GRADUATE STUDIES BOARD

MINUTES

Thursday 7 March 2013

9.00-11.40 a.m. in A204

Present:	Dr Lisa Looney (Chair)[1], Ms Gillian Barry, Professor Liam Barry, Ms Goretti Daughton, Ms Claudine Devereux, Dr Bernadette Flanagan, Dr Gabriel Flynn, Ms Ann McCartney, Ms Louise McDermott (Secretary), Dr Enda McGlynn, Dr Ciarán Mac Murchaidh, Professor Colm O'Gorman, Dr Ana Terres
Apologies:	Dr Christine Loscher, Ms Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Dr Anne Morrissey, Dr Kevin Rafter

The Chair welcomed Ms Ann McCartney, student representative on the Graduate Studies Board and representative of research students on Academic Council, to her first meeting of the GSB.

SECTION A: MINUTES AND RELATED ISSUES

1.   Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2.   Minutes of the meeting of 24 January 2013

The minutes were confirmed and were signed by the Chair.

3.   Matters arising from the minutes

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[1] Professor Colm O'Gorman chaired the meeting for the final three items: 9.19, 10 and 11.

3.1 <u>Noted</u> that a change of internal examiner in respect of a Master's candidate in the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering had been approved, retrospectively, by Chair's action on 1 February 2013.
(Item 5.32 from the meeting of 6 May 2010)

3.2 <u>Noted</u> that the restructured document on joint research supervision and awards had been approved by DCU Executive, had been made available to the Education Committee at its meeting of 6 March 2013 and now represented University policy. It will shortly be made available to the GSB. It indicates a high level of support for the principle of collaboration among research supervisors while specifying that joint awards may be undertaken only in the context of formal agreements that are of strategic importance to the University. The Graduate Studies Office will make available a template agreement for use by research supervisors engaged in collaborative activity. (Item 3.1)

3.3 <u>Noted</u> that a number of ongoing issues are under consideration, and that the GSB membership would be updated about these as appropriate.

3.4 <u>Noted</u> that discussions about information systems for research students were ongoing and that a modified user specification and covering memorandum had been sent to the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar). (Item 3.6).

3.5 <u>Noted</u> that discussions had taken place with a Head of School in respect of the number of supervisors listed on a PGR3 form. (Item 3.7)

3.6 <u>Noted</u> that discussions would take place with the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) about the implications for external examiner nominations and other relevant aspects of GSB work of the developments with respect to the 3U Partnership. (Item 3.8)

3.7 <u>Noted</u> that a PGR3 form was awaited from a School and that, if it were approved, the PGR4 form for the relevant student would be considered. (Item 3.9)

3.8 <u>Noted</u> that a Graduate Training Element had been indicated as being at Level 9. (Item 3.10)

3.9 <u>Noted</u> that the requested modification had been made to *FSH509: Special Topics at DCU*, a module on the EXTATIC programme. (Item 3.11)

3.10 <u>Noted</u> that the policy on Recognition of Prior Learning for research students had been approved by Academic Council at its meeting of 13 February 2013.
(Item 3.12)

3.11 <u>Noted</u> that the current guidelines on PhD by publication had been made available to all those involved in forthcoming submissions. (Item 3.13)

3.12 The Chair <u>noted</u> that she was engaged in reviewing *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* with a view to ascertaining what changes need to be made in the light of the guidance for stakeholders that was formulated, in consultation with Faculties, in the course of 2012/13. These proposed changes, and any others deemed necessary, will be submitted for the consideration of the GSB at its meeting of 18 April 2013. With respect to the concept of mentoring, the Chair <u>noted</u> that the advice from Training and Development in the Human Resources Office is that it is not the optimum term given the duties envisaged; T&D have undertaken to elaborate on this issue in a written document. Of the possible alternative terms, 'adviser' is potentially problematic in that it means 'supervisor' in the US context.
(Items 3.13 and 4.6)

3.13 <u>Noted</u> that it was intended to have a revised list of all available scholarships for research students on the Graduate Studies Office web page and that discussions about management processes for scholarships would be undertaken with Faculties.
(Item 3.14)

3.14 <u>Noted</u> that the Chair had provided comments, from the graduate research perspective, to the working group on plagiarism/academic integrity. (Item 3.15)

3.15 <u>Noted</u> that a revised PGR3 form was awaited from a School. (Item 3.16)

3.16 <u>Noted</u> that information was awaited from a School in respect of a candidate who had requested permission to reside/carry out research abroad. (Item 3.24)

3.17 <u>Noted</u> that a number of revisions to postgraduate research forms were under consideration. <u>Noted</u> that a future meeting of the GSB would consider the issue of the relevance, as distinct from the recency, of the publications of individuals nominated as external examiner. (Items 3.24, 5 and 6)

