



School of Graduate Studies

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Tuesday March 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am in Council Chambers (GH-111)

Present: Dr. D. Welch (Chair), Dr. K. Hassanein, Dr. A. Sills, Dr. J. Shedden, Dr. M-A. Letendre, Dr. J. Gillett, Ms. S. Oikawa, Ms. S. Ramsammy, Mr. A. Ozbilge, Dr. I. Marwah, Mr. L. Greville, Dr. S. Bannerman, Dr. J. Carette, Dr. L. Wiebe, Dr. E. Grodek, Dr. S. Raha, Dr. I. Bruce, Dr. B. Gupta, Dr. P. Swett, Dr. D. Mountain, Ms. S. Baschiera (Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary), Ms. C. Bryce (Assistant Graduate Secretary)

Regrets: Dr. M. Thompson, Dr. L. Chan, Dr. B. Doble, Dr. L. Thabane, Dr. M. Gough

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#### **I. Minutes of the meeting of February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

It was duly moved and seconded **'that Graduate Council approve the minutes of the meeting of February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019 with the corrections noted.'**

The motion was **carried**.

#### **II. Business arising**

There was no business arising.

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

**Dr Welch reported on the following items:**

- The delay in notification from the provincial government regarding OGS, QE2 and Trillium competitions and;
- The success of the McMaster 3MT competition with significantly more competitors than in previous years and the winner, Matthew Campea from the Faculty of Engineering.

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

**Dr. Gupta (Faculty of Science) reported on the following item:**

- The search for a director for the Chemical Biology graduate program, noting that they will also be appointing an associate director.

**Dr. Hayward (Faculty of Health Sciences) reported on the following item:**

- Preparations for the FHS Research Plenary happening May 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>.

Drs. Swett, Hassanein, Gillet had no report.

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

**Ms. Baschiera reported on the following items:**

- Progress on the opt-out fee process mandated by the provincial government;
- The uptake of thesis defences moving through the accelerated thesis process, noting that they are continuing to add enhancements on the system side;
- The work to finalize requirements for the admissions project. The recommendations will then be forwarded to the project steering committee for discussion on direction.

## **VI. Graduate Student Life Update**

There was no update.

## **VII. New Scholarship**

It was duly moved and seconded, **‘that Graduate Council approve the new scholarship as set out in the document.’**

The motion was **carried**.

## **VIII. Graduate Council Working Group Update and Discussion**

### **a. Graduate Program Structure**

Dr. Gupta explained that the group was formed in the fall and was to review what is happening at McMaster with respect to existing regulations and how they apply to current programs. The intent is to create framework to streamline regulations and process. The committee reviewed definitions of different types of programs, whether graduate fees were appropriately flexible for students, the types of leaves available to students and whether they should be expanded, what constitutes full versus part-time status and revised the definitions of a course and milestone to make things clearer. A report is planned for May Graduate Council.

### **b. Cotutelle**

Dr. Swett provided context for this working group, explaining that Cotutelle is a process in which a student at the Ph.D. level has two supervisors, one here and one abroad. The student spends time at both institutions and has a joint degree in the end. It’s a relatively new policy at McMaster and is not widely used, understood or accessible. The Cotutelle working group has been looking at policy (to make it easier to understand and complete), process (who needs to be involved at what stages and what kind of oversight is provided by the School of Graduate Studies) and promotion (how to sell the option and make it more attractive).

Dr. Swett noted that they were planning to provide some language for the calendar in April and provide a full report to Graduate Council in May.

Council members discussed the costs associated with a cotutelle and the possibility of funds to assist with this to help with promotion. Dr. Welch noted that MITACS had announced that they’re greatly increasing the amount of money for incoming and outgoing travel and that that might be an option.

Council members discussed policy revisions as it related to the level of detail needed in the agreements as well as the context at European institutions who have more experience with cotutelle arrangements as well as different tuition structures and course requirements.

**c. Student-Supervisor Relationship**

Dr. Raha explained that the group had been meeting to discuss the challenges in the student-supervisor relationship and noted that the most prevalent issue is misalignment of expectation in carrying out the thesis work. They consulted with a number of different groups and came to the conclusion that they need to consolidate information across campus as they've noted that a lot of good support exists, but the information is not widely known.

The group discusses a number of strategies including the development of a better web presence, peer mentorship, assistance from the MacPherson Institute and discussions about providing some information at the tenure and leadership promotion workshop. A report is planned for May Graduate Council.

Council members discussed supervision oversight (or lack thereof) and how it intersected with the issues being considered. Dr. Raha noted that it was clear to the group that the processes and information must get to the leadership within programs and that how oversight is maintained has been an aspect of the discussion.

A council member noted the process of faculty review for tenure track faculty and noted that the working group had discussed the concept of a contract between supervisor and student versus the worksheet that currently exists but is voluntary.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 10:15.