



School of Graduate Studies

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To : Members of Graduate Council
From : Christina Bryce
Assistant Graduate Secretary

The next meeting of Graduate Council will be held on **Tuesday October 18th at 9:30 am in Council Chambers (GH-111)**

Listed below are the agenda items for discussion.

Please email cbryce@mcmaster.ca if you are unable to attend the meeting.

A G E N D A

- I. Minutes of the meeting September 20th, 2016**
- II. Business arising**
- III. Report from the Associate Vice-President and Dean of Graduate Studies**
- IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans**
- V. Report from the Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary**
- VI. Report from the Assistant Dean, Graduate Student Life and Research Training**
- VII. CAGS Doctoral Dissertation Document**
- VIII. QAC Membership**
- IX. Fall 2016 Graduands (to be distributed)**



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Graduate Council
September 20th, 9:30 am
GH 111

Present: Dr. D. Welch, Ms. S. Baschiera, Ms. C. Bryce, Dr. N. Agarwal, Dr. C. Hayward, Dr. P. Swett, Dr. T. Porter, Dr. M. Thompson, Dr. B. Gupta, Mr. P. Self, Ms. V. Lewis, Dr. E. Grodek, Dr. B. Doble, Ms. N. Shen, Dr. A. Sills, Dr. D. Pelinovsky, Dr. S. McCracken, Ms. M. Badv, Dr. G. McClelland, Dr. A. Guarne, Mr. M. Widlicki, Dr. A. Dean, Dr. S. O'Brien, Dr. A. Fudge Schormans

Regrets: Dr. A. Deza

By invitation: Dr. S. Baptiste

I. Minutes of the meeting of May 17th, 2016

The minutes of the meeting of May 17th 2016 were approved on a motion by Dr. Hayward, seconded by Dr. Porter.

II. Business arising

There was no business arising.

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

Dr. Welch said it had been a very busy and interesting summer. He reported that the new graduate pay model that was mentioned at the May meeting of Graduate Council had been established over the summer and was put in place before first set of pays this academic year. He noted that there had been issues with previous graduate pays after the transition to Mosaic. A feature of the previous model was that the university would take tuition first and the student would get remained. Money was disbursed in different quantities at different times. The confusion in this respect needed to be eliminated. With the necessary permission over the summer they put in place a new pay model whose features were predictability, simplicity and money going out to the student before it came to the university. One of the main differences is that there are fewer payments now. All of the scholarship payment comes out in lumps sums at the beginning of each term and research scholarship is the same. TA pay is as it was, every two weeks during the time the student is employed. Additionally, there is now a letter generated from the financial support information provided by graduate programs. These letters

tell the student what payments they will receive and when so students can verify whether they got the right pay or not. This was also provided to graduate administrators. The pay from the Campus solutions module was intended to go on September 16th but went out one week early. 44 students did not get the pay they were due. They were identified and that money was issued prior to the original September 16th date. The first research scholarship and TA pay happened on the 16th. There were 110 students who were receiving research scholarship support for more than one grant. For reasons that haven't been entirely identified only the first grant had been applied to accounts. HR identified this and has already issued the remaining amount of money. Everybody should have the funding they are due now or in the very near future. All scholarship pays should be given to students and TA pay set up for the rest of the term.

The other difference from previous years is that tuition is due term by term. For this term the due date was September 1st but no interest will be accrued until September 30th. So students will get their first TA and scholarship pay prior to having to pay the tuition for the term. As of September 30th interest will begin to accrue on any remaining amount. When people received their offers of admission there was no implication that there is interest relief – so it's a very fair system.

A council member asked about the pay model, wondering how much they had taken into account international students. Dr. Welch responded that because research payments would be lump sum, up front, they would receive early money. The council member responded that this is only the first semester and that she had heard that international students were facing money problems, particularly those who are not doing a TA in their first term. Dr. Welch responded that he understands the concern but the idea that McMaster is an institution that loans money interest-free is not one the university recognizes. He noted that things were interest-free last year but that was due to system failure. Students do have the option to pay as much as they can and pay off the interest when it comes later on. The council member asked if they don't pay the full tuition they have to pay interest later on. Dr. Welch confirmed this. He said that programs can choose to pay more money in research scholarship to offset that in the first term and can put different amounts in different terms.

A council member asked if students in the previous system were charged interest prior to Mosaic. Dr. Welch responded that they were charged interest all the time. All the tuition for the full year was due September 1st and interest was charged after that point. The council member asked if students were charged interest when they were on payroll deduction. Dr. Welch responded that he would check on that.

Dr. Welch also reported on a campus-wide committee led by the Provost on academic regulations. There have generally been more regulations over time, not fewer. Every now and then the university needs to step back and see if these are the arrangements that they actually want. Dr. Welch is part of that team and they are looking at both graduate and undergraduate regulations. The output of the committee is expected in two years.

Dr. Welch said that welcome week had gone very well. They went off campus for the first time and held a big welcome event at Sarcoa. There was a concern that people wouldn't attend but that was not the case. He thanked the student life team and GSA.

He noted that there are going to be a number of working groups of Graduate Council and hoped that members would consider participating and providing input on how to make things better.

IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans

Dr. Thompson reported that the Engineering Graduate Society held their first annual barbecue on the front lawn. The intention is to bring students away from a department-centered focus to a community-based/faculty-centred focus. Engineering is beginning to draft a document in order to create a co-op program. They are trying to model what the University of Victoria is doing as that institution offers a flexible co-op/work experience model. The option would be applicable to both Masters and Ph.D. students and is another change for students to get professional skills development. He noted that Engineering is also beginning to look at raising the language requirements for admissions, noting that they are currently fairly low compared to the rest of the university.

Dr. Gupta reported that the Faculty of Science had an alumni networking event coming up.

