McMaster University
DigitalCommons@McMaster

SGS Graduate Committees: Agenda & Minutes | School of Graduate Studies

5-8-2006

Minutes of Meeting: Graduate Council, May 8, 2006

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

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/sgs_min

Recommended Citation
Espiritu, Medy Mrs., "Minutes of Meeting: Graduate Council, May 8, 2006" (2006). *SGS Graduate Committees: Agenda & Minutes.* Paper 31.
http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/sgs_min/31

This Capstone is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Graduate Studies at DigitalCommons@McMaster. It has been accepted for inclusion in SGS Graduate Committees: Agenda & Minutes by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@McMaster. For more information, please contact scom@mcmaster.ca.

GRADUATE COUNCIL
MAY 8, 2006, 10:00 a.m.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GILMOUR HALL 111

PRESENT: Dean D. Capson (Chair), Dr. K. Bennett, Dr. L. Chan, Dr. M. Boda, Dr. G. Bone, Ms. K. Espiritu, Ms. E. Giles, Dean D. Goellnicht, Dr. P. Guo, Dr. M. Hatton, Dr. M. Head, Mr. S. Kleinknecht, Ms. K. Kowalska, Dr. G. Moyal, Mr. Y. Li, Dr. R. O'Brien, Dr. D. Pawluch, Dr. S. Porter, Dean C. Richards, Dr. M. Stein, Dr. C. Swartz, Dr. J-P Xu, Mrs. M. Espiritu (Recording Secretary)

BY INVITATION: Dr. H. Haugen, Dr. A. Hrymak, Dr. T. Kroeker, Dr. P. Widdicombe

REGRETS: Dr. B. Allen, Dr. C. Ingram, Mr. J. Scime, Dr. P. Solomon, Dr. G. Steiner, Dr. R. Viveros-Aguillera

---

I. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of April 16, 2006 were approved on a motion by Dr. Boda, seconded by Dr. Moyal.

II. NEW GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Dean Capson presented for Council approval the Robert H. Johnston Graduate Scholarship to be awarded to an incoming Ph.D. student in Twentieth Century European History.

Dean Goellnicht moved, and Dr. Hatton seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the Robert H. Johnston Graduate Scholarship, as set out in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

III. 2006 SPRING GRADUANDS

Faculty of Business

Dr. Chan moved, and Dr. Xu seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve, for recommendation to Senate, the list of the 2006 Spring Graduands for the Faculty of Business, with amendments to be made as necessary by the Graduate Registrar."

The motion was **carried**.

Faculty of Engineering

Dr. Bone moved, and Dr. Swartz seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve, for recommendation to Senate, the list of the 2006 Spring Graduands for the Faculty of Engineering, with amendments to be made as necessary by the Graduate Registrar."

The motion was **carried**.

Faculty of Health Sciences

Dean Richards moved, and Dr. Hatton seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve, for recommendation to Senate, the list of the 2006 Spring Graduands for the Faculty of Health Sciences, with amendments to be made as necessary by the Graduate Registrar."

The motion was **carried**.

Faculty of Humanities

Dr. Bone moved, and Dr. Guo seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve, for recommendation to Senate, the list of the 2006 Spring Graduands for the Faculty of Humanities, with amendments to be made as necessary by the Graduate Registrar."

The motion was **carried**.

Faculty of Science

Dr. Xu moved, and Dr. Hatton seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve, for recommendation to Senate, the list of the 2006 Spring Graduands for the Faculty of Science, with amendments to be made as necessary by the Graduate Registrar."

The motion was **carried**.

Faculty of Social Sciences

Dr. Pawluch moved, and Dean Goellnicht seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve, for recommendation to Senate, the list of the 2006 Spring Graduands for the Faculty of Social Sciences, with amendments to be made as necessary by the Graduate Registrar."

The motion was **carried**.

IV. CURRICULUM REVISIONS FOR 2006-2007/NEW PROGRAM

Faculty of Engineering

Dr. Haugen presented the proposed calendar copy for the new Computational Engineering and Science program. He discussed in detail the three types of Master's programs, the Ph.D. program, admission requirements, course requirements, courses, and the Ph.D. comprehensive examination procedure.

