General Faculties Council

GRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE

APPROVED MINUTES

December 13, 2023, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm AD 167 (Governors Boardroom)

Voting Members
Tara Beattie (Co-Chair)
Qiao Sun (Academic Co-Chair)
Amy Burns
Amy Dambrowitz
Kimberly Lenters
Justin MacCallum
Kirsten Neprily*
Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci* - left during Item 8

Non-Voting Members
Francine Smith*
Louise Wells
Christine Johns

University Secretary
Courtney McVie

Meeting Secretary
Michelle Speta

Scribe
Holly Lywin

Regrets
Andy Knight
David Anderson

Guests
Violet Baron, Director of Strategic Education Initiatives, Werklund School of Education – present for Item 6
Signe Bray*, Associate Professor, Department of Radiology, Cumming School of Medicine, & Scientific Director, Child & Adolescent Imaging Research (CAIR) Program – present for Item 7
Jeffrey Priest*, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies & MEng Program, Schulich School of Engineering – present for Items 4 & 5
Andrea Protzner, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts – present for Item 7
Meadow Schroeder, Acting Associate Dean, Graduate Programs in Education, Werklund School of Education – present for Item 6
Alanna Wall*, Senior Manager, Experiential & Work-integrated Learning Schulich School of Engineering – present for Item 4
Elisa Vandenborn, Assistant Professor, Werklund School of Education – present for Item 6

Observers and Resource Personnel
Catherine McLeod*, Senior Director, Strategic Operations, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Jaclyn Carter*, ITL Consultant, Taylor Institute
Kelly Hoglund, Partner, Program Innovation Hub
Karen Quinn, Analyst, Planning & Reviews, Provost's Office
Elizabeth Pando, Partner, Program Innovation Hub

**Attended virtually*

The Academic Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Traditional Land Acknowledgement and Approval of the Agenda

Amy Burns provided the Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the December 13, 2023 Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved**.**

Carried

2. Remarks of the Co-Chairs

The Co-Chairs welcomed Justin MacCallum, Associate Dean, Graduate, Faculty of Science, to his first Committee meeting as the new academic staff member appointed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) Council. He has been appointed for a term ending June 2026.

The Co-Chairs shared the following updates:

- No amendments were raised for the graduate program Calendar revisions that were moved to an electronic vote following the last meeting. Motions were carried to approve Calendar revisions for the graduate programs in Precision Health, the Faculty of Kinesiology, the School of Public Policy, and the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape.
- All proposals recommended to the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) at the last meeting were approved by the APPC at its meeting held December 11, 2023

3. Approval of the November 22, 2023 Minutes

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes from the November 22, 2023 Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved.

Carried

Justin MacCallum abstained.

4. Recommendation for the Creation of a Master of Engineering (course-based) Internship Degree Program within the Schulich School of Engineering

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Jeffrey Priest, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and MEng Program, Schulich School of Engineering, and Alanna Wall, Senior Manager, Experiential and Work-integrated Learning, Schulich School of Engineering, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the proposed creation of the new Master of Engineering (MEng) with Internship degree program in the Schulich School of Engineering (SSE)
- Students enrolled in the ‘with Internship’ stream will complete their regular MEng programs in addition to a mandatory, full-time, paid internship, 8 to 16 months long, facilitated by the Engineering Career Centre
- The internship will be recognized as a sub-degree nomenclature, reflected on transcripts and degree parchments as "Master of Engineering in (Area of Study) with Internship"

