

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE
ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on March 27, 2007, at 3:00 p.m. in Arts Council Room, Arts 160.

PRESENT: Dean Grant (Chair), Associate Dean Hendren (Vice-Chair), Associate Dean Leighton; Professors Baines, Baker, Drury, Kemme, Levine, Martin, Moore, Ronis, Wechsler, Yau; Associate Dean Niven; L. Houle; N. Budd, A. Coutinho, L. Crawford, C. Haakonsen, M. Retrouvey; J. D'Amico.

REGRETS: Professors Bennett, Chmura, Ricciardi, Silvius; S. Ng, M. Osborn.

DOCUMENTS: **AC-06-17** **AC-06-91** to **AC-06-109**

Dean Grant called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

(1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Prof. Moore **moved**, seconded by Prof. Drury, that the Agenda be approved.

The motion carried.

(2) MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 27, 2007 **AC-06-91**

Prof. Moore **moved**, seconded by Associate Dean Leighton, that the Minutes be approved.

The motion carried.

(3) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- Pharmacology & Therapeutics Major and Honours Programs (Academic Committee Meeting of January 30, 2007)

703.1 Dean Grant informed members that the Dean of Medicine had not approved funding for these programs.

(4) REPORT ON MINOR COURSE CHANGES **AC-06-92
(for information)**

704.1 Associate Dean Hendren briefly described the changes in the Minor Course Change Report.

704.2 Associate Dean Hendren reminded members that multiple course retirements could be made via a single Excel worksheet.

(5) B.A. & SC. AD HOC MAJOR CONCENTRATION PROGRAM IN HISTORY **AC-06-93
AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE (For Information Only)**

705.1 Associate Dean Leighton said that the program would be the Arts component of a B.A. & Sc. The student in question was taking a standard B.A. & Sc. Science component. The B.A. & Sc. Program Administration Committee had approved the above ad hoc Major Concentration, and it was now being submitted to the Faculty of Arts for approval.

(6) PHYSICS

706.1 Prof. Moore introduced the following graduate-level Physics courses, and explained the reasons for the courses.

THE FOLLOWING COURSE WAS WITHDRAWN.**New Course:**

PHYS 657	Classical Condensed Matter 3 credits	AC-06-94
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706.2 After some discussion, it was decided that there should be consultation with the Department of Chemistry before proceeding with approval for this course. Consequently, the course was withdrawn.

New Course:

PHYS 660	Quantum Condensed Matter 3 credits	AC-06-95
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New Course:

PHYS 717	Many-body Physics 3 credits	AC-06-96
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Prof. Moore **moved**, seconded by Mr. Haakonsen, that the above two courses be adopted.

The motion carried.**New Course:**

PHYS 741	Superstring Theory 3 credits	AC-06-97
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PHYS 742	Intro to the Standard Model 3 credits	AC-06-98
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PHYS 743	Phy of the Very Early Universe 3 credits	AC-06-99
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PHYS 744	Finite Temp Field Theory 3 credits	AC-06-100
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PHYS 745	Supersymmetry and Supergravity 3 credits	AC-06-101
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Prof. Moore **moved**, seconded by Mr. Haakonsen, that the above five courses be adopted.

The motion carried.**(7) CHEMISTRY****New Course:**

CHEM 115	Adv. Gen. Chem: Giants in Sci 4 credits	AC-06-102
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707.1 There was a long discussion concerning the proposed restriction. This restriction specified "...a grade of 95% or greater in the Ontario Grade 12 University Preparation

Chemistry Course (SCH4U) or equivalent, or permission of instructor...." A number of members felt that a particular high school chemistry course should not be specified, and that the restriction should be expressed in more general terms.

- 707.2** Prof. Ronis **moved**, seconded by Mr. Houle, that the course be adopted, pending revisions to the restrictions in Box #19 of the Course Proposal Form.

The motion carried.

- 707.3** **Secretary's Note:** The Department of Chemistry has submitted the following restriction:

"Enrollment is restricted to students who have obtained a grade greater than 95% in their high school university preparatory chemistry course (e.g., the Ontario Grade 12 University Preparation Chemistry Course [SCH4U]) or permission of the instructor. Not open to students who have or are taking CHEM 110 or 120."

- Request that CHEM 115 be Included in the List of Approved Freshman Science Courses

AC-06-102A

Prof. Ronis **moved**, seconded by Prof. Moore, that CHEM 115 be included in the List of Approved Freshman Science courses.

