Approval of the Agenda of the Graduate Education Meeting of March 15, 2016

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)

THAT the agenda of the Graduate Education Council meeting of March 15, 2016 be approved.

The motion was CARRIED.

1 For Approval: Minutes of the Graduate Education Council Meeting of November 17, 2015

The minutes of the November 17, 2015 meeting were distributed with the agenda. Professor Elizabeth (Liz) Smyth presents the motion.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)

THAT the minutes of the Graduate Education Council meeting of November 17, 2015 be approved.

The motion was CARRIED.

2 Business Arising from the Minutes

The Dean addressed an item arising from the minutes of the November 17, 2015 meeting regarding conference grants for students. The Dean noted that student members submitted a survey and requested at the GEC (November 2015) to increase the number of conferences travel bursary’s a doctoral student may receive from one to two. In response, the Dean advised GEC that the funds for conference grants no longer exists, as it was leftover NSERC funding. However, SGS is thinking about if these conference grants should be overseen and provided by the graduate units, as SGS is not the best place to be making the decisions about who should receive them. The Dean further noted that UTM and UTSC have programs for additional conference funds, and that SGS will be discussing the matter with the Graduate Deans in the future. A faculty member asked how it would be ensured that students has access to the funding. The Dean responded that one option is to give the conference funding decisions to the Deans and Faculties, as they will have a better sense of how to handle things. A faculty
member noted that conference grants had just been discussed in the Faculty of Dentistry, and equity was based on the assumption that all students could still apply to SGS for funding separately. A faculty member noted that not all departments have equal funding capabilities to provide conference grants. The Dean replied that SGS will collect data across the campuses and then ask the question of how to handle things in a different way, with a transparent discussion between divisions and faculties.

3 Report of the Vice-Provost, Graduate Research and Education

3.1 Vivek Goel Faculty Citizenship Award
The Dean announced that the Vice-Dean, Elizabeth Smyth, recently won the Vivek Goel Faculty Citizenship Award for her lengthy and extraordinary contributions to the University, and invited the GEC to join him in wishing her congratulations.

3.2 SGS Building Renovations
The Dean provided an update on the renovations at 63 St. George. The project required further approvals, resulting in a delay, with the project completion time being moved to Fall 2016. 65 St. George will also receive upgrades, although there will be less work with a small disruption for a couple months.

3.3 Mental Health Initiatives
The Dean advised the GEC on a number of mental health initiatives at SGS done in collaboration with Student Life and the GSU. The Conflict Resolution Centre (CRC) is now open and offers peer-to-peer support for students, and the embedded counsellor at SGS who will be moving from 3 to 5 days per week. The embedded counsellor is also modifying some mental health workshops for graduate students and offering them at SGS. The Dean advised that SGS will be continuing to support student led workshops in the graduate units to help normalize issues students are facing and offer pathways to resolve mental health issues. The Dean advised that moving forward SGS will be doing workshops with faculty members as well. The Dean noted that all of these initiatives have been done in collaborate with the GSU, and welcomes any feedback.

3.4 Graduate Professional Development
The Dean noted that the Graduate Professional Development (GPD) program at SGS has seen an increased growth and diversity of its Graduate Professional Skills (GPS) offerings. The Dean advised the GEC on a new ‘10,000 PhDs’ project that aims to track the last 10,000 doctoral graduates and provide the data gathered to the graduate units. SGS is hopeful this information will help inform graduate programs. The Dean noted that his own department, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, has done a similar project and found the data very useful. The Dean noted the project will also provide the graduate units with a list of alumni that they can engage with. A faculty member asked how many years the project cover. The Dean replied approximately 10 years, with 1000 graduates a year. A faculty member asked how the graduate units can get involved with the project. The Dean replied that SGS will take the first pass on the project, and then go to the graduate units for help. This is to ensure the same methodology is used across different graduate units. A faculty member asked if the alumni will be contacted for advancement purposes. The Dean replied that generally recent graduates in the 5 – 7 year range are not good targets for advancement. A student member noted there is a similar
project called ‘Trace’ that is tracking graduates across Canada. The Dean replied that SGS is aware of it, but prefers to use its own methodology. A faculty member asked if the data can be integrated into other databases so it is not lost. The Dean replied that the hope is for graduate units to carry on the project. A faculty member asked if the professional doctoral Music (DMA) degree can be included. The Dean replied that it can. A student member asked what types of data will be collected. The Dean replied that simple information such as year graduated, current job, sector, and an active email address. The Dean noted that the criteria were set up in consultation with the Conference Board of Canada. A student member asked if this is a privacy issue. The Dean replied that the information gathered will be publically available. A student member asked if incomplete PhDs will be included. The Dean replied that they will not. The Dean also advised the GEC that SGS is getting more involved with internships and experiential learning opportunities for students.

