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Minutes of Meeting: Graduate Council, February 12, 2007

Medy Espiritu Mrs.
McMaster University School of Graduate Studies, espiritu@mcmaster.ca

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GRADUATE COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 12, 2007, 10:00 A.M.
GILMOUR HALL 111

PRESENT: Dean F.L. Hall (Chair), Dr. N. Agarwal, Dean D. Capson, Dean S. Crosta, Dean L. Finsten, Mr. H. Guo, Dr. P. Guo, Dr. B. Kaczynski, Dr. W. Lewchuk, Dr. G. Luke, Dr. T. Marlin, Mr. L. McLeod, Ms. B. McNally, Dr. G. Moyal, Mr. J. Scime (Secretary), Dr. P. Solomon, Dr. G. Steiner, Dr. J. Tiessen, Mr. J. Trzeciak, Dr. R. Viveros-Aguilera, Dr. M. Waddington, Dr. D. Wright, Mrs. M. Espiritu (Assistant Secretary)

BY INVITATION: Dr. R. Arthur, Dr. K. Murphy, Dr. J. Nodwell, Dr. B. Sassen, Dr. G. Wright

REGRETS: Dr. K. Bennett, Dr. L. Chan, Ms. K. Espiritu, Dr. C. Ingram

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I. MINUTES

Graduate Council approved the minutes of the meeting of November 7, 2006 on a motion by Dr. Viveros-Aguilera, seconded by Dean Capson.

II. BUSINESS ARISING

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

III. DEAN'S REPORT

Dean Hall reported that an e-mail ballot was conducted among the Graduate Council members concerning a recommendation from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering to reduce its M. Eng. program course requirements to six courses. The change is necessary in order to bring the program in line with the other M. Eng. programs in the Faculty of Engineering. Graduate Council unanimously approved the proposal.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR DIRECT ENTRY TO Ph.D.

Dean Hall said he asked departments for comments concerning a proposal to change the University-wide course requirements for the Ph.D. program. He explained the two options: (1) that the University's minimum course requirement for the Ph.D. program be one full graduate course; or (2) that there be no University minimum course requirement. Dean Hall explained that departments will still be able to set their own minimum course requirements. In response to an inquiry concerning the practices of other universities in Ontario, Dean Hall said some programs in other universities, i.e., Life Sciences, do not have minimum course requirements. He added that OCGS is concerned with requirements of the programs that are submitted for approval, not with University minimum requirements. One member commented that he is in favour of having no minimum course requirements because in his opinion, course work is not useful to Ph.D. students, since most courses are not relevant to the student's career. One member inquired if safety measures are in place to ensure that direct entry from the Bachelor's to the

Ph.D. degree is addressed. Dean Hall responded that the curriculum committees of each Faculty as well as the supervisory committees are responsible for this issue. In response to a question about what regulations govern in-course students when there is a change, Dean Hall said in-course students can choose which procedure to follow, subject to supervisory committee approval of their courses.

Dean Richards moved, and Dr. Luke seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposal to change the Ph.D. program requirements to no University minimum course requirements, and that departments will individually set the course requirements for their own Ph.D. programs."

The motion was **carried**.

Dean Hall will prepare the calendar wording for this change and submit it to Graduate Council for approval.

V. GRADUATE CALENDAR: SECTION 2.1.2 – ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR Ph.D. DEGREE

Dean Hall reviewed the changes to Section 2.1.2 concerning transfer of students to the Ph.D. program prior to completion of the Master's degree as described in the document.

Dr. Luke moved, and Dean Richards seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the changes to Section 2.1.2 of the Graduate Calendar pertaining to transfer of students to the Ph.D. program without completion of the Master's degree, as outlined in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

VI. STAND-ALONE Ph.D. PROGRAM IN PHILOSOPHY

Dean Hall said the proposal is being presented for Graduate Council's information. He added that the proposed program is the first one to use the fast-track approval procedure. For the benefit of some of the members, Dean Hall explained the fast-track approval process.
The proposed Ph.D. program was approved at the recent meeting of the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee. The proposal will be submitted for approval to UPC, Senate, and then to OCGS. Dr. Arthur, Chair of the Department of Philosophy, was invited to present the proposal and to answer questions from the members.

Dean Finsten moved, and Dean Capson seconded,

"that Graduate Council endorse approval of the proposed stand-alone Ph.D. program in Philosophy."

The motion was **carried**.

VII. M. ENG. IN SOFTWARE ENGINEERING AND GAME DESIGN

Dean Hall referred to the document and explained that the main concern of OCGS is the name of the proposed program—the name, "Game Design" does not reflect the true nature of the program. Dean Hall added that the proposed name change requires approval from Graduate Council and Senate.

Dean Finsten moved, and Dean Capson seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed name change to M.Eng. in Software Engineering and Virtual Systems Design."

The motion was **carried**.

VIII. GRADUATE CALENDAR CHANGES

Dean Capson reviewed the proposed changes for Sections 1.3 and 7.3.5 of the Graduate Calendar. He explained that the current wording in both sections is quite vague with regards to safety behaviour when accessing academic facilities, such as laboratories. Dean Capson added that the proposed changes were approved at the November 28, 2006 meeting of the GC Executive with minor revisions. One member commented that the proposed changes should include a statement that the University will provide students with training about safety guidelines and policies. One member explained that his department conducts fieldwork outside McMaster, and whether this falls under the category of "academic facilities." Dean Finsten said since the statement does not say that it is limited to on-campus facilities, she believes "fieldwork" is included in the statement. Mr. Scime referred to the phrase "subsequently to a requirement for the student to withdraw from his/her academic program," and commented that it does not indicate what circumstances this "subsequently" would take place. He said that not all "denial of access to facilities" would subsequently lead to a requirement to withdraw, and that there should be a better explanation of when this could happen. After the discussion, it was decided that Dean Capson, Dr. Lewchuk and Mr. Scime will work on the calendar wording for the two proposals and submit a revised document at the next meeting of Graduate Council.

