

**GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL**  
**Academic Planning and Priorities Committee**  
Approved Minutes

June 5, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

Governors Boardroom A167

---

***Voting Members***

Penny Werthner, Co-Chair  
Tara Beattie, Academic Co-Chair  
Barbara Brown  
Marjan Eggermont  
Michael Hart  
Dawn Johnston  
Malinda Smith\*

***Non-Voting Members***

Hannah Ashton  
Melanie Zimmer

***Regrets***

Kristin Baetz  
Mark Bauer  
Shazia Jinnah Morsette  
Kirsten Neprily  
Dora Tam

***Invited Guests***

Gopal Achari, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, Schulich School of Engineering – present for Item 4  
Jeff Caird, Professor, Department of Psychology – present for Item 4  
Reed Ferber, Director, Interdisciplinary Specialization in Wearable Technology – present for Item 5  
Mary Grantham O'Brien, Senior Associate Dean (Policy and Program Development), Faculty of Graduate Studies  
– present for Item 3  
Kristen Penrose, Program Coordinator, Wearable Technology – present for Item 4  
Qiao Sun, Department Head (on leave), Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering – present for Item 5

\* via Zoom

***Secretary***

Courtney McVie

***Scribe***

Cherie Tutt

***Resource Personnel***

Jaclyn Carter, Institute for Teaching and Learning,  
Consultant – present for Items 4 – 7  
Kelly Hoglund, Partner, Program Innovation Hub – present  
for Items 4 – 7  
Christine Johns, Senior Director, Program Innovation and  
Planning  
Cathy McLaughlin, Grant Writer, Schulich School of  
Engineering – present for Items 5 & 6  
Elizabeth Pando, Partner, Program Innovation Hub –  
present for Items 4 – 7

---

The Academic Co-Chair provided the territorial acknowledgement and called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Agenda for the June 5, 2023 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting be approved.

**Carried****2. Remarks of the Co-Chair and Academic Co-Chair**

The Co-Chair thanked the Committee members for their diligence and acknowledged the time commitment required of members to review the large meeting packages. Melanie Zimmer was congratulated for graduating with an Executive Master of Business Administration degree at convocation last week.

**3. Approval of the May 1 and May 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Minutes of the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meetings held on May 1 and May 15, 2023, be approved, with the requested clarification to the May 1, 2023 Minutes.

**Carried****4. Approval of the Addition of the Interdisciplinary Specialization in Wearable Technology to the Master of Science (thesis-based) and Doctor of Philosophy programs in Psychology and the Master of Science (thesis-based) and Doctor of Philosophy programs in Computational Media Design**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Mary Grantham O'Brien, Reed Ferber, Jeff Caird, and Kristen Penrose presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents reported that the proposals being presented to the Committee are to expand the existing Interdisciplinary Specialization in Wearable Technology (WTEC) to the MSc (thesis-based) and PhD programs in Psychology and Computational Media Design due to student demand
- It was reported that the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) is recommending these proposals and that the changes requested by the GAPS to address the connection between psychology and wearable technology have been made
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
  - The WTEC courses required for the Interdisciplinary Specialization will need to be taken extra to the Psychology course requirements. However, students may be able to use these courses as elective options and will be supported by the WTEC coordinator to navigate their requirements. The scheduling of the WTEC courses in block week is meant to increase flexibility. Additionally, students completing a PhD are expected to complete the courses following candidacy.
  - In response to feedback received earlier in the process, the proposals include a strategy with various options for responding to reduced funding to ensure the sustainability of the program, and the measure to reduce expenses by shifting responsibilities from the program coordinator to the research staff is deemed unlikely to occur

- It was suggested that:
  - The proponents plan to engage with the Office of Indigenous Engagement and soon to be hired consultant within the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning on curricular opportunities to reflect *ii' taa'poh'to'p*, the University's Indigenous Strategy
  - It would be beneficial to specifically list the equity-deserving groups, if a specific group is in mind, versus using the phrase "other equity-deserving groups" to avoid unintended inequities
- The Committee recommended that the number of courses required for the Psychology program be reviewed to ensure accuracy and that the Calendar entry for Psychology clearly articulate that the WTEC courses are required extra to program and the program consider the impact to student workload and what additional supports may be needed

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposal to add the Interdisciplinary Specialization in Wearable Technology to the MSc (thesis-based) and PhD programs in Psychology, as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

**Carried****Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposal to add the Interdisciplinary Specialization in Wearable Technology to the MSc (thesis-based) and PhD programs in Computational Media Design, as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

**Carried**

**5. Approval of the creation of: The Specialization in Reliability Engineering and Predictive Maintenance and the Specialization in Mechatronics Engineering within the Graduate Certificates in Advanced Engineering Practice I and II**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Mary Grantham O'Brien, Qiao Sun, and Gopal Achari presented this item.

