

GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 14 January 2010

9.00-11.05 a.m. in A204

Present: Professor Gary Murphy (Chair), Dr Françoise Blin,
Dr Dermot Brabazon, Dr Pat Breton, Professor John Costello,
Ms Claudine Devereux, Ms Hannah Dyas,
Dr Bernadette Flanagan, Ms Tanya Keogh, Dr Christine Loscher,
Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Ms Patricia Moore,
Dr Mary Shine Thompson

Apologies: Dr Gabriel Flynn, Professor David Jacobson, Dr Declan Raftery

In attendance: Ms Goretti Daughton

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of four additional submissions under Item 5. It was agreed that, from now on, no distinction should be made on the agenda between requests for transfer to, and requests for confirmation on, the PhD register.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 5 November 2009 (and minutes of the single-issue meetings of 1 and 15 December 2009)

The minutes of the meeting of 5 November 2009 were confirmed subject to the following:

The deletion of the word 'Approved' at Item 6.6, and its replacement by the following: 'Decision deferred pending the submission of a more detailed list of the nominee's publications'.

They were then signed by the Chair.

The minutes of the single-issue meetings of 1 and 15 December 2009 were confirmed.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1** Noted that, once the revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* were in place (see Item 9 below), the postgraduate research forms would be revised. (Item 3.1)
- 3.2** Noted that the Chair intended to meet Dr Blin and Dr Claire Bohan, Director of Student Support and Development, to discuss the possibility of making additional English-language support available to students whose native language is not English, and that the Chair would report on developments to the GSB. Noted that many students who are native speakers of English also tend to have difficulty with academic English. Agreed that it was important to require students to begin writing at an early stage of their research and to do so regularly. (Item 3.5)
- 3.3** Noted that the Chair intended to discuss with the relevant Associate Dean for Research a case in which the possibility had been raised that a student might be reconsidered for admission to the PhD-track register if the standard of work improved. (Item 3.8)
- 3.4** Noted that it now appeared to be generally agreed that the responsibility for uploading theses to DORAS rested with the supervisor. The importance of a consistent university-wide approach to this matter was noted. (Item 3.17)
- 3.5** Noted that a name would be chosen for the upcoming scholarship scheme, and students would be invited to apply with a view to allowing those who were successful to register from April 2010 onwards. The importance of ensuring continuity of funding, notwithstanding the current difficult economic climate, was noted, as was the fact that scholarship students would be expected to teach and perform other duties pertaining to research students generally. The Chair is to report to the Research Advisory Panel and the Deputy President/Registrar on the scholarship issue. (Item 3.18)
- 3.6** Noted that a candidate had been confirmed on the PhD register by means of Chair's action following the provision of a detailed report on the programme of research and the oral examination. (Item 5.1)

- 3.7** Noted that it had been confirmed that a candidate was not a member of staff and that therefore only one external examiner was required; this examiner has now been approved by means of Chair's action. Noted that the student in question had not been recommended for confirmation on the PhD register and would now submit for a Master's degree. (Items 5.5 and 6.7)
- 3.8** Noted that a candidate had been confirmed on the PhD register by means of Chair's action following the provision of a report on the oral examination. (Item 5.9)
- 3.9** Noted that an external examiner nomination had been approved by Chair's action following the provision of a completed list of the nominee's publications. (Item 6.2)
- 3.10** Noted that an external examiner nomination had been withdrawn and replaced by an alternative nomination (see Item 5.12 below). (Item 6.5)
- 3.11** Noted that an external examiner nomination had been withdrawn and replaced by an alternative nomination (see Item 5.10 below). (Item 6.6)
- 3.12** Noted that an external examiner nomination had been approved by Chair's action following the provision of an updated list of the nominee's publications. (Item 6.11)
- 3.13** Noted that an external examiner nomination had been withdrawn and replaced by an alternative nomination (see Item 5.9 below). (Item 6.12)
- 3.14** Approval of two requests for a change of supervisory arrangements was deferred pending a discussion between the Chair and one of the supervisors. (Items 7.5 and 7.6)
- 3.15** Noted that agreement needed to be reached on the appropriate credit rating for a graduate education module before approval for the module could be granted. (Item 9.1)
- 3.16** Noted that two issues relating to graduate students would be discussed by a meeting of a subgroup of the University Standards Committee on 26 January 2010 which had been established to consider a range of issues relating to the implementation of the new Marks and Standards. These issues are credit ratings for graduate training modules and repeat opportunities for graduate students in cases where such modules have been failed or not completed. The decisions on the two issues taken by the GSB at its meeting of 5 November 2009, in the context of the approval granted to the implementation of graduate training elements (Item 10 of the minutes of this meeting refers), are not consonant with Marks and Standards. The question arises

