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Agenda: Graduate Council, October 1, 2009

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September 29, 2009

To : Graduate Council Members

From : Medy Espiritu
Assistant Secretary & SynApps System Administrator

Please note that the next meeting of Graduate Council will be held on **Thursday, October 1, 2009** at **10:00 a.m.** in **MUSC-311/313**.

Listed below are the agenda items for discussion.

Should you be unable to attend the meeting, please call extension 24204 or email *espiritu@mcmaster.ca*.

A G E N D A

- Introduction

I. Minutes of the meeting of May 21, 2009

II. Business Arising

III. Report from the Associate Vice-President and Dean of Graduate Studies

IV. Associate Dean's Report

V. Graduate Scholarships

VI. Policy for Keeping Records of Graduate Student Oral Examination

VII. Guidelines for Graduate Course Instructors

VIII. Other Business

GRADUATE COUNCIL
MAY 21, 2009, 10:00 A.M.
MUSC-311/313

PRESENT: Dr. A. Sekuler (Chair). Dr. P. Baxter, Dr. M. Boda, Dr. R. Cain, Dr. N. Charupat, Dr. S. Crosta, Dr. K. Dalnoki-Veress, Dr. T. Fetner, Dr. D. Goellnicht, Dr. M. Hatton, Dr. B. Kaczynski, Dr. M. Kliffer, Miss H. Kuiper, Dr. A. Montazemi, Dr. C. Richards, Mr. J. Scime, Dr. J. West-Mays, Dr. D. Welch, Mr. K. Viers, Mrs. M. Espiritu (Assistant Secretary)

I. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of April 16, 2009 were approved on a motion by Dr. Welch, seconded by Dr. Hatton with one correction. *"Dean of Engineering"* on page 2, line 4 was replaced with *"Faculty of Engineering Graduate Admissions and Study Committee."*

II. Business Arising

There was no business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

III. Report from the Associate Vice-President and Dean of Graduate Studies

a) OCGS Appraisals

Dr. Sekuler reported that consultants site visits for OCGS periodic reviews were recently held for Anthropology (M.A., Ph.D.), Geography (M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D.), and Chemistry (M.Sc., Ph.D.). She added that there are two upcoming site visits for periodic reviews: June 1-2, Chemical Engineering (M.A.Sc., M.Eng., Ph.D.); and June 23-24, Mathematics (M.Sc., Ph.D.). Dr. Sekuler further said that OCGS is in the process of scheduling consultants to appraise the following programs: M.Sc. Statistics (periodic appraisal), M.Sc. Global Health (standard appraisal), and M.A. Health Management (standard appraisal). Dr. Sekuler explained that OCGS, not the School of Graduate Studies, has control over who the consultants will be and when site visits are scheduled. Dr. Sekuler said she received reports from three site visits, and she hopes to get the final recommendation in June from OCGS appraisal committees concerning two periodic appraisals: Mechanical Engineering (M.Sc., Ph.D.), Electrical and Computer Engineering (M.A.Sc., M. Eng., Ph.D.); and standard appraisals for Computer Science (M. Eng.), and Mechatronics (M. Eng.).

b) 2009-2010 External Scholarships

Dr. Sekuler reported that at a reception she attended in Ottawa, the federal government has awarded eight McMaster University students with the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships. Dr. Sekuler explained that the Vanier is a prestigious program that awards 500 international and Canadian doctoral students with three-year scholarships. The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships (CGS) program is administered by Canada's three research granting councils: the

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Dr. Sekuler then turned to the result of the 2009-2010 external scholarships competition and briefly explained each one.

