students' applications sooner than the program applications close as the VISA process takes a very long time to process.

For inquires, contact Jola Lekich at 604 827-4771 or [jolanta.lekich@ubc.ca](mailto:jolanta.lekich@ubc.ca)

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

Wendy invited faculty to attend the Seed Library event, part of the Earth Day celebration on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

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

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

Mona introduced Tracy Strauch, the Graduate Assistant to the department; congratulated Bathseba Opini on her tenure appointment; recognised Mark Edwards in the room, who has reignited his relationship with the department and will be joining as Lecturer; thanked Alison Taylor recognising her role and contributions as the Graduate Advisor ending in June 2019; and announced Lesley Andres new appointment as the Deputy Head to start in September 2019.

Mona strongly suggested working towards achieving an equitable and gender balance in all service roles, especially with the upcoming Graduate Advisor opening. Mona strongly urged faculty members to step up to the role as this position needs to be filled by 1 July. This is an open invitation and mentorship is available - an excellent opportunity to learn how things works and with endless possibilities.

##### *Discussion*

No questions raised on report.

## **b. Graduate advisor report (Alison)**

Alison spoke on her role as GA. Helping students was the best part of her role and the reason why stepped in to the role 2 years ago. There are a lot of problems that graduate students are facing; some (like funding) are not easily solved. She thanked all committees for reviewing the applicants for admission to start in September 2019, as well everyone who presented and attended Research Day on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Admissions***

With Tracy coming in while in the middle of assessing applications, we had a meeting at GPACC discussing ways to better manage the workflow towards working more efficiently with our adjudication process. Some of the suggestions discussed included moving the deadline forward to November for MA, EdD and PhD applications and strictly following the application deadline. Other institutions have earlier deadlines thus respond back to students on their admission status before us. Another suggestion is to provide coordinators with a training session on eVision next year to ensure we are using it most effectively.

Discussion:

*Proposal* to have an earlier application deadlines for the 2 M.Ed programs – HIED and EDAL – in order to match up the UBC **Mastercard Foundation Scholarship** funding application deadline. This is topic to be discussed further in GPACC in consultation with program coordinators.

*Proposal* to include supplementary questions in eVision during the application stage in order to better understand the applicants and have data to use if needed to make a special case to G+PS for admission.

- This may be a bigger issue for some programs more than others, since some programs include other criteria beyond grades (GPA), e.g., professional work experience and leadership. Thus conversations should occur in programs.

*Suggestion* to have coherent decision from evaluators when submitting final admission on respective applicants in eVision to avoid incongruence when submitting a special case for admission to G+PS.

- Being consistent is important when making decisions: for instance, making a special case to admit an applicant to G+PS while 2 of 3 evaluators have concluded to not admit does create confusion as to the committee's final decision.
- One solution is for each evaluator to record her/his personal decision on personal note book, then discuss decisions in the committee, and finally, the committee will make a collective decision that will then be recorded in eVision.

*In recognizing* the increasing amount of workload that comes with the tremendous increase of applicants per year, we ought to look into ways to effectively manage the increasing number of applicants. Making a special case adds to this workload.

- More clarity regarding what programs are about (e.g. PhD) will help with admissions. If this is unresolved, it can lead to an overflow of workload. A conversation on this is much needed, especially for the PhD level – Mona to follow up with Andre and Taylor on this.

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

Shermila announced that Alliance Babunga has accepted the position as Assistant to the Head taking over Zuzana Jackuliakova starting May 1<sup>st</sup> 2019. Additionally, the two budgets on Operation and Innovation were approved and have been sent to all members. If any questions or concerns on the budgets, reach out to Shermila.

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

Maria recapped the success of Research Day – April 12<sup>th</sup> – and thanked both faculty members for attending and participating as well as the staff for all their assistance with the event logistics. There is one upcoming event at the end of the month, Public Scholars Initiative (PSI). A panel featuring 7 scholars as well as director of the program to speak on this subject and encourage PhD students to apply. Mary and Lena will be GAAs over summer while Neila and Maria will resume their positions in September. GAAs are looking to host any summer events proposed by faculty as they know their students best and what is missing in the classes. Also, urged faculty to contact the GAAs if there is any suggestions for the upcoming school year.

## **6. Announcements**

### **a. EPSE course changes (Jude)**

Jude sits as chair on the Teacher Education advisory committee (TEAC) Shauna Faber from ECPS proposed moving the start date of the TE program to August with ECPS courses– this affects the TEO students as the proposal is to start a month earlier, 12-month program. It is a category 2 change and will be discussed at the Faculty of Education meeting. This is not a voting motion, any questions are welcomed.

