

Council of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Minutes of the meeting of the CGPS held on

Monday, January 18, 2016 2:30 pm

James Administration Building, Room 301

Attendance:

Officers:

Josephine Nalbantoglu (Chair)

Alison Crump (Acting Secretary)

Ex-Officio:

Elisa Pylkkanen, Robin Beech, France Bouthillier, Jean-Jacques Lebrun, Maggie Do Couto, Devin Mills, David Syncox (for Laura Winer), Cindy Smith

Elected Members:

Natheer Alatawneh, Sébastien Breau, Bilal Marwa (for Hao Yu Chen), Benoît Côté, Nancy Czettel, Pengfei Guan, Rene Turcotte (for Dennis Jensen), Louis Houle, Prashant Keshavmurthy, Naguib Mechawar, Monzur Murshed, Meyer Nahon, Laura Nilson, Caroline Brown (for Milica Popovich), Aimee Ryan, Elaine Weiner, Lena Weman

Regrets:

Peter Grutter, Cindy Kim, Andrea Price, Vijaya Raghavan, Michael Van Dussen

Absent:

Gordon Bloom, Derek Bowie, Lara Braitstein, Samer Faraj, Stephanie Law

Guest(s):

Heidi Emami, Associate Registrar, Academic Records and Exams

Order was called at 2:33 pm

Dean Nalbantoglu confirmed that with 17 voting members, we had quorum (which is 14 voting members).

117 Adoption of the Agenda

Motion was made by Lena Weman, and seconded by Pengfei Guan, to adopt the agenda. Motion carried.

118 Approval of the Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of November 16, 2015

CGPS.15.17– MinNov16_15

Motion was made by Naguib Mechawar, and seconded by Meyer Nahon, to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2015 meeting. Motion carried.

119 Business Arising

For Approval – Policy Revisions

Dean Nalbantoglu explained that in this Council meeting, she would introduce policy revisions, with the aim of having the changes reflected in the 2016-2017 e-calendar. She noted that they would go through the usual approval pathway after CGPS approval.

a) Reinstatement and Admission of Former Students

CGPS.15.18–Readmission

Dean Nalbantoglu defined the “Reinstatement and Admission of Former Students” policy and pointed out that students who have passed time limitation and are reinstated to submit their thesis within two years are charged fees for terms in which they were not able to access university services. The proposed change to remove reinstatement will make the process fairer to students.

There was a long period of discussion following Dean Nalbantoglu’s introduction of the change. There was discussion about why the details about fees were vague in the policy document. Dean Nalbantoglu confirmed that under the new policy, students who are readmitted will pay fees up to the time limit of their degree (i.e., Master’s 3, PhD7) and for the term in which they submit their thesis. She also said that information about the fees and procedures are in development and will be on the GPS website, but not on the e-calendar policy document; however, the policy document would have a link to the full procedural details on the GPS website. Dean Nalbantoglu assured Council members that there would be a multi-pronged communication strategy regarding this change (to students, GPCs, and GPDs).

There was some discussion about what counts as a term, and a suggestion to specify that “term” in the document does not include Summer. Dean Nalbantoglu clarified that students who withdrew, for example, in PhD4 and returned in PhD6 would indeed be charged for the previous terms in which they had not registered. Students would not be withdrawn for not registering for 1 term, but would receive notifications. The revised readmission policy would come into effect for students who had not registered for two or more terms. She also noted that students who registered for a Leave of Absence would have this on their transcript and their clock would stop (i.e., no change from the current process).

There was a suggestion to specify in the policy document what the time limit is for Master’s and PhD (i.e., Master’s 3; PhD7) and make reference to the time limitation policy. One suggested edit was: “fees will be based on term of readmission up to a maximum of Master’s3 or PhD7 plus the term of readmission.” This sentence will be included before the policy moves to the next level of approval. In addition, the policy will specify that students should contact their GPC with questions about fees.