3.5 Internationalization
The Dean advised GEC that the President’s Office is working on an internationalization strategy. As part of this focus, SGS is looking at its current services and practices for graduate students, and comparing itself against other international universities to see where overlap is, and what areas may be missing. The Dean advised that SGS has ongoing consultations, and recently organized international student focus groups to receive feedback on ideas. The Dean noted that often international students are learning about services from each other and not from the source, so SGS is building a central web portal to share all international student services in one place, and developing an international student newsletter similar to the digest in collaboration with the GSU. The Dean advised that SGS is also reviewing the International Visiting Graduate Student (IVGS) program, and is aware that people do not register due to the fees. The Dean advised there is a risk with this, and that SGS is looking to remove the obstacles in the program, such as lowering its fees, to attract more students and prevent unregistered visiting students.

3.6 Time to Completion (TTC) and Graduation Rates
The Dean advised that TTC was discussed at the last GEC, and since then SGS has developed a better understanding of the issues. SGS is building a strategy to address TTC, involving the UTQAP process so that program reviews will ask about TTC and efforts being made to improve it. The Dean advised that SGS is also working on revising the Supervision Guidelines, and to developing best practices which will be shared with the graduate community after further consultations. The Dean advised that SGS is looking to incentivize innovative projects that assist with TTC, is offering resources for projects, and is open to any ideas, projects, or workshops the community may have.

3.7 Graduate Funding and Transparency
The Dean advised that since the last GEC, SGS has published program funding data actuals on the SGS website, and completion rate data will soon be added as well. SGS is will soon be adding base funding information to the website, and is currently developing best practices for funding information. This includes language in admissions letters, funding letters and website language. SGS will be producing templates to encourage consistency. The Dean clarified the pathway of data requests from the graduate units, specifically that they may send requests to Laura Stathopoulos, Associate Director, Graduate Awards and Financial Aid. The Dean advised that Vice-Dean Luc De Nil produced a report with a set of recommendations following a task force in 2014 that looked at graduate student funding.
The report included a number of recommendations, and SGS is working with the GSU to address each of them. The Dean noted the limits on employment income, and the goal to keep reducing it, as well as increased transparency, and a new funding complaints process. The Dean noted the final recommendation is to address all the recommendations by June 2017, and that Professor Sandy Welsh, Vice-Provost, Students, has worked on this a great deal.

4 Updates from the School of Graduate Studies

4.1 Vice-Dean Liz Smyth: Flexible-time Guidelines
The Vice-Dean advised the GEC that Flexible-time PhD Guidelines would be posted online soon. They are currently under development and there is no new information in the document, however they will be centralized in one place for ease of use, including some user-friendly FAQs, as the information is currently scattered across the calendar regulations. These guidelines will be coming to the GEC for information in the fall. There has been consultation with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, Planning and Budget, Government, Institutional and Community Relations, and with several other committees across the University.

4.2 Vice-Dean Liz Smyth: Reconvened Oral Examinations
The Vice-Dean advised that there are currently about 1000 Full Oral Exams (FOEs) per year, with approximately 2 – 5 of those being reconvened. The FOE Guidelines have an inclusion to address when a new external appraiser is appointed for a reconvened FOE. Some clarity will be added to the guidelines, as the current practice is that when an FOE is reconvened it will be the same committee, however sometimes this is not possible, and SGS wants to set out best practices for this.

