

Education Graduate Student Society

Thursday, November 23, 2006

11:30-1:00 (Room 631)

Chair: Jessica Toste
Minutes: Jessica Toste
Present: Adeela Arshad-Ayaz, Sandra Chang-Kredl, Sara Janes, Angela Kovalak, Elaine Laflamme, Anika Naeem, Ramona Parkash-Puni, Elizabeth Roberts, Bindy Sanghera, Tomoya Tsutsumi
Guest: Dr. Jamshid Beheshti
Regrets: Ryan Brown, Josie Caro, Eloise Tan

1. **Approval of agenda**
 - Motion carried.
 - Re-organization of agenda items to account for Dr. Beheshti's visit at 12:00PM.
2. **Minutes from General Assembly – September 21st**
 - Distributed via e-mail, no additions or revisions. Motion to approve meeting minutes from General Assembly was moved by Ramona and seconded by Bindy. Motion carried.
3. **Minutes from last meeting**
 - Distributed via e-mail, no additions or revisions. Motion to approve meeting minutes from October 19th was moved by Adeela and seconded by Anika. Motion carried.
4. **Merit award**
 - To be re-named "EGSS Fellowships" and specific award names will be decided once criteria are solidified. Jessica prefaced this discussion with a general update regarding EGSS student awards.
 - There was a concern brought up after last winners were announcement for the November 15th travel award period. Student brought up concern that the travel awards should not be allocated by random draw – suggested that student profile was considered, achievements, visibility of the conference, type of presentation.
 - This issue was discussed by the EGSS Executive via e-mail a couple of weeks ago. Jessica also discussed the issue at the last meeting of the RGS committee. All are in agreement that random draw is the most fair way to select recipients. This procedure is directly in line with Alma Mater guidelines and applicants must meet eligibility criteria (so there already is an "elimination" process). It is not feasible to consider visibility of conference because this may vary depending on the field of research and/or some students may be more interested in attending smaller events. The type of presentation is difficult because Masters students are much more likely to present posters at conferences and, at some larger conferences, there are still Faculty members who present posters. We need to ensure that the selection process is as fair as possible as all students are

contributing to the funds from which these awards are drawn.

- The EGSS Executive also discussed possible criteria for the EGSS Fellowships via e-mail. Jessica discussed this at the RGS committee meeting with Bob

Bracewell and the Program Directors – she presented the general concerns that had come up from the Executive, what the purpose of this award is, the amount allocated, etc. The committee members gave some helpful feedback about how we could divide the awards, as well as what they thought were reasonable considerations if we are looking at “merit”.

- Comments from Program Directors were: (1) please do not place additional demands on the department, such as nominations, (2) students in thesis and non-thesis programs can not complete, so there should be two categories, (3) issue of criteria is not as applicable at the doctoral level because everyone is in a research program, (4) request letter of intent/personal statement and ask student to clearly address specific points, and (5) CV should be required, probably a letter of reference as well.
- Draft of EGSS Fellowships Guides and Criteria was distributed and briefly discussed. The basic outline is two awards of \$500 each for Masters students – one professional leadership (non-thesis) and one research excellence (thesis) – and one award of \$1000 for PhD that combines the two aspects. Some points that were raised for consideration:
 - Should these awards be open to students who already hold external awards?
 - We want students who may not be competitive for external funding to have a chance to win these awards.
 - They should be open to all EGSS members – everyone who pays fees – whether or not they already have funding.
 - Reminder that this is not a needs-based award.
 - If there is a “research award” is this looking at above and beyond what they are already doing? Doesn’t your program require this? No – your program requires research training, but does not expect you to present and publish.
 - We need to determine what kind of criteria qualifies going “above and beyond” your program requirements.
 - There should be a component in criteria that is not reflected in other awards.
 - Need to distinguish between “professional involvement” and “community contribution”.
- Jessica will re-draft guidelines and distribute via e-mail for discussion. [**Note:** this was postponed, as it will be discussed at the next Executive meeting.]

5. **Student space**

- Dr. Jamshid Beheshti, Associate Dean – Administration, joined us to discuss the use of space on the 5th floor (room 513). In the Faculty, he is responsible for continuing education and professional development, facilities management, and the mentoring and orientation for new staff.
- Two offices at the back of room 513 have been allocated as research space – Jamshid apologizes for the confusion because it was thought that the entire space would be allocated. The front part of the room has been allocated to EGSS to be assigned to graduate students – there are 4 cubicles set up and room to bring in more desks. At the current time, we have approximately 270 doctoral

students in the Faculty and 500-600 Masters students (about 50% are in non-thesis programs), so allocation of space is of high concern to the Faculty.

- There is the possibility of making improvements to EGSS's two current rooms – B180 Study Room and 631 Graduate Student Lounge – especially the lighting. Jessica to send Jamshid an e-mail with room numbers, condition of the rooms, and specific requests (possibility of adding LAN lines to the lounge and getting computers). If anyone can not access either of these two rooms using their student cards, please ask them to e-mail EGSS and we shall make arrangements to update their access with Pat Jackson.
- Mention from council member that many students are not aware of the spaces that EGSS currently has open for student use – we should distribute a reminder regarding these spaces in the next EGSS NEWS.
- It is decided that the issue of student space and how to follow through with the allocation of 5th floor space will be discussed via e-mail. **[Note:** Follow-up discussion regarding use of 5th floor space was held via e-mail. Notes from this discussion have been compiled and are available if anyone would like to re-read the thread. A copy of the final communication distributed to all students has been enclosed at the end of these minutes.]

