

Present: Dr. D. Welch, Ms. C. Bryce, Ms. S. Baschiera, Dr. S. Corner, Dr. M. Thompson Ms. A. Devitt, Dr. C. Hayward, Ms. J. Dowdy, Dr. S. Feng, Ms. S. Ramsammy, Dr. I. Marwah, Dr. S. Raha, Ms. S. Ebrahimi, Dr. A. Sills, Dr. B. Doble, Dr. E. Grodek, Dr. S. Pope, Dr. P. Mhaskar, Dr. B. Gupta, Dr. J. Gillett, Dr. M. Parlar

Regrets: Dr. M. Verma, Dr. A. Kitai, Dr. S. O'Brien, Dr. E. Badone, Dr. K. Hassanein

A G E N D A

I. Minutes of the meeting of December 5th, 2017

The minutes of the meeting of December 5th, 2017 were approved on a motion by Dr. Hayward, seconded by Dr. Thompson with corrections to the attendance.

II. Business arising

There was no business arising.

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

Dr. Welch noted that a long-serving SGS staff member, Julie Birch, would be retiring and that there was going to be a celebration held in her honour on January 19th at 9:00 am in University Hall. He said that she was one of the important people within the office who help make things work and that a lot of the changes within Mosaic that resulted in improved processes were partly a result of her understanding of the system or her ability to change things.

He also reported that the second Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) is now signed and that the institution is trying to figure out exactly how the government intends to implement certain things it's agreed to. It is now a public document on the provost's website. He encouraged members to browse it and said that it does give context to the work Graduate Council is doing.

He reported that after the SMA 2 the ministry produced a memorandum on internationalization strategy. It resulted in a new set of conditions for allowing some international students to be converted to domestic fees. He noted that over the years there had been a number of changes in this respect. It went from a situation where no international students could pay domestic fees, to fifteen students being allowed to do so. This year

the Ministry released a significantly changed and broadened policy that allowed more such conversions and committed to doing them for three years in a row. It was a move welcomed by all institutions. The change allows universities to plan to use the spaces and includes the possibility of using the money for recruitment. He has communicated with the Deans about a proposal to use part of that allocation for recruitment in programs where they have traditionally not been able to afford or support international students and was also meeting with the Provost about it. He hoped to be able to share the exact situation at the next Graduate Council. He noted that it was a progressive initiative that would assist the institution in making changes and improving diversity in areas that haven't been able to bring in international Ph.D. students in the past. He also reported that SGS is holding the active graduate recruiting seminars again. As in previous years people will be invited to share their experiences of what they tried and what has worked. He said that anyone interested should sign up and that he hoped the sessions would continue to be well attended.

IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans

Dr. Corner reported that he had a very productive meeting with graduate chairs within his Faculty in December. The meeting included a Q&A with SGS scholarships officers and they talked about several items including the course Education 750 (how programs do and do not include it), Ph.D. Defences, handbooks and a discussion of experiential learning and how it might be useful and developed.

Dr. Hayward noted that attached to the Graduate Council materials distributed for the meeting was a report from the FHS remediation work group. They decided to undertake it because rehabilitation programs have a formal remediation course and they wanted to discuss what policies exist at McMaster. She noted they had reported their work back to the rest of the Faculty and ID programs. The group noted that a formal remediation course is helpful when a student needs to re-take a course earlier than scheduled or when it involves an internship, work placement etc. She noted there was nothing in the graduate calendar administrative sections about formal or informal remediation. A remediation course allows specific goals and objectives to be worked on that lead to the course failure. She said that in the programs that offered the remediation course the majority (but not all) of students end up successfully meeting program requirements. The group didn't think a generic remediation course for the university was worthwhile but programs, particularly with placements, thought it was a good idea.

Dr. Hayward also noted that there is no policy about students requesting to drop a required course in the Graduate Calendar and there was some concern that student might end up prolonging their academic program. Dr. Welch said that the policy is a student can drop a course until the drop date. Dr. Hayward responded that dropping an elective is different than dropping a course that's mandatory for the program. Dr. Welch said that if it's proscribed by a student's supervisory committee it's also a required course. If they drop it after the drop

date, a student gets an F. Dr. Hayward noted that there's nothing in the calendar saying a student can't drop a required course. Dr. Welch said this could be clarified as part of the calendar changes in this cycle.

Dr. Welch said that remediation is one of the areas in which programs can define how things happen as long as they do them in a reasonable way and the changes are approved through GCPC. He noted that there's a blanket situation that if a student fails a graduate course their program will be asked if a student should be allowed to continue, and if they do continue what they must re-do and in what manner it will be replaced. Remediation is a way to deal with these issues.

Dr. Thompson reported that Engineering had, over last few years, been trying to manage increasing enrollment in their undergraduate programs. They have implemented training program for TAs and are now in their second round now of this training in the winter term. They give it to all incoming students at the time when they're about to start doing their TAs. He said that the training has received excellent feedback and they really feel that the workshop, case studies, and mock marking is extremely well received. He said that the Faculty was happy to share if there was interest.

He also reported that Engineering had taken the money they got back from international students converted to domestic students and funnelled it back to department to initiate series of mini 3MT competitions. The Dean is enthusiastic about the competition and has challenged each department to hold their own. They feel that the skill of the pitch is extremely valuable to students.

Dr. Gupta reported that at the November meeting of Graduate Council he had updated that the Faculty of Science was starting to work on social media. They didn't think it was up to standard and have since made more progress in that respect. They are working on website overhaul for all programs and have launched Twitter and Facebook pages for graduate studies in science. In combination with this they have started working on more strategic planning to reach out to domestic students. There will be an open house in March to provide information to prospective applicants. They also held an alumni networking event last year which was very successful. They are getting their input on how to make things more competitive and are holding another event on February 23rd. He noted that handbooks are in the process of being revised and that there will be a curriculum meeting in March where they will be reviewed and approved.

