

GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting

PRESENT: Professor Rachel Spronken-Smith (Chair, Graduate Research School), Associate Professor Wayne Stephenson (Division of Humanities), Simone Freeman (International Office), Taryn Dryfout (PhD Māori Representative), Kalika Kastein (International PhD Representative), Yén Nguyễn (PhD Commerce Representative), Tess Featherston (UOC Representative), Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Division Health Sciences PhD Representative), Michelle Walker (Division of Humanities Representative), Emma Osborne (UOW Representative)

APOLOGIES: Andrew Lonie (Graduate Research School), Professor Richard Blaikie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise), Mino Cleverley, (Pacific Islands representative), Peter Boston (Manager, Postgraduate Scholarships, Prizes and Awards) Sophie Barham (OUSA Postgrad Representative), Wendy Setyadi (Division of Sciences Representative)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ruth Sharpe (Academic Committees).

DATE: Friday, 26 February 2021

	Item	Action
1.	Minutes of previous meeting The minutes for the meeting held on Friday, 27 November 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> ITS have nearly completed automating list-serves and are asking what type of list is required. Members decided a one-way announcement style would work best with GRS Executive Administrator Susan Craig managing the list and members requesting her to post a supplied message. ITS will be asked to prepare a list serve for Christchurch and Wellington which may overlap with lists from their respective student experience coordinators. b) <i>Sustainability Office Air Travel Project</i> Report to be carried forward. Prof Spronken-Smith reported from the Graduate Research Committee policy wording to include a statement about sustainability being considered when deciding on funding for attendance at international conferences. 	RSS AL
3.	Christchurch update (Tess Featherston) reported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported on a range of social activities past and planned. - Funding issues because of budget cuts in the UOC Dean's Office and the implications on future events and their attendance. - Communications on transport options to encourage event attendance. - There is no dedicated space for postgraduate students to meet and none in the building plans. The Dean of GRS will write to the Dean, UOC to ask this matter be placed on his agenda. 	RSS
4.	Wellington update – (Emma Osborne) reported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported on a arrange of consultations to identify and propose solutions to the disjointed support systems for Wellington postgraduate students including those students based at NIWA. - A lack of centralised post graduate student space and no UOW budget, so free activities are being explored. - The matter of access to GP's and lack of access to mental health care on campus for postgraduates was raised. The matter of access to general practice health care for International students who have insurance will be discussed between Simone Freeman of the International Office and Emma Osborne. - Discussion occurred around the Student Service Fee. The Dean will request the breakdown of Service Fees and how these vary between the campuses. Any change in wording to the Student Service fees needs be clear and consistent to avoid inequities between campuses. 	SF & EO RSS
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: Taryn Dryfout (Māori PhD Rep) reported	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reported on the isolation Māori distance doctoral students experienced. She acknowledged Dr Rachel Sizemore – the Māori Postgraduate Support Advisor – who runs writing sessions. While there are offers for funding to come to Dunedin for bigger blocks of writing, this is not possible for those who are parents. So, it was mooted to run writing sessions over zoom on a monthly basis. <p><u>Kalika Kastein, (International PhD Rep) reported:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A concern regarding the pressure of COVID-19 on the job market and careers of international students. The Otago Postgraduate Student Association (OPA) are organising talks and workshops to address these pressures, and plan to also discuss possible discrimination in hiring. - The request for doctoral candidate Otago email addresses to be extended beyond award of the degree to allow for the time to allow for publication edits to be processed. Alternatively, graduates could be given alumni email addresses. In response, the Dean of GRS consulted with ITS and the Alumni Office to find neither solution is possible. The Dean is to inform students about Otago email address cut-off times at workshops and by email newsletters, so students are prepared for this. - The continued need for pastoral care for stressed international students. In response, the Dean reported work is being undertaken in this area and the International Office and GRS are planning an event. - Vulnerability especially of scholarship students in raising complaints or concerns and their perceived risk of power harassment. - Ensuring equity, countering racism, and reporting misconduct. The availability of staff training and what is available to train students in these matters was discussed. <p><u>Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Health Sciences PhD Rep) reported:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An OPA member would like GRS to help by promoting the OPA events and the Dean of the GRS said they are happy to advertise. - This is her last meeting and she is happy to provide information to any incoming replacement. <p><u>Michelle Walker (Humanities PhD Rep) reported:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On postgraduate student contact within a range of departments and schools and plans to meet with other student groups. - On the value of being co-opted to the Humanities Graduate School Committee. - The need to address gaps in knowledge of who postgraduate representatives are by linking the OPA and Graduate Research Student Liaison Committee websites. - While appreciative of space for postgraduates to meet, the common room in Burns is not inviting. <p><u>Yến Nguyễn (PhD Commerce Rep) reported:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The welfare effects of Covid-19 on an international student whose relative died in her home country and how peers here supported her through the festive season gap of support from the University. The International Office will look at addressing future gaps in student support. - Career opportunity concerns after graduation in the pandemic. In response the Dean is to contact the Careers Development Centre to see if they can offer more targeted support for postgraduate students. - On the guilt some PhD students are experiencing about working and not stopping to spend holiday time with their partner/families. - The critical role of the support of a positive and engaging departmental administrator. In response, the Dean will give feedback to Divisional Client Service Managers to be aware of these qualities and the difference they can make to postgraduate experiences. <p><u>Wendy Setyadi (Master's Sciences Rep) apologies but reported:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master's of Science students would like to see more writing workshops available due to the timing and full occupancy of those that are available. In response the Dean reported there will be monthly writing workshops for Master's and Doctoral candidates this year. - Some international Master's students who are returning request financial support for part of the MIQ costs given the cost of their tuition fees. The Dean reported the University will cover half the cost of the MIQ up to a set amount. 	<p>RSS</p> <p>RSS</p> <p>SF</p> <p>RSS</p> <p>RSS</p>
7.	<p>COVID-19 business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Dean reported on the current numbers of research students at different stages through the Return To Otago initiative and future plans for further numbers to return. 	
8.	<p>Feedback from Graduate Opinion Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The statistics for awareness and use of the Graduate Research School are heartening with an 	