**Highlights:**

- The proponents reported that the addition of two new specializations, the Specialization in Reliability Engineering and Predictive Maintenance and the Specialization in Mechatronics Engineering, are being created in response to student and industry demand and will serve to increase the diversity of offerings within the Graduate Certificates in Advanced Engineering Practice I and II
- It was reported that the GAPS was strongly supportive of the creation of these specializations and that all feedback from the GAPS has been incorporated into the proposals
- In response to a question, the proponents outlined the supports that the Schulich School of Engineering (SSE) has in place for Indigenous students and noted that the SSE is fully committed to promoting these Certificates to attract Indigenous students

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of:

1. The Specialization in Reliability Engineering and Predictive Maintenance; and
2. The Specialization in Mechatronics Engineering

within the Graduate Certificates in Advanced Engineering Practice I and II, effective for Fall 2023, as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

**Carried**

**6. Approval of the Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Mary Grantham O'Brien and Gopal Achari presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents provided an overview of the proposal to create a new PhD in Engineering, explaining that all current PhD programs in the SSE are tied to specific departments and that the PhD in Engineering will provide greater flexibility to respond to growth of new fields in Engineering by developing and offering a number of sub-specializations which will be inherently interdisciplinary and supported interdepartmentally. At this time the SSE is proposing to create one sub-specialization in Sustainable Systems Engineering (SUSE), with plans for other interdisciplinary sub-specializations to be developed in the future.
- It was reported that the GAPS feedback on the PhD in Engineering proposal focused on concerns around the timing of the internship component of the program and time to completion and the impacts these may have on student experience, as well as the staffing complement to support the program. It was noted the SSE has now addressed these concerns in the proposal.
- The Committee discussed the parallelism between SUSE and the practices of Indigenous peoples, highlighting the opportunity to show the parallels and differences within the SUSE sub-specialization and encouraged the proponents to reach out to the Office of Indigenous Engagement for support in doing this
- The Committee requested that:
  - The proposal be updated to reflect the different admission strategies and supports for each of the equity-deserving groups that the SSE hopes to attract to this program, noting the importance of recognizing that the admission strategies and supports will differ across the groups
  - The reference to the Indigenous Research Support Team as a student service be removed, as this group is not oriented towards students
  - The listing for the Faculty Council November 17, 2022 meeting in the routing table be revised to confirm Engineering versus Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) Council

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of a PhD in Engineering with a sub-specialization in Sustainable Systems Engineering (SUSE), as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee and as recommended by GAPS with the requested amendments.

Carried

**7. A. Approval for the Creation of the Graduate Certificate in Transdisciplinary Studies I, the Graduate Certificate in Transdisciplinary Studies II, and the Master of Transdisciplinary Studies (course-based), including a ladder pathway**

**B. Approval of the Creation of the Specialization in Community Health Sciences within the Master of Transdisciplinary Studies**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Mary Grantham O'Brien presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent reported that the creation of the course-based Graduate Certificates I and II and the Masters of Transdisciplinary Studies will establish a framework into which sub-specializations can be brought. At the outset, five sub-specializations will be offered, with ongoing work to expand this in the future. It was explained that students who register in the certificates will take discipline-specific courses and one transdisciplinary scholarship (TDST) course, and will need to complete a different sub-specialization for each certificate. The Master's program capstone project will bring students who have completed the certificates into transdisciplinary teams to approach real-world problems.
- The proponent then explained that a Specialization in Community Health Sciences within the Master of Transdisciplinary Studies is also being proposed, for students who complete the Graduate Certificates in Community Health Sciences I and II, which are inherently transdisciplinary, but currently have no appropriate Master's program to ladder to. Prior to starting the Master of Transdisciplinary Studies, students will be required to complete 1.5 units of TDST courses.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
  - The budget for the new Management and Professional Staff (MaPS) and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) positions was split between this proposal and the thesis-based proposal that was approved by the Committee at its May 1, 2023 meeting, and a note to explain this will be added to the current proposal
  - Money for ethics support has been included in the budget to address the extra workload these programs will create for the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB)
  - The discipline offering the sub-specialization will be responsible for overseeing admission to the program. The expectation set by the FGS is that admissions processes are fair, just, and equitable, and the FGS conducts regular audits on various graduate program admissions to ensure this and will be looking closely at the data from the various sub-specializations.
  - The possible increase in the size of seminars has been considered and this can be managed through the admissions process or by ensuring the capacity of instructors to teach an extra section. It is not intended that discipline specific seats will be taken by these programs.
  - There are limited funding opportunities for course-based programs, but the FGS has sent letters to various community organizations seeking support with the intent that more scholarships will be created
  - It is difficult at the outset to say with certainty who the future students will be, but it is believed that the ladder pathway model improves accessibility and will be more attractive to individuals from equity-deserving groups. The FGS recognizes that the supports for different equity-deserving groups are nuanced.