Discussion

*Noted* that all students in TEO have to take EPSE courses. Only these courses will have an August start date, though the program will begin in September

Current questions at hand: Does this affect orientation given that the courses will have started before the September orientation?

*Concern* that students do not have certain skillset at hand before going out on the field, thus the proposed earlier start date based on student feedback due to timing of the course; now front loaded which also raises concerns on issues such as how does EDST 401 fit in to the notion of diversity? Moreover, it can be easy to understand the change given the practicalities, but with the *ethos* of the program it is much more complex.

*Recognizing* there was a lack of consultation with the entire program prior to the change

*Claim* that this change is a measure to address the students' mental health in regard to them feeling less prepared and equipped to do well out in the field with the September start date (*however, no evidence has been provided to back this*).

*Questions and concerns* to be forwarded to Associate Dean Marianne McTavish by Jude on behalf of EDST include: changing start dates puts them in a pressure cooker status, this does not outweigh the stress; living arrangements for incoming students will be impacted; what does equitable and fair assessment look like given that other courses such as 401 and 403 have components on assessment as well? Sequencing and coherence are important, changing one course does affect all and claiming otherwise is incorrect.

#### **a. SSHRCC Explore Award (Vanessa)**

Claim this as a pilot research. April 13<sup>th</sup> was the deadline.

Discussion:

The International Visiting Research Fellowship (IVRF) – deadline is May 31<sup>st</sup>. Departments can ask for nominations. If any received, they will be reviewed by an ad-Hoc committee who will recommend 2 candidates. There is up to \$10,000 in funding available. Criteria: nomination form, CV, expectations of the candidate – refer to email on this for more. There is \$20,000 available funds in totals in the Faculty of Education, and \$10,000 in Kinesiology, thus a total of 3 awards. Nomination has to be submitted together with the completed application.

- Vanessa has a recommendation in mind and will forward this to the department.

Online Learning Advancement Fund (OLAF) letter of intent are due May 17<sup>th</sup>. This implicates proposal for student cohorts, however if interested in applying on this fund there is transparency in creating new cohorts. Share any cohort ideas for a program area, involve the Head who will then share this with the department. This is more for information sharing than vetting, so we all know what the cohorts are, what some of the challenges might be and how to involve as many faculty members if possible. NOTE: the cohort is broader than online cohort, does not have to all online– *the devil is in the details*, follow links provided.

- A cohort is chronological and sequential.

## **7. Forum Discussion**

The second self-study session took place on April 16, 2019.

At the retreat, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, foreground the questions circulated to the members of GPACC (program area coordinator and degree path Chairs) around what some of the learning outcomes are, notion of *wicked problems* as discussed widely by the departments, and how to engage with that.

Encouraged members to look at all programmatic structures examine whether they are working or need to be reshaped – rethink some of our taken for granted structures that may help us get to where we would like to go in a better way.

There are so many *wicked problems* in the world.

One faculty member spoke to the power of an Indigenous third space and referenced the “concept” of *she’lang’en* – a term from the Xwelemi chosen (Lummi SENĆOŦEN Coast Salish language) – when

thinking about the complex wicked problems that students want to explore. This concept is complicated in meaning but simply put, it means the totality of the Coast Salish way of being in time and space— or cultural way of life. This speaks to a wholeness of everything that binds the world together; it is sacred without being religious. Thereby in terms of survival, this concept is understood as the need of people defining themselves on a sense of values that do not have to be made so specific that they lose the animative properties that brings its peoples together.

Defining identity as a collective, unit level can be difficult though easy for an individual – how can collective entities have an ethical identity? Nonetheless, we owe it to the students to defining ourselves here for the purpose of serving our students. This needs to be approached with confidence, even if it means redefining ourselves with something completely different – let us commit ourselves to rethink ourselves, this is a necessity. Positionality matters.

How do we see ourselves? It is also important to ask; how do we want others to see us?

*What are our strengths and how can we build on those? Who are we, and what are the work that we do? What are the wicked problems that we work on in this department?* Incoming, prospective students can also try and identify what some of the wicked problems are, our expertise and experience.

*Wicked problem is a problem with no discernible answer; it is euphemistic – ie. What is the improvement of Education? This is much more ecumenical of an identity to include on the website, better than a manifesto, statement of belief* \*social justice, environmental justice are popular themes addressed by many, if not all departments.

- Consensus support of using “Wicked Problem” as a theme to explore departmental core values and identity as this leaves room for interpretation to all. Room to address the complexity of and within education.

*Meeting adjourned at 2:35PM.*