Ontario Graduate Scholarships (OGS):
- Total number of applications submitted by McMaster: 724 (270 Master's, 389 Ph.D., 65 Master's/PhD visa students)
- Total number of scholarship recipients: 261 (114 Master's, 144 PhD, 3 Master's/PhD visa students)

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC):
- Total number of applications submitted by McMaster: 115 (66 Master's, 49 Ph.D.)
- Total number of scholarship recipients: 83
    - 47 CGS Master's
    - 2 PGS Master's
    - 9 CGS Doctoral (up to 2 years)
    - 6 CGS Doctoral (up to 3 years)
    - 8 PGS Doctoral (up to 2 years)
    - 11 PGS Doctoral (up to 3 years)

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC):

SSHRC Master's
- Total number of applications submitted by McMaster: 20
- Number of recommended alternate candidates submitted to SSHRC: 5
- Number of CGS Master's Scholarships Awarded: 20

SSHRC Ph.D.
- Total number of applications submitted by McMaster: 56
- Total number of scholarship recipients: 32

Dr. Sekuler thanked those who were involved in the ranking of the scholarships.

c) Graduate expansion

Dr. Sekuler said the total number of graduate applications received by McMaster is up by 523 as from last year. She further said the number of acceptances of domestic students for admission to graduate studies is higher this year than last year: Social Sciences was up by 100, Engineering by 40, Science by 20, and Humanities by 15.

IV. 2009 Spring Graduands

Dr. Sekuler presented the list of the 2009 Spring Graduands for Council approval.

Dr. Richards moved, and Dr. Welch seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the list of the 2009 Spring Graduands for the Faculties of Business, Engineering, Health Sciences (Nursing), Humanities, Science, and Social Sciences, with amendments/corrections to be made as necessary by the Graduate Registrar."

The motion was **carried**.

V. Policy on Graduate Course Outlines

Dr. Hatton reviewed the proposed *Policy on Graduate Course Outlines* document. After the discussion, the Council suggested the following items: (1) course outlines should include the Academic Integrity Policy; (2) course outlines should be made available to departments and /or programs one week before the course commences, and available to students before or at the first course meeting; (3) the department/program has the right to change the method of assessment of the course due to unforeseen circumstances, such as illness of the instructor, etc.; and (4) the department/program is responsible for keeping the course outline up to date, and a copy should be kept on file for a minimum of one year.

Dr. Hatton moved, and Dr. Richards seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed *Policy on Graduate Course Outlines*, subject to the amendments proposed by the members."

The motion was carried.

Guidelines for Graduate Course Instructors

Dr. Hatton then discussed the *Guidelines for Graduate Course Instructors* document; and he added that the two documents are the results of the suggestion of Graduate Council to create a "policy document" for course outlines, and a "guidelines document" for instructors teaching graduate courses. One member commented that since seminars are structured in various ways, there might be instances in which providing students with several academic performance evaluations either before or after the "drop" date would be inappropriate. To solve the issue, Dr. Hatton suggested including a statement that the responsibility lies on the instructor to assess the student's academic performance, by whatever means he/she considers appropriate, before the "drop" date. Another issue brought up by a member was the difficulty of some excellent students, for whatever reasons, to participate in seminar discussions. The member feels that although marks are earned, students should not be penalized for non-participation in seminar discussions unless the student demonstrates a willful refusal to participate. In response to a question, Dr. Sekuler said there is a plan in the future to create a template for course outlines. After the discussion, the Council decided to defer further discussion of the document until the next meeting of Graduate Council.

VI. Policy on Retention of Examination Papers and Other Graded Materials
VII. Policy on Access to Final Examinations

Dr. Sekuler referred to the above two policies. She explained that these documents were approved at the meeting of Senate on May 13, 2009. These are presented to Graduate Council for information.

VIII. Policy for Keeping Records of Graduate Student Oral Examinations

Dr. Sekuler referred the members to the document and asked for comments/suggestions. After the discussion, the Council made the following comments: (1) the document should define what an oral examination is, i.e., formal assessment in the presence of one or two examiners in a private setting; (2) replace the first paragraph of the policy with the following: *When an oral examination is part of the assessment process for a graduate course, an audio or video recording must be made if there are fewer than three examiners.* (3) the policy is not meant to apply to instances of class presentation or participation; (4) the document should clearly state that recordings of Master's and Ph.D. oral theses examinations are not required.