3.18 <u>Noted</u> that the policy and procedures pertaining to Higher Doctorates would be revised in due course and in light of the experience of managing the first nomination (see Item 10 below). (Item 3.25)

3.19 <u>Noted</u> that the Chair would, in due course, discuss with representatives from the Students' Union and from Faculties issues such as administrative procedures for nomination/election of candidates and durations of terms of office. (Item 3.26)

3.20 <u>Noted</u>, with respect to an external examiner, that confirmation had been obtained about an issue and the nomination had therefore been deemed approved. (Item 6.3)

3.21 <u>Noted</u>, with respect to two PGR4 forms, that revised abstracts had been submitted and the forms had therefore been deemed approved. (Items 6.4 and 6.9)

3.22 The revised Terms of Reference of the GSB were <u>approved</u> subject to a rewording of the reference to the circulation of the schedule of notification/submission of

items to make the circulation arrangements clear, and a renaming of the Board (intended for implementation in 2013/14, if approved at University level) to 'Graduate Research Studies Board' to reflect its remit more accurately. It is intended that the revised Terms of Reference will submitted for the approval of Academic Council at its meeting of 5 June 2013. (Item 7)

SECTION B: POLICY AND STRATEGY ISSUES

4.   Proposed Graduate Training Elements: Structured PhD programme – Chemistry of Therapeutics

4.1   It was <u>noted</u> with approval that the School of Chemical Sciences had endeavoured to make optimum use of available resources so as to maximise opportunities for students and that this approach would potentially be useful for other Schools. It was <u>noted</u> too that the progress of students on the Chemistry of Therapeutics framework, in due course, would be of interest on the basis of the new approach it represents.

4.2   **CS517: Advanced Scientific Communication Skills**
<u>Approved</u> subject to the rewriting of the 'Coursework Breakdown' and 'Workload' sections to ensure consistency between them.
CS518: Advanced Analysis using Specialised Techniques
<u>Approved</u> subject to the inclusion of safety and risk assessment issues under 'Indicative Content' and more detail in the descriptor about the typical number of pieces of equipment involved and the basis on which they are selected.
CS519: Advanced Literature Analysis
<u>Approved</u> subject to the removal of the reference to 'BSc in Chemical Sciences or related disciplines' under 'Pre-requisite Learning' as being unnecessary in the context of this module descriptor.
CS520: Chiral Separations
<u>Approved</u> subject to the inclusion of details of specific activities under the 'Independent Learning' subsection of the 'Workload' section.
CS521: General Chemistry
<u>Agreed</u> that the School would be requested to revise this module descriptor with a view to including detailed information under all the headings and providing information about the management of the proposed examinations. <u>Noted</u> that the title of the module would benefit from revision.
CS522: Grant-writing for Postgraduate Researchers
<u>Approved</u> subject to the inclusion of details of specific activities under the 'Independent Learning' subsection of the 'Workload' section. <u>Noted</u> that Learning Outcomes 1 and 4 seem very similar to each other and that consideration might be given to revising at least one of them. <u>Noted</u> too that Research and Innovation Support offers training in grant-writing to postdoctoral students and that the possibility of synergies with this module might usefully be explored.

CS525: Practical Chemistry Demonstrating

Approved subject to clarification of the sentence under 'Indicative Content' and transfer of this sentence to an appropriate location in the module descriptor. Noted that the clarification relates to the question of whether the prior module is recommended or is in fact (on the basis of information given elsewhere in the descriptor) essential. Noted too that there is a reference to 'Level 1', and agreed that this should be clarified.

CS526: Quantum Chemistry

Agreed that the School would be requested to revise this module descriptor with a view to including detailed information under all the headings. Noted too that the Learning Outcomes might benefit from being rewritten.

CS527: Regulation and Statutory Requirements for the Pharmaceutical Industry

Approved subject to the provision of information under 'Indicative Content'.

4.3   It was agreed that, in the case of all the module descriptors, the module co-ordinators would be requested to provide more detail than is available at present under 'Indicative Content' (there are also specific comments in this regard about some of the modules, as noted at Item 4.2 above).

4.4   It was agreed that, in the case of all the module descriptors, the module co-ordinators would be requested to substitute '2013/14' for '2012/13' as being the date from which the modules are valid.

4.5   It was noted that all modules which are not already the responsibility of an external examiner should have an external examiner assigned to them. The Chair is to give consideration to the management of this matter, taking into account the periodic review of Graduate Training Elements referred to in the Graduate School proposals (see Item 7 below).

4.6   It was noted that the references to 'Module Recommendations' and 'Requirements' on page 1 of the module descriptor template might benefit from revision, and agreed that the Chair would raise this matter with the Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning.

