

GRADUATE COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 29, 2010, 1:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GILMOUR HALL 111

PRESENT: Dr. A. Sekuler (Chair), Dr. P. Baxter, Dr. P. Bennett, Mr. R. Collier, Dr. K. Dalnoki-Veress, Dr. P. Deane, Ms. M. Emami, Ms. B. Gordon, Dr. P. Graefe, Dr. M. Hatton, Dr. C. Hayward, Dr. A. Holloway, Dr. K. Kanagaretnam, Dr. G. Kehler, Dr. N. Kevlahan, Dr. L. Magee, Dr. T. Maibaum, Dr. J. Medcof, Dr. L. Platt, Mr. P. Self, Dr. E. Service, Dr. G. Steiner, Dr. D. Welch, Mrs. M. Espiritu (Assistant Secretary)

BY INVITATION: Ms. L. Geddes, Dr. J. MacDermid

REGRETS: Dr. D. Cassidy, Dr. N. Charupat, Dr. S. Crosta, Dr. A. Knights, Dr. H. Sheardown, Dr. S. Porter, Dr. P. Zylla

Dr. Sekuler welcomed the new members of Graduate Council: Dr. George Steiner (School of Business), Dr. Thomas Maibaum (Department of Computing and Software), Dr. Alison Holloway (Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology), Dr. Elisabet Service (Department of Linguistics & Languages), Dr. Liss Platt (Department of Communication Studies & Multimedia), Dr. Patrick Bennett (Department of Psychology), Dr. Laura Finsten (Department of Anthropology), and Dr. Peter Graefe (Department of Political Science). She introduced the two graduate student representatives who were present at the meeting: Ms. Maryam Emami representing the Faculty of Engineering, and Mr. Ron Collier representing the Faculty of Humanities. She expects to have student representatives from the other faculties in the next meeting. Dr. Sekuler introduced Dr. Mark Hatton, the Acting Graduate Associate Dean for the Faculties of Business, Humanities and Social Sciences; and Ms. Brooke Gordon, the SGS Executive Director (Strategic Planning and Administration). President Patrick Deane was in attendance and he made a brief remark concerning the important role of Graduate Council in relation to graduate education and research enterprise at the University. Dr. Deane mentioned the importance of McMaster's participation in graduate expansion; however, he acknowledged the difficulty involved in this endeavour because the government funding is not sufficient to promote graduate programs at McMaster. He added that the outcome for graduate programs across the province is an open-ended issue; and the next three months will reveal the key elements of the government's plan concerning growth in graduate education.

I. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of May 3, 2010 were approved on a motion by Dr. Hayward, seconded by Dr. Hatton.

II. Business Arising

There was no business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

III. Report from the Associate Vice-President and Dean of Graduate Studies

Dr. Sekuler reviewed the status of graduate programs submitted to the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS) for appraisal:

Upcoming OCGS consultant site visit for the following program: Design and Manufacturing, October 28-29, 2010

The OCGS consultants' reports were received for the following programs: English (M.A., Ph.D.); Statistics (M.Sc.); Psychology (M.Sc., Ph.D.); Biology (M.Sc., Ph.D.); and Globalization Studies (M.A.). OCGS approved the Management Studies Diploma (Type 4). The Gender Studies & Feminist Research (M.A., Diploma) program is awaiting funding approval from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The upcoming new graduate programs are French (Ph.D.), and Technology, Entrepreneurship and Innovation (MTEI).

Dr. Sekuler explained that McMaster is still working on the development of its institutional quality assurance process (IQAP) concerning the review of undergraduate and graduate programs. She said McMaster conducted a workshop for chairs and graduate advisors whose departments have recently undergone graduate and undergraduate program reviews. She encouraged the Council members to contact her by email if they have ideas/issues concerning the program review process that may be useful to the IQAP committee. She said McMaster IQAP has to be submitted to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (OUCQA). Although the final graduate enrolment numbers will not be available until November 1, 2010, Dr. Sekuler announced that there is an increase of 100 students this year compared to last year. Dr. Sekuler reported the success of the last *Best Practices Lunch*, which discussed "Student Appeal Procedures." She said the next *Best Practices Lunch* will be held on October 27, 2010. She added that more students (1300 total) attended the welcome events conducted by McMaster this year compared to the previous year.

