



School of Graduate Studies

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Graduate Council  
October 17<sup>th</sup> 9:30 am  
GH 111

Present: Dr. M. Thompson, Ms. C. Bryce, Ms. S. Baschiera, Dr. K. Hassanein, Dr. S. Pope, Ms. A. Devitt, Dr. A. Sills, Dr. F. McNeill, Ms. J. Dawdy, Mr. T. Baldeh, Mr. M. Liut, Dr. S. Feng, Mr. K. Allen, Mr. R. Hassan, Ms. L. Yousefi, Dr. B. Doble, Ms. S. Ebrahimi, Dr. J. Qiu, Dr. I. Marwah, Dr. M. Parlar, Dr. L. Thabane, Dr. L. Kapiriri, Dr. W. Farmer, Dr. S. Raha, Dr. P. Mhaskar, Mr. R. Narro Perez, Dr. J. Gillett, Dr. E. Grodek

Regrets: Dr. S. O'Brien, Dr. M. Verma

By invitation: Ms. D. Soucy

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## A G E N D A

### **I. Minutes of the meeting of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

The minutes of the meeting of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017 were approved on a motion by Dr. Sills, seconded by Dr. Raha with one abstention.

### **II. Business arising**

There was no business arising.

### **III. Report from the Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies**

Dr. Thompson, acting on Dr. Welch's behalf said there was no report from the Dean.

### **IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans**

Dr. Gillett explained that a change had recently been approved with respect to the name of one of their programs. He also noted that the Research Shop which gave graduate students the opportunity to volunteer and get involved in research requirements of the community has now moved to the office of community engagement. Dr. Hassanein noted that the blended learning part time MBA was going to UPC the next day and that they have an IQAP review for the new program coming up. He also noted that the first cohort of the relatively new EMBA was graduating this year.

Dr. Gupta explained that the Faculty of Science had put in a proposal to pursue some projects around experiential learning and that the hope was that these would ultimately provide students with transferrable skills.

Dr. Thompson had no report.

**V. Report from the Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary**

There was no report.

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

There was no report.

**VII. Fall 2017 Graduands**

Dr. Gupta moved and Dr. Mhaskar seconded, 'that Graduate Council approve the list of the 2017 Fall Graduands, with amendments/corrections to be made as necessary by the Associate Graduate Registrar.'

The motion was carried.

**VIII. Scholarships Committee of Graduate Council**

Dr. Thompson noted that there were three minor changes to the document in front of council members: Melanie Heath was to be removed. Cyril Levitt and Lawrence Mbugbaw were to be added.

Dr. Mhaskar moved and Dr. Raha seconded, 'that Graduate Council approve the scholarship committee members as described in the document, with the minor changes noted.'

The motion was carried.

**IX. Graduate Council Working Groups**

Ms. Baschiera explained that, as in previous years, they were planning on setting up working groups for graduate council members to review aspects of regulations and processes with the aim to help improve and streamline processes. She noted that the four planned working groups were: review of the thesis defence process with Dr. Hassanein as Chair, review of the use of petitions with Dr. Thompson as Chair. The third group was certificates and diplomas with Dr. Thompson as Chair (temporarily). She noted that there was now an approved joint policy and that the goal is to refine how certificates will work. The final group was to be chaired by Dr. Hayward and would be focused on finalizing the work on graduate program handbooks.

Ms. Baschiera noted they are looking for folks to identify their interest and that members would usually be expected to attend a few meetings with report of some sort in the spring. She asked them to send their information and noted that the hope was to have them running by November.

Dr. Thompson noted that there had been some very interesting work done by a similar group last year around the comprehensive exam which resulted in a significant change on policy involving the comprehensive. He said there was a little bit left to do and that they are planning to have a retreat to bring everyone together to discuss best practices. He said that the working groups can have a major impact on operations and policies.

#### **X. Final Assessment Report**

Ms. Baschiera explained that this report was the output of an IQAP review. The joint Quality Assurance Committee at McMaster reviews the reviewer report, program response and faculty response and draws up the final assessment report. In this particular case the committee noted a lot of positive feedback and also the opportunity to grow. The internal recommendation was that they be reviewed again in four years.

A council member asked if it was four years because they wanted to some substantial changes. Ms. Baschiera confirmed that this was the case, saying that a number of opportunities for improvement came up in the report and that the committee wanted to see some real improvement in a shorter period of time.

Dr. Thompson asked her to clarify what the next steps are. Ms. Baschiera responded that the program would be asked to submit a progress report ahead of their 4 year review and then have another review 4 years after that to hit the normal cycle.

Ms. Baschiera noted that another IQAP cycle was beginning and that MacPherson had already invited folks to attend the kick off meeting.

A council member asked if there are lessons that could be shared across programs from a review like this with significant concerns. Dr. Thompson responded that generally when a program starts up on an IQAP they'll ask for an example of another program's self-study. In SEPT's case it was little bit more unique and it may be that some lessons learned are very specific. Ms. Baschiera confirmed that cyclical review are generally very specific to the programs themselves and it's a reflection on how the program is being executed from the students/faculty point of view. She encouraged any one with programs that are about to go through the process to take advantage of the two year cycle and the supports that are provided.

#### **XI. Faculty of Health Sciences - Facilitated Admission of Indigenous Students**

Ms. Soucy explained that the document in front of council members for approval was intended to assist with self-identification of indigenous students. The policy creates a forum for indigenous applicants to

self-declare to receive assistance with admission to programs in the Faculty of Health Sciences. She noted that it had been vetted through various levels of approval and indigenous communities.

Dr. Raha noted that both Dr. Welch and Dr. Hayward are very supportive of the initiative and the hope is that it is a policy that could be shared with other faculties going forward.

Dr. Mhaskar moved and Dr. Gupta seconded, 'that Graduate Council approve the Facilitated Indigenous Admissions Program as described in the document.'

The motion was carried.