When there were no more questions or comments, motion was made by Benoît Coté, and seconded by Devin Mills to vote for the approval of the policy change. The vote was unanimous in favour of the policy change.

b) Time Limitation

CGPS.15.19–TimeLimit

Dean Nalbantoglu explained that there were some modifications to the “Time Limitation” policy to align this policy with the changes to the Readmission Policy.

There was some discussion about how the time limit for the Master’s and PhD was described in the policy document and that the description for the PhD was confusing. After several suggested edits, there was agreement that the first line of the second paragraph could be removed. This will be done before the policy moves ahead in the approval pathway. A final change will be to use the same language for withdrawal for both Master’s and PhD in the document.

Motion was made by Lena Weman, and seconded by Aimee Ryan, to vote for the approval of the revision to the policy. The vote was unanimous in favour of the revision to the policy.

c) Regulations on Graduate Student Research Progress Tracking

CGPS.15.20–GradResProgTrack

Dean Nalbantoglu explained that the only change to the “Regulations on Graduate Student Research Progress Tracking” was the addition of 2.9, which would ensure that GPDs have oversight of progress tracking meetings. Council members agreed that this was important. One Council member asked what GPDs should do if there is no progress tracking form submitted for a student. Dean Nalbantoglu responded that annual progress tracking for PhD students has been mandatory since 2003, and clarified the importance of being diligent with tracking - if a form is not submitted, this can be treated as grounds for an unsatisfactory report, which falls under the Failure Policy.

Motion was made by Devin Mills, and seconded by Aimee Ryan to vote for the approval of the policy revision. The vote was unanimous in favour of this small addition to the policy.

d) Regulations on Graduate Student Supervision

CGPS.15.21–GradStudSupervision

Dean Nalbantoglu explained that the current “Regulations on Graduate Student Supervision” is a combination of policy and recommendations, and that the revisions separate these into two separate documents, so that the e-calendar document is just the regulations. She talked through the changes in red font and the strikethrough, explaining that we are launching the supervision orientation workshops in spring 2016 and giving new faculty members 2 to 3 years to complete the orientation before reappointment.

The majority of the discussion centered on the addition of 2.8, the recommendation that units have letters of agreement. Dean Nalbantoglu pointed out that we are working on the terminology to ensure that it is clear that it is not a legally binding document. One suggestion was to use the same language as the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) - Letter of Understanding. There was agreement that this was a good option. It was suggested that “agreement” be kept in 2.5 (regarding co-supervision by Adjuncts), but revised in 2.8 to “understanding”.

There were requests for templates of letters of understanding. Dean Nalbantoglu explained that while we do have templates, GPS is working towards having each program develop their own template that can be customized for each student.

There was some discussion about who can be a co-supervisor. There was general agreement that someone with a Master's degree could be a co-supervisor if they had the expertise required to support the progress and development of the student's research program. Dean Nalbantoglu confirmed that there was no financial remuneration for co-supervision by non-McGill people. The process for appointing a co-supervisor is for the GPC to send an email to Enrolment Services specifying the name of the person to be added as a co-supervisor. In this process, there is no assessment of the qualifications of the co-supervisor.

Dean Nalbantoglu provided the rationale for adding details regarding Adjuncts: there always needs to be one supervisor who is a McGill professor and falls under McGill policies and regulations.

Motion was made by Naguib Mechawar, and seconded by Sébastien Breau, to vote for the approval of the policy revision. The vote was unanimous in favour of the policy revision.

120 For Information

a) CGPS Report 2

CGPS.15.22–Report 2_2015.02

There were some questions about details in the report (e.g., credit weight changes; revisions to MA coursework or project option), which the GPS Programs team will confirm before submitting the report to SCTP.

121 Councilors' Forum

There were no items brought forward for the Councilor's Forum.

122 Other Business

Dean Nalbantoglu announced that the selection committees for the GPS Awards, which would sit in February, were 1 member short and asked for a volunteer. Natheer Alataweh volunteered.

There being no further business, all were in favour to adjourn the meeting at 3:58 p.m.