Section 2.5.2 – Course Levels and Type

Dean Capson explained that the proposed change to Section 2.5.2 of the Graduate Calendar addresses the course requirement for the combined B.Eng./M.Eng. program at McMaster. Undergraduate students registered in the program are required to take 600-level courses with written permission from their department.

Dean Capson moved, and Dr. Moyal seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed change to Section 2.5.2 of the Graduate Calendar, as described in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Section 2.4.5 – Leaves of Absence: Continuation of Scholarship Funding During Graduate Student Parental Leave from Studies

Mr. Scime explained that the proposed change will clarify the issue that pregnancy leave and parental leave cannot be taken at the same time. A parental leave is available after the birth of the child, while a pregnancy leave happens before or after the time of birth. Mr. Scime also explained the Employment Standards Act (ESA) requirements concerning these leaves. The proposal was discussed at the recent meeting of the GC Executive; at that meeting it was decided to consult Lisa Kirby, McMaster Employee/Labour Relations Advisor and inquire whether the ESA applies to graduate students. Mr. Scime said Lisa Kirby is working on the issue that there may be some situations in which graduate students can take both leaves. Dean Hall added that the issue is whether the scholarship funding can be combined with the employment insurance while the student is on parental leave. Mr. Scime will inform the Council as soon as he receives the report from Ms. Kirby.

IX. FACULTY OF BUSINESS GRADUATE CURRICULUM RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposal to cancel the Graduate Diploma (Type 1) in Management

Dr. Agarwal referred to the document and explained that the School of Business is proposing to cancel the Management Graduate Diploma (Type 1) due to low demand. In the past three years, Dr. Agarwal said that the School only had two applicants for the diploma program.

Dr. Tiessen moved, and Dean Finsten seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposal to cancel the Graduate Diploma (Type 1) in Management, as described in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Calendar Copy: Ph.D. Program in Business Administration

Dr. Agarwal reviewed the document, which outlines the current and revised wording for the calendar copy of the Ph.D. program in Business Administration. Dr. Agarwal explained that the section of the "Accounting field" is not included in the document because the implementation of this field has been delayed to 2008-2009. Dr. Agarwal also discussed the 9 new courses and the minor changes in the existing courses.

Dean Finsten moved, and Dean Richards seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the calendar copy for the Ph.D. program in Business Administration, as described in the document."

Dr. Steiner spoke against the motion by discussing the background of the proposal. He explained that the Ph.D. program in Business Administration was started 29 years ago with the Management Science/Systems field and was expanded to the Human Resources field about 15 years ago. The program has gone through several OCGS review cycles, obtaining approval as Good Quality. Based on this success, the School decided to expand the program into four more fields: Accounting, Finance, Information Systems, and Marketing and submitted a proposal to OCGS in Spring 2006. In October 2006, OCGS approved the program consisting of six fields.

Dr. Steiner also said that in July 2006, the Dean of the Faculty of Business--acting outside the by-laws of the Faculty--created the new position of Ph.D. Director and abolished the position of Ph.D. Coordinators for the two existing fields, Management Science/Systems and Human Resources. He said the committee that designed the OCGS submission was disbanded without notice, and a new ad hoc committee, headed by the new Ph.D. Director, was formed to work out the details of implementation for the expanded program. Dr. Steiner said the Ph.D. director, in spite of repeated representations by the field representatives on the committee, developed a revised plan for the program, including a substantially changed curriculum. For example, all previously required Economics courses were deleted from the Finance field, three Ph.D. courses were deleted from the Management Science field (two crucial Ph.D. seminar courses among them), and a new common course was included for all fields without proper academic justification for its need and in deviation from the approved OCGS submission. In addition, Dr. Steiner said, new rules were introduced for the administration of the comprehensive examination and the admission process for deciding which applicants from which fields will be offered admission. Dr. Steiner said the revised curriculum was approved at the Faculty of Business Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee by a single vote majority, with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies casting the decisive vote, and 3 of the 5 area field representatives voting against the proposal. Dr. Steiner said that a strong majority approved the proposal at the meeting of the Faculty of Business when closure of the discussion was invoked before 80% of the issues could even be discussed.

Dr. Agarwal said that 50 faculty members were present at the meeting of the Faculty Business when the proposal was presented and discussed.

The motion was **defeated** (5 in favour, 1 opposed and 8 abstentions).

Changes to the requirements for the Health Services Management Stream

Dr. Agarwal discussed the changes to the requirements for the Health Services Management Stream. He explained that the changes will provide students a wider range of choices to plan their curriculum better and provide more flexibility in the requirements for the stream.

Dr. Tiessen moved, and Dr. Steiner seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to the requirements for the Health Services Management Stream, as described in the document.”

The motion was **carried**.

Cancellation of the Minor in Entrepreneurship

Dr. Agarwal explained that the proposed cancellation of the Minor in Entrepreneurship was due to low demand. Only two students have enrolled in this program since it was introduced eight years ago.

Dr. Tiessen moved, and Dr. Steiner seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the cancellation of the Minor in Entrepreneurship program, as described in the document.”

The motion was **carried**.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.