Mr. Self reported that the first appreciation event for post-doctoral fellows was successfully held on September 28, 2010. He also said that the School of Graduate Studies and MITACS will be holding three more events for graduate students this year. Mr. Self announced that the *Graduate Student Awards* will be held on October 4, 2010, and there are 72 nominations this year compared to 50 last year. Mr. Self extended an invitation to the Graduate Council members to attend the *Graduate Student Awards* ceremony.

IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans

According to Dr. Welch, the "Student Appeal Procedures" *Best Practices Lunch* topic will be conducted again sometime this October due to numerous requests from departments and programs. Dr. Welch reported that the online version of the SGS #101 course will soon be in operation. Dr. Hatton reported that the SSHRC workshop for students, led by Drs. David Clark, Lorraine York, and James Benn was successfully held on September 27, 2010. He hopes that the

workshop will be conducted again next year. Dr. Hatton stated that the proposed Ph.D. program in French will soon be presented for approval to the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee. Dr. Hatton said he will be involved in the revision of the School of Graduate Studies thesis guidelines. Dr. Hayward reported that she is involved in a research study concerning graduate student supervision and supervisory faculty evaluation in the Faculty of Health Sciences. She also said that the Plenary Day—which was a success this year—will now be held annually. Dr. Hayward said she will also be involved in a Faculty of Health Sciences taskforce, which examines practices that address the mental health issues of graduate students.

V. 2010-2011 Scholarships Committee of Graduate Council

Dr. Sekuler reviewed the membership list of the 2010-2011 Scholarships Committee of Graduate Council.

Dr. Welch moved, and Dr Hatton seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed membership list of the 2010-2011 Scholarships Committee of Graduate Council.”

The motion was carried.

VI. New Graduate Scholarships

Ms. Gordon reviewed the new graduate scholarships for Council approval:

- Margo Wilson and Martin Daly Ontario Graduate Scholarship
- Marion D. Maitland Ontario Graduate Scholarship
- H. Vincent Elliott Memorial Travel Bursary
- PCL Ontario Graduate Scholarship in Engineering

Dr. Hayward moved, and Dr. Bennett seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the Margo Wilson and Martin Daly Ontario Graduate Scholarship, Marion D. Maitland Ontario Graduate Scholarship, H. Vincent Elliott Memorial Travel Bursary, and the PCL Ontario Graduate Scholarship in Engineering.”

The motion was carried.

VII. Report from the Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Policy and Curriculum Council

Nursing: Creation of new field and change in existing field

Dr. Baxter presented the School of Nursing's proposal to create a new field and change the name of its current field. The proposal was approved by the Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Policy and Curriculum Council at its meeting on June 10, 2010, and subsequently approved by the Faculty of Health Sciences Executive Committee on June 23, 2010. Dr. Baxter explained that the creation of the new field, "Advanced Practice Nursing," will clearly identify the focus and strength of the Nursing Program within this area, and would enable potential applicants for advanced practice nursing education to readily identify their field of interest. She added that the current field, "Nursing Leadership and Practice," will change to "Leadership."

Dr. Hatton moved, and Dr. Hayward seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposal from the Nursing graduate program to create a new field and change the name of its existing field, as described in the document."

The motion was carried.

Changes to the comprehensive examination process for the Rehabilitation Science Ph.D. program

Dr. MacDermid briefly discussed the proposed changes to the examination process as follows: to allow students to develop grant proposals related to their thesis. The option of creating grant proposals on another topic will remain. By allowing some overlap with the thesis topic, the department hopes that the proposed change will help students complete the Comprehensive Examination on time. Another proposed change is the addition of a statement specifying that the attendance of the supervisor at the feedback session is advantageous. Dr. MacDermid pointed out that there were additional minor revisions to the document to clarify the examination process.

Dr. Hayward moved, and Dr. Hatton seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to the comprehensive examination process for the Rehabilitation Science Ph.D. program, as described in the document."

The motion was carried.

