

## Council of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Minutes of the meeting of the CGPS held on  
Monday, September 16, 2013, 2:30 pm  
James Administration Building, Room 301

### **Attendance:**

#### *Officers:*

Martin Kreiswirth (Chair)  
Mona Sharafi-Razvand (Committee Secretary Assistance)

#### *Elected Members:*

Roger Cue, Ned Schantz, Jeff Gostick, Louis Houle, David Wolfson, Bettina Kemme, Adam Bouchard and Nathaniel Qutoriano.

#### *Ex-Officio:*

Jean-Jaques Lebrun

#### *Regrets:*

Benoît Coté, Kristin Norget, Simon Tran, France Bouthillier, Angela Campbell, Derek Bowie, Eleanor Stublely, Patricia Kirkpatrick,

#### *Absent:*

Carrie Rentschler, Ingrid Sladeczek, Saibal Ray, Isabelle Rouiller, Josephine Nalbantoglu, Greg Brown, Heather Goad, Laura Nilson, Lissa Matyas, Ali Jahanbani Ardakani, Kedar K. Mate, Adelina Artenie, Maedeh Khayyat Kholghi and Hatem Dokainish.

#### *Guests:*

David Syncox, Jonathan Mooney, Kim Bartlett, Scott Kushner, Joel Deshayé, Maggie Do Couto, and Jim Engle-Warnick

### **Order was called at 2:40 pm**

The Chair, Dean Kreiswirth, welcomed the new members for this academic year and proceeded with a round table of all the members.

### **100 Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was not adopted due to a lack of quorum.

### **101 Approval of Minutes**

CGPS.13.01

The minutes of the April 10, 2013 meeting were not approved due to a lack of quorum.

**102 Introduction of Committee:**

- Mandate
- Procedures
- Schedule

CGPS.13.02

Dean Kreiswirth presented the Council's mandate and described the role of the members. He described the different types of documents that are presented for approval and for information and explained the approval process of these documents.

Dean Kreiswirth informed members of Council that Agenda items will be shared in advance and strongly encouraged them to communicate desired subjects for discussion two weeks prior to Council meetings. Dean Kreiswirth also highly recommended for members who will be missing some of the meetings to send a faculty representative on their behalf.

**103 Business Arising from the Minutes**

## a) Initiatives

CGPS.13.03

Dean Kreiswirth explained the history of GPS and briefly mentioned some of GPS' goals such as Increasing Graduate Enrolment and Funding as well as Improving Graduate Admission (uApply) and the Graduate and Postdoctoral Experience.

The GPS Operating Model and its Strategic Research Initiative (SRI) projects were also presented to members of Council.

## b) New Graduate and Postdoctoral Writing Initiative

Dr. Scott Kushner, program coordinator of the McGill Writing Center from School of Continuing Studies, presented the New Graduate and Postdoctoral Writing Initiative which soft launched last week thanks to its partners, GPS and TLS. The objective of this initiative is to perceive the need for McGill to help graduate students to improve their writing skills. He described the 3 approaches to the initiative: a series of small meetings, specific workshops and 1 credit courses that are available at no cost to graduate and postdoctoral students.

Dr. Kushner also shared the need to recruit advanced Graduate, Postdoctoral and recent PhD students with a science and medical-science background to teach and mentor students.

Dean Kreiswirth shared some more background information regarding the involvement of GPS and TLS (Skillsets) and their goal to accommodate all the students.

**104 New Business**

## a) 2012-2013 Supervisory Surveys Overview

CGPS.13.04

Dr. Joel Deshayé, Academic Programs and Projects Officer from Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS), invited members of Council to go through the 2012-2013 Supervisory Surveys Overview emerging from supervisors and supervisees responses. Based on the responses,

Dr. Deshayé was able to identify areas that need improvement and to make recommendations based on his findings.

b) Recommendations on Supervision

CGPS.13.05

Dr. Deshayé, with support from Dean Kreiswirth, presented to members of Council the following recommendations; (1) concern regarding solving problems by increasing regulations, (2) the potential lack of differentiation between supervisory committees and co-supervision, (3) the lack of professors who can fulfill additional committee duties in small departments, (4) the potential for supervisory committees to be motivational and supportive, (5) the size of proposed supervisory committees, (6) and the potential that the first three recommendations would be rendered unnecessary if academic units created incentives for effective supervision.

In response to the first 3 recommendations about agreements on expectations, members of Council debated whether agreements should refer to daily and weekly concerns (e.g., meetings) or concerns of greater magnitude (e.g., sabbaticals), the lack of clarity about whether the recommendation was intended to be used at the departmental or individual levels, or both.

In response to the final 3 recommendations about supervisory training, councilors debated the use of the word “training” compared to “support” and they proposed alternatives such as “orientation” or “workshop”; the applicability of training to the diverse disciplines and the likelihood that ineffective supervisors could be corrected vs. the likelihood that ineffective supervision could be prevented.

As a result, Dean Kreiswirth and Dr. Deshayé will spend some time revising the recommendations and will communicate the revisions by email with members of Council as soon as possible.

**105 For Information:**

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| a) SCTP Summary Report 1- New, Revised and Retired Courses | CGPS.13.06 |
| c) SCTP Summary Report 1 – Revised and Retired Programs    | CGPS.13.07 |
| d) SCTP Summary Report 2 – New Courses                     | CGPS.13.08 |
| e) SCTP Summary Report 2 – Revised Programs                | CGPS.13.09 |

These documents were presented for information to members.

**106 Councilor’s Forum**

**107 Other Business**

**There being no further business, all were in favour to adjourn the meeting at 4:35 p.m.**