The motion carried.

(8) COMPUTER SCIENCE

- 708.1** Prof. Kemme briefly described the reasons for proposing the following two new courses.

New Course:

COMP 308	Computer Systems Lab	AC-06-103
	1 credit	

Prof. Kemme **moved**, seconded by Mr. Haakonsen, that the course be adopted.

The motion carried.

New Course:

COMP 561	Comp. Biol. Methods & Research	AC-06-104
	4 credits	

- 708.2** In response to a query, Prof. Kemme said she would check with the course instructor to see whether a reading list should be sent to the library.

Prof. Kemme **moved**, seconded by Mr. Haakonsen, that the course be adopted.

The motion carried.

Program Changes:

- Minor in Computer Science	AC-06-105
- Major in Computer Science	AC-06-106
- Major in Software Engineering	AC-06-107

Prof. Kemme **moved**, seconded by Prof. Moore, that the above program changes be approved.

The motion carried.

**B.A. Program Changes (For Information Only):
- Minor Concentration in Computer Systems**

(9) B.A. & Sc. MULTI-TRACK

AC-06-108

709.1 Associate Dean Hendren said that for the B.A. & Sc. Multi-track system there were three Major Concentrations (the Biomedical Sciences Major Concentration in Science, and the Humanistic Studies and International Development Studies Major Concentrations in Arts) that were very broad-based, and consequently rather unfocused. Any student taking the Biomedical Sciences Major Concentration and either the Humanistic Studies or International Development Studies Major Concentration would obtain a B.A. & Sc. degree that was long on breadth but short on depth. Students would thus take very few upper-level courses for their degree. The same problem arose if a student took one of the above three Major Concentrations and two Minor Concentrations. The purpose of the new regulation was to ensure that students must take at least one focussed Major Concentration.

709.2 Associate Dean Hendren answered members' questions concerning the proposed regulation, and clarified issues for members.

709.3 Associate Dean Hendren said that she had brought the regulation to the Academic Committee to find out how members thought about students obtaining an unfocussed B.A. & Sc. She said that her sense was that members supported focus in the B.A. & Sc. degree.

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Levine, that the new regulation in Document #AC-06-108 be approved.

The motion carried.

709.4 Dean Grant asked members how they felt about the possibility of abolishing the Biomedical Sciences Major Concentration for the B.A. & Sc. Several members said that the Biomedical Sciences Major Concentration did not prepare students for anything other than medical schools. A straw vote was held, with all members, apart from one abstention, in favour of abolishing the Biomedical Sciences Major Concentration.

(10) UCSSA: REPORT FROM THE WORKGROUP ON DISTINCTION/GREAT DISTINCTION

AC-06-109

710.1 Associate Dean Leighton said that a subcommittee of the UCSSA had been examining the issue of the designations of Dean's Honour List, Great Distinction and Distinction. The aim was to devise designations that were uniform across McGill's faculties. The suggestion of the subcommittee was that Dean's Honour List would continue to apply to the top 10% of students in a faculty. Distinction would apply to students ranked in the top 25%, but excluding students already assigned to the Dean's Honour List or receiving degrees with honours or first class honours. The designation Great Distinction would no longer be used.

710.2 Associate Dean Leighton said that Document #AC-06-109 was being brought to the Academic Committee solely for feedback. Feedback from the various faculties would be examined by the UCSSA subcommittee, and a final proposal would then be brought to faculties.

710.3 Among the suggestions made were:

- That students in honours programs be eligible for Distinction.
- That the criteria for Dean's Honour List and Distinction be CGPA, set by individual faculties, i.e., similar to the current system.
- That the percentages be applied to each individual unit within a faculty, and possibly to each program within a unit, to allow for grading disparity between units.

710.4 Associate Dean Leighton would communicate the feedback to the UCSSA subcommittee.

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS POSTPONED TO A FUTURE MEETING:

- (11) **MINI-THEME: THE DELIVERY & EVALUATION MECHANISMS OF UNDERGRADUATE SCIENCE COURSES, POINT #5, COURSE EVALUATIONS** **AC-06-17**
- (i) **Positive use of course evaluations to guide improvements**
 - (ii) **Feedback on the success and problems of using Mercury**

Due to lack of time, the above item was postponed.

(12) **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.