Police Records Check – Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy (PT) Programs

Referring to the document circulated to the Council members, Dr. Geddes discussed the proposed Police Records Check Policy for the Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy programs. Dr. Geddes explained that incoming OT and PT students are required annually to undergo a police records check, which includes screening and police records check of RCMP and the National Canadian Police Information Centre databases. Dr. Geddes stated that the proposal was modelled from the police records check policy of the Department of Medicine's undergraduate program.

Dr. Hayward moved, and Dr. Bennett seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed police records check policy proposed by the Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy programs.”

In response to a question, Dr. Geddes explained that for international/visa students the policy will require them to provide a sworn affidavit specifying that they do not possess any criminal record outside Canada. She added that the affidavit should address all aspects of the police check, and the authenticity of the sworn affidavit will be verified by the OT/PT admissions office. To safeguard the University from any liability issues, the Council suggested requiring students to inform the OT/PT programs within two weeks of the change of status in relation to sections D12 and D13 of the document.

The motion was carried, subject to the amendment mentioned above.

OT/PT Leaves of Absence and OT/PT Parental Leave of Absence

Dr. Geddes explained that they are reviewing the two existing OT/PT leaves of absence policies to ensure that they are in accordance with the School of Graduate Studies student leave policy. Upon reviewing the documents, the Council members made the following comments:

- a member wondered how these policies differ from the leaves of absence policy of the School of Graduate Studies; and commented that the wording of the proposal, especially the procedure for “Returning from a Leave of Absence,” appears to give the program additional capability to decide whether or not a student can re-enter the program
- the proposed leave of absence document needs rewording, in particular, the section, *Returning from a Leave of Absence* needs clarification—the phrase “as assessed by the Assistant Dean” on page 3, #3 should be removed
- there was a comment as to whether the Assistant Dean should involve the Associate Dean in making the final decision/approval; if the decision involves the Associate Dean, and the student appeals the decision, the Dean of SGS will need to deal with the issue, since any further involvement by the Associate Dean becomes a conflict of interest
- in the parental leave of absence policy, the section, *Returning from a Leave of Absence*, the wording needs clarification (e.g., to address the issue of whether a student can be denied from re-entering the program)

The Council then decided to table discussion of the proposals until the issues raised were addressed by the OT/PT programs

VIII. Revision to the Graduate Council By-laws

Dr. Sekuler explained that the proposed revisions to the by-laws of Graduate Council are housekeeping issues that have arisen as a result of restructuring within the School of Graduate Studies. The proposed changes concern the membership composition of Graduate Council, in particular, changing the position title, "Graduate Registrar & Secretary of Graduate Studies" to "Associate Graduate Registrar and Secretary of Graduate Studies;" and adding the Assistant Dean (Graduate Student Life and Research Training), and the Executive Director (Strategic Planning and Administration) as Ex-Officio members (without vote) of Graduate Council. The other minor changes in the by-laws seek to revise the term of office of graduate students on the Graduate Council from September 1st to October 1st. On page 38 of the document, Statement (xi) was replaced with "to meet at least twice per academic year."

Dr. Welch moved, and Dr. Kehler seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to the Graduate Council by-laws as discussed above."

The motion was carried.

IX. Graduate Committees

Dr. Sekuler explained that Graduate Council will be creating sub-committees to address issues concerning graduate studies. Dr. Sekuler then encouraged Council member involvement in the following sub-committees:

- (1) Internationalization – Chair: Dr. A. Sekuler
- (2) Calendar and Policy – Chair: Dr. D. Welch
- (3) Mentorship and Supervision – Chair: Dr. C. Hayward
- (4) Thesis Guidelines – Chair: Dr. M. Hatton
- (5) Registration Process (Leaves, Special Petition) – Chair: Dr. H. Sheardown

The Council members were then handed a form, and requested to list their sub-committee preference.

X. Other business

Dr. Sekuler announced that the Centre for Learning and Leadership (CLL) is conducting a workshop regarding outcomes and critical components of IQAP on October 12, 2010 in Gilmour Hall 111 at 2:30 pm. The CLL website provides more information about the workshop.

There was no other business; and the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