of the extent to which Marks and Standards should apply to graduate training elements. The Chair indicated that, from his perspective, it would be appropriate for Marks and Standards to apply in the case of the two issues. The outcome of the discussion of the USC subgroup about the issues will be made known to the wider USC and to the GSB. (Item 9.1)

- 3.17** Noted that the Chair intended to discuss with the Director of Registry the means of resourcing the administration of graduate training modules. The urgency of finding a resolution to this matter was noted. (Item 10.2)
- 3.18** Noted that the Chair had conveyed to the School of Education Studies and the Deputy President/Registrar the decision taken by the GSB in respect of the external examining arrangements for the first cohort of candidates for the Doctorate in Education. (Item 11)

SECTION B: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

4. Applications for transfer to the PhD register or confirmation on the PhD register

- 4.1 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.1, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.2 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.2, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.3 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.3, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.4 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.4, School of Electronic Engineering
Decision deferred pending a discussion between the Chair and the Head of School.
- 4.5 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.5, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 4.6 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.6, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved.
- 4.7 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.7, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 4.8 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.8, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 4.9 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.9, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.

- 4.10 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.10, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.
- 4.11 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.11, School of Nursing
Approved.
- 4.12 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.12, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.13 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.13, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.14 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.14, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.
- 4.15 Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/4.15, NICB
Approved. Noted, however, that the submission actually came from the NICB and the School of Biotechnology, and that this should have been reflected on the form. Agreed that the Chair would raise this issue with the relevant staff members.

Noted that a number of submissions from a particular School had been handwritten (and were, in some cases, difficult to read). Agreed that the relevant Associate Dean for Research would raise these issues with the School with a view to ensuring that future submissions are completed electronically.

5. Appointment of external examiners

- 5.1 Professor Paul Engel, University College Dublin
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
Decision deferred pending a discussion between the Chair and the supervisor to clarify an issue.
- 5.2 Professor Anette Frank, Universität Heidelberg
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.2, PhD, School of Computing
Decision deferred pending a discussion between the Chair and the supervisor to clarify two issues.
- 5.3 Dr Philipp Koehn, University of Edinburgh
Professor Hans Uszkoreit, Universität des Saarlands
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.3, PhD, School of Computing
Decision deferred pending a discussion between the Chair and the supervisor to clarify two issues.
- 5.4 Professor Jie Kang, The College of New Jersey
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.4, MSc, School of Health and Human Performance
Approved.

- 5.5 Professor David Jones, Manchester Metropolitan University
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.5, PhD, School of Health and Human Performance
Approved.
- 5.6 Dr Seán Dinneen, National University of Ireland, Galway
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.6, PhD, School of Health and Human Performance
Approved.
- 5.7 Professor Teresa Maria Fernandes Rodrigues Cabral Monteiro
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.7, PhD, School of Physical Sciences/NCPST
Approved.
- 5.8 Professor Natascha Müller, Universität Wuppertal
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.8, PhD, School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
Approved.
- 5.9 Dr Eoin Casey, University College Dublin
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.9, MSc, School of Biotechnology
Noted. The nomination had already been approved by means of Chair's action (on 18 December 2009).
- 5.10 Dr Joe Carthy, University College Dublin
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.10, MSc, School of Computing
Noted. The nomination had already been approved by means of Chair's action (on 18 December 2009).
- 5.11 Professor Andrew de Mello, Imperial College London
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.11, PhD, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.
- 5.12 Professor Roger Smith, Loughborough University
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.12, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 5.13 Dr Daniel O'Connell, Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.13, PhD, All Hallows College
Approved.
- 5.14 Dr Patrick Mullins, Milltown Institute
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.14, PhD, All Hallows College
Approved.
- 5.15 Dr Peter de May, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.15, PhD, All Hallows College
Approved. Noted that the form needed to be amended to include the student's ID number.