6. **Portfolio reports**

- Vice-President Student Life: Ramona and Bindy announce that the EGSS Wine Tour will take place on the week-end of December 9/10. It will be free of charge to all Education graduate students and \$5/10 for guests. The bus will return around 6:00 or 7:00 from Eastern Townships, and dinner will be organized.
 - Three days have been booked in room 233 for film screenings & wine. The dates are Thursday, November 30, December 6, and December 13 (2:30PM).
 - All information will be sent out with EGSS NEWS and reminders via listserv.
- Department representative ECP: Angela reported on discussion of switch to online course evaluations (Mercury) – concern on the part of professors that students will not fill them out. From students, there is a concern about whether they can be “tracked” by the system.
- Department representative DISE: Tomoya mentioned the new Masters of Teaching program is in the works – 14 month program for students who already have a Bachelor's degree in a teachable subject.
- Department representative GSLIS: Sara mentioned discussion at MLISSA regarding merit awards (everyone has concerns similar to her, so she is comfortable representing the department's views on the issue).
 - Once website has moved forward, MLISSA may submit a proposal to EGSS for contribution of some funds to start-up costs.

7. **Conference Committee**

- Open meeting held on November 14th – was helpful and many interested people.
- Poster was passed around. It will be posted throughout the Education building and distributed as widely as possible.

- Looking into different journals to publish a special issue with conference proceedings (to be advertised to all presenters to submit their papers).
- There was a question raised about changing the date to Thursday/Friday because Faculty members are less likely to attend on Saturday. At this point in the planning, it was decided that it would remain on Friday/Saturday and that evaluation forms will be distributed to all participants asking about the days, etc.

- Applied for a Mini Beatty grant at the end of October – congratulations!
Possibility of having the Chairs of the 4 departments lead an opening plenary.

8. **Activities & Events**

- We had an inquiry from a student in DISE regarding the possibility of offering a film series. He suggested submitting a proposal to EGSS for the funds needed to buy food/drink to run the event. Jessica to e-mail student and put him in touch with Bindy/Ramona to see if he is interested in helping to organize the film series.
- Sandra reported that the Student Committee for Doctoral Studies in Education (SCDSE) had discussed the possibility of a doctoral student social event, perhaps a get-together at Thomson House with Bob/Carole to come and say a few words. This could be held as a “welcome back” wine and cheese.

9. **Surplus**

- Item to be postponed to new year – this may be relevant to our discussions regarding improvements to EGSS space.

10. **Meeting adjourned.**

The Education Graduate Students' Society (EGSS) is pleased to announce that the Faculty of Education has allocated a newly renovated space in the Education Building for the use of graduate students – Room 513 on the 5th floor, formerly the ECP department office.

The EGSS Executive has discussed possible uses of this space for the remaining months of the 2006-2007 academic year. We are very excited to continue to discuss future plans for the development of this space, but our immediate concern is ensuring that this space becomes immediately occupied and used by graduate students. This room has already been set-up with cubicles and desks, and was assigned to EGSS primarily to address the dire need for graduate student office space. Therefore, we have come to a consensus that Room 513 will be immediately assigned to Masters and PhD students who are currently without office space. These assignments will be effective until October 1st, 2007 – at which time the EGSS may re-allocate the space to students (renewal for the same students and/or new students), or may elect to transform our current spaces in order to maximize the opportunities for work space and community space.

In the future of the Faculty of Education, we hope that the EGSS will be instrumental in developing a Graduate Student Centre – but there are considerations that we must make, and an administrative procedure that must be followed; hence, we (as an Executive) are committed to thoroughly examining our options and planning accordingly. To reiterate, the current space in **Room 513** will be assigned as office space to graduate students until October 1st, 2007 – during this time, the EGSS Executive will work towards improving our existing space in **Room 631 (Graduate Student Lounge)** and **Room B180 (EGSS Study Room)**, as well as make plans for the continued development of our space(s). If you have any suggestions about how we can improve our spaces or if you're interested in helping out, please let us know! Your feedback is always welcome.

Are you currently without office space? There are approximately 10 desk spaces in Room 513 which will be assigned to Masters and PhD students in thesis programs who do not currently have allocated work or research space. The EGSS Executive will be putting together a list of students currently without space and our goal is to have all of the desks assigned before the holidays. Please note that, because space continues to be limited, priority will be given to PhD students. We will try to accommodate as many students as possible – however, if there are a large number of students who come forward, names will be randomly drawn with consideration given to equal division across the departments and priority to PhD students.

The deadline to submit your name for consideration is **Wednesday, December 13th, 2006**. If you are currently without space, please e-mail us at egss@mail.mcgill.ca with the following information – full name, student ID#, department, and program year (e.g. PhD3).

Thank you for your understanding – we look forward to continuing to improve our graduate student community!

Take care.
Jessica (on behalf of the EGSS Executive)

Jessica Toste, President

Education Graduate Student Society (EGSS)
McGill University, Faculty of Education
egss@mail.mcgill.ca
www.education.mcgill.ca/egss