



School of Graduate Studies

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Graduate Council
November 14th 9:30 am
GH 111

Present: Dr. M. Thompson, Ms. C. Bryce, Ms. S. Baschiera, Dr. K. Hassanein, Dr. S. Corner, Dr. S. Pope, Dr. L. Kipiriri, Dr. W. Farmer, Dr. B. Doble, Ms. M. Badv, Mr. R. Narro Perez, Ms. S. Ramsammy, Ms. L. Yousefi, Dr. A. Sills, Mr. K. White, Mr. T. Baldeh, Ms. J. Dawdy, Dr. E. Badone, Ms. A. Devitt, Dr. P. Mhaskar, Dr. E. Grodek, Dr. S. Raha

Regrets: Dr. M. Verma, Dr. A. Kitai, Dr. L. Thabane, Dr. S. O'Brien, Dr. S. Feng, Dr. I. Marwah

A G E N D A

I. Minutes of the meeting of October 17th, 2017

The minutes of the meeting of October 17th 2017 were approved with a minor correction on a motion by Dr. Hassanein, seconded by Dr. Pope.

II. Business arising

There was no business arising.

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

Dr. Welch reported that the brand new Provost, Dr. David Farrar officially became sole provost on November 1st. He said he thought Dr. Farrar was an excellent choice and intended to invite him to attend one of the upcoming Graduate Council meetings.

He also reported that there were three convocations this week and that this is the biggest season for graduate students.

Dr. Welch noted that over the last couple of years there has been a lot of talk about SMA 2, which McMaster has now signed. This will ultimately become a public document but the ministry doesn't want them released yet. He said there are already all sorts of activities under way with respect to next SMA. SMA 3 will start at the end of the SMA 2 cycle, which is only three years long. Given that it took a long time to get agreement, efforts are already underway for SMA 3. One of the items relevant to Graduate Council is that SMA 3 will be very concerned with experiential learning opportunities at university. He said that there are obviously more of

those available at graduate level but at the same time there is no listing of which programs/courses offer experiential learning as defined by province. All universities will now be asked to identify which courses do what kind of experiential learning and it will be one of the items the institution is measured on for SMA 3.

He also reported that there has been an increase in the number of international students in Ph.D. programs that are allowed to be counted as domestic students. These students are charged domestic tuition and McMaster receives grant money from the province for those students. He noted that this change did not affect all international students but that there had been an increase by a factor of three in the number McMaster has been able to count this year compared with the past few years. The province has also committed to this level of international funding at the domestic level for three years. He noted that a discussion would take place with the Deans and Provost about how McMaster will deal with this situation and said that it was promising that the province has recognized that international Ph.D. students play an important role and that they have made a change to make that a longer term commitment.

Dr. Welch also reported on the recent CAGS conference. He said that McMaster had fielded a good contingent including the available associate deans, Dr. Welch, two GSA exec members and two students who had produced a SPICES project regarding connecting students with industry. Among the items discussed was the concept of an individual development plan; they are keen on making this part of graduate work. There was also a discussion on the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and how this will impact scholarship distribution to make sure that the intent of the TRC can be realized and that scholarships are accessible. He also noted that the Tri-Council folks were all present and that there was a big move afoot for them to harmonize so that as many of their competitions are as similar as possible in terms of paperwork and requirements.

IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans

Dr. Gupta reported that the Faculty of Science had been focused on recruitment. He had had a discussion with all science programs about steps to take to improve that area. He noted that one idea was an open house intended to engage students at earlier stages rather than just those in their fourth year. He said they're also working on social media strategies and looking at specific graduate program webpages that need updating. They plan to include information about current students, awards that they've won and alumni. He said that the Faculty of Science is also working on matters related to the student-supervisor relationship and noted that they were encouraging students and supervisors to use and review the document that had been developed centrally to assist with this. He also reported that the Faculty is looking into building more alumni connections. To that end, a list of recent graduates had been sent to programs to have the jobs and industries they've gone in to. They hope to engage some alumni in a more meaningful way and learn from them as to what kind of skills are needed in the job market. The final item he reported is that the Faculty of Science is also focusing on experiential learning to ensure students are competitive after graduation.

Drs. Corner, Hassanein, and Thompson had no report. Dr. Kipiriri had no report on behalf of Dr. Gillett.

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. Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Policy And Curriculum Committee Report

Dr. Bradley Doble presented the items on behalf of Dr. Hayward. He noted that the FHS committee had approved a number of changes from Global Health. These included a change to calendar copy with respect to two fields in Global Health intended to ensure that fields of study are more reflective of the current state of the discipline. The program also made a change to their course requirement switching one of their course requirements from HRM 771 to NURS 715. He noted that as the program has grown and developed a lot over the years they have expanded the number of elective offerings and adjusted their calendar copy to reflect this. Dr. Doble said that the Global Health students participated in a pilot exchange in Norway and now the program is listing the fields available through exchange at their partner institutions (Norway and Maastricht).

