

Tuesday April 21st at 9:30 am via Zoom

Present: Dr. D. Welch (Chair), Dr. K. Hassanein, Dr. J. Gillett, Dr. M. Thompson, Dr. B. Gupta, Dr. S. Hanna, Dr. M. Horn, Dr. N. McLaughlin, Mr. D. Cursio, Dr. F. McNeill, Dr. I. Bruce, Dr. J.P. Xu, Dr. J. Shedden, Dr. J. West-Mays, Ms. J. de Lange, Dr. C. Kwan, Mr. L. Greville, Dr. M.-A. Letendre, Mr. M. Lighstone, Dr. M. Stroinska, Dr. S. Raha, Dr. L. Thabane, Dr. S. Bannerman, Dr. L. Chan, Dr. S. Pope, Dr. N. Tan, Mr. M. Javdan, Ms. S. Baschiera (Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary), Ms. C. Bryce (Assistant Graduate Secretary),

Attendees: Ms. M. Zheng

I. Minutes of the meeting of January 21st and February 18th, 2020

It was duly moved and seconded, **‘that Graduate Council approve the minutes of January 21st and February 18th.’**

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:

- Online Ph.D. defences, including the development of documentation to assist;
- A message to graduate instructors on the need to complete grades in final assessments, including the need for flexibility on final assessments and re-weight things to the benefit of the student where possible;
- The Winter 2020 Term Grade Change Policy, noting a communication would be going out to students and that if no change was requested by May 15th, the grade would appear on their transcript as normal;
- Extension of the deadline for comprehensive examination completion from 24 months to 36 months;
- Associate Dean review of curriculum modifications required to courses as a result of the pandemic, noting a future report to Graduate Council;
- Work to reimburse students for travel issues, following up on specific issues where additional guidance is needed;
- No information as yet from the federal government on emergency funding for the post-secondary sector.

In response to question about scholarship considerations related to the grade change, Dr. Welch noted that it will not factor into the calculation of an average but a lot of ‘P’s on the transcript may be a problem. He suggested that in most instances if a student passed a course at the graduate level, they should leave the grade on and noted that the expectation is that students will get input before they request the change.

IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans

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

- Discussion within the Faculty of student support for those most affected by the changes related to Covid-19;
- Minimal leaves of absences requested so far;
- Comprehensive and transfer examinations moving online.

Dr. Hassanein (Faculty of Business) reported on the following items:

- Work related to making the move to online learning and dealing with students who were unable to get a co-op term.

Dr. Horn (Faculty of Humanities) reported on the following items:

- Grading issues related to the pandemic, noting that he expected the potential for more incomplete grades than usual;
- Discussions within the Faculty about support for students affected by the pandemic.

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

- Faculty plans to launch a graduate ambassador program based on the models in Health Science and Science;
- The upcoming review the new Master of Public Policy has been adjusted in light of the current environment and will now be a desk audit.

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

- Issues related to international students, particularly those arriving for the May intake, some have deferred to September and others are coming and McMaster will be helping them isolate;
- Accommodations for condition clearing due to the fact that language testing centers have been closed;
- Potential issue with offer letters related to immigration officers;
- Many co-ops have been continuing or have been deferred to June.

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

- Emphasized to instructors that they were supposed to provide modifications to requirements to ensure marks got in;
- The expectation that there will be a lot of leaves of absence within the Faculty, particularly in clinical programs for the summer term and discussions around how students can complete using a non-clinical placement where possible.
- The cancellation of the Research Plenary, with the continuation of the awards program;
- The plan to mount IUSRS in a virtual way for the summer term.

V. Report from the Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary

Ms. Baschiera reported on the following item:

- Work with the Registrar's Office on online convocation ceremonies, including digital parchments.

VI. Faculty of Business Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee Report

Dr. Hassanein explained the changes, including the following:

- eHealth proposed a change to course requirements to revise their elective list and a change to their calendar copy, including the program description and changing areas of specialization to 'disciplines' to reflect the reality of how students move through the program;
- Master of Finance proposed a change in calendar copy after consultation with immigration, to make it clear that MFIN students are on a scheduled break during the summer term;

- The Blended Learning Part-time MBA proposed a change to course requirements around independent study and available electives and a change to their admission requirements around the GMAT;
- MBA proposed changes to their calendar copy, including removing old language around transfer credits and waivers and proposed a change to their admission requirements, now recommending one professional and one academic reference and removing the GMAT requirement for one group and allowing the MCAT to satisfy the requirement along with GRE and GMAT for another;
- Business Ph.D. program proposed removing the two MBA courses required in the Information Systems field, in-line with a recommendation from the last IQAP program review.

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

The motion was **carried**.