4.7   It was noted that 'Science without Borders' is erroneously referred to as a structured PhD programme in the memo accompanying the descriptors.

5.   Teaching and Learning component strategic plan: elements of particular relevance to graduate research

Suggested projects of relevance to graduate research, relating to the forthcoming Teaching and Learning and other component strategies, were noted. The Chair requested GSB members to submit any further proposed projects to her for consideration by the relevant members of Senior Management for inclusion in the strategy. This was requested within a short timeframe, as the strategy is due for completion by the end of March 2013, though review of strategic issues will

continue in the University on a rolling basis. It was <u>noted</u> that the projects are not confined to new ventures but also include, in some instances, activities already being undertaken. The importance of taking account of the need to eliminate unnecessary activities and reduce focus on less important ones, in view of current budgetary constraints, was <u>noted</u>.

6.   Update on recent activities

6.1   Supervisor training

The Chair <u>noted</u> the high level of recent and ongoing activity and the engagement of staff from the University, the linked colleges and, for the first time, the 3U partner organisations. She expressed appreciation, on behalf of the GSB, to Mr Martin Leavy and Ms Kathryn McCarthy of Training and Development in the Human Resources Office for their ongoing commitment to the provision of the training.

6.2   'Tell it Straight' competition

The Chair <u>noted</u> that the final of this competition would take place on 14 March 2013 and requested that research students be encouraged to attend. She expressed appreciation, on behalf of the GSB, to Dr Pádraig Murphy of the School of Communications for providing training for entrants and facilitating a presentation by the finalists to students on the MSc in Science Communication, as well as to Ms Deirdre Wynter of DCU Communications and Marketing for assistance with shortlisting. She <u>noted</u> that there had been thirty-six entries and that the finalists included representatives from the Faculty of Engineering and Computing, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mater Dei Institute of Education and, in particular, the Faculty of Science and Health. The breadth of research being presented is very encouraging, and the membership of the judging panel incorporates a broad range of backgrounds.

6.3   'Write a Thesis' Seminar

The Chair <u>noted</u> that the feedback from this seminar, which had taken place on 1 March 2013 and had been facilitated by Dr Rowena Murray of the University of the West of Scotland, had been excellent. The number of those who had attended (54) is significant. The importance of providing ongoing support for students in terms of writing was <u>noted</u>.

6.4   Availability of Research Integrity online tool

It was <u>noted</u> that the School of Chemical Sciences is considering using this tool on a pilot basis and that the possibility exists of its being made available to students on Moodle (though the need for ongoing support sessions for students was also <u>noted</u>).

Its suitability for use at as part of the orientation process will be assessed as part of the review of orientation to take place in Summer 2013. Some operational upgrading will be required for the tool in the near future, prior to its being made available. It was <u>noted</u> that it had the potential to be useful to staff as well as students. The Chair <u>noted</u> that institutional responses to the *Draft Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland* would be submitted in the near future, through RIS.

6.5   O'Hare Scholarships 2013

The Chair <u>noted</u> that the priority areas relating to the 2013 Scholarships had been slightly modified to ensure alignment with strategic plan priorities. A thoroughgoing review of the Scholarships is planned for 2014/15. Meanwhile, Faculties are encouraged to ensure the timely organisation of review panels following the closing date for submission in Spring 2013. The Careers Service is to publicise the Scholarships to final-year undergraduate students, and they will also be highlighted on the home page of the University website. It was <u>noted</u> that students are precluded from holding scholarships such as the O'Hare Scholarship concurrently with Irish Research Council scholarships, though there can be uncertainty as to whether an IRC scholarship can be considered guaranteed on receipt of an initial letter.

7.   Graduate School Proposals

The proposals (including the proposed change to *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research and Thesis*, which will be included in the general review of these regulations at the meeting of 18 April 2013 – see Item 3.13 above) were <u>approved</u> subject to the inclusion of the word 'normally' in the reference to credits at the second bullet point. It was <u>noted</u> that a Level 8 module could be included as a Graduate Training Element if a supervisor was of the view that it would meet a student's needs. The Chair <u>noted</u> that she intended to discuss with QQI the appropriateness or otherwise of having GTEs at Level 10. It was <u>noted</u> that GTE academic structures should no longer incorporate references to 2.5-credit modules.

SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ISSUES

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

8.1   Student ref. GSB/2013/A2/8.1, School of Biotechnology/NICB
          <u>Approved</u>.
8.2   Student ref. GSB/2013/A2/8.2, School of Chemical Sciences
          <u>Approved.</u>

8.3 Student ref. GSB/2013/A2/8.3, School of Computing
<u>Approved</u>. <u>Noted</u>, however, that there is a reference on the form to a prior, in-School, process which took place before the confirmation examination. <u>Agreed</u> that the School would be asked to submit a rewritten form which would make it clear that this prior process did not constitute an examination and, in this connection, to note Section 8.2.2 of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*.