Dr. Swartz moved, and Dr. Hatton seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the calendar description of the Computational Engineering and Science program, as outlined in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dr. Haugen reviewed the recommendation of the Department of Computing and Software to reduce the number of required courses for its M.Sc. program from five to four, to be consistent with other Master's programs in the Faculty of Engineering. There was also a proposal from the department requiring students in the M.A.Sc. program to complete four graduate courses—one of the four does not need to be a core course. The recommendation will allow students to take other courses that are relevant to their research.

Dr. Swartz moved, and Dr. Xu seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to the M.Sc. and M.A.Sc. degree programs in the Department of Computing and Software, as outlined in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dr. Haugen outlined the proposed calendar description of the combined M.Eng. degree in the Electrical and Biomedical Engineering program. One member commented that the proposed description is discriminatory against non-McMaster students. Dean Capson explained that students from other universities are admissible, but since it is combined they will not be able to take advantage of the accelerated part of the program. After a brief discussion, it was decided to remove *"only"* from the first line of the paragraph.

Dr. Bone moved, and Dr. Swartz seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed calendar description of the M.Eng. degree in the Electrical and Biomedical Engineering program, as outlined in the document and subject to the amendment mentioned above.”

The motion was **carried**.

Dr. Haugen explained the proposed new fields for the Master’s and Ph.D. programs in the Department of Engineering Physics: (a) Photonics; (b) Nano- and Micro-Device Engineering; and (c) Nuclear Engineering and Energy Systems.

Dr. Swartz moved, and Dr. Hatton seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve the proposed new fields proposed by the Department of Engineering Physics, as described in the document.”

The motion was **carried**.

Dean Capson invited Dr. Hrymak to speak about the Master of Engineering Design proposed by the School for Engineering Practice. Dr. Hrymak discussed the program’s objectives, fields, course requirements, and list of faculty members involved. The program has an optional accelerated route from the Bachelor of Engineering degree to the Master of Engineering degree for in-course students with a focus on design. Dean Capson explained that for these types of programs, OCGS prefers to use “accelerated” rather than “combined” in order to differentiate the undergraduate from the graduate component of the program. Even if OCGS allows the accelerated route, Dr. Hrymak explained that McMaster still has to develop a system in the registration function that will allow fourth-year students to register in 600-level courses. Dr. Chan commented that a decision has to be made as to how many 600-level courses fourth-year students are allowed to take. Dean Capson said only students registered in this type of program will be permitted to enrol in 600-level courses. Dr. Pawluch inquired if there were previous Graduate Council discussions regarding the viability of this type of program. Dean Capson responded that the M.Eng. in Electrical and Biomedical Engineering is the first program at McMaster that has the accelerated feature. He added that there was considerable debate about the double-counting of credits when the program was submitted to various committees for approval. Dr. Pawluch then requested that, if possible, an agenda item concerning 600-level courses taken by fourth year students (i.e. double-counting of courses) be included, in future meetings of Graduate Council.

The motion was **carried**.

Dr. Haugen then briefly discussed the remaining report of the Faculty of Engineering Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee for Graduate Council information.

Faculty of Humanities

Dean Goellnicht explained that the Department of Classics has recommended changing its Ph.D. course requirements to accommodate the needs of individual students, in particular the different

language abilities with which students enter the program. The change will result in the elimination of 701 and 702 as required courses in the Ph.D program.

Dean Goellnicht moved, and Dr. Moyal seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the change in the Ph.D. course requirements proposed by the Department of Classics, as described in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dean Goellnicht then referred to the proposal submitted by the Department of English and Cultural Studies to change its comprehensive examination procedure. Currently, students are required to take a Primary Area Examination and a Secondary Area Examination from the ten fields identified by the department. The recommendation is to replace the two area examinations with a field examination in one of the ten fields approved by OCGS, and a topic examination that relates to the student's dissertation. The change will assist in developing the student's breadth of knowledge in his/her field, preparing the student for the job market, and writing the dissertation.

Dean Goellnicht moved, and Dr. O'Brien seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed change in the comprehensive examination procedure for the Department of English and Cultural Studies, as described in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dean Goellnicht addressed the recommendation from the Department of History, which is a change in the grading procedure of its comprehensive examination. The department is recommending this change in order to conform to the practice of other McMaster departments offering doctoral programs. History is the only department at McMaster that assigns grades for its comprehensive examination.

