

COUNCIL OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES (CGPS)

Meeting held via Zoom

Date: Monday, December 14, 2020

Time: 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For meeting attendance list, please see last page.

Order was called at 2:33 p.m.

Dean Nalbantoglu confirmed quorum.

1.0 Adoption of the Agenda**CGPS-AGD_2020.12.14**

Motion was made by Samer Faraj, and seconded by Cecily Hilsdale, to adopt the agenda. Motion carried.

2.0 Approval of previous Minutes of Meeting**CGPS-MoM_2020.11.16**

Motion was made by Stephanie Chevalier, and seconded by Griet Vankeerberghen, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, November 16, 2020. Motion carried.

Business Arising

None

For Approval**3.0 Policy revisions:****3.1 Graduate Student Supervision****CGPS_2020.12.14_GradStudSupervision**

Dean Nalbantoglu informed Council members that in Spring 2019, Faculties were consulted about Letters of Understanding (LOUs), which they started implementing across all doctoral programs in Fall 2019. The intention was to eventually make LOUs mandatory. The policy revision to Graduate Student Supervision is formalizing a practice that is already widespread across the University.

CGPS commentary

- A Council member asked whether the timeline for completing the LOU is stipulated by GPS or the individual units. Dean Nalbantoglu confirmed that the LOU is implemented once a supervisor is selected. The timeline for selecting a supervisor varies across units. Due dates for the LOU milestone therefore vary in myProgress.
- Council members discussed the differences between LOUs and annual Progress Tracking reports. Dean Nalbantoglu explained that whereas the focus of Progress Tracking reports is on academic progress, LOUs are intended to clarify expectations of the relationship between the student and the supervisor.
- A Council member asked if LOUs need to be officially approved by GPDs. Dean Nalbantoglu confirmed that while GPD oversight is recommended, formal approval by the GPD is not mandatory. It is up to individual units to decide.

CGPS requests

- A Council member requested that section 2.8 be revised to: "A Letter of Understanding (LOU) is mandatory between Ph.D. students and their supervisor(s). GPS strongly recommends that units also implement an LOU for master's students."

Motion was made by Marta Kobiela, and seconded by Monzur Murshed, to approve the revisions to the policy. The revised policy was approved with 19 votes (1 abstain); it will be reported to APC for approval.

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For Information**4.0 For Information:****4.1 Minor/Moderate Revisions and Program Retirement [including Low Enrolment/Obsolete] CGPS-RPTP_2020.12.14**

Dean Nalbantoglu updated Council members on the program revisions and retirements that were made to meet the Quebec Ministry-mandated revision of Master's thesis programs over 45 credits. In addition, to align ourselves with our peer institutions across North America, M.Eng. programs are being retired. The M.Eng. is now exclusively reserved for non-thesis programs, while the M.Sc. is used for thesis programs. Proposals available upon request.

Councillors' forum**None****Other Business****5.0 Local Wellness Advisor**

Dean Nalbantoglu noted that Local Wellness Advisors (LWAs) have resources available to support departments and faculty members as well as graduate students.

CGPS commentary

- A Council member remarked that the LWA cannot reach out to students who stop attending classes and/or responding to emails; this must be done by the Office of the Dean of Students.

CGPS requests

- Council members requested that the LWA resource document refer to the Keep.meSAFE program.

6.0 Supervision orientation/workshops

Presented by: Associate Dean Nathan Hall from Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Associate Dean Nathan Hall informed Council members that the information typically provided to new supervisors in in-person supervision orientation workshops will now be offered in an online format. The content is currently being finalized and will be available through myCourses in the new year. Associate Dean Hall provided an overview of the sections that will be covered. Future plans include the addition of modules that will look more deeply into issues such as conflict resolution, mental health, and work-life balance.

CGPS commentary

A Council member asked if new GPDs could also view the modules. Associate Dean Hall will inquire as to who can opt-in to complete the module beyond the new faculty members for whom it will be required.

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7.0 Graduate Funding

Presented by: Associate Dean Russell Steele from Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Associate Dean Russell Steele resumed the discussion on the creation of a standardized framework for graduate funding letters from the CGPS meeting of November 16, 2020.