- The TDST courses will be designed using a framework such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to ensure an equitable learning environment for students. There is also intent to bring in instructors from various backgrounds, such as Indigenous Elders.

- The FGS is working with several units across campus to reach out to community partners, and the intent is that the capstone projects will be set/driven by the needs of these partners. It will be possible for a student to complete an individual capstone project, but it still must centre around a real-world problem.
- The Committee discussed:
  - The potential for the Graduate Certificates in Engineering Practice I and II to ladder to the Master of Transdisciplinary Studies, as well as other Graduate Certificates that currently have no Master's to ladder into
  - Concerns about the Graduate Certificates not having enough transdisciplinarity, because there are only 1.5 units of TDST coursework embedded into the certificates, learning outcomes for students in a discipline specific program will need to be met within the other courses being taught, and the course instructors may not have been trained in a transdisciplinary way
  - That it would be beneficial for instructors to receive training in transdisciplinary teaching and for the units involved to have regular points of engagement so there is cross-collaboration. It was also suggested that integrated teaching may benefit these programs and further help to break down silos.
  - Oversight and decision making on admission to the certificates
  - That future sub-specializations may naturally arise from other transdisciplinary initiatives on campus, such as the creation of Institutes for Transdisciplinary Scholarship
  - The importance of understanding the different pathways to admission and supports required for different equity-deserving groups and that it is the University's responsibility to consider this and to differentiate these various pathways
  - The content of the TDST courses and how these courses will bring the content from a student's other courses together to connect and enforce transdisciplinary thinking
  - That the nature of Indigenous scholarship is often transdisciplinary, and there are concerns that the perspectives of Indigenous Scholars are not reflected in the proposals because there was a lack of consultation with Indigenous groups, and that this is a missed opportunity when creating new programs. The Committee suggested that follow-up occur to determine why the planned meeting with the *ii' taa'poh'to'p* working group did not occur.
  - The influence that the FGS and the future Graduate College for Transdisciplinary Scholarship can have to ensure the various programs under the transdisciplinary umbrella are responding to the University's strategies and priorities, including *ii' taa'poh'to'p*
  - The importance of interweaving Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) and Indigenous ways of knowing and being into the curricular development process
  - That this is a framework and starting point for transdisciplinary learning at the University
- The Committee recommended that the FGS make it a priority to look at standardizing possible inconsistencies across the sub-specializations, such as usage of different grading schemes, as these may impact student experience
- The Committee suggested that a footnote be added to the proposal to explain UDL and what is meant by hybrid learning approaches

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of the Graduate Certificate in Transdisciplinary Studies I, the Graduate Certificate in Transdisciplinary Studies II, and the Master of Transdisciplinary Studies, Faculty of Graduate Studies, as set out in the proposals provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

**Carried**

Michael Hart and Malinda Smith abstained.

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of the Specialization in Community Health Sciences within the Master of Transdisciplinary Studies, as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee, contingent upon the Ministry of Advanced Education's approval of the Graduate Certificates in Community Health Sciences I and II, with the requested amendments.

**Carried**

Malinda Smith abstained.

**7. Subcommittee Reports from the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee May 17 meeting and the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee May 18 Meeting**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

**8. Status of Program Approvals Report**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only. Questions can be directed to the Program Innovation and Planning office.

**9. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**10. Motion to Adjourn****Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee adjourn the June 5, 2023 meeting.

**Carried**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.



University Secretary