Dean Goellnicht moved, and Dr. Hatton seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed change in the grading procedure of the Department of History's comprehensive examination, as described in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dean Goellnicht then briefly discussed for Graduate Council information the other graduate curriculum recommendations from the Faculty of Humanities.

Faculty of Science

Dr. Xu discussed the proposal submitted by the Department of Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences to change the calendar description of the M.Sc. program in order to conform to the OCGS requirements regarding 600-level courses.

Dr. Xu moved, and Dr. Guo seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed change in the M.Sc. degree calendar description for the Department of Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences, as set out in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dr. Xu reported that the Department of Medical Physics and Applied Radiation Sciences has recommended closure of the Diploma in Health Physics and the Diploma in Medical Physics due to low enrolment.

Dr. Xu moved, and Dr. Bone seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the closure of the Diploma in Health Physics and the Diploma in Medical Physics, as described in the document."

Dr. Hatton said it is unfortunate that diploma programs such as these have to be closed for lack of interest.

The motion was **carried with 1 opposed**.

Dr. Xu explained that the Department of Medical Physics and Applied Radiation Sciences recommended the addition of a new field—radiation biology—to the program. The introduction of the new field required a program name change to M.Sc./Ph.D. in Radiation Sciences – Medical Physics and M.Sc./Ph.D. in Radiation Science – Radiation Biology. Dr. Xu discussed the admission requirements for the M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Radiation Sciences and he said there are 14 faculty members involved in the program.

Dr. Xu moved, and Dean Goellnicht seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the new field and the change in program name proposed by the Department of Medical Physics and Applied Radiation Sciences, as described in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dr. Xu then discussed the other graduate curriculum proposals from the Faculty of Science for Graduate Council information.

Faculty of Social Sciences

Dean Goellnicht outlined the submissions from the Department of Economics: (a) elimination of the field "Economic Planning and Development"—this field has not been offered in twenty years; (b) addition of prerequisites to certain courses in order to admit only Ph.D. students with background knowledge; (c) revision of the Ph.D. degree calendar description to bring it in line with the department's practice and ensure that students in the program are aware of the requirements; and (d) elimination of the 14 half-course requirement.

Dean Goellnicht moved, and Dr. Pawluch seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the graduate curriculum revisions submitted by the Department of Economics, as outlined in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dean Goellnicht discussed the graduate curriculum revisions proposed by the Department of Social Work: (a) calendar description change for the MSW program specifying that students in the Social Welfare Policy field have to take 703 first in the fall term; and 731 for students in the Social Work Practice field; (b) stipulate that 737 is a prerequisite for 738.

Dean Goellnicht moved, and Dr. Stein seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the graduate curriculum revisions proposed by the Department of Social Work, as described in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

Dean Goellnicht then turned to the curriculum revisions recommended by the Department of Sociology: (a) change to the M.A. and Ph.D. theory requirement; and (b) rename the B Area Comprehensive Examination to "Sociology of Deviance and Social Problems."

Dean Goellnicht moved, and Dr. Pawluch seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed graduate curriculum revisions submitted by the Department of Sociology, as described in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

V. DIVINITY COLLEGE: M.A. AND Ph.D. IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Dean Goellnicht explained that the M.A. and Ph.D. in Christian Theology programs—currently accredited through the Association of Theological Schools (ATS)—are already being offered by Divinity College under its own charter. The Divinity College is now seeking OCGS approval for these two programs. Divinity College is submitting the proposal through Graduate Council as recommended by OCGS, although Divinity College does have the right to go directly to OCGS.

Due to a number of program submissions from theology schools, OCGS formed a committee to develop procedures for submission of such programs, which have now been adopted as OCGS bylaws. Dean Goellnicht read the relevant sections from the "Report of the OCGS Working Group on Graduate Degrees in Theological Colleges" and from the "Agreement on Affiliation of McMaster University and McMaster Divinity College," which was revised to clarify policies and procedures for implementing graduate programs.

Dean Goellnicht moved, and Dr. Porter seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed M.A. and Ph.D. programs in Christian Theology submitted by Divinity College, as described in the document."

