

Tuesday January 19th at 9:30 am via Zoom

Present: D. Welch (Chair), J. Gillet, S. Hanna, M. Horn, K. Hassanein, M. Thompson, B. Gupta, M. Dion, S. Brophy, J.P. Xu, J. Shedden, J. Kish, S. Zakaria, A. Shi, S. Raha, A. Roddick, M. Stroinska, J. West-Mays, S. Zakaria, B. Farmer, M. Parlar, S. Madeiros, S. Bannerman, S. Raha, S.K. Dhimi, C. Davidson, D. Mountain, O. Loertscher, C. Seiler, K. Tsang, E. Wright, M. Naisani, S. Baschiera (Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary), C. Bryce, (Assistant Graduate Secretary)

Regrets: N. Tan

By Invitation: K. Dej, J. MacLachlan, R. Narro Pérez

I. Minutes of the meeting of December 8th, 2020

It was duly moved and seconded, **‘that Graduate Council approve the minutes of the meeting of December 8th as set out in the document.’**

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:

- Dr. Khaled Hassanein will be the new Dean of Business effective July 1st;
- The current Covid-19 context, including the lockdown, vaccines and locations of community spread;
- International student arrivals, which began in December, noting that they expect 90 more to come by the end of the term and that the quarantine for these students has been effective;
- The start of the winter term with most classes delayed until the 11th;
- Task forces on mental health and the future of work, noting the possible benefits of a blended model and that McMaster is looking at what the next academic year will look like and the implications for recruitment;
- Gradflix will be replacing the 3MT competition this year.

Council members discussed changes to course and program modes of delivery in fall 2021 and beyond and the implications for overall approval.

IV. Report from the Graduate Associate Deans

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

- The submission of an expression of interest via eCampus Ontario to establish a communications course, in concert with 7 other universities in Ontario.
- A fellowship for indigenous and black faculty, noting they are part of a consortium of 6 universities in Ontario working to improve representation of these groups within faculties.

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

- With respect to the Strategic Alignment Fund call, the Faculty is involved in 4 graduate level submissions;
- Scholarship updates, including a one-year fellowship and the conversion of a pandemic-related scholarship with low uptake to merit-based competition.

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

- The proposal to establish a Master degree in Scientific Communication, with links to Humanities and Health Sciences.

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

- The Faculty is participating in several initiatives at the graduate level as noted, responding to the Provost's call for Strategic Alignment Fund initiatives.

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

- Two proposals in the works with respect to the Provost's call with other faculties;
- Thinking of ways to work through the issue of students who need to travel as part of their research;
- A research centre in the Faculty holding an open house on the 21st for all those interested in social science methodology and research.

Dr. Hassanein had no report.

V. Report from the Associate Registrar and Graduate Secretary

Ms. Baschiera reported on the following items:

- Start of term had gone smoothly and they are now preparing for government count;
- Students had received payment through e-transfer for the first time and SGS was working with Accounts Receivable and Students Services to support students through the change;
- Planning is happening around the opening of registration and new admission system.

VI. Intersession opportunities - Acting Vice-Provost (Faculty)

Kim Dej, John MacLachlan and Rodrigo Narro Pérez presented this item, noting that it was a new space and time in the McMaster calendar, which will be formally offered for the first time in May 2021 with a pilot offering the previous year. It is an opportunity for students to take a short course and is intended to provide learning opportunities for changing demographics and experiment with new ways of teaching and learning. It's also an opportunity for microcredentials and a way to integrate academic and coacademic learning. Courses under the INSPIRE code provide small group experiences and interdisciplinary courses that allow people to explore outside of their own comfort zone and their discipline. The courses offered were on a variety of topics, including a course about coping with Covid and stress and a course on Topics in Black, African and African Diaspora Studies in collaboration with ACFAM (African and Caribbean Faculty Association).

Council members discussed options for graduate students, including a course on mentorship, as well as the interface in the approval process across faculties, remuneration of TAs that participate in the intersession courses and how intersession courses could intersect with graduate program requirements.

VII. Faculty of Business Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee Report

Dr. Hassanein presented the items for approval:

- A correction to calendar copy with respect to the order in which two 700 level courses were to be taken;
- A revision to the elective list in light of the addition of blended format electives;
- A revision to the timing of independent study courses.

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

The motion was **carried**.

VIII. Plagiarism-checking Software Update

Dr. Thompson provided an update on the status of the implementation of the software. He noted that the Avenue to Learn shells have been created and that they’d worked out a number of issues with the vendor. In discussing the roll out, they learned that the software is going through a major update in May. In light of this the decision has been that the best way to approach it right now is to have a soft roll out. MacPherson activated Urkund shell of all eligible faculty members and SGS has pulled together information document for faculty members and students. The soft roll out will give everyone a chance to familiarize themselves with the software and voluntarily allowing grad students to submit grad thesis for scan to software ahead of mandatory date in October.

Council members discussed the roll out, including the faculty members who have access in Avenue, clarity around where the information is available and direct student access to the tool.

IX. Scholarship Committee Membership Update

It was duly moved and seconded, **‘that Graduate Council approve the changes to the Scholarship Committee membership as set out in the document.’**

The motion was **carried**.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned.