

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting

PRESENT: Professor Rachel Spronken-Smith (Chair, Graduate Research School), Andrew Lonie (Graduate Research School), Associate Professor Nigel Lucas (Division of Sciences), Taryn Dryfout and Toni Hoeta (PhD and Master's Māori Representatives) Kalika Kastein (International PhD Representative), Sophie Barham (OUSA Postgrad Representative), Yên Nguyễn (PhD Commerce Representative)

APOLOGIES: Professor Richard Blaikie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise), Danielle Yamamoto Kerr and Simone Freeman (International Office), Peter Boston (Manager, Postgraduate Scholarships, Prizes and Awards) Eleanor Burgess (Acting UOC Representative), Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Division Health Sciences PhD Representative), Michelle Walker (Division of Humanities Representative), Will Tait (Division Health Sciences), Joseph Altobelli (Division of Sciences Representative), Mino Cleverley (Pacific Islands PhD Representative)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ruth Sharpe (Academic Committees).

DATE: Friday, 27 November 2020

	Item	Action
1.	Minutes of previous meeting The minutes for the meeting held on Friday, 28 August 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
2.	Matters arising from previous meeting a) <i>List serves for graduate students (Professor Spronken-Smith):</i> This matter is still with ITS, who are making progress to automate list-serves. The aim is to have Divisional list-serves for thesis candidates so representatives can contact their peers.	RSS
3.	Christchurch update (Eleanor Burgess) apologised but reported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported on a range of social activities past and planned. - The Postgraduate Wellbeing Symposium was held 12-13 October. - Recruitment of committee members for 2021 is underway. 	
4.	Wellington update - position vacant The vacancy will be advertised. A lack of peer support in Wellington is often indicated in exit survey data and will be raised with the new representative.	RSS & RS
5.	Distance candidates update - position vacant	
6.	Updates from all Graduate Research Student Liaison Committee Reps (ALL) Each of the representatives at the meeting gave feedback. Key points arising were: <u>Toni Hoeta (Māori Master's Rep)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has been in the role for an insufficient time to connect with students but expects to do so in the new year. <u>Taryn Dryfout (Māori PhD Rep)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported that most conversations with students were related to the impact of Covid-19. - Reported on a disconnect in communication about conferences, travel restrictions and how to deal with interviews when they are part of the research. <u>Kalika Kastein, (International PhD Rep)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported a range of COVID-19 related stressors for international students. - Reported a range of perceived racism experiences of international students in the University; perceived lack of training and action. An International Student Ombudsman was suggested. Discussion ensued and members were updated that the Internationalisation Strategy, which is being considered by Senate; EnAbLe, a working group to develop a strategic framework for academic writing support for EAL students has been established. It was suggested that matters related to racism and structural issues be raised with the Equity and Diversity Committee. - Vulnerability especially of scholarship students in raising complaints or concerns. - Concern about a community perception focussing on the financial benefits international students bring rather than the diversity of thought they bring. 	

	<p><u>Sophie Barham (incoming OUSA Postgraduate Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OUSA is contributing to outreach events for international students including postgraduates via the Summer @ Otago programme. <p><u>Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Health Sciences PhD Rep)</u> apologised but reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported an Otago Postgraduate Student Association (OPA) member would like GRS to promote the OPA events. In response members were updated on a range of modes of event promotion, including by GRS in their newsletters and social media. - Reported a request had been made of GRS to move the travel funds (student conference funding) to an extra month of a publishing bursary. In response, members were advised this is not possible for GRS to do because the funding for conferences is held by the Divisional Pro Vice-Chancellors, while the Scholarships and Prizes Committee oversees publishing bursaries. Nevertheless, the issue could be raised with Postgraduate Coordinators and Associate Deans Postgraduate. Travel and conferences were being looked at campus-wide in response to limited funding and sustainability initiatives. The Pūtea Tautoko fund has offered some support for requests about additional travel costs, or extensions of bursaries. <p><u>Michelle Walker (Humanities PhD Rep)</u> apologised but reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported on communications with a range of academic and student groups to canvas support for a range of activities to support and engage with Postgraduate Student Representatives in the Humanities Division. <p><u>Yến Nguyễn (PhD Commerce Rep)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported the effects of Covid-19 on data collection occurring in Commerce students' home country has impacted to such an extent that some have had to change their methodology or even topic. - some are stuck in their home country unable to return to NZ. 	
7.	<p>COVID-19 business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government pilot for returning students – initial focus is on PhD candidates with 40 on our list. - Immigration NZ is not processing offshore visas until February 2021. - Remote starts are being offered for doctoral candidates and peer support for remote starts has commenced with 18 trained mentors, most of whom are advanced in their PhD. - Disruptions are ongoing. - PhD deferral options – trying to keep deferrals to a minimum and trying to extend funding at the end of the degree. <p>ITS eVision maintenance means that until 10 January, the Pūtea Tautoko application form is not available in eVision but can be accessed here: https://otago.custhelp.com/ and search for Student Hardship Fund.</p>	
8.	<p>Feedback from Graduate Opinion Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attention was brought to items of interest, which were discussed. - A request was made for some additional questions to be inserted or data broken down with an intersectional lens (e.g. across ethnicities). Kalika to look through questions and identify more/flag existing ones that could be further categorised. All students to have questions to Ruth by the end of January. 	All members
9.	<p>Sustainability Office Air Travel project as part of the UO Net Carbon Zero Programme</p> <p>To help in the preparation of a business case for senior management, focus groups including research candidates will be held imminently, members are invited to contribute and put their name forward.</p>	All members AL
10.	<p>Convenor's Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Graduate Research Festival has been well attended. - Postgraduate Happy Hour has also been well attended with the last of the year to occur today. 	
11.	<p>General Business</p> <p>Nil</p>	

The date of the next meeting is **Friday, 26 February 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)
Peter Boston (Graduate Research School)
Yến Nguyễn (PhD Commerce Representative)
(Division of Commerce Representative)
(Division of Humanities Representative)
Michelle Walker (Division of Humanities Representative)
Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Division of Health Sciences Representative)
Will Tait (Division of Health Sciences Representative)
Joseph Altobelli, (Division of Sciences Representative)
(Division of Sciences Representative)
(International Representative)
Kalika Kastein (International Representative)

Eleanor Burgess (UOC Representative)
(UOW Representative)
Taryn Dryfout (Māori Representative)
Toni Hoeta (Māori Representative)
Sophie Barham (OUSA Postgraduate Representative)
(Distance Representative)
Danielle Yamamoto Kerr (International Office)
(GRC Humanities Representative)
Associate Professor Nigel Lucas (GRC Sciences Representative)
Associate Professor Lisa McNeill (GRC Commerce Representative)
Associate Professor Chrys Jaye (GRC Health Sciences Representative)
Ruth Sharpe (Academic Committees)