GRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
of
Tuesday, November 16, 2010, 3:10 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Held in the Council Chamber, Galbraith Building

The Dean called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and visitors at 3:10 p.m.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT the Graduate Education Council meeting of November 16, 2010, will adjourn no later than 5:00 p.m.

The motion was CARRIED.

Approval of the Agenda of the Graduate Education Meeting of November 16, 2010

The Dean asked whether there were any objections to varying the order of business to deal with items 9.1 and 9.2 before item 8. No objections were raised.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT the agenda of the Graduate Education Council meeting of November 16, 2010, be approved as amended.

The motion was CARRIED.

1 Minutes of the Graduate Education Council Meeting of October 19, 2010

The minutes of the October 19, 2010, meeting were distributed with the agenda. The Dean noted a minor correction to the attendance list.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT the minutes of the Graduate Education Council meeting of October 19, 2010, be approved.

As no discussion arose, the Dean called the question.

The motion was CARRIED.

2 Business Arising from the Minutes

2.1 Subsequent Considerations of GEC-approved items

Law, Global Professional Master of Laws (GPLLM) (new degree program)
Final approvals are in place for the Global Professional Master of Laws (GPLLM) program. The proposal is effective September 2011. Detailed approvals: GEC (April 20, 2010); the Academic Policy
and Programs Committee (AP&P) (May 11, 2010), the Planning and Budget Committee (P&B) (May 5, 2010), Academic Board (pending); final approvals from Governing Council (pending) and OCGS (pending).

SGS Constitution

Final approvals are still awaited for the amendments to the SGS Constitution. It becomes effective January 1, 2011. Detailed approvals: GEC (October 19, 2010); AP&P (pending); final approval from the Executive Committee of Governing Council or from Governing Council (pending).

A member noted that in the new governance process outlined in the amended Constitution, most graduate curriculum changes where GEC once had final approval would instead receive final approval by Faculty Councils or AP&P. The member noted that the Graduate Students’ Union (GSU) does not have seats on every Faculty Council, making it more challenging for students to be involved in the process. In response, the Dean agreed that this was a consequence of the new process and that alternate ways of students monitoring and staying informed of proposed curriculum changes are in order. There is an elected graduate student member on every Faculty Council, though not necessarily a GSU representative.

Another member asked whether SGS would have any reporting role in the new governance process and whether SGS would be able to continue keeping graduate units abreast of developments. The Dean responded that this will be done informally.

2.2 Other Business Arising from the Minutes?

There was no other business arising from the minutes.

3 Dean’s Remarks

3.1 Quality Assurance Update

The Dean reported that no Institutional Quality Assurance Plans (IQAP) have yet been approved. The Quality Council has been a bit slow in responding to the plans they requested.

3.2 Fall Add/Drop Date: Possible Adjustment for Next Year

SGS has been examining the question of whether fall add/drop dates are set early enough given that many Faculties now have twelve week terms. The Dean invited opinions, either after the meeting or upon further reflection.

A member expressed the opinion that people are happy with how the dates are currently set. Another member countered that, due to how programs are structured in his graduate unit, it takes a few weeks for students to sort out their courses after they are admitted, and that later dates would be better. The Dean noted that there is likely no universal solution, but there is a need to find dates that best serve the graduate programs at U of T.

3.3 NGSIS Development

SGS has been actively participating in Next-Generation Student Information Systems (NGSIS) projects. We see much room for improvements to the system, as it was designed with undergraduate studies in mind. The NGSIS program will provide web or mobile-based services for students, faculty and administration. It will include the classical functions of a Student Information System and “next generation” features such as co- and extra-curricular elements of a student’s life-cycle interactions with the University.

The Graduate Awards Office was an active participant in the GSAD (Graduate Students Award Disbursement) project which was a complete assessment of the processes and technology involved in administering student fees and awards.
SGS has and will continue to advocate for enhanced functionality to support greater flexibility in course management including modular courses, credit weights and timetabling. Particularly anticipated is the release of cross system communication tools so that SGS can integrate the online application system with the ROSI database and so services can be built that call on live data in ROSI (e.g., enrolment confirmation, graduation requests and assessment tracking, and online awards application).

The largest project and a significant improvement and replacement of ROSI functionality would be a web based supervisory module with faculty access to track supervisory meetings and outcomes as well as the final oral exam process.

A member asked whether the consultation process involved staff as well as students. Heather Kelly, SGS Director of Student Services responded that SGS had two NGSIS “road shows” in the fall term: one for graduate administrators, the other for graduate coordinators. All graduate administrators were invited to express their wish list. SGS will repeat these road shows this winter.

