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Minutes of Meeting: Graduate Council, April 6, 2006

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GRADUATE COUNCIL
APRIL 6, 2006, 1:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, GILMOUR HALL 111

PRESENT: Dean F.L. Hall (Chair), Dr. N. Agarwal, Dr. B. Allen, Dean P. Bates, Dr. M. Boda, Dr. G. Bone, Dean D. Capson, Dr. L. Chan, Ms. K. Espiritu, Dean D. Goellnicht, Dr. P. Guo, Dr. M. Head, Mr. S. Kleinknecht, Ms. K. Kowalska, Mr. Y. Li, Dr. G. Moyal, Dr. R. O'Brien, Dr. D. Pawluch, Dr. S. Porter, Dean C. Richards, Mr. J. Scime (Secretary), Dr. P. Solomon, Dr. G. Steiner, Dr. C. Swartz, Dr. R. Viveros-Aguilera, Mrs. M. Espiritu (Recording Secretary)

REGRETS: Dr. K. Bennett, Ms. E. Giles, Dr. G. Luke, Mr. S. Luyk, Dr. M. Stein, Dr. J. Xu

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Dean Hall announced that the Ph.D. in Business Administration proposed fields will be presented towards the end of the meeting because Dean Bates will be late in attendance.

I. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of March 9, 2006 were approved on a motion by Dr. Viveros-Aguilera, seconded by Dr. Agarwal, with correction on page two, first paragraph. The last sentence was replaced with *"Dr. Bone commented that perhaps the four-year limit is no longer realistic because Ph.D. programs are becoming more challenging."*

II. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the minutes.

III. TRANSFER FROM COURSE-WORK TO THESIS MASTER'S OR VICE VERSA, AND DISCUSSION OF M. ENG. TO M.A.Sc. CHANGES

Referring to the document outlining the proposal, Dean Hall explained that the University Ombuds has requested the School of Graduate Studies to clarify its view on whether McMaster students currently working on a Master's degree are allowed to transfer from a thesis-based to a course-based Master's program or vice versa. Dean Hall sought the opinion of departments offering graduate programs and the comments he received were incorporated into the document. The proposed changes will result in the revision of section 3.1 of the Graduate Calendar.

Dr. Swartz moved, and Dr. Bone seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to section 3.1 of the Graduate Calendar which concerns the transfer from course-work to thesis Master's or vice-versa, and the discussion of the M.Eng. to M.A.Sc. changes, as outlined in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

IV. CREDIT FOR GRADUATE WORK DONE BEFORE ENTERING A DEGREE PROGRAM; GRADUATE DIPLOMAS; POST-DEGREE STUDIES

Dean Hall stated that the changes being proposed will result in the revision of sections 2.1.4- *Admission Requirements for Graduate Diploma Programs*, and 2.1.5. – *Admission Requirements for Post-degree Students* of the Graduate Calendar. Dean Hall explained that the recommendation came from the M.Sc. Rehabilitation Science (course-based) program offered in conjunction with the University of British Columbia, where several students expressed interest in transferring from the diploma program. The current policy of McMaster is to limit credit for prior work to one full course. According to Dean Hall, other universities use diploma programs to attract students for Master's programs; and these universities also allow for more credit. After the discussion, it was agreed that in the document the average grade should be specified, instead of the actual grade of a specific course because instructors have the flexibility to raise the student's grade.

Dr. Pawluch moved, and Dean Richards seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to sections 2.1.4 and 2.1.5 of the Graduate Calendar, as outlined in the document and subject to the amendment mentioned above."

The motion was **carried**.

V. SECTION 5.1.3 OF THE GRADUATE CALENDAR

Mr. Scime explained that section 5.1.3 – *Readmission Tuition Charges* of the Graduate Calendar is recommended for revision in order to differentiate the tuition payment for the two sets of students who apply for readmission: (1) Students who were withdrawn in good standing due to time limit and are successful in gaining readmission; and (2) Students who withdrew voluntarily or did not register for an academic session and wish to apply for readmission. Mr. Scime mentioned that when the document was presented at the last meeting of the Graduate Council Executive, there was a minor revision: the phrase "*(regular, part-time or discounted)*" was moved to second paragraph, line two, after the phrase "*last category*."

Dr. Bone moved, and Dr. Moyal seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the proposed changes to section 5.1.3 of the Graduate Calendar, as outlined in the document and subject to the amendment mentioned above."

The motion was **carried**.

VI. SCHOLARSHIP – THE ROBERT JOHN MORRIS BURSARIES

Dean Hall said the current description for the Robert John Morris Bursaries has to be changed because of the closure of the Master's program in Music Criticism. Mr. Scime said the proposed new description was presented to and subsequently approved by the donors.

Dr. Pawluch moved, and Dr. Steiner seconded,

"that Graduate Council approve the revised description for the Robert John Morris Bursaries, as outlined in the document."

The motion was **carried**.

VII. TRACKING OF GRADUATE STUDENT'S PROGRESS

Dean Hall referred to four Internet links to the University of Melbourne website which discuss completion rates of graduate students; and to the table, *Academic Results for Students Entering Doctoral Study on a Full-time Basis During the Period September 1994 to August 1999*. He discussed briefly the completion rates of the different departments, noting the 74% rate of completion for both the Engineering and Science faculties. Dean Hall then asked the members for comments on ways to improve the completion rates for the faculties of Business, Humanities and Social Sciences. Dean Hall wondered whether there is a need for more intensive tracking/reporting by departments on an annual basis to improve students' completion rates in these faculties. There was a suggestion to offer a course about thesis dissertation in order to assist students. Another suggestion was to provide technical writing assistance to students who have difficulty in writing the thesis. Focusing on students who withdrew and determining the reasons for program withdrawal was another suggestion. There was a general comment that graduate programs should have well-defined structure and guidelines. Expectations from students in the program (i.e., meeting deadlines, completion time, etc.) should also be clearly explained.

Dean Hall thanked the members for their comments and added that he will ask departments to ensure that expectations from students are clearly outlined in their graduate studies brochures.

VIII. Ph.D. IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROPOSED FIELDS

Dr. Head discussed at length the proposed fields for the Ph.D. in Business Administration: Accounting, Finance, Human Resources, Information Systems, Management Science, and Marketing.

In response to Dr. Pawluch, Dr. Head referred to Table 2 on page 15 of the document and explained the program's projected enrolment from 2006 to 2010.

Dr. Chan expressed her concern that some students may not have the necessary background for the preparatory courses. Dr. Agarwal responded that he does not foresee any problems because the admission process will ensure the students have the appropriate background knowledge before they are admitted to the program. Dr. Chan said there were some typographical errors in the document and she also commented that the structure of the courses needs more clarification. In response to Dean Capson, Dean Bates said the proposal was thoroughly discussed and subsequently approved at the recent meeting of the Faculty of Business.

There was a revision to the document: on page 5, “Accounting/Financial Services” was replaced with “Accounting.”

Dean Bates moved and Dr. Agarwal seconded,

“that Graduate Council approve in principle the proposed fields in the Ph.D. Business Administration program, as outlined in the document, and subject to the change mentioned above.”

The motion was **carried**. (14 in favour, 3 abstentions)

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

Dean Hall announced that there is a plan to hold a Graduate Recruitment Day either late September or mid-October this year. After a brief discussion, the Council recommended to hold a Friday-Saturday event in late September or mid-October this year and will invite students from other universities as well.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.