



General Faculties Council
GRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE
APPROVED MINUTES

November 22, 2023, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Voting Members

Tara Beattie (Co-Chair)
Qiao Sun (Academic Co-Chair) – left during Item 6
Amy Dambrowitz
David Anderson
Andy Knight
Kimberly Lenters – left during Item 9
Kirsten Neprily – left during Item 5
Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci

Secretary

Michelle Speta

Scribe

Holly Lywin

Meeting Support

Elizabeth Sjogren

Regrets

Amy Burns

Non-Voting Members

Francine Smith
Louise Wells
Christine Johns

Guests

Dorothy Badry, Associate Dean Graduate Programs, Faculty of Social Work – present for Item 6
Elder Leona Carter, Community Leader & Planning Circle Member – present for Item 6
Christine Chateau, Master of Social Work practicum student - present for Item 6
Gretchen Greer, Manager, Office of Health & Medical Education Scholarship, Cumming School of Medicine – present for Item 4
Jennifer Hewson, Vice Dean, Faculty of Social Work – present for Item 6
Rahim Kachra, Medical Director, Master of Physician Assistant Studies program – present for Item 4
Frances Kalu, Learning & Instruction Designer, Cumming School of Medicine – present for Item 4
Jennifer Markides, Assistant Professor, Werklund School of Education – present for Item 6
Kimberley McLeod, Associate Registrar & Director, Systems & Policy, Office of the Registrar – present for Items 8 & 9
Elder Kerrie Moore, Faculty of Social Work Wellness Elder & Planning Circle Member – present for Item 6
Deandra Neufeld, Faculty of Social Work Indigenous Advisor – present for Item 6
Jeffrey Priest, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies & MEng Program, Schulich School of Engineering - present for Item 5
Lisa Welikovitch, Senior Associate Dean (Education), Cumming School of Medicine – present for Item 4

Observers and Resource Personnel

Catherine McLeod, Senior Director, Strategic Operations, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Jaclyn Carter, ITL Consultant, Taylor Institute
Kelly Hoglund, Partner, Program Innovation Hub
Elizabeth Pando, Partner, Program Innovation Hub
Jessica Revington, Program Proposal Assistant, Program Innovation Hub

The Academic Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Territorial Land Acknowledgement & Approval of the Agenda

Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci provided the Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the November 22, 2023 Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved.

Carried

2. Remarks of the Academic Co-Chair

The Co-Chair thanked the Academic Co-Chair for leading the last meeting in her absence and noted that Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci will be taking over Chair duties for Item #8 as the Co-Chair is a proponent for that item and the Academic Co-Chair will need to leave the meeting early.

3. Approval of the October 18, 2023 Minutes

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes from the October 18, 2023 Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved.

Carried

4. Recommendation for the Creation of the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Degree, Cumming School of Medicine

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Lisa Welikovitch, Senior Associate Dean (Education), Cumming School of Medicine and Rahim Kachra, Medical Director of the Master of Physician Assistant Studies program, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter provided an overview of the proposed two-year, 93-unit intensive graduate program initiated by a targeted enrolment expansion from the Government of Alberta to address the current shortage of primary care health professionals. Notable considerations included:
 - Extensive consultation within the Cumming School of Medicine (CSM), University stakeholders, as well as national and international experts, was completed to develop a curriculum that will educate and train Physician Assistants (PAs) while meeting the accreditation standards of the Canadian Association of Physician Assistants
 - The program will welcome an initial cohort of 20 students in September 2024 through multiple admission pathways focusing on equity-deserving applicants and those working in rural communities with hybrid learning options introduced once the program is established
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - Experience in patient-facing healthcare is an admission requirement for the program. Although the minimum requirement has yet to be defined, the current plan is to develop a points-based rubric where points are allocated by the number of hours of Healthcare Experiences rather than having a set minimum number of hours required. "Healthcare Experiences" will also be defined in the admission requirements.