4 Report of the Vice-Dean, Programs

Vice-Dean Liz Smyth reported that there will be further discussion on flexible-time PhD guidelines at the Council of Graduate Deans (CGD) and the Committee on Program Matters (CPM). Some feedback is desired about defining practicing professionals and what candidacy might look like in the flexible-time option. Members will be hearing more in the future.

The Vice-Dean also reported that developing an online process for Graduate Faculty membership is a priority in SGS. It would function in a similar way to the online Final Oral Exam process.

5 Report of the Vice-Dean, Students

Vice-Dean Berry Smith noted that the External Awards Success Rate Report for agenda item 11 was distributed at the start of the meeting, and thanked Krista Steeves, SGS Assistant Director of Student Services for putting it together. It is an attempt to summarize the process and results of annual competitions for federal tri-agency awards and for OGS, the provincial granting agency. Members were reminded that SGS cannot do much about these results, as they are often determined by quotas from the agencies, presumably based on successes in previous years. Colleagues who have served on adjudication panels are SGS’s primary source of information on criteria that are actually used, political considerations, evening out of process across institutions, or other factors that are weighed. Most results are reasonably consistent with previous years.

For 2010-11, U of T has 66 CIHR master’s awards - less than was expected. However, the success rate remains the same (81%), making it difficult to know if this is an anomaly or not.

With respect to Vanier awards, U of T did not do quite as well this year compared to last year. Last year was exceptional because it was the award’s initial year; U of T was well prepared to respond that year, and reached its quota whereas many institutions did not. Therefore, that this year’s results are lower than last year’s is not unexpected. The results still seem relatively good.

The OGS statistics are somewhat unfortunate. Despite a shift towards greater graduate enrolment, the number of OGS awards had not yet increased. If anything, the number went down slightly compared to the last two years. It would be nice to know how well the University did, compared to other institutions, but this information is difficult to obtain.

A member asked for clarification regarding the fact that 66 CIHR awards were received but the report says that the quota will be reduced to 29. Ms. Steeves replied that those are the results from last year’s competition. This year’s CIHR competition is coming in January and February, and it is known that U of T will be able to make 29 submissions. She agreed with the member that the reduction was significant, and explained that the award’s previous growth was linked to Canada’s economic action plan; the quota is being reduced now that the economic action plan is drawing to a close.
6 New Collaborative Master’s and Doctoral Program in Resuscitation Sciences

The proposal was approved by Faculty of Medicine Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) on October 14, 2010. Members were directed to read the motion sheet for prior discussion of this item. GEC approval is the final University approval. The proposal will be submitted to OCGS for appraisal.

The Dean called on Vice-Dean Smyth to present the motion.

**MOTION (duly moved and seconded)**

THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the Faculty of Medicine for a new graduate Collaborative Master’s and Doctoral Program in Resuscitation Sciences, to be housed within SGS Division IV (Life Sciences) for administrative purposes, and with the Faculty of Medicine as the program’s lead Faculty, effective September 2011.

Professor Laurie Morrison and Ms. Sandra Iverson were available to speak to the item and answer questions. Professor Morrison thanked SGS, as well as Professor Andrea Sass-Kortsak and Ms. Jennifer Francisco from the Faculty of Medicine, for their support.

A member noted that the program is based on short-term funding, and asked what would happen if new funding sources were not found. The Dean replied that the University’s commitment is that any student who begins a program will be able to continue to completion. The Faculty would be expected to cover funding if necessary. From a student perspective, short-term funding should pose no problem. Professor Morrison added that funding was based on network infrastructure used by the US NIH; they were now inviting this Canadian program into it. The grant has been renewed at least four times for US institutions.

Seeing no further questions, the Dean Called the question.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

7 Program Closure: Collaborative Master’s Program in International Relations

The proposal was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Science Three Campus Graduate Curriculum Committee (3CGC) on October 26, 2010. Members were directed to read the motion sheet for prior discussion of this item. GEC approval is final. It will also be sent to OCGS for information.

The Dean called on Vice-Dean Smyth to present the motion.

**MOTION (duly moved and seconded)**

THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the Faculty of Arts and Science to cease admissions to the Collaborative Master’s Program in International Relations program, effective immediately, and to close the program when there are no more students registered in it.

Professor Steven Bernstein was available to speak to the item and answer questions. Professor Bernstein explained that the program had run its course and that another program, the Global Affairs program had recently commenced which covered a similar area. In response to a question from a member, Professor Bernstein assured Council that students currently in the program would have the courses needed to complete the program made available to them.

Seeing no further discussion, the Dean called the question.

The motion was **CARRIED**.
8 Admission and Program Requirement Changes: Comparative Literature, MA, PhD

[This item was dealt with after items 9.1 and 9.2.]

The proposal was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Science 3CGC on October 26, 2010. GEC approval is final. The Dean called on Vice-Dean Smyth to present the three motions. The motions were considered separately.

