

Tuesday November 19th at 9:30 am in Council Chambers (GH-111)

Present: Dr. M. Thompson (Chair), Dr. C. Kwan, Dr. L. Chan, Dr. D. Mountain, Dr. I. Bruce, Dr. S. Raha, Dr. S. Bannerman, Dr. M. Stroinska, Dr. J. Shedden, Dr. J. Xu, Dr. M.A. Letendre, Dr. S. Hanna, Dr. M. Horn, Dr. B. Gupta, Mr. M. Lightstone, Ms. V. Antonipillai, Ms. C. Bryce (Assistant Graduate Secretary), Ms. S. Baschiera (Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary)

Regrets: Dr. J. Kish, Ms. J.

Attendees: Ms. A. Masciantonio, Ms. D. Potvin

I. Minutes of the meeting of October 22nd, 2019

It was duly moved and second **‘that Graduate Council approve the minutes of October 22nd, 2019.’**

The motion was **carried**.

II. Business arising

There was no business arising.

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

There was no report.

IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans

There were no reports.

V. Report from the Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary

There was no report.

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

Dr. Hanna presented the for-information items, noting that a new course had been proposed by Public Health which necessitated an anti-requisite for a similar course in another program. Speech Language Pathology also created two remediation courses for their cohort-based program.

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

Dr. Gillett explained the items in the report, noting there were some housekeeping changes from Anthropology. The approval items were from Economics and included adding some ability to specialize areas in their comprehensive. The program was also looking at ways to ensure students remained connected with the program and to that end proposed the addition of an Active Researcher Milestone and the addition of a major research paper after the completion of their comprehensive.

Council members expressed concern around the potential variability in how the active research milestone would be reviewed with different supervisors managing it (including whether there should be specific thresholds applied to attendance at department seminars). Some solutions discussed included a clearly defined role for the graduate advisor in oversight and/or setting the expectation at the first committee meeting and reviewing annually at the subsequent supervisory committee meetings.

Council members discussed the timing for the research paper after the comprehensive and whether the new requirement would impede a student's progress through the program, including whether they would have the tools at that point in their degree to complete the paper successfully, as well as the consequence outlined in the document, leaving the program. Dr. Gillett noted that students would be building on previous work, so the timing made sense in that respect and in response to the question about the consequence, he noted that the program wants students to take the requirement seriously and compared it to a case where a student failed a course. He noted the option to appeal was always available.

Dr. Gillett withdrew the item so he could review with the department and ask for clarity about how the Active Research Milestone would be administered from the outset and then ensure there was follow up on an annual basis with the supervisory committee.

VIII. Research Plagiarism Checking Policy

Dr. Thompson explained that he had also taken the policy to undergraduate council, noting that some of the discussion with that group had centered around why this policy could not be an appendix to the research integrity policy. He explained that the Secretariat's office believes the documents shouldn't be merged, noting that the Research Integrity Policy is meant for processing allegations of research misconduct and is disciplinary in nature. The Research Plagiarism Checking Policy is meant to provide a tool for researchers to check their own work and is intended to be a preventative measure, to be used to avoid allegations of misconduct.

Council members discussed the following items:

- That clarification was needed in paragraph 14 around how the provision to contact the academic integrity office would interact with folks from other institutions and what the consequences of that contact would be;
- That they should consider strengthening the language about who could submit the document to the software in paragraph 23;
- Clarification on the use of academic supervisor versus principal supervisor was needed in paragraphs 19, 20 and 23;
- Clarification was needed about which documents the policy applies to.

In response to a question about paragraph 18 and the language around allowing a student to change their thesis after being submitted to the software, Dr. Thompson noted that in this case they're talking about a student with a copying and pasting error or something similar. The intention of the university is to give students an opportunity to catch what would be innocent mistakes before documents are released.

Committee members also discussed the logistics of students in an interdisciplinary program, the responsibility of the supervisor and discipline-specific considerations, the application of the policy to internal documents versus external document (Dr. Thompson noted that the policy is primarily concerned with documents being released to people external to the university) and the logistics of deployment in SGS around clear to graduate and the cohort of students the policy would apply to once approved.

In response to a question about Cotutelle arrangements and whether the new policy would require students in that case to submit to the system, Dr. Thompson confirmed that they would be required as they are also seeking a degree from McMaster.

Dr. Thompson withdrew the item to consult further with the Secretariat's office.

IX. Scholarships Committee Membership

Dr. Thompson noted that there was an issue with the document and this item would be deferred to a future meeting.

X. Scholarships Update

Ms. Masciantonio and Ms. Potvin presented a summary of graduate scholarships awarded for the 2018/2019 academic year and the general conditions for holding a scholarship document which was developed to help clarify the conditions for holding a scholarship.