4.3 Vice-Dean Liz Smyth: Academic Integrity
The Vice-Dean advised that that SGS has been working with graduate units across the University on outreach, and that SGS is also involved with the Academic Integrity Council of Ontario and the International Centre for Academic Integrity, of which the incoming President is Governing Council’s Chris Lang. SGS is planning workshops regarding academic integrity in graduate studies, and any inquiries should be sent to the Vice-Dean’s Office, or to Emma Thacker, Associate Director, Graduate Affairs. The Vice-Dean advised that SGS is planning workshops in the graduate units on best practices when assembling misconduct case files, so that as people and staff change, SGS can to provide an opportunity and space for discussion.

4.2 Josie Lalonde: SGS Statistics
Josie Lalonde provided an overview of the SGS Statistics Report presentation that was included with the agenda package. She noted that this is the fall 2015 snapshot, and that admissions are up 3.1%, with a 7.1% growth in international student registration. A faculty member noted that the government is trying to make it easier for international graduate students to study here, and this is good news.
5 For Approval: Regulations

5.1 Dual Degree Program Definition – Regulation 1.5.7
The Dean advised the GEC on the motion for approval. The University is making strides to become more internationalized, and one initiative is the introduction of the International Dual Degree model. This type of program is new and a brief definition needs to be added to the SGS Calendar. The Dean noted that Daniella Mallinick, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance was in attendance from the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, should there be any questions. Vice-Dean Liz Smyth presented the motion.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the School of Graduate Studies to add a definition of a Dual Degree to the Graduate Programs section (1.5) of the General Regulations, effective September 1, 2016 as follows.

1.5.7 Dual Degree Programs
A dual degree program is a program of study offered in partnership by the University of Toronto and an international peer university, or equivalent institution. In a dual degree program, a student’s successful completion of the program requirements of two existing degree programs is conferred with two degree documents or parchments. Dual degree programs build on a strong academic rationale between the programs in the combination and provide a distinctive academic benefit to students. Dual degree programs are governed by a memorandum of agreement.

The Vice-Dean opened the floor to discussion from GEC on the motion. A faculty member asked how the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) works. Daniella Mallinick replied that the model is the same as Combined Programs, where the respective Deans sign the MOA for the two divisions, and the Provost’s Office is developing a template. A faculty member asked if the initiative for such an MOA comes from the department or elsewhere. Daniella replied that generally the conversation usually starts with individual faculty members and grows on existing faculty collaborations, but the initiative is not top-down. Daniella noted that for the Provost’s Office an expeditious process is a priority, and that they are looking at how to clarify things surrounding the process. A faculty member asks if a single student can study under this model. Daniella replied that there are a suite of options for single students, such as the joint doctoral placement program. A faculty member asked if this was meant to exclude domestic initiatives, and if so, the rationale for this. Daniella replied there is a push for internationalization at the moment. A faculty member asked about the joint degree program. Daniella replied this a single new program, and that the Ministry has a separate accreditation for that type of approval, and the University has not yet engaged in the process. A faculty member asked how many dual degrees are currently available. Daniella replied there is one proposal at the moment, and that it should go through governance in the spring.

Seeing as discussion was finished, the Dean called the question.
5.2 Late Registration Fee Revision
The Dean advised the GEC on the motion for approval. Currently SGS has a service charge to students who register after the deadline. The fee is $44 plus $5/day, up to maximum of $94 (or 10 days late). Determining this payment amount relies on human intervention to assess the appropriate fee. A flat fee will allow for payment online, which will streamline the process. To arrive at the revised fee, research was completed to compare rates across the U15 Canadian institutions. In addition, cost analysis was completed and it was determined that the revenue loss would be approximately neutral, while offering many students the easy of paying online. Vice-Dean Liz Smyth presented the motion.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the School of Graduate Studies to revise the Late Registration Regulation, to remove the incremental fee of $5 dollars per day to a maximum of $94. The language “plus $5 for each day of delay to a maximum of $94”, that has been struck in the Motion, will be removed from the regulations. The late registration fee will be $44, effective September 1, 2016.

