

**GRADUATE COUNCIL
DECEMBER 17, 2010, 1:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GH-111**

PRESENT: Dr. A. Sekuler (Chair), Ms. S. Baschiera (Secretary), Dr. P. Baxter, Dr. P. Bennett, Dr. N. Charupat, Ms. B. Gordon, Dr. P. Graefe, Dr. M. Hatton, Dr. C. Hayward, Dr. A. Holloway, Dr. K. Kanagaretnam, Dr. G. Kehler, Dr. N. Kevlahan, Mr. A.R. Khokhar, Dr. L. Magee, Dr. J. Medcof, Ms. A. Nissar, Ms. M. Emami, Mr. P. Self, Dr. E. Service, Dr. H. Sheardown, Dr. G. Steiner, Dr. D. Welch, Mrs. M. Espiritu (Assistant Secretary)

REGRETS: Dr. L. Finsten, Dr. A. Guarné, Dr. T. Maibaum, Dr. L. Platt

I. Minutes of meeting

On a motion by Dr. Hayward, seconded by Dr. Kevlahan, Graduate Council approved the minutes of the meeting of October 26, 2010.

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 announced that the last *Best Practices Lunch* this year will be held on December 21, 2010 and the topic is "Discussion Potpourri." In terms of OCGS reviews, Dr. Sekuler explained that the Ph.D. in French program obtained internal approval and will be sent to OCGS today. The School of Graduate Studies received the initial report from OCGS concerning the ADMI program. McMaster will then commence discussion with the other four universities involved as to how to proceed with this program. Dr. Sekuler said the transition from OCGS to IQAP has placed program reviews on hiatus in order to introduce the new procedure.

Dr. Sekuler said the subcommittee she chairs discussed wide-ranging issues on internationalization. Dr. Sekuler explained that the meeting was very timely with the upcoming forum to be hosted by President Deane, which will discuss the "Open Ontario" strategy for internationalizing post-secondary education. The President's open forum on January 18, 2011 will discuss McMaster's plan on internationalization. She said there is also a growing demand from universities in European and Asian countries to provide some form of international experience for their students.

Another issue discussed by the subcommittee was the "*cotutelle* system" (joint Ph.D. programs) that originated in France. Dr. Sekuler said both Canada and France have four universities listed in the top 100 universities in the world, which is why France wants to collaborate with Canadian

universities. In addition, the subcommittee discussed the development of a clear set of guidelines for *cotutelles* and initiating discussions with the French Embassy.

Dr. Sekuler reported on her recent successful trip to China to participate in the annual Ph.D. recruitment workshop. Her group met with 200 students, and she noticed that there is an increase this year in the number of potential recipients of China Scholarship Council (CSC) fellowships. She explained that CSC award recipients will be funded for living expenses for the duration of their doctoral studies, and that McMaster will only cover the tuition fees (approximately \$15,000 per student). During her trip, there was another group of McMaster representatives visiting China and arranging bilateral agreements with the country. Dr. Sekuler commented that the bilateral agreement is a way of raising McMaster's profile in China.

Dr. Sekuler discussed the new Ontario Trillium Scholarships program for top international students pursuing doctoral studies in Ontario. The scholarship, worth \$40,000 per year, is renewable for four years. McMaster was allotted five awards; and the criteria and selection process is yet to be announced by the government. To support the scholarships, the Ontario government will fund \$20 million while participating universities will provide \$10 million.

Dr. Sekuler reported that the graduate enrolment figures as of November 2010 have gone up to 7% compared to last year. Application to graduate studies is up by 13% compared to last year. Dr. Sekuler said McMaster is almost near its limit for the Master's level allocation while the Ph.D. level allocation still has over 100 spots. Dr. Sekuler also announced that NSERC will now fund only year 1 of the Master's level and funding for year 2 will have to come from elsewhere.

Mr. Self reported that McMaster, in partnership with MITACS, will hold another 15 workshop sessions beginning next year up to the end of March. About 380 graduate students— around 10% of the University's graduate student population—attended the previous workshops. The forthcoming workshops will focus on job searches and etiquette dinners. The University Advancement department will participate in some of the sessions. Registration for the upcoming workshops is now full and MITACS is currently maintaining a waiting list.