Dr. Porter reported on the research shop where students from multiple faculties do research with community partners. This year it included 8 partners and 36 students from all 6 faculties. They hope to make it a permanent feature. He also reported on the review of the RMM 801 process for student travel. EOHSS convened a committee over the course of the summer with a lot of input from different areas into what needs to be done to make the procedure more useable. He noted that with differentiating risks from different areas there will be differentiation in the procedures accordingly. It is now being reviewed at more senior levels now.

Dr. Agarwal reported that in the school of business the welcome orientation happens at the program level and that they had been very successful this year. He noted that the summer term revolves around developing plans for changes that were approved in the preceding academic year. In this case the MBA program implemented a major overhaul of MBA year-one curriculum that was approved last year. He said that the experience so far with onboarding and foundation modules have been received very positively. He also reported on the launch

of the new program EMBA in Digital Transformation which was approved last year. It attracted a first cohort of 20 students and all are very highly qualified.

Dr. Hayward reported that the Master of Biomedical Discovery and Commercialization and the M.Sc. in Child Life and Pediatric Psychosocial Care had launched this September. They have also received full approval of the new M.Sc. in Speech Language Pathology program which is on track to launch September 2017. She noted that the Faculty is in the second year of the grad student ambassador program. They welcomed 15 new ambassadors this year and there are 25 ambassadors total. Students who participated last year felt the whole program was very beneficial. The ambassadors will be participating in the program open house scheduled for the fall. Michael G. DeGroot scholarships were offered to 15 recipients. An extremely impressive group of individuals received competitive stable funding for their first two years and there is an option for a further two years. The Faculty will be holding the annual Research Plenary May 16th to 18th and Dr. Hayward welcomed people to participate. It is open to all FHS students and students from those programs affiliated with FHS as well as affiliated postdocs and individuals outside of faculty doing health-related research. The Faculty will be holding a CIHR application session to inform students what people are looking for in an application. On September 27th they will be holding an event where an academic and career coach will deliver a talk titled From Ph.D. to Life to discuss career options.

Dr. Swett reported that in May the Faculty of Humanities and SGS sent two grad students to Carleton for a conference on the future of Ph.D. in Humanities. There was a lot of discussion at the conference on solo-suffering during the Ph.D. as well as the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. She said that McMaster seems to be on point with a lot of topics that were under discussion and that a number of best practices discussed are already happening here. She noted that there were also some interesting projects specific to the Humanities, including MITACS-funded humanities projects. She also reported that the Faculty of Humanities is on track for introduction of a new Ph.D. in Communication Studies and Multimedia.

V. Report from the Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary

Ms. Baschiera noted that her team was going through end of term and start of term processing. She was pleased to share that academic advisement was going live, starting with diploma programs. Next would be Masters and then Ph.D. She noted that this was a benefit of Mosaic and that at the graduate level there has never been a way to audit progress against degree requirements. A student who runs the academic advisement report will be able to see the requirements of the program they're in and their progress to date. She also reported that they have started the monthly town halls for anyone who is interested in attending from the program offices. These are intended to inform programs of what's on the horizon. They are also holding bi-weekly practical labs for administrators. She reported that the fall convocation is moving to a two-day format and that these are the ceremonies with the most graduate students.

VI. Report from the Assistant Dean, Graduate Student Life and Research Training

Mr. Self reported that the supervisory relationship document previously reviewed by graduate council was now available on the SGS website. He also reported that they had hired two graduate writing consultants for a pilot. The consultants will provide 6 hours a piece of support to graduate students to help with their writing. He noted that this is not an editing service but is intended to give students the skills to help move along their writing. His team is working on more initiatives to support that writing piece and acknowledged that McMaster has a gap in this respect.

He reported that Graduate Welcome week had just happened and that 300 students were in attendance at their kick-off event. As part of this welcome week they also held a graduate student fair including internal and external services available to graduate students. The annual barbecue co-sponsored with the GSA was held again on the patio at the Phoenix. They also held graduate student awards which are the result of a number of awards promoted earlier in the summer. In partnership with a SPICES project an LGBTQ event was held at the Faculty Club. Another welcome week event was the international graduate student fair.

Coming up he reported that his team will be running another thesis writing boot camp. It's happening the 12th to 14th of October and 40 students have signed up. They also have an immigration session with a lawyer from Toronto which is a student run initiative with participation from the GSA. It will be the fifth or sixth time they've held it and the session provides thoughtful information about the best routes for people in different situations trying to gain PR status.

He noted that Valedictorian nominations are due by September 29th and urged anyone who has been outstanding to apply. They need three this year because of the new convocation configuration.

VII. Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities policy

Dr. Sue Baptiste presented the proposed new policy. She noted that the process for developing the accommodations policy has been going on for the last 18 months and that it is a very complex policy. It has been created against a backdrop of a very active Human Rights Commission. A number of dictates have been passed down by the Commission and with that in mind they looked at the old policy to see how it could be streamlined and to add what the Commission has asked to be added.

She said that there is now no requirement for students to disclose their diagnosis. This major shift for the Commission was instigated by a decision made around a York University student. Students may request interim accommodation with medical documents pending. The policy also makes it clear that temporary and permanent disabilities will be accommodated. They have to be constantly in touch with student with an accommodation and retroactive accommodation is possible. She noted that this has been a particular sticking

point, that there is a wide range of opinions on the table and that that section had been rewritten from what was in the document the council received.

In light of these changes Dr. Welch suggested that the council have the discussion and that Dr. Baptiste forward the revised policy to be approved at a later stage. Dr. Baptiste responded that the changes made are minor.

She also noted that the Commission has stated that this has to be approved by September. She acknowledged the issues around that but wanted to highlight the context of heavy-handedness that they're currently facing.

She explained that in the new policy students don't have to present a letter to the instructor anymore. This information will go to SAS and the program office. A council member asked how instructors will be informed.

Dr. Baptiste responded that the information would be communicated to instructors but that it would be managed in a different way than the current case. She noted that communication is critical.

