

General Faculties Council
GRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE
Approved Minutes

Meeting #33
December 13, 2017, 2:00 p.m.

A167

Voting Members

Lisa Young, Co-Chair
Antony Ware, Academic Co-Chair
Jalel Azaiez
Hormoz Izadi
Angelique Saweczko
Michael Sideris – arrived during Item 5
Jewel Spangler
Joelle Welling

Non-Voting Members

Christine Johns
Francine Smith
Tanya Zdorenko

Secretary

Susan Belcher

Scribe

Cherie Tutt

Regrets

Jim Field
Quentin Pittman

Guests

Susan Barker, Vice-Provost, Student Experience – present for Item 5
Debbie Bruckner, Senior Director, Student Wellness Access and Support – present for Item 5

Observers

Gillian Robinson, Senior Director (Strategic Operations), Faculty of Graduate Studies

The Co-Chair 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 December 13, 2017 Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved.

Carried

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

The Co-Chair expressed her appreciation to the members for their contributions over the busy Fall term and thanked the members whose service on the Committee is ending.

The Co-Chair provided an overview of the feedback received on the Master of Management proposal which was approved by e-mail vote of the Committee.

The Co-Chair noted that the proposal for a Specialization in Interdisciplinary Engineering within the course-based Master of Engineering, discussed at the November 29, 2017 meeting, is still in development and may be presented at a future meeting.

The Academic Co-Chair made no remarks.

3. Approval of the November 22, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee meeting held on November 22, 2017 be approved.

Carried

4. Approval of Calendar Changes: Environmental Design, Haskayne School of Business, Nursing, Science, Schulich School of Engineering

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Lisa Young and Tanya Zdorenko, Graduate Calendar Editor, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Co-Chair remarked that the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) Calendar Working Group reviewed all of the proposed Calendar changes and recommends the changes to the GAPS

Haskayne School of Business

- In response to a question, it was confirmed that the fees for the Master of Business combined degrees are assessed per course, and that the amount charged per course can vary depending on the program

Nursing

- In response to a question, it was reported that the changes to the Master of Nursing required examinations section are being made to reflect current practice and to better articulate requirements to students. It was confirmed that the take-home written exam has been incorporated into NURS 634 and the oral examination is based on the work completed in NURS 634, but is not a formal part of the course and is recorded as a graduate milestone.

Science

- In response to questions, it was reported that:
 - The course hours for field studies courses can be different e.g. GLGY 637 H(96 or 104 hours) because of the location and techniques used

- GLGY 537 and 545 are antirequisites for GLGY 637 as they are co-taught with GLGY 637 and, although they have different learning objectives, they are considered to be too similar to allow students to obtain credit for both courses
- Whether a field study course is considered to be in the Summer or Fall term depends on a number of factors and this is determined by the Office of the Registrar
- Last year, a separate Calendar entry was created for the Biostatistics Specialization in the Interdisciplinary section of the Calendar and links to this section have now been added to the Mathematics and Statistics and the Community Health sections
- The Committee requested that, in the Mathematics and Statistics section for the MSc and (thesis-based and course-based) and PhD course requirements, “Statistics students must include Statistics 701 and 721 and at least one more course from List C.” be changed to “Statistics students must complete at least three courses from List C, two of which must be 701 and 721”

Schulich School of Engineering

- In response to a question, it was confirmed that the full list of Pipeline Engineering approved courses will be included in the Calendar

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) approve the Calendar changes for the graduate programs in the Faculty of Environmental Design, as set out in the Summary provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the GAPS Calendar Working Group.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) approve the Calendar changes for the graduate programs in the Haskayne School of Business, as set out in the Summary provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the GAPS Calendar Working Group.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) approve the Calendar changes for the graduate programs in the Faculty of Nursing, as set out in the Summary provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the GAPS Calendar Working Group.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) approve the Calendar changes for the graduate programs in the Faculty of Science, as set out in the Summary provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the GAPS Calendar Working Group, and with the requested amendments.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) approve the Calendar changes for the graduate programs in the Schulich School of Engineering, as set out in the Summary provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the GAPS Calendar Working Group.

Carried**5. Medical Notes/Statutory Declaration**

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Susan Barker and Debbie Bruckner, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponents reported that it is being proposed that the University remove the requirement for a student to submit a medical note when requesting exemptions to academic regulations and introduce a statutory declaration as an alternative form of support for an exemption request. It was explained that a student could still choose to submit a medical note, but that the University would no longer require them to do so, and as an alternative, a student could submit a statutory declaration.
- The proponents provided a summary of the reasons for the change, which included requiring unwell students to access a medical clinic within a set timeline, costs associated with acquiring medical documentation, and impact on internal and external medical and counselling services. It was noted that a number of post-secondary institutions in Canada have already implemented this practice.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - If a student submitted a statutory declaration they could not also be asked to submit a medical note
 - If the University agrees in principle to the change in practice, a number of changes to the Calendar will be brought forward for approval
 - It is not envisioned that a statutory declaration would be submitted in advance of a request for exemption, but it may be a possibility given certain circumstances. The Committee suggested that the wording on the Statutory Declaration Form be reconsidered to reflect this.
 - Students will not be expected to complete a statutory declaration for a Faculty-approved activity, such as presenting a paper at a conference or attending the Olympics
 - The University will train individuals as Commissioners of Oath in the advising offices and Faculties to increase access for students
 - It is not currently being proposed to replace altogether the medical note with the statutory declaration, as a medical note may still be preferred or more efficient in some instances e.g. a student with a chronic illness or a student who has been admitted to emergency

- The Committee discussed:
 - The rationale for the proposed change and the different scenarios in which a statutory declaration would be more appropriate than a medical note
 - The merit, ethicacy and ability to verify a statutory declaration versus a medical note, and the importance of continuing to hold students accountable in order to maintain the University's academic integrity
 - Challenges with the current system, including too much or too little information in medical notes, and the demand on counsellors to produce these medical notes at peak times
 - The timeline for students to submit a statutory declaration and exceptions to the current regulations, which require students to see a medical practitioner within 48 hours. It was noted that it is important that a student notify the instructor if there is an issue.
 - That students registering with Student Accessibility Services may still be required to submit medical documentation if requested, as per the Student Accommodation Policy
 - How this change is connected to improving student experience
- The Committee suggested that, in addition to the specific changes to regulations, an information statement may need to be added to the Calendar articulating the broader principle for the change in practice

6. Status of Program Approvals

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

7. Other Business

There was no other business.

8. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee adjourn the December 13, 2017 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

Susan Belcher
University Secretary