Late Registration
Any student registering after the deadline date specified in the academic calendar (sessional dates) is required to pay a late registration fee of $44. plus $5 for each day of delay to a maximum of $94.

Seeing no discussion, the Dean called the question.
The motion is CARRIED.

6 For Approval: Standing Committee Membership

6.1 Graduate Academic Appeals Board - Membership: 2016-2017
The Dean commented that the Graduate Academic Appeals Board is a standing committee of the Graduate Education Council and is governed by a by-law. The motion documentation provides details regarding appointments to GAAB. The GEC is the final approval level for this Board. Vice-Dean Liz Smyth presented the motion.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT Graduate Education Council approve the renewal appointment of three faculty and two student members, the new appointment of one alternate Chair, one faculty and one student member to serve on the Graduate Academic Appeals Board for the 2016-2017 academic year as follows:

Alternate Chair
Angela Fernandez (Renewal - July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019)
(Professor Fernandez is currently Acting GAAB Chair)
Graduate Faculty Members (Division 2)
Michele Peterson-Badali, Human Development & Applied Psychology (Renewal - July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019)
Heather MacNeil, Faculty of Information (New - July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019)

Graduate Faculty Members (Division 4)
Michael J. Wiley, Anatomy (Renewal – July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019)
Rosemary Martino, Speech Language Pathology (Renewal - July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019)

Graduate Student Members
Michael Donnelly, English, Division I (Renewal - July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017)
Rusty Souleymanov, Social Work, Division II (Renewal - July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017)
Boaz Schuman, Medieval Studies, Division I (New - July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017)

Seeing no discussion, the Dean called the question.
The motion is CARRIED.

6.2 Admissions & Programs Committee - Membership: 2016-2017

The Dean commented that the Admissions and Programs Committee is a standing committee of Graduate Education Council and is governed by a by-law. The motion documentation provides details of the committee responsibilities, powers, and membership composition. GEC is the final approval level for this committee. Vice-Dean Liz Smyth presented the motion.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT Graduate Education Council approve the renewal appointment of four faculty members and one graduate student to serve on the Admissions and Programs Committee for the 2016-2017 academic year as follows:

Faculty Member Renewals: (renewal for an additional one year term)
Division I Faculty Member:
Pascal Michelucci, French Language and Literature (September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017)

Division II Faculty Member:
Anna Korteweg, Sociology (September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017)

Division III Faculty Member:
Markus Bussmann, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017)

Division IV Faculty Member:
Howard Mount, Institute of Medical Science (September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017)
Student Members:
Graduate Student Member:
Bogdan Smarandache, Medieval Studies, Division I (September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017)

Seeing no discussion, the Dean called the question.
The motion is CARRIED.

7 GEC Discussion and Consultation Topics

7.1 International Graduate Student Services
The Dean asked the GEC what role SGS should have in international student recruitment. The Dean commented that we see a role for talking about the city. A student member stated that SGS could have a role in the timeline for accepting funding offers. A faculty member asked a question about funding for domestic versus international students, as the funding programs are important for recruiting international students. The Dean replied that work is being done to increase the number of Connaught scholarships, and that the process is being used to identify students. The hope is to have a 50% increase. The Dean welcomed any ideas on this topic as development is being done.

7.2 Mental Health Initiatives
The Dean asked the GEC what more can be done regarding mental health initiatives. The Dean reviewed the efforts already underway at SGS, including a variety of workshops, counselling, developing support communications such as supervisory guidelines, thesis writing groups, and the Conflict Resolution Centre. The Dean welcomed any ideas on what more can be done in the upcoming year, and any suggestions for more efficient means to access to students and spread information. A student member suggested asking the GSU to pass on information to the individual presidents in the graduate units as students do not read the GSU digest. Another student member voiced agreement. A faculty member shared concerns that they were not sure if they were in a good position to speak on behalf of students for this topic. The Dean replied that this is why SGS is working so closely with the GSU, and noted that the GSU is aware of the disconnect with students who are not engaged with them. A student member shared the he had looked at the statistics surrounding mental health issues, and was wondering if there were discussions about preventing mental health issues. The Dean replied that these discussions are happening, one such place is the Conflict Resolution Centre.