She highlighted another notable change from the current policy – the new policy is overarching for the entire campus. In the past there had been four different sections and those are not there anymore. This did cause

some issues around trying to balance the need to be generic enough but also to ensure people understood how the policy was intended to work. The creation of the Campus Accommodation Team and the Academic Accommodation Oversight Committee are new.

The Campus Accommodation Team will be composed of someone from each of the educational units who are accountable for front-line accommodation processes.

The Academic Accommodation Oversight Committee is a committee from the Provost's office and will bring in resources from all services on campus who have direct applicability to accessibility requirements.

She noted that there is now a concept of good faith in the policy. If a student comes forward and appears to have pink-eye, there is no requirement to wait to send the student home until they have a medical certificate from somebody. Colds and flus are not included in this context.

She said that the new policy also includes guidelines for essential requirements which is another piece that is relatively new. They have created guidelines for considering essential requirements and experiential learning issues to be considered.

Dr. Baptiste noted that they're now in a position of completing the visits to the internal bodies for formal approval. They have met with the Assistant Deans, ADG group, and have appointments with UGC etc. She said they will finalize the document and send to senate for approval after these are done and noted that there had been a broad sweep of consultation.

Dr. Welch asked if Graduate Council was the first body of approval that they were seeking. Dr. Baptiste responded that it was the first formal approval. Dr. Welch said that he would have to insist that Graduate Council see the final policy that they're approving. He noted it was possible to handle it via e-ballot depending on what happened with the discussion at the meeting.

Dr. Hayward thanked Dr. Baptiste for her efforts to lead this policy change and noted a few issues to be corrected. There were some paragraphs duplicated. In Section 9 the second line referencing the Associate Deans should be removed because Assistant Deans are the program heads. Item 34 in the policy referenced a review of student accommodation plans that are not agreeable to students or acceptable to instructor; Dr. Hayward noted that it would primarily be the academic head of the program dealing with this and that changing this section to refer to them rather than the instructor would be appropriate.

She said that currently the Associate Dean is very involved in student accommodation plans, particularly when they get down to issues that may involve the academic integrity of this program. She thought that the Associate Dean was probably still the best person to navigate this but was open to the Campus Accommodation Team dealing with the cases initially provided the Associate Dean was still involved. Dr. Baptiste responded that it is currently very vague in the policy but it can be managed out in different ways. They made it as crisp as possible but there are different ways to operationalize what happens.

Dr. Hayward noted that in point 46 the word instructor appears there and suggested that perhaps it should be 'university programs.' A council member responded that this is actually a big change and asked for clarification on where the responsibility needs to be. Dr. Hayward suggested it could say university programs and faculty member perhaps. Dr. Welch agreed that the instructor is not the right person for the situation described in the header on point 46 but that in the sub-item 'A' the faculty member would be responsible.

Dr. Hayward said there was a lack of clarity on point 'F' and wondered how the Associate Dean would contact SAS to be involved. She also suggested a friendly amendment to section 91, noting that it didn't seem appropriate for students to contact SAS, associate dean's office and SGS. She suggested that their program be the first point of contact. Dr. Welch agreed that made sense.

Dr. Hayward noted at point 96 another instance where there is instructor of the course notifying the chair of the department. She thought that should be the program office. A council member responded that that depends on the circumstances. As an undergraduate instructor you wouldn't go straight to the associate dean's office. It would be the instructor making the decision. Dr. Hayward wondered if it could say 'program or instructor of the course as appropriate'. The council member noted that this point is concerned with who is upset with the accommodation and that that could be a variety of people in the program.

Dr. Hayward noted that in appendix A in the second paragraph there was a reference to Associate Dean that should be taken out. A council member responded that this might be the appropriate dean at the undergraduate level. Dr. Hayward said she thought the title would cause confusion. The council member suggested that it be more specific, noting Associate Dean Academic as appropriate. She also said that there were issues around whether it was appropriate to speak with the Associate Dean or department chair.

Dr. Baptiste responded that this is where the local context gets into play. The intent is that people will take the policy and make it work in individual contexts. They are working to make the policy as clean as they can and when people need help implementing it they will have resources.

Dr. Hayward noted that the first four paragraphs in appendix C included some duplication. With respect to the section on overall communication structure (second paragraph) she asked who the representative ensuring that the overall academic integrity is maintained was and suggested that this needed to be clarified.

Dr. Hayward also noted that on page 50 of the meeting package, the overview of the policy point e) that there is a lack of clarity about who is communicating what information. Dr. Baptiste responded that this is where, again, the local context becomes important. She also said that that was just an overview, not the policy itself.

Dr. Thompson had some concerns about using the policy as a legal document. He noted that there was a lot of the wording that seems too definite. He highlighted point 15 which states that McMaster recognizes that barriers exist and that changes to the policy are required. He said that reasonable accommodation is what McMaster is required to provide. Dr. Baptiste responded that the Commission does not see where there is any place that an accommodation could not be met. Reasonable accommodation is no longer a clear cut statement that can be used. Dr. Thompson responded that the AODA includes this statement. Dr. Baptiste agreed but has been charged with implementing what has been passed down by the Commission.

Dr. Thompson asked about the flow chart included. He noted that there was inclusion of university officials but no mention of what qualifications they might have. Dr. Baptiste responded that they no longer have to be medical professionals. There are other folks who might have qualifications but not the traditional kind. Dr. Thompson said he assumed they would have to have some credential. Dr. Baptiste responded that they would be allied health professionals. Dr. Thompson asked that clarification be added to the document.

Dr. Thompson asked a question about scope, noting that it seems to be focused on accommodating around courses. Dr. Baptiste responded that they are accommodating programs of study. He asked why volunteers, visitors and observers are listed in the document. Dr. Baptiste responded that the policy had been through three legal reviews and that because those folks can be part of a learning experience they should be accommodated under the policy. Dr. Thompson said this seemed too vague and that McMaster should only be looking after those to who the institution has a financial responsibility. Dr. Baptiste agreed to take it back to the lawyer.