	<p>improving trend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concern was expressed at the statistics on resolution of supervisory issues, but it was recognised that not all situations were easily solved. 	
9.	<p>Convenor's Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There will be no Graduate Research Festival this year but events will be spread throughout the year, partly to protect against changing alert levels. 	
10.	<p>General Business</p> <p>Nil</p>	

The date of the next meeting is **Friday, 28 May 2021 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 & E	(Pacific Islands Representative)
Andrew Lonie (Graduate Research School)	Tess Featherston (UOC Representative)
Peter Boston (Graduate Research School)	(Emma Osborne UOW Representative)
Yến Nguyễn (PhD Commerce Representative)	Taryn Dryfout (Māori Representative)
(Division of Commerce Representative)	Toni Hoeta (Māori Representative)
(Division of Humanities Representative)	Sophie Barham (OUSA Postgraduate Representative)
Michelle Walker (Division of Humanities Representative)	(Distance Representative)
Yasmin Abdul Aziz (Division of Health Sciences Representative)	Danielle Yamamoto Kerr & Simone Freeman (International O
Will Tait (Division of Health Sciences Representative)	Associate Professor Wayne Stephenson (GRC Humanities Rep
Joseph Altobelli, (Division of Sciences Representative)	Associate Professor Nigel Lucas (GRC Sciences Representativ
Wendy Setyadi (Division of Sciences Representative)	Associate Professor Lisa McNeill (GRC Commerce Represent
(International Representative)	Associate Professor Chrys Jaye (GRC Health Sciences Repres
Kalika Kastein (International Representative)	Ruth Sharpe (Academic Committees)