IV. Report from the Associate Deans of Graduate Studies

Dr. Welch reported that the SGS #101 online course is running smoothly and is a better system compared to the previous procedure used by Graduate Studies. The registration for SGS #101 is already closed but the actual completion of the course is ongoing. Dr. Welch reported that 731 students already completed the course. Fourteen students failed, but they have ten opportunities to retake the course. Dr. Welch added that the marks will be available in January 2011.

Dr. Welch said he emailed the members of his subcommittee on graduate calendar/policy for suggestions on how to improve the graduate calendar. Dr. Welch then briefly outlined the members' email responses concerning the topics/issues in the graduate calendar that need to be addressed, such as: visiting students, petition for consideration, duplicate descriptions of

cross-listed courses, review of the list of graduate scholarships and awards, interdisciplinary/collaborative programs, template for calendar copy, and faculty members listing for each department/program. One member commented that departments/programs, especially course-based programs, should be given flexibility when listing their faculty members in the graduate calendar.

Dr. Sheardown announced that the Dean of Engineering will provide financial incentives to faculty member supervisors and their domestic Ph.D. students, as well as domestic Master's students intending to continue onto the Ph.D. program. Dr. Sheardown reported that her subcommittee on registration has discussed changes to some of the School of Graduate Studies policies with the objective of making them more user-friendly. She added that the next step is for the subcommittee to meet and discuss the issues involved.

Dr. Hatton reported that the Faculty of Business Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee, and the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee had separate meetings to discuss graduate curriculum changes in their faculties. One of the items recently approved by the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee was the proposed Ph.D. in French program. Dr. Hatton explained that his thesis subcommittee wrote and commented on the first draft of the thesis guidelines in October. A second draft will be available late December 2010. Dr. Hatton explained that the major change in the document is the inclusion of the rules surrounding the e-thesis submission. Dr. Sekuler added that the Graduate Associate Registrar and the Thesis Coordinator are in the process of reviewing the entire thesis preparation/submission process, and the Council members should contact them if they have any suggestions to improve the system.

Dr. Hayward reported that the subcommittee on supervision and mentorship consulted with chairs of departments concerning the issue of evaluating faculty members as supervisors. Dr. Hayward also presented the result of the study on mentorship to the Faculty of Health Sciences Executive. She reported that the Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Policy and Curriculum Council had its meeting on December 17, 2010 with the new members from the interdisciplinary programs in attendance. For the Health Sciences Research Plenary Day in May 2011, Dr. Hayward plans to make a slight revision to the format by including simultaneous sessions.

V. New Scholarship

Ms. Gordon presented the Pioneer Petroleums Ontario Graduate Scholarship for Council approval.

Dr. Sheardown moved, and Dr. Kehler seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed Pioneer Petroleums Ontario Graduate Scholarship, as described in the document.”

In response to a query, Ms. Gordon explained that the scholarship is open to a student in any faculty whose research has a commercial application.

The motion was carried.

VI. Report from the Faculty of Business Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee

Dr. Medcof withdrew the Ph.D. Accounting field proposal from the agenda due to the unavailability of documents to support the recommendation. Dr. Medcof then turned to the proposal to change the admission requirements by removing a requirement of a B average in undergraduate required commerce/business and economics courses for students applying to the MBA Accelerated program. The recommendation would allow the program to be competitive with the MBA Accelerated programs in other universities.

Dr. Kehler moved, and Dr. Welch seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposal to remove the admission requirement of a B average in undergraduate required commerce/business and economics courses for the MBA Accelerated program, as described in the document.”

The motion was carried.

Dr. Sekuler reminded the Council that the report from the President’s Advisory Committee on the DeGroote School of Business (PACDSB) is now available to the McMaster community. She encouraged the Council members to contact President Deane should they have comments about the report. Dr. Sekuler explained that one of the changes in the structure of the DeGroote School of Business is the creation of an Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and Research position. This position will be responsible for graduate programs as well as the overall research program of the School. Dr. Sekuler said McMaster expects the other Faculties to move to the model of creating a separate Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (for each Faculty), with dual reporting to the relevant Faculty Dean and the Associate Vice-President & Dean of Graduate Studies.

