

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting

PRESENT: Professor Rachel Spronken-Smith (Chair, Graduate Research School), Professor Richard Blaikie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise), Peter Boston (Manager, Postgraduate Scholarships, Prizes and Awards) Andrew Lonie (Graduate Research School), Dr Sophie Bond (Division of Humanities), Ellie Torbati (International PhD Representative), Amanda Clifford (Maori PhD Representative), Mino Cleverley (Pacific Islands PhD Representative), Hope Lan (Humanities Masters Representative), Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Division Health Sciences PhD Representative), Hanna van der Giessen (OUSA Postgrad Representative), Will Tait (Health Sciences Masters Representative, Kalika Kastein (International PhD Representative).

APOLOGIES: Danielle Yamamoto Kerr (International Office), Aditya Malhotra (Commerce Masters Representative).

IN ATTENDANCE: Ruth Sharpe (Academic Committees); Simone Freeman (International Office); Yvonne Gaut and Jackie Dean (Career Development Centre)

DATE: Friday, 29 May 2020

New representatives Will Tait for (MSc) Health Sciences, Kalika Kastein for (PhD) International were welcomed.

	Item	Action
1.	Minutes of previous meeting The minutes for the meeting held on Friday, 28 February 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
2.	Matters arising from previous meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>List serves for graduate students (Professor Spronken-Smith):</i> This matter is currently with ITS, and progress has been delayed by Covid-19. The aim is to have Divisional list-serves for thesis candidates so representatives can contact their peers. b) <i>IELTS requirements (Professor Spronken-Smith)</i> Some programmes in Health Sciences such as Public Health (7.5) have higher IELTS score requirement than the University's 6.5. Discussion is ongoing in Public Health about piloting a lower IELTS requirement. c) <i>Prayer Room (Professor Spronken-Smith)</i> This is being considered by Health Sciences, but space is currently pressured due to the Dentistry rebuild. d) <i>Maori Consultation (Professor Spronken-Smith)</i> A meeting was held between the affected students and the Dean of Graduate Research School. The students also corresponded with Rachel Sizemore (Māori Postgraduate Support Advisor, Graduate Research School). While their immediate concerns were addressed, training from the Office of Maori Development has been requested. e) <i>Voting rights of honours and PG Dip Students (Hanna van der Giessen)</i> A recent change of policy allows third year students to vote for the Postgraduate Representative in a normal election. However, only current postgraduate students are allowed to vote in a by-election as the resulting elective will only influence postgraduate students of that current year. f) <i>Statistics of Master's completion time (Professor Spronken-Smith)</i> This matter has been overtaken by Covid-19 and will be considered by SAR at a later date. 	RSS RSS
3.	Christchurch update (Cassie Stylianou) Not present.	
4.	Wellington update - position vacant The vacancy will be advertised. A lack of peer support in Wellington was indicated by an exit survey and will be raised with the new representative.	RSS & RS
5.	Distance candidates update - position vacant	