Dr. Welch moved, and Dr. Richards seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed *Policy for Keeping Records of Graduate Student Oral Examinations,* subject to the amendments proposed by the members."

The motion was **carried**.

IX. Qualifications of a Supervisor

Dr. Sekuler proposed a plan to develop a structured process that determines how, and whether or not, faculty members qualify for graduate supervision. Ideally, she would like to have a list of faculty members who—according to a set of criteria established by the University—are eligible to serve as primary supervisors. The rationale for the proposal stems from the fact that over the past several years, diverse categories of professors have been created to meet the University's various needs, i.e., CLAs who have become part of the MUFA group, teaching professors, adjuncts, and sessionals. Dr. Sekuler is concerned that without establishing specific qualifications regarding who is eligible to supervise graduate students, the University might give the impression that any faculty member can serve as primary supervisor. There was a comment that tenured professors are expected to engage in graduate supervision and other faculty members such as teaching professors and CAWAR (Continuing Appointment Without Annual Review) faculty should be assessed on a case by case basis. Dr. Richards explained that in the Faculty of Health Sciences, faculty members who are interested in graduate supervision must be assessed by a sub-committee and then approved through the Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Policy and Curriculum Council. After thanking the members for their input, Dr. Sekuler said this issue will be further discussed at future meetings of Graduate Council.

There was no other business, and the meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS – FOR APPROVAL

The Bev Bayus Ontario Graduate Scholarship
Established in 2009 by Bev Bayus to contribute to the funding of Ontario Graduate Scholarships at McMaster University. To be awarded by the School of Graduate Studies to a student within the Faculty of Science or Faculty of Social Sciences. Preference will be given to a student pursuing graduate studies in either of the Department of Kinesiology, the Department of Sociology, or the School of Geography and Earth Sciences.

The Jan W. deGrijs Ontario Graduate Scholarship
Established in 2009 by Jan W. deGrijs (Class of ’71) to contribute to the funding of Ontario Graduate Scholars at McMaster University within the Faculty of Science. Preference will be given to a student pursuing graduate studies in the School of Geography and Earth Sciences.

Mildred Gulliver Graduate Scholarship in Infectious Diseases
Established in 2009 by the estate of Mildred Kathleen Hodgson Gulliver. To be awarded to a graduate student connected to the Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Infectious Disease Research who has made a significant contribution to anti-infection research through a presentation of their research. Winners will present at an annual trainee research symposium. The scholarship has a current value of $1,000 and is non-renewable. To be awarded annually by the School of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the Executive Committee of the Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Infectious Disease Research.

Mildred Gulliver Postdoctoral Scholarship in Infectious Diseases
Established in 2009 by the estate of Mildred Kathleen Hodgson Gulliver. To be awarded to a postdoctoral fellow connected to the Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Infectious Disease Research who, in the judgment of the Executive Committee of the Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Infectious Disease Research, has made a significant contribution to anti-infection research through a presentation of their research. Winners will present at an annual trainee research symposium. The scholarship has a current maximum value of $1,000 and is non-renewable. A maximum of one will be awarded annually by the Faculty of Health Sciences on the recommendation of the Executive Committee of the Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Infectious Disease Research.

