YORK UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**Council Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Thursday, April 1, 2021**

**3:00 p.m.**

Present: M. Ahmed, A. Akyol, A. Al-Attar, N. Aminnejad, M. Annisette, D. Bazely (Chair), D. Cecchetto, C. Chapman, C. Chaufan, O. Chevalier, A. Clifford, J. Choiniere, C. Coates, C. Cowdy, S. Cunningham, R. da Silveira Gorman, P. Dawson, C. Fretz, P. Fu, S. Gabriele, G. Gerzon, K. Gicas, L. Gilbert, S. Glockman-Musto,M. Gordon,G. Grau, J. Hadlaw, A. Hamid, M. Hayward (Secretary), S. Henry, B. Heron, S. Horowitz, B. Hyman Zatzman, S. Ingram, M. Jefford, M. Johnson, U.T. Khan, A. Kosavic, G. Lawrence, R. Lazarenko, M.C. Leps, E. Light, T. Loebel (Dean), S. MacDonald, A. MacLennan, A. Martin, S. Martin, O. Mermut, A.A. Mitchell, W. Moir, I. Moyles, E. Mykhalovskiy, K. Petschke, P. Rezai, C. Rogers-Jarrell, A. Samji, M.M. Schiff (Recording Secretary), C. Scott, R. Silver, M. Soliman, A. Sparling, G. Taltekin Guzel, A.M. Tarc, S. Trivedi, A. Tucker, A. Vagners, A. Valeo, D. Vuckovic, S. Watson, Y. Weima, P. Wood

*Guests: M. Limanni, H. Moore*

*Regrets: A. Bain, N. Couto, A. Hudson, L. Kamenitz, J. McDonough-Dolmaya, V. Patroni, D. Vallesi, C. van Daalen-Smith*

This meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

**1.  Welcome and Chair’s Remarks**

Chair Dawn Bazely welcomed members of the Committee to the meeting.

She read the Land Acknowledgement:

“We recognize that many Indigenous nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which York University campuses are located that precede the establishment of York University. York University acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Huron-Wendat, and the Métis. It is now home to many Indigenous Peoples. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region.”

Chair Bazely commented that March 13, 2021, marked one year since the campus was mainly closed as a result of the pandemic. She encouraged councillors to use their health benefits.

**2.  Student System Renewal Program**

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*Guests:  Marie Limanni, Executive Director, Student System Renewal Program; Heather Moore, Manager, Business Transformation, Graduate Studies*

**Presentation**

Guest Marie Limanni introduced this month’s update about the upcoming implementation of the Student System Renewal Program. She expressed appreciation to the Faculty of Graduate Studies’ managers including Executive Officer Jodi Tavares; Associate Director, Student Affairs, Anne Stebbins; Manager, External Scholarships and Graduate Awards, Yuko Sorano; and Manager, Communications, Public Relations and Recruitment, Anesa Albert. Ms Limanni welcomed Heather Moore, Manager to Council, who will be working with Graduate Studies on the new end-to end process specific to graduate students.

Ms Limanni’s update commenced with a review of the Student System Renewal Program achievements so far, including: acceptance to the Oracle Early Adopter program, assembling a leadership team, establishing program governance, negotiating requests-for-proposals for key processes, initiating enterprise architecture and data governance, engaging the York community, and establishing collaboration with the service excellence program.

Ms Moore continued, highlighting Faculty of Graduate Studies-related Student System Renewal Program progress. Identity and Access Management determines how York systems are accessed. A Fit Gap strategy defines requirements and alignment. Current ‘gaps’ were acknowledged: “inconsistent policy enforcement or lack of governance,” and “lack of standard access roles, currently based on individuals, not roles.” A series of workshops is taking place, with the Faculty of Graduate Studies playing an important role. Ms Moore noted that the Student System Renewal Program is planning Nextgen SIS Fit Gap workshops for June to December 2021, with over 140 community participation events. The presenters stressed that features of the new software will be implemented over time and not all at the same time.