6.	<p>Updates from all Graduate Research Student Liaison Committee Reps (ALL) Each of the representatives at the meeting gave feedback. Key points arising were:</p> <p><u>Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Health Sciences PhD Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upon canvassing those she represents, no particular matters were raised. <p><u>Hope Lan (Humanities Masters Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised the matter of conference funding for PhD students entering their final year and whether the window can be moved to allow students to attend while writing up their theses or after submission. In response, fiscal austerities post-Covid-19 mean networking will be different and unlikely to be by physical attendance at conferences, but online. Humanities are likely to be more flexible regarding the timing of conferences they can support. Affected students are advised to speak with their Associate Dean Postgraduate as the policy differs between divisions. In the Division of Humanities students are recommended to contact Dr Sophie Bond: adgs.humanities@otago.ac.nz - Raised the matter of the 10-day grace period brought in during COVID-19, when submitting a thesis submission. It was felt this period is not long enough. In response, the approximate 10-day extension will continue to the end of the year (the grace period is dependent on the date of scholarship payment runs). The period cannot be longer due to the need to be enrolled to access resources. Pūtea Tautoko has helped with funding for scholarship extensions for 1-2 months, and, for self-funders, tuition fee waivers and living costs. <p><u>Hanna van der Giessen (OUSA Postgraduate Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OUSA executive are returning to their roles with a very busy workload. - Referendum results will be analysed - Acknowledged the work of the hardship fund and its assessment panel <p><u>Ellie Torbati, (International PhD Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refer to Kalika's report <p><u>Kalika Kastein, (International Masters Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised the concerns of homesickness amongst international students, their concerns about visiting or going home and the great financial concerns caused by the timing gaps in receiving the hardship fund. - Feedback given to Simone Freeman of the International Office concurs with these matters. What has helped students most is support in settling in the present, having a plan to remain here and cope with that. An International Zoom café has low attendance. Weekly updates are given to demonstrate to students they are cared about and for. - Andrew Lonie reported for those students wishing to go home there is greater flexibility now to do so and information is on the Covid-19 website. Students are advised to speak with their supervisors to come up with creative solutions to continue with their research. <p><u>Will Tait (Health Sciences Masters Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upon canvassing those he represents, no particular matters were raised. Gaining access to the List Serves will aid the communications/canvassing. <p><u>Mino Cleverley Pacific Island PhD Rep</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported on his attendance at an extensive range of social, academic and cultural events that have occurred and are forthcoming. Examples are HEDC qualitative methodology webinars, Pacific Centre Seminar Series and Climate Change groups. <p><u>Amanda Clifford (Maori PhD Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Māori students continue to be supported by the GRS through Rachel Sizemore, the Māori Postgraduate Support Advisor, who has changed in- person hui to over zoom (Zui) and has weekly office hours. 	
7.	<p>Personal development plans – Careers Advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Careers Adviser Yvonne Gaut was joined by Jackie Dean, Manager of the Career Development Centre to outline the services they offer to postgraduate students. - Feedback was sought on the development of a panel of employers answering the top questions asked. Student representatives were asked to canvas the cohorts they represent to gather questions for a panel session. - The approach of graduate and postgraduate students to getting into the workforce in these increased competitive times was discussed. Being creative and flexible and using transferable skills are key. 	<p>All student representatives</p>

8.	<p>COVID-19 business Key points discussed were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The first panel meeting to assess applications to Pūtea Tautoko has been held. A substantial number have been received and awarded. - The Graduate Research School has conducted extra professional development sessions (Dean's Forum, Wellbeing Forums in conjunction with OPA), and its sessions have been well attended. The GRS Dean's Zoom morning tea for new doctoral students was highly successful with multinational attendance. - The dissemination of communications is challenging because of rapidly changing situations. 	
9.	<p>Convenor's Business Nil</p>	
10.	<p>General Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thanks and best wishes of members were expressed to out-going Māori representative Amanda Clifford and Ellie Torbati outgoing International PhD representative. - Access to PhD offices while under physical distancing was a matter raised that is expected to be eased under Level 1. In the meantime, identification of alternative office space is to be sourced via the relevant department. - The GRS are planning to return to face to face workshops, and student demand for these has been very high. 	

The date of the next meeting is **Friday, 28 August 2020 at 2.00pm** **Committee Room North, first floor Clocktower.**

Distribution:

Professor Rachel Spronken-Smith (Chair), Dean, Graduate Research	Mino Cleverley (Pacific Islands Representative)
Professor Richard Blaikie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Engagement)	(Pacific Islands Representative)
Andrew Lonie (Graduate Research School)	Cassie Stylianou (UOC Representative)
Peter Boston (Graduate Research School)	(UOW Representative)
Aditya Malhotra (Division of Commerce Representative)	Amanda Clifford (Māori Representative)
(Division of Commerce Representative)	(Māori Representative)
(Division of Humanities Representative)	Hanna van der Giessen (OUSA Postgraduate Representative)
Hope Lan (Division of Humanities Representative)	(Distance Representative)
Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Division of Health Sciences Representative)	Danielle Yamamoto Kerr (International Office)
Will Tait (Division of Health Sciences Representative)	Dr Sophie Bond (GRC Humanities Representative)
Joseph Altobelli, (Division of Sciences Representative)	Associate Professor Sally Shaw (GRC Sciences Representative)
(Division of Sciences Representative)	Associate Professor Lisa McNeill (GRC Commerce Representative)
Ellie Torbati (International Representative)	Associate Professor Chrys Jaye (GRC Health Sciences Representative)
Kalika Kastein (International Representative)	Ruth Sharpe (Academic Committees)