

GRADUATE COUNCIL
JUNE 1, 2006, 2:00 p.m.
MUSC-311/313

PRESENT: Dean F. L. Hall (Chair), Dean P. Bates, Dr. K. Bennett, Dr. M. Boda, Dean D. Capson, Dr. L. Chan, Ms. K. Espiritu, Dr. P. Guo, Mr. S. Kleinknecht, Ms. K. Kowalska, Mr. Y. Li, Dr. G. Luke, Dr. R. O'Brien, Dr. D. Pawluch, Dean C. Richards, Mr. J. Scime (Secretary), Dr. P. Solomon, Dr. M. Stein, Dr. C. Swartz, Dr. R. Viveros-Aguilera, Dr. J-P Xu, Mrs. M. Espiritu (Assistant Secretary)

BY INVITATION: Dr. M. Giacomini, Dr. K. Murphy

REGRETS: Dr. N. Agarwal, Dr. B. Allen, Dr. G. Bone, Dean D. Goellnicht, Dr. M. Head, Dr. C. Ingram, Dr. G. Moyal

I. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of May 8, 2006 were approved on a motion by Dr. Xu, seconded by Dr. Swartz.

II. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the minutes of the May 8 meeting.

III. Ph.D. IN HEALTH POLICY ANALYSIS

Dean Hall explained that the Faculty of Social Sciences approved the Ph.D. in Health Policy Analysis program on May 31, 2006. At that meeting, Dean Hall said there were considerable discussions regarding the resource implications of the program. There was also concern about the admission requirements, specifically the evaluation of the applicant's skills in qualitative and quantitative analytical methods.

Dean Hall read the motion that the Faculty of Social Sciences approved:

"that the Faculty of Social Sciences approve, for recommendation to Graduate Council, the establishment of a Doctoral Program in Health Policy Analysis based on the academic merits of the Program, as set out in Appendix A, with the provisos that: 1) there will be a thorough discussion of the resource implications of the program as well as governance issues; 2) the results of that discussion will be reported, for information, to the Faculty of Social Sciences at a meeting in the Fall of 2006; 3) requirements for admission to the program be revised to ensure equivalent assessment of an applicant's skills in qualitative and quantitative analytical methods."

The proposal was also presented and subsequently approved at the recent meetings of the Health Sciences Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee and the Health Sciences Executive Committee.

Dr. Giacomini from the Clinical Epidemiology & Biostatistics Department presented an overview of the program. She explained that the Ph.D. in Health Policy, modeled on similar programs in the United States (e.g., Berkeley and Harvard), is the first of its kind in Canada. There are three fields involved: (1) political studies; (2) health economics; and (3) social organization. The course requirements (minimum

of 5 to a maximum of 12 half courses) are a combination of specialty field half courses and doctoral seminar half courses. The courses were designed to accommodate students in different fields. The program only caters to full-time students, and expects to admit 3-7 students annually.

Dean Richards moved, and Dr. Bennett seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed Ph.D. in Health Policy, as described in the document.”

Dr. Giacomini said the format of the course requirements provides flexibility to applicants who are expected to come from different disciplines. She explained that graduate students are required to have attained competency in five areas within the course requirements. The supervisory committee will provide guidance regarding the course plan that is appropriate for each student.

Dr. O’Brien remarked that the program has academic merit(s); however, he believes that several faculty members are not optimistic that it is viable because of the lack of teaching resources in the Faculty of Social Sciences. For example, Dr. O’Brien said, in the coming years three to four faculty members in the Department of Political Science are expected to retire and the department is concerned that its Policy field will be in jeopardy. Since the Faculty of Social Sciences is in deficit, committing to new programs is quite difficult because the Faculty cannot hire new faculty members. Dr. Pawluch said that unless the resource issues are addressed, it is unclear whether the proposal is feasible. Dr. Stein suggested that Graduate Council should adopt a motion that is similar to what was approved by the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Dr. Stein moved, and Dr. Viveros-Aguilera seconded,

“to amend the original motion as follows: that Graduate Council approve the establishment of a doctoral program in Health Policy Analysis based on the academic merits of the program with the proviso that there will be a thorough discussion of the resource implications of the program, as well as governance issues.”