- This program will benefit international students (85% of the MEng student population) in particular, who can only work full-time during the spring/summer scheduled break when enrolled in the regular MEng program. Making the internship a required component of the degree program allows international students to take on longer work terms that will support a direct transition into the workforce after graduation.
- The enhanced work-integrated learning component is anticipated to strengthen the Faculty's reputation and attract top-tier international students to study, work, and live in Alberta.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
    - The MEng with Internship degree program will have an expected completion time of three (3) years rather than two (2) years as for the regular MEng program
    - Admission to the 'with Internship' stream will be competitive based on employer capacity; students will indicate their interest in this program at the time of application and will be offered admission to the regular MEng program if they are not admitted to the internship stream. As such, enrolment in the MEng program as a whole is expected to continue to rise with the launch of this new offering.
    - FGS is aware of the changes that will be required to the application for admission and tuition inserts for admission letters
    - Students outside of the 'with Internship' stream who obtain internship longer than four months with their own employer will be supported to join the program. Those interested in an internship without an employer will be referred to the Transformative Talent Internships program at FGS.
    - Every SSE department will have an allotment of seats in the 'with Internship' stream
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) considerations include:
    - Dedicated support for Indigenous students will be operationalized by leveraging the foundation of SSE's existing undergraduate Pathways Program, aligned with the University's Indigenous Strategy
    - Collaborative efforts with the Taylor Institute are underway to enhance opportunities for neurodivergent students
    - Further EDIA considerations are embedded throughout the program, given the dominance of international students within the Faculty. Building upon an established and successful undergraduate structure, SSE plans to implement career preparation sessions, additional career advisors, and collaborative initiatives to leverage existing employer EDIA support, ensuring comprehensive support for all students.
- The Committee requested the following amendments to the proposal:
    - Update all tuition references to reflect graduate amounts
    - Include community benefits to complement learner benefits
    - Work with the FGS to clarify the statement on admission qualifiers
    - Include Indigenous in-program support plans and balance with existing EDIA considerations
    - Address how students will be supported if they encounter difficulties with employers during their internships

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend to the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee the creation of the Master of Engineering (course-based) with Internship, effective September 2024, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee, with the requested amendments.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate and Academic Program Subcommittee approve the Calendar entry for the Master of Engineering (course-based) with Internship, effective for the 2024-2025 Calendar and contingent upon the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee's approval of the program, as recommended by the GAPS Calendar Working Group and as set out in the documents provided to the Committee.

Carried

5. Approval of the Calendar Revisions for the Graduate Programs in the Schulich School of Engineering

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Jeffrey Priest, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies & MEng Program, Schulich School of Engineering, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenter outlined the proposed calendar revisions, which include:
    - The addition of requirements and courses for the newly approved course-based Master of Engineering (MEng) in Biomedical Engineering, including the Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Interdisciplinary Specialization
    - Removal of all references to the thesis-based MEng in Biomedical Engineering following termination approval by the APPC in June 2023
    - Updates to courses for Civil Engineering programs and the MEng (course-based) in Geomatics Engineering

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) approve the Calendar revisions for the Schulich School of Engineering, effective for the 2024-2025 Calendar, as recommended by the GAPS Calendar Working Group, and as set out in the document provided to the Committee.

Carried

6. Recommendation for the Creation of the Specialization in School Counselling within the Master of Education (MEd) in Educational Research (Interdisciplinary Route)

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Meadow Schroeder, Acting Associate Dean Graduate, Elisa Vandenborn, Assistant Professor, and Violet Baron, Director of Strategic Education Initiatives, from the Werklund School of Education, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the proposed creation of a new specialization for the Master of Education (MEd) in Educational Research (EDER), Interdisciplinary Route
- Recognizing the unregulated status of School Counselling as a profession in several provinces, including Alberta, the specialization targets teachers seeking to become school counsellors, understanding that it does not lead to registration as psychologists
- The proposed specialization will be one of seven options available to students enrolled in the existing MEd EDER Interdisciplinary program, which is completed as a certificate to diploma to Master's degree laddered pathway
- The curriculum emphasizes research, working alliance skills, ethical considerations, health promotion, and social justice, aligning with Werklund School of Education's (WSE) expertise in educational research and psychology.
- It was noted that the calendar changes will be coming forward to the Committee after the GAPS Calendar Working Group has reviewed in the new year
- In response to questions, it was learned:
    - The specialization's feasibility is highlighted by the need for only a few new courses and the option to offer it every two years if needed. Anticipated enrollment is expected to surpass 20 students per year, based on the past popularity of the Master of Counselling program, which was suspended in 2018.
    - The four new courses that will be created will provide an opportunity for PhD students to gain teaching experience as sessional instructors in their areas of expertise
- The Committee requested the following amendments:
    - At the beginning of the proposal, articulate the rationale for the specialization's creation, highlighting its uniqueness, identifying the target audience, and clearly outlining its viability. While detailed budgetary information is not mandatory, providing some initial notes could help address potential questions later in the approval process.
    - Clarify the distinction between programs offered in Educational Psychology and this specialization
    - A typographical error was also noted