Dr. Boda discussed at length the objectives of the two programs, faculty members involved, admission requirements, financial resources and infrastructure, course requirements, and thesis procedure. Dr. Boda said the College has significant financial resources through endowment and trust funds, which is why it is not dependent upon external funding sources. If the programs are approved by OCGS, Dr. Boda said students will be able to apply for student loans. After Dr. Boda's presentation, Dean Capson introduced Dr. Travis Kroeker (Chair) and Dr. Peter Widdicombe (Graduate Program Advisor) from the Department Religious Studies, both of whom were invited to the Council meeting.

Dr. Kroeker remarked that he is concerned with Divinity College affiliating its research degrees with the School of Graduate Studies because of the employment practices of the College—specifically with regards to its faculty members. He said the past record of Divinity College in terms of employee relations is highly problematic. Dr. Kroeker said the affiliation between the Divinity College and the Toronto School of Theology was recently terminated because of issues regarding dismissal of faculty members without cause and non-renewal of probationary faculty appointment without peer review. He said Divinity College does not have normal tenure but a regular review process for ongoing appointments, thereby leaving regular faculty members vulnerable to threat of dismissal without cause, and resulting in an unstable academic environment. Dr. Kroeker further said the faculty review process within Divinity College includes only two faculty members out of six and does not include a process of peer adjudication. In addition, Dr. Kroeker expressed his concern regarding the supervisory structures and capacities of the program, the anomalies in the listing of faculty with supervisory powers, the funding levels of doctoral students, and questions of oversight and accountability to the School of Graduate Studies in terms of supervisory committees and external examiners. Dr. Kroeker remarked that the degree programs being recommended should not be supported until Divinity College brings its practices into conformity with the general practices of a research academy.

Dr. Boda said a faculty member at Divinity College cannot be terminated without cause—there has to be an identifiable reason for termination. He explained that the procedure starts with a letter from the Principal addressed to the faculty member identifying the problems. The faculty member must then address/rectify the concerns outlined in the letter. If the Principal believes the issues have not been resolved, the long process—which involves issuing a warning, identifying areas of concerns, etc.—will continue. He added that the College has a faculty handbook

explaining this procedure. Dr. Porter said that in recent years, there have been faculty members who were dismissed, but the procedures of the College were followed rigorously. In response to a question about the nature of faculty dismissals that occurred in the past, Dr. Porter said that as administrator of the College, he is legally bound not to discuss these issues. Referring to the $17,000 minimum funding that McMaster guarantees its Ph.D. students—which Divinity College lacks—Dr. Widdicombe expressed his concern that Ph.D. students at Divinity College may not have adequate funding to pursue an academic degree; he added that students might also experience difficulty finding employment to support their studies. Dr. Boda responded that some graduate students in the College receive support from private sources, but acknowledged that the guarantee of $17,000 could not be made. Dr. Porter pointed out that resource issues are a matter for the College, independent of the University.

After an hour and a half of discussion, Dean Capson suggested that if Council members feel that further discussion is needed to clarify issues surrounding the proposal, it would be necessary to table the motion to approve the proposal. He explained that there is a GC Executive meeting on May 29 and he proposed to turn this meeting into a Graduate Council meeting if enough members of the Council will attend to constitute a quorum. Dr. Agarwal inquired if Divinity College can provide additional documents to assist the Council with its decision. Dr. Boda responded that the minutes of the Divinity College Board meetings and the faculty handbook can be made available to Graduate Council for this purpose. Since some members already withdrew from the meeting and there were only 16 voting members left, Dean Capson called for a motion to table the proposal. He explained to the 16 voting members present that Council needs two thirds of their vote (11) before the motion to table is approved.

Dr. O'Brien moved, and Dr. Stein seconded,

"to table the motion to approve the M.A. and Ph.D. in Christian Theology to the next meeting of Graduate Council for further discussion and clarification."

The motion to table **failed with 10 in favour**.

Dean Capson then called for Council members to vote on the main motion to approve the proposed M.A. and Ph.D. programs in Christian Theology.

The motion to approve the proposal **failed with 6 in favour, 3 opposed, and 6 abstentions**.

Since the program was not approved, the Council did not discuss the courses related to the proposal.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.