- The budget for instructors in the proposal is based on hours of instruction rather than the number of instructors. The number of sessional instructors hired is expected to fluctuate each year.
- In the program's second year, students will spend 48 weeks in workplace-integrated learning, such as clerkships or clinical experiences, to practice the concepts learned in the first year. They will rotate between different clinical settings every four to six weeks to ensure broad exposure, similar to medical rotations. The program is completed after students undertake two elective blocks in their chosen field of study with the preceptors they intend to work with after graduation.
- Competition for clinical placements with medical (MD) students will be minimal as the MPAS program will only add one to two extra students per rotation. Additionally, rural medical placements have expressed significant interest in accommodating PA students.
- The program is designed to feed directly into the workforce, although further studies are possible
- MPAS will be under the direct oversight of the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) and utilize the existing Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) infrastructure for managing clinical placements, including financial processes to pay preceptors, assessment systems, and competitive applicant selection. The program will also remain cohesive with a direct reporting structure to the Senior Associate Dean (Education) in the Cumming School of Medicine.
- All admission interviews will be conducted virtually to increase accessibility and inclusion, reduce environmental impacts associated with travel, and expedite the process
- The medical terminology milestone course will be delivered online to provide a low-stakes platform for students to interact and learn together. Students can retake the course if needed and obtain individual support through mentoring with practicing PAs.
- As this will be the only PA program in Western Canada, student recruitment will focus on domestic applicants to encourage high-quality applicants to live and learn in Alberta
- The MPAS was created as a graduate program (rather than an undergraduate) to align with other PA programs in Canada
- The Committee requested the following amendments to the briefing note and proposal as applicable:
 - Add more details regarding the evaluation of applications for admission, such as evaluating an applicant's experience in patient-facing healthcare and how applicants in the parallel paths to admission will be supported. Guidance on the process will be helpful both for prospective students and faculty members reviewing the applications.
 - Add further explanation regarding the rationale for administering the program independently from the Graduate Science Education (GSE) and Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) offices
 - Add clarification about the future educational opportunities that the MPAS graduates would be qualified for and likely to pursue i.e., pioneering clinical education through telehealth and telemedicine
- The Committee commended the proponents for working closely with the Registrar's Office and the Program Innovation Hub to refine the proposal

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of the Master of Physician Assistant Studies program in the Cumming School of Medicine, effective July 1, 2024, as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee, with the requested amendments.

Carried

5. Recommendation for the Creation of a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sustainable Systems Engineering (SUSE) (previously the PhD in Engineering with a sub-specialization in SUSE)

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Jeffrey Priest, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies & MEng Program, Schulich School of Engineering presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter provided the rationale for moving SUSE from a specialization to an area of study to align with post-secondary approval standards and to mirror all other PhD degrees offered by the Schulich School of Engineering (SSE). There were no other changes to the program proposal.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - The internal University degree nomenclature and the Ministry degree nomenclature are different in that what the Ministry refers to as a ‘specialization’ is internally referred to as an ‘area of study’, and what the Ministry considers a ‘sub-specialization’ is internally referred to as a ‘specialization’
 - The program proposal was approved by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee in June 2023. It was sent back by the Ministry for the nomenclature change after their assessment deemed the program's level of detail, courses, learning outcomes, and time to be more reflective of a ‘specialization/area of study’.
 - Re-approval through the University's governance process is required but the Ministry has indicated the program will be approved upon return of the revised proposal
 - Some members of the SSE Faculty Council expressed concerns over the Ministry's revisions, viewing them as a shift away from the interdisciplinary intention of the program. However, the change aligns the program with Schulich's undergraduate program offerings in SUSE.
- The Committee requested a minor editorial amendment within the program proposal form to ensure the specialization is entered in the appropriate place on the provincial forms

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the amendment of striking “sub-” from the previously approved PhD in Engineering with a sub-specialization in Sustainable Systems Engineering, thus creating a PhD in Sustainable Systems Engineering, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee, with the requested amendment.

Carried

Secretary's Note: Item 6 was presented before Item 5.

6. Recommendation for the Creation of a New Specialization, Indigenous Ways of Knowing in Leadership, in the Graduate Certificate in Leadership in the Human Services, Faculty of Social Work

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Jennifer Hewson, Vice Dean, Faculty of Social Work, presented this item.

Highlights:

- Elder Kerrie Moore provided a blessing before the discussion
- The presenter provided an overview of the proposed creation of a new specialization within the Faculty of Social Work's graduate certificate in Leadership in the Human Services (LHS). This specialization is designed to address the changing needs in social work education, in line with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.

- The courses for this specialization will be led by a collaborative team of Indigenous instructors, Elders, knowledge keepers, and non-Indigenous leaders committed to sharing and introducing knowledge.
- Students who complete the LHS certificate with this specialization are eligible to apply for laddering credit towards the Master of Social Work (MSW) course-based degree as per the existing laddered pathway. An editorial amendment was reported regarding outdated course titles on page 11 of the proposal.
- In response to questions, the Committee learned that:
 - The admission process will align with existing admission protocols which include a written application customized to each program. The tailored questions will allow applicants to articulate their intentions, experiences, and learning goals.
 - All classes within the specialization will be facilitated by Indigenous instructors and attended by Elders from various regions of Alberta, with an honorarium protocol
 - Two motions have been proposed for this item to accommodate committee governance. The Calendar entry for the new specialization is included; however, the approval for the Calendar entry is contingent upon the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee's approval of the specialization, which is coming forward to the December 2023 meeting.
- The Committee members thanked the group for this work to enhance Indigenous educational opportunities for social workers

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of a new specialization, Indigenous Ways of Knowing in Leadership, in the Faculty of Social Work's Graduate Certificate in Leadership in the Human Services, effective for Fall 2024, as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee, with the reported amendment.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee approve the Calendar entry for the new Indigenous Ways of Knowing in Leadership specialization in the Faculty of Social Work's Graduate Certificate in Leadership in the Human Services, effective for the 2024–2025 Calendar, contingent upon the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee's approval of the creation of the specialization, as recommended by the GAPS Calendar Working Group and set out in the documents provided to the Committee.