Dr. Agarwal noted a lack of clarity in appendix D around retroactive accommodation and said that if the accommodation has been retroactively applied it needs to be clear what happens.

Dr. Thompson asked if university officers were defined as legal officers. Dr. Welch noted that there are already a group of people referred to as university officers. Dr. Thompson said that point 61 refers to healthcare professionals and university officers. Dr. Welch thought that it sounded like there was an 'R' in there that shouldn't be there and that it should read university offices.

A council member asked about student consultation on the development of the new policy. Dr. Baptiste responded that the MSU, GSA and MAPS were all invited to attend. Some never did but they received all of the minutes.

Dr. Welch said that since there are enough changes needed he assumed this would have to come back to the next meeting for approval and asked Dr. Hayward to withdraw her motion. She agreed.

VIII. Final Assessment Reports: Business Ph.D. and Computational Science and Engineering

Dr. Welch presented these for-information items and asked if there were any questions or comments.

IX. Scholarships Committee of Graduate Council

Dr. Welch noted that the scholarships committee structure was changed not this summer but the previous summer. It involves more people but the burden put on every person who contributed was much lower.

A council member said that there were a couple of minor corrections to be made and said they would send them along.

Dr. Swett moved and Dr. Thompson seconded, 'that Graduate Council approve the scholarship committee members as described in the document.'

The motion was carried.

Additional Item: New Scholarships and Scholarships Changes

Dr. Agarwal noted there was some text missing with the RJ Spence award on the scholarship changes document. A council member asked how interest was assessed with respect to some of the scholarship changes in the document. Dr. Agarwal responded that this information was typically advertised within their program and students noted their interest directly. He noted that in the past there had been a management information systems specialization which had since been removed which is part of the reason that the wording has been changed to note 'interested in' rather than 'specializing in'.

Dr. Agarwal moved and Dr. Sills seconded 'that Graduate council approve the new awards and changes to existing awards as provided in the documents.'

The motion was carried.

Dr. Welch said that the final thing he wanted to discuss was participation on three working groups of Graduate Council. SGS has received a communication from part-time graduate students who drew

attention to the fact that policies and potential supports related to part-time students have not changed in many years. Therefore, he would like to strike a working group to examine what other universities do, what McMaster does and doesn't do and what recommendations should be put forward to support part-time students. He noted that Dr. Porter and Peter Self will be on this group.

Dr. Welch said that last year Graduate Council had discussed the comprehensive exam. He would like to come to conclusion about how they are treated going forward. The way McMaster runs it is not the way it runs at all institutions. He noted that Dr. Thompson is part of CAGS which is considering the comprehensive exam this fall. Dr. Thompson will chair the working group. Drs. Swett and Grodek volunteered to participate. Dr. Hayward said that it would be good to have representation from each faculty. Dr. Welch agreed and suggested that the Associate Deans might be able to assist in getting participants.

The final working group is one dealing with program handbooks. He noted that it was a delicate balancing act between what the regulations are in the graduate calendar and how things actually work in the program and suggested that this would be a great one for grad students to be on. Mr. Nick Quinn volunteered to participate.

Dr. Welch said an email would be circulated asking for volunteers.

DRAFT

Consultation Document

The Doctoral Dissertation – Purpose, Content, Structure, Assessment

This document was written by a working group of the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies* and is intended to promote and facilitate discussion on the doctoral dissertation of the 21st century among those responsible for or undertaking doctoral education. The outcome of these consultations will help inform the development of a series of recommendations by the working group.

We broadly invite institutions or disciplinary groups to hold consultation discussions on this subject. Please see a Toolkit for Consultation in Appendix C at the end of this document to help with these.

August 30, 2016

*Working group composition:

Susan Porter (co-chair), Dean and Vice Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies; Clinical Professor, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of British Columbia

Lisa Young (co-chair), Dean and Vice-Provost, Graduate Studies; Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Calgary

Lonnie Aarssen, Professor, Biology Department, Queen's University

Robert Gibbs, Director of Jackman Humanities Institute; Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto

Raymond Klein, Professor, Department of Psychology, Dalhousie University

Anthony Paré, Professor and Head, Department of Language and Literacy Education, UBC

Anna Ryoo, PhD student, Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy, UBC

Paula Wood-Adams, Dean of Graduate Studies; Professor, Department of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering, Concordia University

Overview

Shifts in the academy and society over the last few decades have led to a world-wide conversation on rethinking educational approaches to the PhD, with a number of recent meetings, conversations, and papers focused on the future of the dissertation in particular (Council of Graduate Schools, 2016; Institute for the Public Life of Arts and Humanities, McGill University, 2013; Modern Language Association of America, 2014; Patton, 2013; Porter & Phelps, 2014; Smith, 2015). While the themes of increased flexibility with regard to format and content are gaining some traction and/or are being encouraged and implemented institutionally (e.g. UBC [Public Scholars Initiative](#), [HASTAC Futures Initiative](#) and [City University of New York](#)) there has not been a broad attempt to examine the pedagogical or evaluative principles relevant to a potentially changing scope, or to create parameters or

best practices that could guide both students and faculty. It is our intent to help fill that gap through this consultative process.

Background

Any conversation about the form of the doctoral dissertation must be situated in the context of a discussion of the purpose, or purposes, of the PhD. Doctoral education has traditionally been viewed as an apprenticeship with a faculty member towards membership in the ‘guild’ of the professoriate. Given, however, that a minority of current PhD graduates enter the increasingly sparse tenure-track academic job market, that original purpose is insufficient (and, arguably, morally problematic) unless enrolment is drastically reduced.