He noted there were a couple of items for information: two new courses (Innovation by Design and one from Global Health), two change to course titles for Health Management and Child Life and Pediatric Psychosocial Care changed the prerequisite of one of their courses.

Dr. Welch explained that there was some overlap between the reports because the curriculum business involves interdisciplinary programs from different faculties. The faculties have approved the same things. He said Graduate Council will not approve the same items repeatedly and will note if it's the subsequent faculty's curriculum and policy report.

Dr. Mhaskar moved and Dr. Sills seconded, 'that Graduate council approve the changes proposed by the Faculty of Health Sciences as described in the documents.'

The motion was carried.

VIII. Faculty of Social Sciences Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee Report

There was some discussion of the items to be presented as part of the report. Dr. Welch clarified that all that Graduate Council was being asked to approve was the degree name change for the Ph.D. as the other for-approval items were included in the previous report.

Dr. Mhaskar moved and Dr. Badone seconded, 'that Graduate council approve the changes proposed by the Faculty of Social Sciences as described in the documents.'

The motion was carried.

IX. Faculty of Business Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee Report

Dr. Hassanein noted that Business GCPC approved the changes from Global Health already described in the Faculty of Health Sciences report. Dr. Welch noted that no vote was required in this case.

A council member asked about the changes Dr. Welch mentioned for international students moving to domestic Ph.D. and asked what the policy was behind having international students pay domestic fees. Dr. Welch responded that the net benefit to the university was that instead of receiving no provincial funding, they would receive domestic student-level funding in the case of these students. In previous years, 15 students could be counted and receive provincial funding. The university had decided that fees should match provincial funding level. These changes had to be instituted by the November 1st count. As students were already set up with international support they had to convert students without disadvantaging them in terms of their support packages.

The council member noted that international students receive larger amount of funding in the beginning but that they also pay international fees and asked if they would receive the same amount of funding but pay domestic fees. Dr. Welch responded that their funding was rearranged.

The council member asked how the student were picked. Dr. Welch responded that in past years it had been fourth year students and that associate deans were asked to seek out students who were doing well but hadn't yet got a Trillium or the like. Since in the past there were fewer students selecting them was less complicated. This year the associate deans were asked to decide what group of students would be appropriate for this.

Dr. Thompson noted that in the Faculty of Engineering because they had so many more spots this year that they chose first year students who had different funding packages. They were looking for an easy way to adjust the money without harming their pay. So they chose first term people across departments and in the case of their Faculty it wasn't really merit based. At the time they weren't sure how many they were getting and had to choose very quickly. The important consideration was that they wouldn't be harmed in any way by the change. The council member asked if students were chosen based on admission package. Dr. Thompson responded that they were because they had different admission packages than students in their later years.

Dr. Welch explained the different areas students receive funding from and noted that part of the task was to figure out how to reallocate support. Ms. Baschiera noted that in SGS there was a good effort made

with the participating partner office. They ensured that when letters went out they were given the opportunity to come in and enquire. Based on what they've heard it's been positively received.

The council member asked a student has an option to deny the changes. Dr. Welch responded that they hadn't encountered that. The council member said they weren't sure what the student ended up getting out of it at the end. Dr. Welch noted that all obligations were met in terms of total support and that they have wording in the letters to clarify the situation for students.

A council member asked if there was a way students could be picked earlier, noting that if students are picked in their fourth year they've already missed the opportunity to bring in very good students from abroad with the additional funding. Dr. Welch responded that with this announcement McMaster now has the ability to use this strategically since the institution know it's coming again next year and the year after. Now that the institution has this commitment for the coming years there needs to be a discussion to see how it will be used to strengthen programs. He noted that this would be a Faculty Dean/Provost decision.

A council member noted that the deadlines from the government are a complicating factor. Dr. Welch responded that the ministry likes October a lot and that the timing means that students are already here and all financial arrangements have been made. So in the past when the information had been passed along by the ministry it had been a bit of a scramble to make use of it quickly. The multi-year commitment changes that going forward.

A council member asked if next year and the follow year there would be an allocation to each faculty so visa students can count as domestics. Dr. Welch responded that there would be a decision about that and that that's what the Deans and Provost would be talking about. He said there are a number of ways to use it and noted that there could be capacity built into programs who have not in the past been able to offered attractive packages to international students.

Dr. Hassanein noted that the instruction given was very clear that no student would be receiving lower package, had to be the same or more and that nobody rejected the package that was the same or better. He said that in his faculty (Business) everyone was better off. A council member asked why they were better off, wondering if this was a type of scholarship.

Dr. Hassanein noted that some students in Business were not getting a tuition bursary waiver, so they decided to give it to them. Dr. Welch noted that they didn't want to cut this too finely in terms of getting down to the dime but they did want to ensure that there wasn't anybody who got less and there were some that got this one-time benefit.

A council member asked if they had a sense of how many students were affected. Dr. Welch responded that this year it was 41 international students which was a big change from last year's 15.