VII. Faculty of Engineering Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee report

Dr. Thompson reported on the changes, including the following

- Biomedical Engineering proposed the addition of an accelerated option for M.A.Sc and a direct-entry option Ph.D., to create a pathway that would attract iBiomed undergraduate students into their programs. The proposal is consistent with other accelerated Masters degrees in the Faculty. Dr. Thompson noted that all regulations of the Ph.D. apply regardless of whether students can complete in three years or not. Both options are intended to encourage students to carry on to graduate work and capitalize on work they’ve done at the undergraduate level;
- Engineering Physics proposed a change to the wording but not the requirements to reduce confusion;
- The School of Engineering Practice and Technology proposed the following changes:
 - New Program Calendar Copy for the M.Eng in Systems and Technology, with increased units required for program completion and the relabelling of a stream within the program;
 - All SEPT programs will have their requirements increased to 30 units overall, all programs will take the innovation workshop, and the majority will include an additional course.
 - Other changes included the creation or cancellation of streams within the degrees to better differentiate the work done in each program.

Council members discussed the accelerated and direct-entry options. In response to a question Dr. Thompson explained that for both the PhD and Masters, the accelerated component is accomplished by using an undergraduate course toward the graduate degree, with students taking on the added work content required at the 600 level while in their undergraduate degree. They also start doing research work in advance of their graduate degree. Dr. Hanna noted that the iBiomed engineering stream in undergraduate is already a five-year degree so there is additional flexibility in that timeframe.

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

The motion was **carried**.

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

Dr. Hanna presented the changes including the following:

- Minor changes to calendar copy from Child Life;

- Eliminating the requirement for a scholarly paper for the course-based stream of the M.Sc in Health Science Education, replacing it with a capstone portfolio better suited to the learning objectives of students, who are mostly clinicians;
- Nursing proposed a number of changes related to their curriculum review, including a mandatory online training course related to indigenous health, the removal of a scholarly paper course, replacing it with research methods course which includes scholarly paper and the addition of a leadership course;
- Occupational Therapy proposed changes to their calendar copy related to the dual degree option and changes to the vulnerable sector screening language, related to a change in the overall policy for the Faculty of Health Sciences;
- Physiotherapy proposed changes to the calendar related to the vulnerable sector screening, the increase of the fee for the online interview software and changed their admission requirements to allow a Humanities or Social Sciences to count for admissions, based on a list of disciplines at McMaster.
- The Master of Public Health program cancelled one of their public health seminar series and replaced it with a new series better suited to the needs of students and reworked their second seminar series to be focused on leadership in public health.

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**.

IX. Faculty of Humanities Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee Report

Dr. Horn explained that Classics proposed a change to course requirements, proposing two new courses to better prepare students for subsequent language examinations, which will now be mandatory for all Ph.D. students in the department. They also proposed a Dual Degree PhD stream option between La Sapienza in Rome and McMaster. Cognitive Science of Language added a requirement around qualitative research to highlight work students are doing on their transcript. This change was proposed in respond to a recommendation from their most recent IQAP review.

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

The motion was **carried**.

X. Faculty of Science Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee Report

Dr. Gupta explained the changes for approval, including two calendar copy changes. The first was from Radiation Sciences, to note that students can enroll part-time. This has always been the case and the program wanted to add it to the calendar for clarity. Kinesiology changed the description of their research areas to align with current faculty complement.

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

The motion was **carried**.

XI. Graduate Calendar Administrative Section Updates

Dr. Welch noted that the changes were all laid out in the document and that the clause in the motion to allow amendments is related to pandemic concerns around the timing of registration and that there is a potential for graduate registration dates be moved. Some of the dates are not yet known but will be known by the time the calendar comes into effect.

It was duly moved and seconded, **'that Graduate Council approve the changes as set out in the document for inclusion in the 2020-2021 edition of the Graduate Studies Calendar, with amendments or corrections to the Sessional dates made as necessary by the Associate Graduate Registrar.'**

The motion was **carried**.

XII. Faculty of Health Sciences Spring 2020 Graduands (to be distributed)

It was duly moved and seconded, **'that Graduate Council approve the list of the 2020 Faculty of Health Sciences Spring Graduands, with amendments/corrections to be made as necessary by the Associate Graduate Registrar.'**

The motion was **carried**.

XIII. New Scholarship

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

The motion was **carried**.

XIV. Microcredential Academy

Dr. Welch explained that the Academy had been presented and approved by Undergraduate Council at their last meeting.

Dr. Thompson explained the Faculty of Engineering was planning to establish an Academy which is intended to streamline the approach for credential review and the committee will ensure there is adequate evaluation for all microcredentials and recommend and the committee will make recommendation/reports to the Dean and the Certificate and Diplomas Committee as appropriate. He noted that it is not intended to replace the development of a McMaster-wide definition of a microcredential but to put an evaluation approach into place within the Faculty and that the document provides a definition that they'll use in Engineering until there is an institution-wide definition.

Council members discussed the naming of the Academy and participation in microcredentials from other Faculties.

In response to a question about how handing out credentials would work in the absence of a Senate definition, Dr. Thompson noted that in terms of governance, Faculties already have authority to issue non-academic credentials through the Dean's office and academic credentials through the appropriate committees currently.

It was duly moved and seconded, **'that the Graduate Council approve, for recommendation to Senate, the establishment of the Academy for Microcredentials and External Learning, as set out in the attached.'**

The motion was **carried**.