7.3 Graduate Funding Transparency
The Dean asked the GEC what more can be done regarding funding transparency. The Dean reviewed the efforts already underway at SGS regarding posting funding actual data online, revising the funding letter templates, and encouraging graduate units to be transparent in their transactions with students. The Dean noted that the project would be nearing completion after publishing the funding templates. A faculty member asked if the goal is to drive inflation of deflation. The Dean responded that is neither, it is about transparency and understanding. A faculty member shared that many students do not understanding their base funding, or the heterogeneity of funding and how it differs between programs, and sometimes between students. The Dean commented that this kind of information is about how their package is composed, and how the University handles these transactions. The Dean noted that often students are paid inconsistent amounts spread throughout the year. The Dean noted
that often UTF funding does not have to be this way, and that making the funding payments regular would help the students. A faculty member shared that many faculty members also do not understand the funding situation, and that the process of dividing up the funds available at the unit level into offers is complicated, and they were unsure how to make things more transparent. The Dean replied that the Faculty of Arts & Science does have a guide coming out for this, and that moving more of the process to the departmental level will help. A faculty member commented that for international students they can offer them UTF, or try and get Trillium or Connaught funding, but it can be complicated. The Dean replied that there is a new guide from the Faculty of Arts & Science, and that Arts & Science is looking to move more down into the departments. The Dean noted this is a conversation that will be held with the chairs in the units. A faculty member shared that they were unsure how to breakdown the numbers in funding letters and how to state living expenses. The Dean replied that SGS is thinking about how to separate it and make it easy to understand. For instance, there can be a column that makes the different amounts clear. A student member shared concerns that institutional memory may be lost, as many discussions that were held during the strike have disappeared. Another student member shared concerns that students often do not consult with the GSU when going to the table to negotiate. The Dean replied that people are recognizing this, and that there is some discussion happening in Arts & Science to form a unit to respond to this.

8 Other Business

None.

9. For Information:

The Dean commented that there are several attachments for information.

9.1 GEC Election Report – Spring 2016
The annual report was distributed with the agenda. The report is for information only, and provides the council with a summary of the spring election new members and remaining vacant seats.

The annual report was distributed with the agenda. The report is based on a snapshot of PDF engagement in 2014-2015. The report focuses on campus affiliation, hospital and other statistics, divisional representation, unit and faculty association and other statistics such as citizenship, gender and stipends.

9.3 Admissions and Programs Committee – Annual Report 2014-2015
The annual report was distributed with the agenda. The report is for information only, and provides the council with a summary of the various non-standard requests that were submitted to SGS and if the request was approved.

9.4 New Awards Report
The SGS New Awards Annual report was distributed with the agenda and developed by the SGS Awards Office. It details the newly established graduate awards. A summary page provides a
breakdown by Faculty and also indicates the total amount from the last reporting year for comparison.

9.5 Name and/or Status Change to Graduate Units or Programs
The report is for information only, and provides the council with a summary of approved name and status changes for graduate units and graduate programs, since our last meeting. It provides basic details on the appeals heard at SGS, including the graduate department of the appellant, the basis for the appeal, and the outcome.

9.6 SGS Registration Statistics
This annual report was distributed with the agenda as a PowerPoint. Thanks to Corinne Pask-Aube, for her contributions in pulling the data.

Closing Remarks

The Dean announced that the next meeting will be scheduled for the fall 2016, and that there may be some new program convocation hood motions emailed out approval prior to that. The Dean advised that the GEC will receive a communication from SGS. The Dean welcomed any questions or feedback.

Seeing no further discussion or questions, the Dean moved to adjournment.

Adjournment

The Dean thanked the Council members for their participation, and extended a special thank you to members who terms are ending for their service on the GEC.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Emma Thacker, Secretary, GEC

Date: March 15, 2016