The John and Doris Puddington MBA Scholarship
Established in 2009 by John Puddington, MBA (Class of ’71) and Doris Puddington, MBA. To be awarded to a student entering the MBA co-op program in the DeGroote School of Business. Value: $1,000

McMASTER UNIVERSITY

Complete Policy Title:	**POLICY FOR KEEPING RECORDS OF GRADUATE STUDENT ORAL EXAMINATIONS**
Policy Number (if applicable):	**n/a**
Approved by:	**Graduate Council / Senate**
Date of Most Recent Approval:	**April 12, 1994 (Graduate Council)** **May 25, 1994 (Senate)**
Revision Date(s):	
Position Responsible for Developing and Maintaining the Policy:	**~~University Secretariat~~ Associate Vice President and Dean, School of Graduate Studies**
Contact Department:	**University Secretariat**

DISCLAIMER: *If there is a discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held by the Policy owner, the written copy prevails.*

~~Assessment in graduate course work is usually based upon the evaluation of written work. In the rare case when~~ When an oral examination is part of the assessment process for a graduate course, an audio or video recording must be made ~~of the event~~ if there are fewer than three examiners. ~~When there are three or more examiners, no recording is necessary.~~

The examiners are responsible for arranging the recording and for ensuring that the recording is accessible to the Department Chair (or equivalent) for at least one year from the last use of the recording.

Master's and doctoral theses are excluded from the re-read/re-assessment procedures in the *Student Appeals Policy*, as are Ph.D. comprehensive examinations, Objective Standard Clinical Examinations (OSCE) and supervisory committee reports. Accordingly, recording is not required in these instances.

~~The oral defense of a doctoral thesis is chaired by a representative of the Dean of Graduate Studies, and includes three members of the Supervisory Committee as well as two additional faculty members and, when possible, the External Examiner. Accordingly, there is no need to record any oral defense of a doctoral thesis.~~

~~Master's theses are defended only before the supervisory committee. When the committee is three or more, recording is not necessary. When there are fewer than three examiners, recording should be undertaken.~~

~~In the defense of a master's or a doctoral thesis there is an assumption that the thesis is good enough to go to defense, and therefore an assumption that approval is likely. In the case of an oral examination connected with or comprising a Ph.D. comprehensive examination, that~~

~~assumption cannot be made. Accordingly, a recording should be made whenever there are fewer than three examiners.~~

~~In all cases audio recording is preferred to video recording because it is much less intrusive. The examiners are responsible for arranging the taping and preserving the tapes for six months after the end of the academic year (deemed to end August 31) in which the oral exam took place.~~

“Guidelines for Graduate Course Instructors”

~~**[To be made available to all course instructors either from the online calendar or, in print, from SGS and all departments and Graduate Programs]**~~

For most faculty members and graduate students alike, the graduate classroom offers a unique site of intellectual development, exploration, and exchange. ~~To~~ The following guidelines are intended to highlight best practices to help instructors plan and run successful graduate courses~~, the following guidelines are provided:~~, and to optimize the learning experience for graduate students. These guidelines supplement the official *Policy on Graduate Course Outlines*, to which all graduate courses must adhere.

1. In fields that include diverse knowledge bases or skill sets, the instructor may wish to meet with prospective students before the course starts, particularly with ~~those~~ students who are from outside the home program or department. Such a meeting might include a discussion of the overall objectives and content of the course, an explanation of the methods of assessment, and a description of the expertise and skill level expected of the student.

~~2. Graduate course instructors are responsible for providing students with a written course outline either before the course starts or at the first meeting of the class. (See the Policy on Graduate Course Outlines).~~

~~3. The instructor should bring the Academic Integrity Policy to the students' attention during the first session. (See the Policy on Graduate Course Outlines.) In addition, the course outline should include the following statement (taken from the McMaster University Undergraduate Course Management Policies, p.5, 2007):~~

> ~~*“You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.*~~
> ~~*Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result inunearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.*~~
> ~~*It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the AcademicIntegrity Policy, located at http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity*~~
>
> ~~*The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:*~~
> ~~*a. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.*~~
> ~~*b. Improper collaboration in group work.*~~
> ~~*c. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.”*~~