**MOTION (duly moved and seconded)**

THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the Faculty of Arts and Science to change the admission and program requirements to introduce a direct-entry option to the PhD in the Comparative Literature program. To be admitted, students coming out of an undergraduate program must demonstrate exceptional ability to undertake advanced research in two languages and literatures other than English. Students entering the program this way must complete at least 8.5 FCE overall, of which 4.5 FCE must be COL courses. This change is effective September 2011.

Professor Neil ten Kortenaar was available to speak to the item and answer questions.

A member wondered if students would receive a master’s degree during their progress in case they did not complete the PhD. The Dean replied that this has been a recurring topic of discussion and that many would like to see this happen; however, the Provincial Government would require a return of its funding in such cases, which has stopped most attempts to implement such a process.

Another member asked whether most US programs in comparative literature had a direct-entry PhD with similar requirements. Professor ten Kortenaar replied in the affirmative.

Seeing no further discussion, the Dean called the question.

The motion was CARRIED.

**MOTION (duly moved and seconded)**

THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the Faculty of Arts and Science to change the program requirements of the MA in Comparative Literature by removing the two-year option in the program, effective immediately.

Professor ten Kortenaar noted that the two-year option had not had any enrolment in years. A member asked about the original motivation to offer this option. Professor ten Kortenaar replied that it had been thought that applicants without a background in languages might be admitted but require two years to ready themselves for doctoral level work. In practice, it was found that such applicants were not successful in seeking admission to the program at all.

Seeing no further discussion, the Dean called the question.

The motion was CARRIED.

**MOTION (duly moved and seconded)**

THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the Faculty of Arts and Science to change the program requirements of the PhD in the Comparative Literature program by reducing the overall requirements from 5.0 to 4.5 FCE, effective immediately.
Professor ten Kortenaar explained that the proposal had to do with the pace students go through the program. This sends a clear message that students should be finished courses in a year and a half; it was found that the extra half course made students drag coursework out longer than they should. A member asked whether it was accurate that similar programs at other institutions have a similar requirement. Professor ten Kortenaar replied that steps had been taken to ensure the program would not be out of line with the norm. A member asked whether there would have been consideration for keeping the half-course if the University’s funding package was not limited to five years. Professor ten Kortenaar replied that keeping the half-course would likely still not have been considered. He further explained that the graduate unit was seeking some balance between breadth, background and ensuring students complete their program in reasonable time.

A member asked for clarification that the direct-entry option requires 8.5 FCE while the normal PhD would require 4.5. Professor ten Kortenaar replied that this was the intent of the proposal. The Dean noted that this was made clear in the Calendar entry.

A member asked whether a direct-entry PhD student could finish in four years. Professor ten Kortenaar replied that direct-entry students would work at the same pace as students progressing through the program to an MA and then a PhD, that is, five years. The number of FCEs required in each case are identical. The Dean noted that in the US, similar programs would remove the option of obtaining an MA and a PhD, and simply offer a direct-entry PhD. Seeing no further discussion, the Dean called the question.

The motion was CARRIED.

The Dean noted that this was a historic moment, as it could be the last of the program proposals coming before this Council for consideration.

9 Program Requirement Changes:
[These items were dealt with before item 8.]

9.1 Law & Global Affairs, JD/MGA, Combined Program
The proposal was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Science 3CGC on October 26, 2010. There was no substantive discussion at the meeting. GEC approval is final. The Dean called on Vice-Dean Smyth to present the motion.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Arts and Science to change the program requirements of the combined JD/MGA in Law and Global Affairs by replacing the requirement of a Supervised Upper Year Research course with a the requirement of an International, Comparative or Transnational Law course, effective September 2011.

Professor Steven Bernstein explained that change is a result of changes to the requirements for the JD. The changes need to be reflected in the combined program. Seeing no discussion, the Dean called the question.

The motion was CARRIED.
9.2 Statistics, MSc

The proposal was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Science 3CGC on October 26, 2010. There was no substantive discussion at the meeting. GEC approval is final. The Dean called on Vice-Dean Smyth to present the motion.

MOTION (duly moved and seconded)
THAT Graduate Education Council approve the proposal of the Faculty of Arts and Science to change the program requirements of the MSc in the Statistics program by removing the option of 3.5 FCE overall, composed of STA 3000Y plus five 0.5 FCE. All students will now be required to complete 4.0 FCE overall, one of which may be an approved supervised reading project (this was an option previously). This change is effective September 2011.

Professor Jeffrey Rosenthal explained that students in the master’s program have been allowed to take STA 3000Y, a doctoral-level course, and get a bonus of an extra half credit. This proposal “levels the playing field” for all students.

Seeing no discussion, the Dean called the question.

The motion was CARRIED.