Graduates make substantial and essential contributions to society in innumerable ways, both within and outside the academy, and the purpose – from a societal perspective – has broadened. Accordingly, there has been an ongoing process of reconsidering the doctoral curriculum and experience to ensure it is relevant to the variety of work graduates will undertake. Several large projects on the subject of doctoral students’ preparation for diverse careers (e.g., Higher Education Commission, 2012; Kemp, 1999; Woodrow Wilson Foundation, 2005) have identified some common employer- and student-identified gaps, including limited skills, understanding, and attitudes relevant to non-academic contexts, and a narrowness of doctoral research. Much change has already taken place; most major universities now offer optional, non-credit professional development offerings relevant to non-academic skills, internships

A wealth of research...[suggests] that nearly half of the students who enter humanities doctoral programs nationally leave without a PhD as a result of becoming disenchanted by the narrowness of their intellectual and social experiences..Even students who finish complain about the lack of integrative professional experiences of collaboration, teamwork, and mentoring (Nerad et al. 2004; Aanerud et al. 2006; Ehrenberg et al. 2009). For these students, the disciplinary apprenticeship model that dominates the humanities is a dead end, regardless of whether too many or too few jobs are available in the guilds after the masters have done their work. The problem with the model is that it casually yet ruthlessly prunes any intellectual, educational, and political capacities or aspirations that do not fit the specific academic-professional trajectories normalized in graduate degree programs.

- Bartha & Burgett (2015), p. 39

[A collection of essays commissioned by the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate] converged on a number of trends: a move toward greater interdisciplinarity and interaction with neighboring disciplines; growing commitment to team work...; and greater purposefulness in reaching out to partners and audiences outside of academe in ways that connect academic work with the larger social context. Many of the authors talk as well about...the need for more flexible, integrated conceptions of scholarly work...

- Walker et al (2008), p. 37

The sin is that people get the impression that going narrow and deep is the essence of the doctorate, but the essence is really trying to be critical and original...We need people who are intellectually adventurous.

- Business leader as quoted in ‘The Responsive PhD’ (Woodrow Wilson Foundation, 2005)

in non-academic environments are more common, and industrial and practice-based PhDs are increasingly prevalent in some parts of the world. A broadening conception of the core of the PhD program – the research and the dissertation – is beginning to be seen, as is a reconsideration of the sole apprenticeship model.

Attributes important for students' future scholarship are often developed in isolation from the major intellectual work of the student's program, but increasingly, the value of integrating such development within the student's field and/or research is seen as valuable. Integration can occur through coursework, the work leading to a comprehensive exam, experiential opportunities, and the dissertation itself. Only some of these approaches allow assessment of the rigour and effectiveness of the student's work in the context of their scholarly development, however, and only some involve meaningful scholarship.

The dissertation associated with the traditional academic vocational view is inherently conservative; the apprentice's mode of research should resemble that of the supervisor's, and the dissertation should be similar in form and scope to that completed by the supervisor. In most (but not all) cases, it follows that the goal of the dissertation research is to discover or synthesize knowledge in a way that other academics may critique and build upon. It also follows that in some disciplines, the dissertation should take the form of a first draft of a scholarly monograph; in others, the dissertation may take the form of a series of related published or publishable academic journal articles. The primary audience for the dissertation, in this view, is the scholarly community, and the objective and the standard by which the dissertation is judged is that of the scholarly literature.

The work most PhD graduates undertake, whether in or out of the academy, is scholarly, in that word's broadest definition (Walker et al, 2008). In contrast to expected student trajectories in the traditional view, however, graduates' scholarship may differ substantially from that of their supervisor - it may be solely focused on teaching, or involve work that is interdisciplinary, collaborative, application-oriented and/or problem-driven. These forms of scholarship can be said to be encompassed within the same paradigms of scholarship advocated by Ernest Boyer and many others to be given equal value in the academy (see sidebar), as a means of ensuring the university's vitality, worth, and relevance. They are therefore, arguably, legitimate approaches to dissertation research; that is, even in disciplines where these forms of scholarship may be somewhat foreign (or perhaps unrewarded), the dissertation *could* reflect the scholarship of application, engagement, and of teaching and learning, in addition to the traditional modes of discovery and integration². As the approaches, audiences, and

PARADIGMS OF SCHOLARSHIP¹

Discovery: original research that 'contributes to the stock of human knowledge'; seeks understanding for its own sake.

Integration: 'disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research'; 'gives meaning to isolated facts', makes 'connections across the disciplines ...illuminating data in a revealing way'

Application: 'asks, How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems' in a dynamic process: 'new intellectual understandings can arise out of the very act of application...theory and practice vitally interact, and one renews the other'

Teaching and Learning (or Sharing Knowledge): scholarly inquiry which advances the practice of transmitting, transforming and extending knowledge

¹ Categories and quotes from Boyer, 1990. Boyer's original category of 'teaching' was extended in later years to 'teaching and learning', and also to 'sharing knowledge'. The scholarship of engagement is often an additional category, although it can be viewed as any of the forms carried out in a reciprocal partnership between the university and society.

² This view is reflected in the Council of Graduate Schools' policy statement on the purpose of a PhD: 'The Doctor of Philosophy program is designed to prepare a student to become a scholar: that is, to discover, integrate, and apply knowledge, as well as to communicate and disseminate it...' (Council of Graduate Schools, 2005, p. 1)

collaborators may differ in the more applied or pedagogical forms of scholarship, so would the dissertation structure and content. In particular, the scholarly products produced through these diverse forms of scholarship may also extend beyond the typical ones associated with discovery research.

Apart from the doctoral career perspective, other arguments have also been made for a more capacious view of dissertation research. Students themselves have indicated a desire to connect their research to society's challenges (Cherwitz et al, 2003; Jaeger et al, 2014; Phelps, 2013; Walker et al, 2008); engaged or applied research can validate and improve the quality of new knowledge; and collaborative, engaged, and interdisciplinary work is necessary to address the world's most pressing problems. There may also be ethical imperatives in research involving partners (whether communities, institutions, or individual human participants) to disseminate and/or validate findings in modes that differ from the usual academic ones; students need to learn these skills and should arguably be assessed on their merit.