24. The graduate course instructor may decide to recruit one or more faculty members or field experts to give special lectures during the course. Such an invitation should be made well in advance of the lecture date. Invited instructors ~~are not~~ usually are not expected to evaluate the students. ~~However,~~ However, there may be rare cases in which an invited instructor contributes some aspect of course evaluation. In that event, the official course instructor still bears ultimate responsibility for overall evaluation and course outcome. Accordingly, best practice would be for ~~if an invited instructor is required to assess the students, then the students should be made aware of this in advance; in addition,~~ the invited instructor ~~should be provided with~~to receive information, preferably in writing, about evaluation criteria and expectations ~~— preferably in writing —~~that are consistent with the course outline. Students also should be informed of the mechanism and mode of evaluation. ~~The course instructor bears the ultimate responsibility for all grading.~~

35. ~~At the first session, the instructor should remind students that they are responsible for ensuring that they have formally registered for the course (including any seminar course) through their department or graduate program.~~ To receive ~~a~~ credit for ~~the~~ a course, each student is responsible for confirming on SOLAR that his/her registration status is appropriate for that course. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have formally registered for the course (including any seminar course) through their department or graduate program. Best practice suggests that the instructor should remind students of their responsibilities at the first meeting of the course.If the instructor becomes aware that a student is not listed on the grade sheet, or that the grade sheet includes the name of a student who has not been attending the class, the instructor ~~is responsible~~should ~~for~~ inform~~ing~~ the department/graduate program.

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46. ~~The~~ As noted in the *Policy on Graduate Course Outlines*, the course instructor is responsible for providing each student with evaluations of the student's academic performance at various stages during the course, and, whenever possible, a list of due dates. ~~It is preferable~~It is best practice in graduate courses for ~~that~~ each student receive at least one written evaluation prior to the 'drop' date so that ~~a~~ students ~~-~~can have the chance to withdraw from the course without academic penalty. ~~For example, such~~Such an evaluation ~~might entail~~could take any of a number of forms (e.g., ~~a response~~ evaluations of~~to~~ a seminar presentation, ~~or to~~ a written assignment, or ~~or to~~ a collaborative work).

57. ~~Normally~~At the graduate level, students normally are expected to actively participate in courses (i.e., contribute to discussion, be encouraged to ask questions) ~~in any graduate course~~, and instructors ~~of most courses will~~often award marks for participation. ~~which~~ Participation marks ~~may~~ typically amount to a relatively minor proportion (e.g., 5-20%) of the final grade. Some students, particularly those whose first language is not English, may be reluctant to participate in a discussion in class. ~~These~~ Best practice suggests that these students should be recognized early and, whenever possible, tactfully drawn into the discussion by the instructor. The ultimate aim of any graduate course is not only to ~~impart to,~~convey information to and exchange information

with~~, the~~ students, ~~-~~but also to equip ~~the~~ students with the confidence and ability to exchange information with others, both in the spoken word and in writing.

6~~8~~. ~~While~~ Although instructors are required to provide written course outlines at the beginning of courses, the *Policy on Graduate Course Outlines* also provides ~~, they~~ instructors ~~may~~ with the opportunity to alter a course's content to reflect shifting research interests ~~so~~ as long as the students are informed of such changes promptly and *in writing*. ~~Instructors~~ Even in the case of changing content, best practice is for instructors ~~are advised~~ to adhere to the original course outline in terms of the amount of work expected from the students, the schedule of assignments, ~~the~~ due dates, and the evaluation scheme.

7~~9~~. ~~At the end of the course, the instructor is responsible for awarding the marks for all assignments, for calculating the final grade and for conveying this information to each student and to the School of Graduate Studies by the date stipulated in the Graduate calendar.~~ Best practice suggests that instructors should calculate and provide final grades to the School of Graduate Studies for *all students* by the date stipulated in the Graduate calendar. Final marks also should be provided to the students in a timely manner. Although there may be rare instances in which the instructor may need to report grades before all work is complete for a student, i~~I~~nstructors should be aware that a grade of "incomplete" will be converted to an "F" and recorded on the student's transcript~~.~~.