10 Other Business
There was no other business.

11 For Information: External Awards Success Rate Report
A member asked whether the introduction of the new Doctoral Completion Award (DCA) program had been completed for the fall. Vice-Dean Smith replied in the affirmative. The member noted that some uncertainty existed over what methods were used to evaluate applications, and asked whether these could be explained. The Vice-Dean asked whether the member had received the SGS memorandum explaining the DCA; the member replied that the memorandum had been received and appreciated, but that it was not sufficiently illuminating.

The Vice-Dean explained that an adjudication committee had met and discussed questions, including how adjudication decisions were to be made. SGS had already checked applications before the committee met. As this was the DCA’s inaugural year, there were a lot of unknowns. The key point to remember is that the DCA is supposed to provide funding to students who are taking longer than might be normal in their particular area because of circumstances beyond their control. This was not always easy to define, and a number of applications from students in need had to be rejected. The committee came close to making awards to all eligible students. The limiting factor was the fixed amount of money available. This year it was necessary to spend over half of the funds on grandparented students. About 100 new awards were provided. Beyond that, the committee had to make decisions on the basis of a wide range of things that are difficult to categorize.

The member responded that some of the uncertainty arose out of not being certain what factors to emphasize in one’s application. It had been surprising to see that certain people received a DCA while certain others did not. The member asked whether any attempts to make the process clearer and communications more transparent were planned for future years. The Vice-Dean replied that there were plans to communicate the application criteria more explicitly in future in order to reduce the number of applications to process and the number of disappointed people. The Dean added that it was not unexpected for students to apply for an award even when they did not meet the criteria. The DCA was
clearly targeting students who were in the first year past the funding year and yet many students applied who were further along than that. In general, feedback has been positive regarding the DCA.

The member further asked what constitutes a normal delay in program completion versus an abnormal delay. Vice-Dean Smith replied that this was not known with any great certainty, and often varied from discipline to discipline. The member suggested that perhaps each graduate unit should be asked to forward documentation on how to adjudicate what is normal and abnormal in a particular discipline. Vice-Dean Smyth noted that this information could be included in the supervisor’s statement on the application. Another member noted that it was strongly in the supervisor’s interests that their students receive funding. Vice-Dean Smith agreed that if an incentive exists to presenting an application in the most favorable light, it would likely happen; all these factors come into play, and indeed time to completion can vary even within a graduate unit. Some units are passionate to have students take six years because it makes them more competitive. It is very hard to determine the overall effect of all these factors. It would be better to emphasize on an application those things that, even with good planning, could not necessarily have been anticipated.

Heather Kelly added that a number of students had submitted applications on the basis of personal financial need but that this was not one of the criteria for the DCA. Those students should apply to SGS’s emergency grant program. Nevertheless, it was decided not to offer the DCA to students who were receiving $10,000 net or more from other sources. She also noted that applications had been received that might otherwise have been successful if more resources were available.

A member asked whether the committee relied solely on the students’ self-reporting or whether any fact-checking had been done. Vice-Dean Smith replied that the applications had not been checked, and that SGS was learning from this experience and would try to get clearer instructions to match expectations with results. However, adjudicating such an award will always be an imprecise art. The Dean added that if anyone could provide definitions of normal versus abnormal delays, this would be helpful, although it would likely vary among units.

12 Adjournment

• The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.
Appendix to the Minutes

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Record of Attendance
GRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL
November 16, 2010

Present (Voting & Non-voting Members)

Corman, Brian (Chair)
Baker, Robert
Bayat Movahed, Hanif
Bina, Bardia
Campbell, Elizabeth
Campbell, Malcolm
Capotorto, Arianna
Crapo, Adleen
Damaren, Chris
Daniere, Amrita
De Nil, Luc
Gaitana, Gianina
Joseph, Jemy
Julian, Stephen
Litvack, Andrea
MacKay, Gillian
Martini, Pauline
O’Hogan, Cillian
Piccardo, Enrica
Piccin, David
Rosenthal, Jeffrey
Sass-Kortsak, Andrea
Smith, Berry
Smyth, Elizabeth
St-Amour, Michelle
Stiles, David
Tannock, Rosemary
Tsao, Eugenia

In Attendance (Guests & SGS Staff)

Ball, Megan
Bernstein, Steven
Francisco, Jennifer
Hurlhe, Victoria
Iverson, Sandy
Makarova, Vesna
Morrison, Laurie
Rutchinski, Steve
Steeves, Krista
Ten Kortenaar, Neil
Yee-Sloan, Lily

Absent

Keith, Alison
Knight, Keith
Noyes, John
Papangelakis, Vladimiro
Pirraglia, Daniela

Alderdice, Jane (Secretary to Council)
Purandaré, Anil (Assistant to Secretary)