Any view of the purpose of the PhD encompasses the notion that doctoral study must prepare students to carry out rigorous research that makes a significant and original contribution to knowledge, to have a breadth and depth of understanding of their field(s), to have strong critical and analytical thinking abilities, to be able to communicate their research appropriately, and to be able to ask important research questions. The challenge for supervisors, examination committees, and all those involved in graduate education is to find ways to allow (or even encourage) the inclusion of diverse forms of scholarship and scholarly products in the dissertation, while ensuring the rigour of the research.

The Current State

CHARACTERISTICS OF KNOWLEDGE, ORIGINALITY³

New knowledge should:

- contribute to the shared store of knowledge in a general sense
 - generating 'culturally novel apprehensions that are not just novel to the creator or individual observers of an artifact'
 - leading to understandings that are transferable
- be shared
- be testable and/or amenable to criticism

Originality (some suggested qualities):

- contributes to new understanding in topic, in method, in experimental design, in theoretic synthesis, or engagement with conceptual issues
- contains innovation, speculation, imaginative reconstruction, cognitive excitement

Content: There are no current universally-accepted definitions of the content or scope of a PhD dissertation, although the following types of descriptors are commonly used: 'product of substantial research and scholarship' (University of Michigan); 'should make an original contribution to knowledge' (Yale University). Many, but not all, universities also indicate that the dissertation should have a unified focus: 'it is expected that a dissertation will have a single topic, however broadly defined, and that all parts of the dissertation will be interrelated' (Yale University); 'All components must be integrated into a cohesive unit...providing a cohesive, unitary focus, documenting a single program of research.' (McGill University).

For traditional forms of scholarship (discovery in particular), faculty have fairly common views of what would be considered 'original', or what constitutes new, meaningful 'knowledge'. For other forms of scholarship, some definitions or characteristics of these and related concepts have been developed (see sidebar).

Form: The academic monograph form was the norm throughout much of the history of the modern PhD; it is now common in many disciplines, however, to allow published or draft academic manuscripts to comprise much of the dissertation, usually accompanied by a unified scholarly introduction and conclusion. In some fields, it is increasingly common to include other scholarly products, including digital material (e.g., videos, websites) or creative products (e.g., novels, artwork). Although not yet common, there have also been examples of dissertations composed wholly in non-traditional forms, e.g., as a comic-book (Mulhere, 2015) or novel (Williamson, 2016), or in the Indigenous oral tradition (Hutchinson, 2015).

See Appendix A for other examples of dissertations that are non-traditional either in content and/or form.

Assessment: The types of scholarship where non-traditional products are common, and central to the dissertation work, include practice-based or practice-led research, action research, and creative practice research. These fields have developed some guidelines around the scholarly analysis, or exegesis, that normally accompanies the products. Such analysis has been recommended to include a description of the intended audience, the situating of the product and its processes within a discipline or field, an explanation of its significance and originality, and a narrative of the intellectual processes that led to its creation (Candy, 2006; Winter et al, 2000; Elison and Eatman, 2008).

Since Boyer's delineation of alternative forms of scholarship, and in those disciplines where these alternative forms are common, much work has gone into identifying common standards of rigour to which all forms of scholarship should be held accountable. Very broad conversations across the US in the 1990's (Glassick, 1997) resulted in the set of criteria listed in the sidebar. They continue to be used (with some modification) in the assessment of scholarship for tenure and promotion processes in many institutions.

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE FOR ALL FORMS OF SCHOLARSHIP

Clear goals

- The scholar states the purposes of the work clearly, defines objectives that are realistic and achievable, and identifies important questions.

Adequate Preparation

- The scholar demonstrates an understanding of the relevant existing scholarship, and brings the necessary skills and resources to the work.

Appropriate Methods

- The scholar uses methods appropriate to the goals, applies them effectively, and modifies procedures in response to changing circumstances.

Significant Results

- The scholar achieves the goals. The work adds consequentially to the field and opens up additional areas for further exploration.

Effective Presentation

- The scholar uses a suitable style and effective organization to present the work, and uses appropriate forums for communicating work to its intended audiences. The message is presented with clarity and integrity.

Reflective Critique

- The scholar critically evaluates his/her own work, brings an appropriate breadth of evidence to the critique, and uses evaluation to improve the quality of future work.

Questions for Discussion

Section I: Dissertation Content

- A. Must/should the dissertation represent a unified program of research, or is it acceptable to include loosely related but separate studies? How does the intellectual development stemming from an exploration of a single subject compare with that of several loosely related or unrelated subjects?
- B. What are the acceptable forms of scholarship in a dissertation? E.g. Is it acceptable in the humanities or basic sciences to investigate the application of knowledge, or the identification of new knowledge in a non-academic setting? To engage the public around a text (humanities) or policy? Is it acceptable to focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning in a non-Education discipline?
- C. How should the boundaries of acceptable scholarship be determined? Are there identifiable criteria for making the determination? If so, what are they?
- D. Who should determine these boundaries? Is this the domain of a central university authority (Senate, Faculty of Graduate Studies), the disciplinary group offering the graduate program? The supervisory committee?

Section II: Dissertation Form

- A. What, other than traditional scholarly text, can be included in a dissertation? Should/could creative works (art, film), lay communication materials, policy papers, websites, syllabi, museum curation material, consulting reports, business plans or other elements be included and assessed as integral parts of the dissertation?
- B. When non-traditional elements are included, do they need to be placed within a scholarly context? Is a critical analysis and/or interpretation required?
- C. How should the boundaries of what is acceptable for inclusion be determined? Are there identifiable criteria for making the determination? If so, what are they?
- D. Who should determine these boundaries? Is this the domain of a central university authority (Senate, Faculty of Graduate Studies), the disciplinary group offering the graduate program? The supervisory committee?

