

Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy

Participation of Graduate Students in Department Governance

9 March 2009

The Department and Faculty welcome the participation of graduate students in governance. There are formal and informal venues for this, and protocols or procedures guiding formal input into decision-making processes. Understanding how to formally move items and issues on to agendas should be enabling and empowering.

Formal Input:

Each Department has a Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) that addresses all policy and programmatic issues of the graduate programs as well as issues such as funding and admissions. At the Faculty level there is also a Graduate Curriculum Advisory Committee (GCAC), which includes all Graduate Coordinators or Advisors and addresses policy that covers all programs within the Faculty. There are Faculty of Education Graduate Student (GSFE) representatives on the GCAC. The GSFE representatives on the GCAC work with Department GSFE representatives and Departmental Graduate Peer Advisors along with other representatives across the Faculty. At the University level, the Graduate Student Society (<http://gss.ubc.ca>) offers many opportunities for graduate students to participate in governance.

Students wanting formal input into decision-making are encouraged to work through their GSFE representatives for Faculty level (GCAC) initiatives and changes and Peer Advisors for Department level (GAC) initiatives and changes. Normally, students begin at the Department level, where the following protocols are followed:

1. Bring concerns to the Peer Advisor representative on the GAC, who will then bring the concerns to the GAC in the form of a report on issues or an agenda item for discussion. Students are encouraged to work with their Peer Advisors for concerns with graduate curriculum, policies, etc. Peer Advisors collate concerns from the graduate community and bring these to the GAC. Items can be formally placed on the GAC agenda up to one week prior to each monthly meeting. The Peer Advisor representative can accommodate feedback up to the beginning of each GAC meeting.
2. If this has not succeeded, the second step is to meet with the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Coordinator will then bring the concerns back to the GAC or appropriate faculty members or committees.
3. The third step is to approach the Department Head with issues that have not been addressed by the Peer Advisors, GAC, or Graduate Coordinator. The Department Head typically follows up by going to the GAC or Department for advise, etc.