



General Faculties Council  
**GRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE**  
APPROVED MINUTES

April 17, 2024, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

AD 167 (Governors Boardroom)

***Voting Members***

Tara Beattie (Co-Chair) - left during Item 5  
Qiao Sun (Academic Co-Chair)  
Amy Burns\*  
Amy Dambrowitz  
Andy Knight  
Justin MacCallum  
Kimberly Lenters  
Kirsten Neprily\*  
Oleksiy Osiyevskyy

***University Secretary***

Courtney McVie

***Meeting Secretary***

Michelle Speta

***Scribe***

Holly Lywin

***Regrets***

Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci

***Non-Voting Members***

Christine Johns  
Francine Smith\*  
Louise Wells\*

***Guests***

Wendy Benoit, Interim Vice-Provost, Teaching & Learning – present for Item 4  
Caroline O'Shea\*, Project Associate, Student & Enrolment Services – present for Item 8  
Verity Turpin, Vice-Provost (Student Experience) – present for Item 8  
Vanessa Wood, Deputy Registrar – present for Item 4

***Observers and Resource Personnel***

Catherine McLeod\*, Senior Director, Strategic Operations, Faculty of Graduate Studies

*\*Attended virtually*

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The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and confirmed quorum.

**1. Traditional Land Acknowledgement and Approval of the Agenda**

The Academic Co-Chair provided the Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Agenda for the April 17, 2024 Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved.

**Carried**

## 2. Remarks of the Co-Chairs

The Co-Chairs provided opening Committee remarks including:

- Thanks to Kirsten Neprily, Vice-President (Academic) of the Graduate Students' Association for her contributions to the Committee on the occasion of her last meeting
- Congratulations to Committee Co-Chair Tara Beattie, on her appointment as Dean and Vice-Provost of Graduate Studies as of April 1, 2024

The Co-Chairs also shared that the proposals for the terminations of the thesis-based Master of Engineering (MEng) degree program and the Graduate Certificate in Pipeline Engineering were approved by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC).

## 3. Approval of the March 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee approve the minutes from the March 13, 2024 meeting.

**Carried**

## 4. Recommendation for the Changes to the Academic Regulations: Section E. *Course Information* and Section G. *Academic Assessments and Examinations*

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Amy Dambrowitz, Registrar, Wendy Benoit, Interim Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, and Vanessa Wood, Deputy Registrar, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided the rationale for the proposed changes to the academic regulations Sections E and G, noting that ongoing institutional discussions will shape the development of a “principles of assessment” document to support these regulations. Revisions to these regulations are related to but distinct from academic regulation Section M.1.
- Substantive changes in Section E.1 included:
  - Requiring course outlines to include a list of all assessments and their weights towards the final grade, as well as the dates of the assessments
  - Clarifying procedures for missed assessments (aligning with Section G)
  - Detailing permitted versus prohibited resources/tools, such as books and generative AI tools
  - Updates to definitions for required and recommended readings/texts
- Substantive changes in Section G. were made to ensure consistency in regulations across in-course assessments, final assessments, and examinations, and included updates to definitions and assessment principles. The changes also provide clarity for in-course assessment regulations, absences, and scheduling, as well as transparency for final examination and assessment regulations, including take-home exams.

- In response to questions, it was explained that:
  - For frequent, low-weight assessments (e.g., daily quizzes), course outlines can include a broad schedule and the specific weights for each assessment, along with a timeframe for when specific assessment dates will be shared. However, all details should be provided in the course outline for any high weight assessments (e.g., the midterm exam).
- The Committee’s discussion included:
  - How the current structure does not allow for a Dean or their delegate to intervene in an instructor’s assessment decision outside of the grade reappraisal process
  - There may be situations in which transferring more than 50% of a course’s weight to the final exam is the best solution and there should be a mechanism for such a decision to be possible
- The Committee requested the following amendments:
  - G.2.3 Absence from In-Course Assessments:
    - Addition of: “Students should refer to Section E.1 (b) and their course outline for information on what students should do if they have missed a required component of the course.”
    - Addition of a part iv) to subsection b): “In extenuating circumstances, if alternative arrangements cannot be reached, the Dean or designate will approve the transfer weight that exceeds the 50% maximum for a final examination.”
  - G.3.3 Deferred Final Examinations:
    - Addition of: “The authority to approve or deny deferred final examinations lies within the teaching Faculty for graduate students”, to clarify that the decision-making authority is with the student’s home graduate program, not the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Graduate Academic Programs Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the changes to the Academic Regulations: Section E. *Course Information* and Section G. *Academic Assessments and Examinations*, effective immediately, as set out in the document provided to the Committee, with the requested amendments.

**Carried**

### **5. Approval of the Revised Calendar Entries for Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Courses MDPS 649 and 650, Cumming School of Medicine**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Louise Wells, Lead, Graduate Calendar, Policy and Program Development, presented this item.

#### Highlights:

- The presenter shared that the MPAS program Calendar entry and course list were approved by this Committee in March 2024. Following approval, it was discovered that two of the proposed formal topic courses, MDPS 649 and 650, erroneously included the notation “MAY BE REPEATED FOR CREDIT”. The proposed edit to both MDPS 649 and 650 is to remove this notation.
- In response to questions, it was explained that the notation is only intended for informal topics courses. Students should only take each of these courses once in succession.