The Student System Renewal Program will be reaching out to graduate programs over the next several months. Ms Limanni thanked Council for the opportunity to present information about the program.

**3.**[**Minutes**](https://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2021/03/2-fgs-council-minutes-march-4-for-april-2021-1.docx?x75114)**of Previous Meeting (March 4, 2020) (.docx)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were **approved**.

**4.  Business Arising from the Minutes**

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At Council’s previous meeting, it was agreed to continue the discussion of the support of continued assistance of graduate students facing pandemic-related challenges to degree completion. Dean Tom Loebel discussed available remedies and spoke about communicating with York’s governing bodies to ensure that resources are available. The COVID-19 extension may be continuing; more information may be announced in the coming weeks. Associate Dean Students Aryn Martin stressed the importance of using the academic progress report to record ongoing academic issues. Dean Loebel noted that hours of work should be recorded also. Graduate student councillors noted that in some instances there have been extra demands in the transition to online instruction, in assignments, feedback, grading, and enhanced office hours and consultations with students. The result may be less time for research and longer times to completion.

Chair Dawn Bazely referenced the Teaching Commons “[TA Start Up Guide for Teaching & Learning at York University](https://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/2014-TA-Manual-2nd-Edition1.pdf),” by Professor Celia Popovic.

**5. Dean's Remarks and Discussion**

Dean Tom Loebel spoke about the Fall planning exercise, and expressed appreciation for the patience of those involved. There will be some instruction in outdoor spaces. Orientation should take place online. Dean Loebel discussed his involvement in COVID-19 planning governance.

**6. Reports from FGS Representatives to Senate Committees**

*Cheryl van Daalen-Smith, Senate Executive Committee*

There was no update this month.

*Evan Light, Senate Academic Planning, Policy & Research Committee*

Professor Evan Light reported that anti-Black racism discussions will return to the Senate committee in upcoming meetings on a regular basis.

*Mark Hayward, Senate Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy Committee*

Associate Dean Academic Mark Hayward noted that there had been a discussion about policy related to requiring doctors’ notes.

*Naomi Couto, Senate Executive Committee's Subcommittee on Honorary Degrees & Ceremonials*

There was no update this month.

**7. Consultation on proposed new Academic Conduct Policy and Procedures**

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*Iain Moyles, Chair, FGS Appeals & Academic Honesty Committee*

[**Revisions to Senate Policy on Academic Honesty: Consultation on proposed new Academic Conduct Policy and Procedures**](https://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2021/03/fgs-council-ascp-sac-academic-honesty-policy-revisions-consultation-april-2021.pdf?x75114) **(.pdf)**

[**Presentation**](https://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2021/03/fgs-council-senate-policy-academic-honesty-revisions-presentation-april-2021.pptx?x75114)**(.pptx)**

For reference:  [**Existing Senate Policy on Academic Honesty**](https://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-honesty-senate-policy-on/)**(URL);**[**FGS Procedural Guidelines**](https://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2014/06/academic-honesty-guidelines.pdf?x75114)**(URL)**

Professor Iain Moyles addressed Faculty Council. Senate is seeking a fairer, open and more transparent process, with flexibility on sanctions. Changes are being introduced to enhance University procedures and to improve record-keeping, and as well to make the language of the regulations clearer and less legalistic. Major changes, Professor Moyles stated, include a shift from exploratory meetings to local remediation. New rules should expedite processes. A “primary person of responsibility” would be designated to support the application of the Senate policy.

Areas of concern include a continued undergraduate focus in the regulations. Graduate education has many more roles, including supervision, and research activity. The Faculty’s Appeals & Academic Honesty Committee would become an appeals body in specific academic honesty scenarios. The proposed new assignment threshold rules may also have unintended consequences in regard to the graduate grading scheme. Other concerns raised by Professor Moyles include informing students of their rights throughout the process; and the lack of student involvement in the ratifying of some decisions. The Faculty’s Appeals & Academic Honesty Committee would become an appeals body. The proposed new rules do not align with graduate grading schemes.