Dr. Gillett reported that a lot of discussions within his Faculty have been organized around recruitment and that many programs have really struggled bringing international students in. He noted that the international conversion Doug mentioned has created a lot of buzz. Programs have been discussing how to recruit and bring in a new group of students. They have also been discussing how they can better support those students. The Faculty has been in discussion about how to support newer programs and their needs versus more established programs. He noted that the Faculty had also been discussing professional development and has been working to find strategies for supporting students who want to go into academia but also coming up with effective ways

of supporting students seeking other pathways. They have been exploring to what extent this is the faculty's responsibility to guide students in this respect.

V. Report from the Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary

There was no report.

VI. Faculty of Business Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee Report

Dr. Corner presented the items, noting that there were two up for approval. The MBA program proposed a change in admission requirements for their accelerated option. The change consisted of a simplification and modification to the requirements with an aim to make a path available for a larger number of students to be eligible for the option. He noted that the second change proposed was to the admission requirements for EMBA. The changes involved clarifying the amount of work experience required and generally underlining the standards needed for entry of the program. The amount of work experience required was increased to further distinguish from existing program and the proposed part-time program. He noted there was an emphasis on managerial experience. Dr. Corner noted that there was a sentence fragment in the calendar copy with respect to the first change that would need to be corrected.

Dr. Welch noted that the new part-time program mentioned is just proposed as this juncture.

Dr. Hayward moved and Dr. Mhaskar moved, 'that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes from the Faculty of Business as described in the documents, with the correction noted.'

The motion was carried.

VII. Faculty of Social Science Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee Report

Dr. Gillett explained that there were three items for approval. The first proposed change was to the name of the Master's in Work and Society to Labour studies. The change proposed was a matter of creating consistency in their graduate and undergraduate programs and to provide clarity for students coming into the program. The second change proposed was from Social Work and included new program calendar copy for their diploma and the inclusion of part-time options for the leadership diploma and stream. He noted that a few years ago Social Work introduced two new graduate diplomas intended to give opportunity to folks in community who didn't have time to do another degree. They also found that some people who were interested may not have been able to take it in a full time way and so proposed introducing part-time options. The final item was from Global Health and had already been approved by the two other Faculties. The change was to their calendar copy around program length for students involved in field work as well as those taking the thesis option.

Dr. Mhaskar moved and Dr. Gupta seconded, 'that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes from the Faculty of Social Sciences as described in the documents.'

The motion was carried.

VIII. Petitions Working Group Report

Dr. Thompson noted that at the request of Graduate Council they had divided up into several groups, including one tasked with reviewing petitions at McMaster. He was pleased to report that the petitions committee had met and had a productive discussion. One of the recommendations arising from the meeting was to streamline the use of petitions. Currently, petitions for special consideration are used in SGS for multitude of issues. These petitions are used to ask for permission to give allowance to not have to follow a particular policy in special circumstances. The petition has, over time, evolved into a generic document that fills in the gap where there isn't a specific form or policy in place to help a student when they're experiencing some difficulties. The working group worked to assess all the different uses that they were aware of and break them down into whether they felt new forms would be a better way of dealing with that issue. A list was developed with all this information. He noted that the working group needed to work on it a bit more and wanted to carry their mandate a bit further to consider what the other forms would look like. The plan is to come back in March or April and request that their recommendations be considered.

Dr. Welch provided some additional context. He noted that as Dr. Thompson mentioned these are situations where the student agrees that the university has done it's work properly but they're asking for an exception. The flip side is the appeal procedure. He noted that this is one of the reasons why Michelle Bennett was involved as she deals with appeals. He also said that it is the case that most students will submit a petition at some point in their graduate career and that it's important to handle the changes needed efficiently so no one spends unnecessary time on the situation. There is also work being done in SGS to see which of forms and processes can be made electronic. There has been a pilot with actual live students for the Ph.D. supervisory committee form that has gone very well. The hope is that the bulk of supervisory committee reports this summer will no longer be in the old paper form but can move between various entities that need to sign off and acknowledge them electronically.

IX. IQAP Final Assessment Report

Ms. Baschiera said that the reports included in the package were for Physics and Chemical Biology and that both had been approved for normal review cycle.

Dr. Welch noted that the IQAP process is something that is typically done for every program on an eight-year cycle and some programs are about to go through the cycle a second time. He said that McMaster would be audited by Quality Council. That organizations goes to a few universities every year to look and see that process

defined in each university is being followed. The auditors will pick a handful of programs to check to see if the institution has been dealing with their work as described in their policy.

Ms. Baschiera said that Graduate Council will probably be called on to meet with the auditors in some form. They're anticipating a mix of graduate and undergraduate cyclical reviews, new programs and major modifications. Graduate Council, Undergraduate Council and all committees where the documents are considered will be invited to meet auditors.

Dr. Hayward asked if they would be selecting programs before they arrive. Ms. Baschiera responded that they would be. In partnership with Macpherson SGS has selected a program to do a mock audit on it where all the documentation is pulled together so gaps can be identified ahead of time. The audit involves two days on site with a desk audit beforehand. She noted that it wouldn't be about the quality of the program but about the process.

Dr. Welch said that there is some benefit of coming late in the cycle, noting that McMaster had had some people from within the institution who've acted as auditors who have shared their knowledge about what to expect and that they have also met with institutions who have been audited.