Carried

7. Approval of Calendar Revisions for the Graduate Programs

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Due to time limitations, it was determined that this item would be moved to an electronic vote following the Committee meeting.

- A. Precision Health Program (Cumming School of Medicine)
- B. Faculty of Kinesiology
- C. School of Public Policy
- D. School of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape

Secretary's Note: The GAPS approved the proposed Calendar revisions by electronic vote.

8. Recommendation of the Revisions to Calendar Sections ‘Types of Credentials and Sub-Degree Nomenclature’ and ‘Work-Integrated Learning’

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Tara Beattie, Interim Dean and Vice-Provost, Graduate Studies, and Kimberley McLeod, Associate Registrar and Director, Systems and Policy, presented this item. Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci, Academic Staff Member appointed by the GFC Executive Committee, acted as Chair for this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter explained the proposed revisions are to clarify work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities in the Calendar. These changes respond to a growing need to formalize internship programs and offer clear pathways for both domestic and international students; the implementation of the new Calendar software; and a forthcoming proposal for a new Master of Engineering (MEng) with Internship degree program.
- The proposed revisions included:
 - An update to the Undergraduate Sub-Degree Nomenclature section for Co-operative Education/Internship Program to indicate that it refers only to traditional Internship/Co-operative Education Programs where students are formally admitted and have the WIL component indicated on their transcripts
 - The addition of ‘Degree Program with Internship’ to the Graduate Sub-Degree Nomenclature section that formalizes internship options for graduate programs and allows students to graduate with the internship noted on their transcript and parchment
 - A provision for individual programs to develop an internship degree if it aligns with their discipline. The Master of Engineering program is set to be the first to implement this option, pending approval, by September 2024.
 - Provide clear information, mirroring graduate and undergraduate regulations where possible, and delineating between the two when required
- The proponents reported an amendment regarding clarification the international student’s work permit requirements for internships
- In response to questions, the Committee learned:
 - Mitacs internships are extra to degree programs and, therefore, will not be recognized on transcripts or parchments
 - Both thesis-based and course-based graduate students are eligible to apply for Mitacs
- The Committee requested removal of the direct reference to Mitacs in the Calendar regulations, and asked that a future amendment that clarifies Mitacs internship opportunities are open to both course-based and thesis graduate students be brought forward to the Committee.
- The Committee also requested the removal of ‘either’ from the first sentence within Section 2.1 *Admissions to Co-op and Internship Programs*

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposed Calendar revisions, effective for the 2024–2025 Calendar, as recommended by GAPS Calendar Working Group and as set out in the document provided to the Committee with the requested and reported amendments.

Carried

Tara Beattie, Interim Dean & Vice-Provost, Graduate Studies, abstained.

9. Recommendation of Structural Changes to the Calendar for the New Calendar Software (Coursedog)

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Amy Dambrowitz, Registrar, and Kimberley McLeod, Associate Registrar and Director, Systems and Policy, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the 19-month initiative to revise and modernize the Calendar by implementing the new software known as Coursedog. The comprehensive revisions included:
 - The consolidation of the Graduate Calendar with the University Calendar, necessitating a re-numbering of the Graduate Regulation Sections. Graduate academic regulations sections will have a prefix of 'G.'; for example, Section A. and Section G.A.
 - A contemporary navigation structure
 - The reorganizing of program-specific regulations into a single location
 - Reformatted regulations into navigable requirements and course lists
- The Committee learned that many of the proposed changes are structural and do not result in any alterations to Calendar information apart from the proposed removal of the Welcome messages from the President, Provost, Dean of Graduate Studies, and the President of the Graduate Students' Association and the replacement of the individual Student and Campus Services pages with a single landing page that links to the corresponding webpages.
- The Committee thanked the project team for their diligent work

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposed structural changes to the University Calendar, effective for the 2024–2025 Calendar, as set out in the document provided to the Committee.

Carried

10. Status of Program Approvals

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

11. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee adjourn the November 22, 2023 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Courtney McVie
Secretary