CGPS commentary

- A Council member asked whether the funding letters only apply to full-time students. Associate Dean Steele replied that they only apply to incoming Ph.D. students. Dean Nalbantoglu added that Ph.D. students cannot start as half-time at the very beginning.
- A Council member asked whether external awards contribute to tuition and base funding, or if tuition and base funding are considered a “top-up” to external awards. Dean Nalbantoglu replied that units can choose the amount of base funding, which prevents “clawing-back” should students get an external award.
- A Council member asked how to approach funding for students who do not fulfill the duties of their T.A. contracts. Associate Dean Steele noted the advantage of the new funding letter format in its specification of employment salary as expected rather than guaranteed. Furthermore, he emphasized the distinction between stipends (used for progress towards the degree) and employment (salary for stated hours of specific duties for work).
- A Council member asked how to proceed should students receive an external award that is lower than the supplement amount. Associate Dean Steele explained that the funding letter is structured so that students holding external awards cannot expect to get the full supplement amount; however, if they do hold an award that is lower than the supplement, units can use the supplement to make up the difference. Dean Nalbantoglu added that the supplement can change from year to year.
- A Council member asked if faculty members without grants would be able to recruit students. Dean Nalbantoglu explained that each year, GPS allocates funds to units to be applied to recruitment.
- A Council member asked how guaranteed funding would be affected should there be a fallout between the student and the supervisor. Dean Nalbantoglu replied that in some cases, GPS has funds set aside that can be used to help with the student’s first year of funding, until a new supervisor is selected.
- A Council member asked if the new funding letter model would be mandatory. Dean Nalbantoglu replied that there will be presentations to introduce units to this new framework and encourage them to think about funding more strategically.
- Council members discussed the importance of covering tuition fees in order to remain competitive.
- A Council member asked how to manage students who work more than 180 hours per term. Dean Nalbantoglu answered that students are expected to make satisfactory progress towards their degree and the 180-hour rule is there to help them meet this goal; as well, with adequate funding and success in external funding competitions, students shouldn’t have to work more than 180 hours.

CGPS requests

- Council members requested a Word version of the funding letter template for departmental simulations.

There being no further business, all were in favor to adjourn the meeting at 4:28 p.m.

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Q*	Name	Faculty/Departement	Present	Regrets	Absent
1	Cecily Hilsdale	Arts	X		
2	Eran Shor	Arts			X
3	Griet Vankeerberghen	Arts	X		
4	Robert Funnell	Medicine and Health Sciences	X		
5	Isabelle Gelinás	Medicine and Health Sciences	X		
6	Nathalie Lamarche-Vane	Medicine and Health Sciences	X		
7	Andrew Cumming	Science	X		
8	Nicolas Moitessier	Science	X		
9	Frederic Guichard (for Tamara Western)	Science	X		
10	Jean-Benoit Charron	Agricultural, Environmental & Science	X		
11	Stephanie Chevalier	Agricultural, Environmental & Science	X		
12	Marta Kobiela	Education	X		
13	Marie-Helene Pennestri	Education	X		
14	Jinhyuk Lee	Engineering	X		
15	Siva Nadarajah	Engineering	X		
16	Monzur Murshed	Dentistry	X		
17	Nancy Czermmel	Law	X		
18	Samer Faraj	Management	X		
19	Philippe Depalle	Music	X		
20	Kristi Kouchakji	Secretary-General - PGSS (delegate)	X		
21	TBA	Postdoctoral fellow			
22	TBA	Graduate Student - AES, Eng or Sci			
23	TBA	Graduate Student - Arts, Edu or MGMT			
24	TBA	Graduate Student - Dentistry or Med			
25	TBA	Graduate Student - Law or Music			
-	NuRee Lee (for April Colosimo)	Libraries (ex-officio)	X		
-	Sylvain Coulombe (for Martha Crago)	Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) (ex-officio) (delegate)		X	
-	Carolyn Samuel (for Laura Winer)	Director - TLS (ex-officio)	X		
Members with voice but no vote					
-	Josephine Nalbantoglu	Dean of GPS - Chair	X		
-	Lorraine Chalifour	Associate Dean - GPS	X		
-	Nathan Hall	Associate Dean - GPS	X		
-	Russell Steele	Associate Dean - GPS	X		
-	Elisa Pylkkanen	Director - GPS	X		
-	Maggie Do Couto	Academic Affairs Officer - GPS	X		
-	Chloe Garcia	Academic Affairs Officer - GPS	X		
-	Cindy Smith	SCTP Secretary		X	
-	Sarah Curci	Committee Secretary	X		

*Q = quorum (40%) = 10 on 25 members - Article 6.3.1 from Statutes of McGill University.

An ex-officio member is not counted in calculating the quorum, but he/she has the right to vote. - Robert's Rules of Order