

Tuesday September 17th at 9:30 am in Council Chambers (GH-111)

Present: Dr. Dr. Welch (Chair), Ms. N. Taylor, Dr. S. Hanna, Dr. M. Horn, Dr. J. Gillett, Dr. M. Thompson, Dr. B. Gupta, Ms. V. Lewis, Dr. C. Kwan, Dr. J. Kish, Dr. I. Bruce, Dr. S. Raha, Dr. J. West-Mays, Dr. L. Thabane, Dr. S. Bannerman, Dr. M. Stroinska, Dr. J. Shedden, Dr. F. McNeill, Dr. J. Xu, Dr. N. Tan, Dr. N. McLaughlin, Dr. M. A. Letendre, Ms. C. Bryce (Assistant Graduate Secretary), Ms. S. Baschiera (Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary)

Regrets: Dr. S. Pope, Dr. L. Chan, Dr. S. Dickson

I. Minutes of the meeting of June 11th, 2019

It was duly moved and seconded, **‘that Graduate Council approve the minutes of June 11th, 2019 with the minor correction 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:

- Introduction to the Senate By-Laws which describe the mandate and responsibilities of Graduate Council;
- Work on the third Strategic Mandate Agreement and the impact of changes in funding metrics going forward and the constraints on spots for new programs;
- The harmonization of the tri-agency doctoral competitions;
- McMaster is now able to give out two Governor General Awards;
- The Strategic Alignment Fund grant for the purpose of jointly having researchers have access to plagiarism checking software and the upgrade of SGS 101 going forward;
- Upcoming Graduate Council Working Groups.

Council members discussed funding for domestic and international students and the context of course-based programs. In response to a question from a council member about whether head count matters if the government is shifting to funding-based metrics Dr. Welch noted the importance of caps and provided an overview of the spaces available.

IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans

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

- Changes to leadership in interdisciplinary programs;
- Work to enhance graduate websites.

Dr. Hanna (Faculty of Health Sciences) reported on the following items:

- Targeted education opportunities for graduate students arising from the recent David Braley centre opening;
- Indigenous scholarships, noting that the Faculty had given out four last year and was providing four more for students arriving in September;
- New programs approved with a planned launch no later than September 2020 for the M.Sc. Psychotherapy, and Ph.D. in Global Health;
- Three cyclical IQAP reviews.

Dr. Thompson (Faculty of Engineering) reported on the following items:

- An initiative from the Dean to add more professional development to curriculum and the plan to develop a new Ph.D. program that would build on discussions related to micro-credentials and blockchain.

Dr. Gillett (Faculty of Social Sciences) reported on the following items:

- Exploration within the Faculty around micro credentials and looking at graduate curriculum in a slightly different way to divide it up into more flexible pieces;
- New program development from Political Sciences who were planning a professional Master of Public Policy and Governance;
- International collaborations that would allow students to participate in a joint experience.

Dr. Horn (Faculty of Humanities) had no report.

V. Report from the Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary

Ms. Baschiera reported on the following items:

- Ph.D. thesis defences, noting increased uptake on the accelerated thesis process, the use of the dedicated Chairs list and other enhancements to the process to make things smoother on the day of the defence;
- Enrollment stabilization ahead of the November 1st count, including improvements to the condition clearing process;
- The admissions project is moving forward and they are now accepting proposals from vendors;
- The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) is working close with University Technology Service to figure out how to better utilize the system to track progression and standing, including automatic updates.

VI. Report from the Coordinator Postdoctoral Affairs and Research Training

Ms. Taylor reported on the following items:

- The Resource Fair, including on and off campus services;
- The new graduate student welcome and club fest at The Phoenix;
- International student board game night;

- The graduate recognition awards nominating period;
- Valedictorian nominations are open now as well, noting that students are now able to nominate themselves which is a change from previous years.

VII. Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee Report

Dr. Hanna presented the report, noting the only item for approval was the removal of the co-op option from the Health Research Methodology programs. The option has been on the books for some time but has not been utilized as it is not practical within the confines of the program.

It was duly moved and seconded, **‘that Graduate Council approve the changes proposed by the Faculty of Health Sciences as described in the documents.’**

The motion was **carried**.

VIII. Research Plagiarism Checking Policy

Dr. Thompson presented the item, noting that the Provost had approved a Strategic Alignment Fund proposal to provide three years of funding to look at ways to improve academic integrity. He provided some general context, noting the different systems that journal use to review work submitted. The policy is intended to provide guidelines from the University about how any research plagiarism checking tool should be used. He noted that there needed to be a balance between genuine intellectual integrity misunderstandings and purposeful academic integrity violations.

Council members discussed this policy in the context of the existing research integrity policy as well as issues related to sandwich theses, which include different papers previously published together. Dr. Thompson noted that a previous iteration of the policy had discussion of consequences around particular scores, but the new language now leaves it with the student and supervisor to determine whether it’s an issue.

Council members also discussed the use of the checking software in the context of work that may have been published in another language originally and discussed the pros and cons of using translating software to assist. Dr. Welch suggested that should be more discussion on the topic with Kim Mason from the Academic Integrity Office.

Council members discussed the context of publishing in journals (particularly related to the issue of potential of overlap with previous work for those with a long history of publishing) and how to navigate publishing relationships with other institutions where there might be different academic integrity environments. Dr. Thompson noted that the policy is intended is to help to inform someone that there is a potential issue.

Council members discussed the merits of calling the document guiding principles rather than a policy.

IX. Working Groups

This item was postponed to a future meeting.

X. **New Scholarship**

It was duly moved and seconded, **'that graduate council approve the terms for the proposed new as described in the document.'**

The motion was carried.