Section III: Dissertation Evaluation

- A. What policies or practices should be in place to ensure quality and rigor? Should all work be assessed by those with appropriate expertise, if that means including practitioners without a PhD, or scholars from other disciplines on the supervisory and/or examination committee?
- B. What standards should be used to assess the quality and rigor of non-traditional forms of scholarship and associated elements of the dissertation? Do the Glassick criteria (p. 5) address the main aspects?
- C. Who should determine the standards and policies? Is this the domain of a central university authority (Senate, Faculty of Graduate Studies), the disciplinary group offering the graduate program? The supervisory committee?

Section IV: Concerns, Barriers, Opportunities, and Recommendations

- A. What are your primary concerns about increased flexibility in doctoral dissertations? (see Appendix B for frequently cited concerns)
- B. If you are generally supportive of the trend towards increased flexibility, what do you feel are the major barriers to enabling that to happen? What means might you suggest to reduce those barriers; what are potential opportunities to help facilitate the trend? What recommendations in particular would you make?

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Appendices

A - Examples

Non-traditional format/style of a dissertation; novel methodology (Educational Studies):

Hussey, Charlotte (1999). [*Of swans, the wind and H.D. : An epistolary portrait of the poetic process.*](#) McGill University.

Hilda Doolittle (1886-1961), the American poet known as H.D., was a key figure in and founding member of the Imagist Movement, along with poets Ezra Pound and Richard Aldington. She was a prolific poet, and wrote extensively *about* poetry, as well. Charlotte Hussey, a Montreal-based poet, wrote this dissertation about the process of composing poetry by using herself as the unit of analysis and by analyzing and interpreting that process in H.D.'s Imagist framework.

What makes the dissertation unusual is its structure as a set of letters between Hussey and H.D., whose letters were written by Hussey based on Doolittle's theories about poetry and the poetic imagination. In her own letters, Hussey sent draft poems to H.D., explaining their origins in memory, dream, and imagination, and H.D.'s responses drew on her own poetry, her theories of poetics, and the work of Pound and other Imagists. Occasionally, Hussey introduces "Dear Reader" letters, which offer a form of meta-analysis of the whole project.

In a very real sense, the dissertation reports on an experiment that blends the analytic with the poetic, the rhetorical with the literary. Though based deeply in scholarly texts, it is also suffused with poetry, and the resulting text traces the creative process from seed to flower.

Charlotte is currently a poet, creativity coach, and college/university lecturer in writing and literature.

Applied scholarship in a field normally dominated by discovery research (Pathology):

Jennifer Won (2015) [*Clinical performance of diagnostic, prognostic and predictive immunohistochemical biomarkers for hormone receptor-negative breast cancer.*](#) UBC. This dissertation starts with the development of a set of biomarkers that are unique to an aggressive form of cancer that is currently poorly diagnosed (and therefore suboptimally treated). Rather than doing further studies on the biology of the cancer, Jennifer chose to conduct a study more aligned with her career goals: she partnered with a starting non-profit group to assess whether Canadian hospital labs were able to use these biomarkers correctly in real life settings. She found the laboratories were not able to use the original markers consistently, so she tried a simpler, second set which was more successful. She continued to work with the labs to assist with technical problems, and generally to raise awareness about the issue.

Although the content was unusual in her disciplinary context, the format of Jennifer's dissertation was traditional, as she described the applied work in a scholarly framework with relevant background and analysis. Scholarly products that were critical to her methodology and to the success of the project, but which were not incorporated into the dissertation or assessed directly, included correspondence with and reports to the labs, other communications and press releases (to raise awareness), as well as a business plan for the non-profit. Jennifer would have appreciated their inclusion in the dissertation, to have them acknowledged and to benefit from feedback on them.

While completing her degree, Jennifer was hired as the first scientific director of the organization.

The scholarship of teaching and learning in a field dominated by discovery research (Zoology):

Laura Melissa Guzman's dissertation research in Zoology (UBC) is primarily focused on the ecology of bromeliads. As part of her research, she has become very adept at statistical computing. As a TA in a 4th year Ecological Methodology course, Melissa noted along with the instructor several deficiencies in the way statistics was taught, and together they created and implemented a revised curriculum that took into account cognitive load theory and associated designs and procedures. Melissa will conduct an analysis of student learning of the revised curriculum, and based on the results, will design and assess a fuller curriculum for that and an additional course. The work should be transferrable to many subjects and contexts, and is planned to be written and published as a scholarly paper and included as a chapter in her dissertation.

Non-traditional format of dissertation; the scholarship of engagement in a field dominated by the scholarship of discovery and integration (English):

Amanda Visconti (2015) "[How can you love a work if you don't know it?': Critical code and design toward participatory digital editions](#)". University of Maryland. This digital humanities dissertation is focused on an interactive (participatory) website on James Joyce's *Ulysses* called *Infinite Ulysses*. Amanda designed and coded the website, conducted user testing, and analyzed usage data. The fully online dissertation consists of the abstract; a link to the *Infinite Ulysses* website; a 123 page 'whitepaper' that describes and analyzes the work, and synthesizes and adds to scholarly thinking on the public humanities; a set of research blog posts, a public repository of design and code; a description of the methodology; and acknowledgements.

The dissertation won the University of Maryland's Distinguished Dissertation Prize. Amanda is currently an Assistant Professor at Purdue University.

Non-traditional/creative format of dissertation (Visual Art and Education);

Marta Madrid-Manrique. (2014). [Creating audiovisual participatory narratives: A/r/tography and inclusivity](#). University of Granada, Spain. This dissertation research investigates the use of participatory art to address educational problems, and in particular to assess whether such engagement enhances a sense of inclusivity among those with diverse experiences including disabilities, different cultures and languages, and social difficulties.