Profess Moyles presented Senate’s questions, which ask if the new policy and procedures achieve the Senate Committees’ goals; if sanctions are appropriate at the undergraduate and graduate levels; if other relevant items should be included; if the new Senate policy is in alignment with the Faculty’s existing petitions and appeals procedures; if the high volume academic misconduct procedures are appropriate; and whether the new rules adequately address any concerns that may be raised relevant to remote instruction. Areas of concern for graduate education, it was noted, may involve assessment and program requirements; suitable opportunities for collegial involvement in the oversight of academic honesty procedures; and accessibility and clarity to graduate students and faculty members.

Councillors discussed the new policy and procedures. Rachel da Silveira Gorman, Director, Graduate Program in Critical Disability Studies, noted that an undergraduate focus on academic honesty may drive inequities and criminalize students. Some issues result from citation difficulties for students new to professional programs.

Chair Dawn Bazely noted that comments may be directed to Academic Affairs Officer Wes Moir < wmoir@yorku.ca >. Professor Moyles stated that he will incorporate feedback into his report.

**8. Proposed Revision to Graduate Studies Regulations on Comprehensive Examination**

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[**Proposed Revision to Graduate Studies Regulations on Comprehensive Examinations:  Draft for Consultation**](https://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2021/03/fgs-council-proposed-comprehensive-examination-regulations-changes-consultation-april-2021-1.pdf?x75114)**(.pdf)**

Associate Dean Academic Mark Hayward informed Council about proposed changes to comprehensive regulations, which are not extensive in current procedures. Students expressed concerns regarding the lack of clarity regarding comprehensives or milestone examinations. The new text will “provide a framework that will clarify what information must be communicated to a student and committee members, and the expectation that programs establish a timeline for the sharing of information to relevant parties.” The proposal specifies areas to include in program comprehensive examinations regulations, and expands on each area in detail:

1. Timing and scheduling  
2. Format and structure   
3. Accessibility and accommodations   
4. Assessment criteria and feedback   
5. Outcomes of the examination(s)

Associate Dean Academic Hayward presented three questions to Council: will the proposed changes improve communication to students and faculty members?; is anything missing?; and, does the proposal address existing challenges within programs?

Councillor Rachel da Silveira Gorman asked about best practices for implementation of changes. Associate Dean Hayward replied that accessibility concerns should be included at the design stage for updates.

Dean Tom Loebel asked for clear and understandable processes be individualized by programs in ways that will sustain over time. Associate Dean Hayward agreed that programs can provide examination guidelines with ways to adapt as required. Associate Dean Students Aryn Martin recommended that there be a graduate template for accommodations.

Feedback should be forwarded to Academic Affairs Officer Wes Moir < wmoir@yorku.ca >.

**9. Changes in Faculty Regulations**

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[**Leaves of Absence:  removal of fees**](https://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2021/03/fgs-council-changes-to-regulations-leaves-of-absence-april-2021-1.docx?x75114) **(.docx)**

### Academic Affairs Officer Wes Moir provided the background for these changes. One year prior, the Faculty removed leaves of absence fees for several categories of leaves. This proposal seeks to remove fees for the remaining categories of leaves of absence, External Student Status and Elective. Academic Affairs Officer Moir noted that necessary discussions were held with resource Faculties.

### It was moved, seconded, and CARRIED, unanimously,

### “that the changes to Faculty of Graduate Studies’ regulations on leaves of absence APPROVED.”

**10. Senate Synopsis**

Information

*Summary of the Senate meeting of*[***February 25, 2021***](https://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/files/Senate-Synopsis-20210225.pdf?x80023)**(URL/pdf)**

The Senate synopsis was received *for information*.

**11. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**12. Adjournment**

The meeting **adjourned** at 5:20 p.m.