The amended motion was carried.

IV. GRADUATE PROGRAM IN NEUROSCIENCE

Dean Hall invited Dr. Murphy from the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour to speak about the proposed Neuroscience graduate program. Dr. Murphy referred to the document and stated that the program aligns with McMaster’s graduate expansion. Neuroscience is one of the areas of graduate study in Science and Engineering in which Ph.D. graduates have increased over the past 20 years (NSF Science and Engineering Doctorate Awards data). Currently, there are only three Neuroscience graduate programs in Ontario (Queen’s, University of Ottawa, and University of Western Ontario). The program is composed of five research fields: (1) cellular and molecular neuroscience; (2) clinical and health neuroscience; (3) cognitive neuroscience; (4) computational neuroscience; and (5) systems and behavioural neuroscience. Sixty faculty members from the Faculties of Science, Health Sciences, Engineering and Social Sciences will be involved in the program.

Dean Capson moved, and Dr. Luke seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed graduate program in Neuroscience as described in the document.”

Dean Richards said that when the proposal was presented at the Faculty of Health Sciences GCPC, the committee raised the issue of financial resource allocation among the faculties because it was not described in the document. Dr. Murphy acknowledged that this issue should be addressed in the document. She added that the financial model for the Biomedical Engineering program was adopted for the proposal.

The motion was **carried**.

V. FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES CURRICULUM REVISIONS

Dean Richards reviewed the abbreviated report from the Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee.

1) HRM – New Comprehensive Examination Process

Dean Richards explained the minor changes in the comprehensive examination for Health Research Methodology. Rather than a three-month full time procedure, the proposal calls for a ten-month part-time process with two components: a Ph.D. seminar consisting of 20 sessions and an Independent Study involving part time work over 10 months. Referring to page 14 of the document, Dean Richards discussed the two components of the comprehensive examination.

Dean Richards moved, and Dr. Solomon seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to the comprehensive examination of the Health Research Methodology Ph.D. program, as described in the document.”

One member commented that the new procedure seemed to be more complex than necessary. Dr. Bennett responded that the change provides more depth and breadth to the examination, and also makes the best use of faculty and student time.

The motion was **carried**.

2) Rehabilitation Science Calendar Copy

Dean Richards discussed the Ph.D. Rehabilitation Science program calendar copy, outlining description of the program, admission requirements, and list of fields and courses. The Health Sciences Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee discussed and subsequently approved the document with minor revisions: the removal of Dr. H. Shannon’s name from the Associate Members’ list, and the addition of *701 to the list of courses.

Dean Richards moved, and Dr. Solomon seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed calendar copy for the Ph.D. Rehabilitation Science program, incorporating the changes proposed by the Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee, as described above.”

The motion was **carried**.

3) Changes to the Rehabilitation Science Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination

Referring to the document circulated to the Council, Dean Richards reviewed the changes to the comprehensive examination procedure. Dean Richards explained that the changes were proposed due to the recommendations of the OCGS consultants when the program was approved in April 2006.

Dean Richards moved, and Dr. Solomon seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to the Ph.D. comprehensive examination procedure for the Rehabilitation Science program, as described in the document.”

Dr. Swartz suggested that perhaps the presentation component can be open to the public but the examination should be a closed session to avoid putting too much pressure on the candidate. Dean Richards responded that the intent is to make the program consistent with the other graduate programs in the Faculty of Health Sciences. He added that it would also give other students the opportunity to see how the examination is conducted.

Discussion ensued and there was a general comment from the Council that the “pass/fail” grading procedure described on page 6 of the document is unclear and confusing. The Council decided to refer the proposal back to the department for clarification. The motion to approve was then withdrawn.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.