- 5.16 Dr Thomas Norris, St Patrick's College, Maynooth
Student ref. GSB/2010/A1/5.16, MA, All Hallows College
Decision deferred pending the submission of a more detailed list of the nominee's publications.

7. Requests for changes to supervisory arrangements

- 6.1 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.1, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.2 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.2, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.3 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.3, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.4 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.4, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.5 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.5, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.6 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.6, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.7 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.7, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.8 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.8, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.9 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.9, School of Biotechnology
Approved.
- 6.10 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.10, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved.
- 6.11 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.11, School of Computing
Approved.
- 6.12 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.12, School of Computing
Approved.
- 6.13 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.13, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.
- 6.14 Student ref. GSB/2009/A6/6.14, School of Physical Sciences
Approved.

7. OTHER STUDENT ISSUES

None.

SECTION C: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES**8. Proposed graduate education modules**

None.

9. Further discussion of draft revised *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis***9.1** The following were agreed:

Section 10 – Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees

- This section should indicate that all supervisors and internal examiners of candidates being considered should attend the relevant Faculty Awards Board
- The two bullet points in paragraph 1 (Establishment of Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees) beginning ‘The timing of ... ‘ and ‘The fixing of ...’. should be deleted
- In paragraph 2 (Remit of Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees), it should be made clear that the function of the Faculty Awards Board is to consider and approve (or otherwise, where necessary) the award of the degree
- Annual Progression and Awards Boards, timetabled within one of the standard PAB schedules, will be necessary to consider module marks; it can then be noted at the Faculty Awards Boards that this work has been done
- The graduate training elements to be considered at the PABs should also be referred to early in the regulations, at the point where the different types of doctorate are listed.

Section 11 – Deferral

- Detailed regulations drawn up by University College Cork may be useful in informing DCU’s procedures; the Chair is to make the UCC regulations available
- Deferrals should normally be granted only in exceptional circumstances
- The revised regulations should not contain detailed information about the financial implications of deferring; this should instead be contained in the detailed operational documentation referred to in 9.2 below.

Other

- The regulations will need to be very specific about the fact that concurrent registration for two awards is not normally permitted.

- 9.2** The importance of making a clear distinction between regulatory and operational matters was noted. While only the former should be included in the revised regulations, it will be essential to ensure that the latter continue to be documented fully and communicated clearly to all stakeholders.
- 9.3** The following timeline for completion of the revision of the regulations was agreed:
- Mid-January to mid-February 2010: completion of a new redrafted version of the regulations by a small group consisting of the Chair, other members of the GSB (with the Associate Deans for Research closely involved) and a minimum of one member of the working group which had been set up in 2008 to make initial recommendations on the revision
 - Second half of February 2010: consideration of the new version by the GSB (either electronically or by means of a specially-convened meeting)
 - March to the third week of April 2010: consideration of the new version by Faculty Research Committees (by means of specially-convened meetings, if necessary)
 - May 2010: consideration of the new version, incorporating Faculty comments, by the GSB, and either approval at that stage or subsequent approval, later in May, with further GSB recommendations incorporated
 - 3 June 2010: consideration of the new version by the University Standards Committee (following a presentation by the Chair), with recommendations, if relevant, to Academic Council
 - 9 June 2010: consideration of the new version by Academic Council (following a presentation by the Chair)
 - 28 June 2010: consideration of any final revisions, if relevant, by Academic Council.
 - September 2010: implementation
 - 2010/11: monitoring to ascertain fitness for purpose and determine any further revisions that might be necessary.

10. For formal approval: structured PhD proposal from the School of Law and Government

Approved.

13. Any other business

None.

Date of next meeting:

**Thursday 4 March 2010
9.00 a.m. in A204**

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____