The overall structure of the dissertation was traditional, and included an abstract, a theoretical framework, a description of the research methodology and results, and an interpretation and conclusion. The format was highly unusual, however: It was published online in three volumes similar to a graphic novel trilogy, it incorporated many forms of visual data (including photos and watercolour illustrations) and was in part presented in the forms of a comic book, graphic novel, and story book. These forms were in themselves a research experiment, to assess mechanisms to convey research findings in a manner that preserved anonymity and confidentiality and which enrich academic narratives with graphic allegories.

Marta is a graphic artist, and teaches in postsecondary institutions.

B - Concerns and Responses to Diversifying Doctoral Scholarship and Dissertations

| Concern | Responses |
|--|--|
| <p>Students won't get academic jobs / academic jobs are what most students want / academic placement is a positive metric for program quality</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is not for everyone; it's about what's acceptable for those who desire it – students should be fully aware of the purpose and potential risks of non-traditional scholarship - Many students don't want academic jobs - The academy is changing in many fields, with non-traditional scholarship becoming more common - Non-traditional scholarship includes teaching – incorporation of teaching scholarship into the dissertation may make candidates more competitive in higher education - One has to start somewhere or it will never change - Non-academic careers are increasingly not viewed as second-class; quite the contrary for many outcomes |
| <p>In some fields, the issue is really just political – we need more tenure-track faculty; the PhD should still be oriented to that end</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It's unlikely a significant change will occur, at least not to the point where all PhD graduates would get tenure-track positions - PhD graduates do contribute meaningfully in the teaching or non-academic world |
| <p>Faculty need the labour on discovery research projects; non-traditional scholarship potentially devalues and may reduce the prevalence of basic research</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-traditional or applied scholarship is not for everyone - Discovery research can be extended, improved, and validated through application or knowledge exchange - Granting agencies are increasingly interested in impact - It is arguably an ethical issue if students' needs are not taken into account; the university is in the business of education |
| <p>This is diluting the PhD - ie, this does not represent rigorous 'real' research; the products are not suitable</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each realm of scholarship can (and must be) rigorous, with standard criteria for assessment - Students' intellectual development can be made significantly richer through employing different approaches, disciplinary lenses, etc |
| <p>If they get an academic job, they won't be able to transform their dissertation to a book (humanities)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic publishing is in major shift – it is not a given that a monograph will translate to book |
| <p>External examiners won't approve non-traditional dissertations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a need to change culture, and make a legitimate case |
| <p>We should be encouraging the development of professional doctorates rather than applied</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That is relevant for some sectors, but not all - The varied forms of scholarship are worthy of |

| | |
|---|--|
| PhDs | highest degree |
| Faculty don't know how to mentor alternative forms | - Should include external professionals/scholars as mentors, on committees, examiners |
| Applied research 'sells out' to the world's values | - Collaboration can influence the world's values and elicit positive change. |
| It's not necessary to re-envision the dissertation – just provide professional skills training | - Those can be good and necessary, but: didactic training is often decontextualized, doesn't necessary allow development of intellectual breadth, attitudes, insight, understanding relative to context and core intellectual development - Internships etc are often outside of intellectual area, and are not assessed or valued as part of degree - Rigorous, non-traditional scholarship can improve the quality of knowledge, and make an impact in the world |
| We shouldn't admit students who don't want academic track | - That would exclude the majority in most disciplines - Incoming students don't often know what they want as a career path - PhD graduates contribute substantially to society in many ways |
| Students won't get scholarship funding if student's research is non-traditional | - Funding agencies are very interested in impact; research still has to be rigorous |
| Promotion and tenure have not caught up – faculty don't get credit for non-traditional scholarship | - It is changing (slowly), and should be addressed in parallel - It is important work of the university |

C – Toolkit for Consultation

This Consultation Document is intended to form the basis for conversations about the future of the dissertation at Canadian universities. Any organization or group, including Faculties/Schools of Graduate Studies, graduate programs, graduate students' organizations or disciplinary associations, are invited to host conversations about the future of the dissertation, using the Consultation Document as a basis. If you are interested in leading a discussion, please let Sally Rutherford in CAGS know [], and if you are at the same university or general location as one of the task force members, please coordinate with them.

The task force has no set guidelines for the format or make-up of the consultation meetings. We believe that both disciplinary and multi-disciplinary meetings are helpful; and the presence of students is encouraged. There may also be benefit in holding student-only or faculty-only discussions. If there is an opportunity to collaborate with another institution in the same geographic area, that is encouraged. When organizing the consultation, please consider the following:

- Please let Sally Rutherford (phd-doctorat@cags.ca) know in advance if you wish to lead a discussion.
- Consider who is to be invited to the consultation - Faculty? Students? Other interested parties?

- Please distribute the Consultation Paper to participants in advance. Is there any other material that is relevant for your group that should also be distributed?
- If the group is fairly large (more than 10-15), we recommend incorporating smaller break-out sessions, with the smaller groups reporting back to the larger group.
- Identify one individual to chair the session, and leads for each small group.
- Identify individuals to serve as note-takers for each small group, and one for the larger group.
- We recommend that you set aside at least 2 hours for the discussion

Holding the Consultation

- To start the conversation, it would be helpful to give a short presentation outlining the issues
- It may also be helpful to have a general discussion about the ideas before addressing the individual questions. As much as possible, however, we would appreciate that the specific questions be addressed during the consultation.
- Before any break-out sessions, consider asking participants to make notes on their perspective
- Be sure that note takers provide summaries of the discussions to the lead
- You are welcome to record the sessions, and to submit the recordings to Sally Rutherford (phd-doctorat@cags.ca) for transcription and/or summary.

Reporting Back

- Please submit your notes and/or recording to Sally Rutherford (phd-doctorat@cags.ca) with a description of the consultation group.

The report summarizing these findings with recommendations going forward will be made broadly available in 2017.