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee approve the revisions to the Calendar entries for the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Program courses MDPS 649 and 650, effective for the 2024-2025 Calendar, as set out in the document provided to the Committee.

**Carried****6. Approval of the Calendar Entry for Chemistry (CHEM) 654, Faculty of Science**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Justin MacCallum, Associate Dean (Graduate), Faculty of Science, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter outlined the proposed changes to the Chemistry (CHEM) 654 Calendar entry, requested by the APPC
- The course title and description were revised to remove the word “teaching” and clarify that the course focuses on mentorship and collaboration, and does not provide formal training for teaching assistantships or lead to a teaching credential

**Moved/Seconded**

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee approve the Calendar entry for the course Chemistry 654 in the Faculty of Science, effective immediately, as set out in the document provided to the Committee.

**Carried**

*Secretary's Note: Item 8 was presented before Item 7*

**7. Updates to the Non-credit Professional and Continuing Education Credentials Framework Discussion**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Christine Johns, Associate Deputy Provost and Professional and Continuing Education (PaCE) Working Group Co-Chair, presented this item for discussion.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the proposed updates to the Non-Credit Professional and Continuing Education Credentials Framework, which include the introduction of a micro-credential category that would allow students to apply both credit and non-credit courses towards a non-credit/professional micro-credential
- In response to questions, it was explained:
  - Non-credit micro-credentials cannot be used for laddering credit towards a degree program, but credit courses taken as part of the non-credit micro-credential may be considered for advanced credit towards a degree program
  - Continuing Education courses are guided by their own approved framework and not governed by the Ministry of Advanced Education. However, non-credit courses undergo review by an academic advisory committee for research-informed content.

- The possibility of transferring non-credit courses into credit programs via a learning recognition assessment would need to be formalized early in the program's design, very rarely occurs, and is not currently under consideration. The current proposal is only to allow for credit courses to apply towards non-credit programs.
- Credit courses that a student takes towards a non-credit microcredential would be recorded in the Registrar's Office system (PeopleSoft), separately from non-credit courses recorded in Continuing Education's system (Destiny One). The two units are working collaboratively on future options for digital recognition of micro-credentials (e.g., digital badges).
- Graduate-level courses are only open to registered students. There are no graduate-level Open Studies students.
- The Committee suggested clarifying language be added to the proposal to outline how non-credit and credit courses are managed through separate student records systems

### **8. M1 (Supporting Documentation) Academic Regulation Review Discussion**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Verity Turpin, Vice-Provost (Student Experience), presented this item for discussion.

Highlights:

- The presenter gave an overview of changes aimed at improving the clarity of regulations for documentation used to verify absences from assessments and examinations. Key changes include listing specific documentation options for students who miss an assessment and addressing in-course assessments separately from final examinations/assessments.
- It was emphasized that Section M.1 is about documentation options for students, while Sections E and G focus on communication between students and instructors. The Committee suggested that links to Sections G and E be referenced earlier in the M.1 regulation to clarify the relationship between the sections.
- Future considerations include a website with resources to operationalize the regulation
- A special thank you was extended to the M.1. Working Group for their involvement in the extensive stakeholder consultation over the past year

### **9. Revisions to the GAPS Terms of Reference**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Courtney McVie, University Secretary, presented this item for discussion.

Highlights:

- The presenter outlined that a comprehensive review of the Committee's Terms of Reference is completed every three years. Proposed revisions are discussed with the Co-Chairs and the Committee, and then recommended by the APPC to the General Faculties Council Executive Committee for final approval.
- The substantive change being proposed is granting the Committee the authority to approve graduate program suspensions. This was prompted by a Ministry of Advanced Education process change whereby suspended programs will be automatically reactivated if no proposal to terminate is submitted. The Ministry now also allows programs with no enrolment to proceed directly to termination without the intermediate step of suspension.

- The benefits of this change include:
  - Leaner governance process for program suspensions
  - Better oversight of suspended programs, including subsequent terminations for program terminations, which will no longer be submitted as a combined proposal with suspensions
- A corresponding change for approval of undergraduate program suspensions by the Academic Program Subcommittee (APS) is also being proposed
- Further changes include editorial revisions for clarity and alignment with the new Academic Calendar structure and naming conventions and the addition of the Faculty of Graduate Studies' Senior Director, Strategic Operations, or their delegate, as a non-voting member
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
  - Current practice has been for program suspensions and terminations to come through governance as a single proposal ("suspension leading to termination"), which has resulted in a lack of clarity on suspension lengths and timing of termination. This practice also results in challenges for programs that may subsequently decide to reactivate.
  - Going forward, program suspensions and terminations will be separate proposals. Terminations will continue to require APPC approval.
  - APPC will retain oversight on program suspensions through the meeting reports submitted by the GAPS to the APPC

#### **10. Program Approvals Status Report**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only. It was noted that questions can be directed to the Program Innovation Hub.

#### **11. Approved Revisions to the 2024-2025 GFC and GFC Standing Committees Meeting Schedule and the 2025-2026 Meeting Schedule**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

#### **12. Other Business**

There was no other business.

#### **13. Adjournment**

##### **Moved/Seconded**

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee adjourn the April 17, 2024 meeting.

**Carried**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.