VII. M. Eng. in Energy Systems

Dr. Sheardown explained that the proposed Master of Engineering in Energy Systems is a professional program based on industrial needs. The program, which is unique in Ontario, provides training in all aspects related to energy systems. The program, which will be offered to full-time or part-time students, is expected to be completed in one year. Students can apply to the program through a course-based option or a combined course and industrial project based option. The Master’s program will commence in 2013 and will be housed in the Walter G. Booth School of Engineering Practice. The Faculty of Engineering Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee (GCPC) approved the proposed program on December 14, 2010. At this meeting, Dr. Sheardown explained that the curriculum committee members recommended

developing a list of 3-4 common courses (offered every year) that are relevant to energy studies, and that students will be required to take one of these courses. This change will be included in Section 4.2 – Program Regulations of the document.

Dr. Sheardown moved, and Dr. Hatton seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed Master of Engineering in Energy Systems program.”

On page 14 of the document (Degree Requirements), a member commented that with the OCGS requirements of “no more than one-third of the program’s minimum course requirements may be at the 600-level,” the requirement for the proposed Master’s program should be six instead of four 700-level courses as indicated in the document. A member commented that the program should also consult the OCGS by-laws to investigate whether the course-based option needs a research content/requirement attached to it.

The motion was carried, subject to incorporating the recommendation from the Engineering GCPC and addressing the issues raised by Graduate Council.”

VIII. Discussion

(a) Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP)

Dr. Sekuler referred to the draft IQAP documents and said the materials were also presented to the University Planning Committee, Undergraduate Council, Faculty Deans, and Chairs/Directors meetings. Once all the comments from the different bodies have been incorporated, the document will be submitted again to Graduate Council for approval. Dr. Sekuler briefly discussed some of the highlights of the new process: reviews of all academic programs are on an eight-year cycle; to provide flexibility, departments can choose to review undergraduate and graduate programs jointly or separately; for new graduate programs, the review team will consist of at least two external reviewers. There was a comment that the document does not specify the regulations to follow should a program fail the review. Dr. Sekuler acknowledged that this issue has come up in discussions with the different University bodies. She explained that if changes to a program are significant and the program requires major modification, an early program review will be initiated, and such a review will occur through an expedited approval process.

(b) Certificate for Leadership and Community Engagement

To recognize the leadership achievements of McMaster’s graduate students, Dr. Sekuler said a proposal to create a non-credit Graduate Certificate in Leadership and Community Engagement is being recommended. Dr. Sekuler said she is not asking Graduate Council to approve the document at this time, but rather soliciting comments/suggestions as to whether the proposal is beneficial to students.

Dr. Sekuler explained that students would apply for the certificate through their supervisory committee, which will recommend approval to the graduate program's committee. Approval will be forwarded to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. To qualify for the certificate, Dr. Sekuler explained that students should provide evidence of at least 20 hours of active engagement in each of at least three different activities and submit a paper (5-10 pages) summarizing the activities. She added that applicants are also required to provide two letters of support from external referees.

Discussion ensued and the members made the following comments:

- The University should encourage outreach involvement; however, McMaster should not be involved in granting a certificate that is unrelated to the student's academic performance. McMaster is not in a position to evaluate students' community service involvement. Perhaps McMaster could assist students in the job application process, such as providing assistance in CV preparation, or offering a prize/award for students conducting community-related research.
- The certificate is a good opportunity for students to increase their chances of winning scholarships since leadership outreach is one of the selection criteria for most external scholarships.
- What is the value of the certificate, since charitable and non-profit organizations (e.g., Cancer Society) already send letters to volunteers acknowledging involvement in their institutions? Students can peruse the letters from these organizations if they are required to show proof of community service involvement.
- The certificate encourages students to do more than studying all the time by having them participate in other activities such as community outreach.
- The certificate is an additional credential for students pursuing other career opportunities (especially those who may not end up in academia).
- The certificate would be useful to some graduate programs, which encourage volunteerism.
- University recognition of leadership and community engagement should take the form of an award rather than a certificate. A certificate looks like McMaster is seeking credentials or doing some sort of assessment.
- There are supervisors who expect their students to attend seminars or workshops but do not necessarily encourage volunteer work. Students become more willing to participate in community outreach if supervisors will allow them.
- When students request for reference letters, some faculty members already include in the letters the volunteer work done by the student.

- How different is this to the Mary Keyes Award, which is given to undergraduate students?
- The document does not specify what activities qualify for the certificate.

Dr. Sekuler thanked everyone for the comments.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.