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of the Specialization in School Counselling within the Master of Education in Educational Research (Interdisciplinary Route), as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee with the requested amendments.

Carried

7. Recommendation for the Addition of an Interdisciplinary Specialization in Computational Neuroscience (CNEU) to Master of Science (thesis-based) and PhD programs in Psychology (PSYC), Faculty of Arts, Computer Science (CPSC), Faculty of Science, and Biomedical Engineering (BMEN), Schulich School of Engineering

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Signe Bray, Associate Professor, Department of Radiology, Cumming School of Medicine, and Andrea Protzner, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts, presented these items.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the existing interdisciplinary graduate specialization in Computational Neuroscience (CNEU), approved by the APPC in January 2022. The specialization's curriculum spans neuroscience fundamentals, advanced statistics, mathematical modelling, network sciences, computational physics, and machine learning. It is currently only available to students in Neuroscience (Cumming School of Medicine) and Physics and Astronomy (Faculty of Science) but was created with the intention of expanding to more graduate programs.
- This proposal is to open the CNEU interdisciplinary specialization to the existing MSc (thesis-based) and PhD programs in Psychology (Faculty of Arts), Computer Science (Faculty of Science), and Biomedical Engineering (Schulich School of Engineering)
- The CNEU's had flexible course requirements that enable students to integrate the specialization's requirements within their home programs and accommodate diverse research interests in this interdisciplinary field. Graduates are anticipated to be highly employable in fields like biotechnology, digital tech, neurotech, or academia, equipped to undertake technical projects applying computational principles to study nervous system function or develop biologically inspired systems.
- A typographical amendment was reported within the Requirements section of the proposal
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
    - Support letters were gathered during initial consultations, which started in 2020
    - Late-stage pivots in student thesis topics would be addressed on a case-by-case basis, but are not expected to be an issue given the specialization's broad scope

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposal to add the Interdisciplinary Specialization in Computational Neuroscience to the MSc (thesis-based) and PhD programs in Biomedical Engineering, effective September 2024, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee, with the reported amendment.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposal to add the Interdisciplinary Specialization in Computational Neuroscience to the MSc (thesis-based) and PhD programs in Computer Science, effective September 2024, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee, with the reported amendment.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposal to add the Interdisciplinary Specialization in Computational Neuroscience to the MSc (thesis-based) and PhD programs in Psychology, effective September 2024, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee, with the reported amendment.

Carried

8. Updates to Structure of Calendar Sections for Schulich School of Engineering and Cumming School of Medicine

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Louise Wells, Lead, Graduate Calendar, Policy and Program Development, and Amy Dambrowitz, Registrar, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The recent soft launch of a new calendar platform was discussed, highlighting the unification of the Graduate and University Calendars into a single Academic Calendar
- It was explained that the new platform has a search function and ability to create tables, both of which improve accessibility and support the integration of undergraduate and graduate information
- Changes to the organization of information in the new software have necessitated the removal of main landing pages for the Schulich School of Engineering and the Cumming School of Medicine. Examples were demonstrated to showcase how common information is now listed in each credential rather than having a main page to which each credential page links.
- The Committee was encouraged to explore the platform and provide user input in identifying issues for improvement.
- The next stage of the project, implementation of workflow processes for calendar changes, will begin in Spring 2024.

9. Status of Program Approvals

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only. Questions can be directed to the Program Innovation Hub.

10. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee adjourn the December 13, 2023 meeting**.**

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Courtney McVie
Secretary