8.4 Student ref. GSB/2013/A2/8.4, School of Electronic Engineering
<u>Approved.</u>

8.5 Student ref. GSB/2013/A2/8.5, School of Health and Human Performance
<u>Approved.</u>

8.6 Student ref. GSB/2013/A2/8.6, School of Health and Human Performance
<u>Approved</u>.

8.7 Student ref. GSB/2013/A2/8.7, School of Physical Sciences
Engineering
<u>Approved.</u>

9. Appointment of external examiners

9.1 Professor Ioannis Konstantinou, University of Western Greece
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.1, PhD, School of Biotechnology
<u>Approved.</u>

9.2 Professor Wolfgang Schuhmann, Ruhr-Universität Bochum
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.2, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
<u>Approved</u> subject to the reason for appointment being outlined in more detail than is the case at present.

9.3 Professor Roland Zengerie, University of Freiburg, Germany
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.3, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
<u>Approved</u> subject to the reason for appointment being outlined in more detail than is the case at present. <u>Noted</u> that it would be helpful to mention to the School the reference to gender representation in the examining team, at Section 10 of *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*.

9.4 Dr Andreu Llobera, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.4, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
<u>Approved </u>subject to the reason for appointment being outlined in more detail than is the case at present.

9.5 Dr Mark Fitzsimons, University of Plymouth
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.5, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
<u>Approved</u> subject to the form being signed by the student.

9.6 Professor Thorfinnur Gunnlaugsson, Trinity College Dublin
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.6, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
<u>Approved</u> subject to the reason for appointment being outlined in more detail than is the case at present.

9.7 Professor Colin McCoy, Queen's University Belfast
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.7, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved subject to the reason for appointment being outlined in more detail than is the case at present and the date being indicated on the form.

9.8 Dr Bert Vandevelde, Imec, Belgium
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.8, PhD, School of Electronic Engineering
Approved. Agreed that it would be mentioned to the School that the word count of the thesis appears low.

9.9 Dr Su-Ming Khoo, National University of Ireland, Galway
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.9, PhD, School of Law and Government
Approved.

9.10 Dr PJ Cregg, Waterford Institute of Technology
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.10, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved subject to the reason for appointment being outlined in more detail than is the case at present.

9.11 Professor Guang-Zhong Yang, Imperial College London
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.11, PhD, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Approved.

9.12 Professor Henrik Lund, Aalborg University, Denmark
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.12, PhD, School of Chemical Sciences
Approved. Agreed that it would be mentioned to the School that the word count of the thesis appears low.

9.13 Dr Lillis Ó Laoire, National University of Ireland, Galway
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.13, PhD, Roinn na Gaeilge, St Patrick's College
Approved.

9.14 Professor Nollaig Mac Congáil, National University of Ireland, Galway
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.14, PhD, Roinn na Gaeilge, St Patrick's College
Approved. Noted that the student is a full-time student.

9.15 Dr Glyn Daly, University of Northampton
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.15, PhD, Education Department/Department of Religious Studies and Religious Education, St Patrick's College
Approved.

9.16 Dr Nicholas Acheson, University of Ulster
Professor Jenny Harrow, City University, London
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.16, PhD, All Hallows College
Approved.

9.17 Dr Oonagh O'Brien, The Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.17, PhD, All Hallows College
Approved.

9.18 Professor Kate Loewenthal, Royal Holloway University of London
Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.18, PhD, All Hallows College
Approved.

9.19   Professor Catherine Marienau, DePaul University, USA
        Student ref. GSB2013/A2/9.19, PhD, All Hallows College
        <u>Approved.</u>

With respect to students who submit for examination in the third year of registration, it was <u>noted</u> that the possibility exists that they might complete their research, and be examined, before the normal three years of study had elapsed. In practice, however, this tends not to happen, both because students usually avail of more than three months to complete the research and because of the logistical issues (particularly diary issues) associated with organising oral examinations. It was suggested none the less that the submission timeframe be revisited in due course. It was <u>noted</u> that it might be helpful to bear in mind, in this context, the fact that in the event of a lapse of twelve months or more between the approval of a PGR4 form and submission for examination, a new nomination process must take place.

It was <u>noted</u> that the indicative word length for theses would be the subject of discussion by the GSB at a future meeting.

10.   Other student issues

10.1   Appointment of assessor for Higher Doctorate

        GSB2013/A2/10.1, Faculty of Science and Health
        <u>Approved.</u>

11.   Any other business
        None.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 18 April 2013
9.00 a.m. in A204

Signed: _____   Date: _____
     Chair