**Council Meeting Agenda October 4, 2018; York University Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**Agenda**  
**Thursday, October 4, 2018**  
**3:00 p.m.  
N940 Ross Building (Senate Chamber)**

**Regrets**

Sylvia Bawa, Nada Barqawi, Noreen Ann Cauley, David Cabianca, Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt, Magda Kazubowski-Houston, Clara McCallum Fraser, Maggie MacDonald, Desmond O'Doherty, Viviana Patroni, Aparna Mishra Tarc, Giselle Thompson

**1.  Welcome and Chair’s Remarks**

Chair Suprakash Datta read to Council the Indigenous Acknowledgment as provided by the Aboriginal Education Council:

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 New 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.

Noted the meeting will end by or before 4:20pm to provide enough time for individuals to make it over to the Senate Forum taking place in Accolade West for 4:30pm.

**2.** [**Minutes**](http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2018/09/fgs-council-minutes-june-7-for-october-4-2018.docx) **of Previous Meeting (June 7, 2018) (.docx)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

**3.  *Report on* *Items approved by FGS Academic Planning & Policy Committee acting with summer authority for Council***

A degree change was processed in the summer, which is included in the report.

*\* \* \*   F o r   I n f o r m a t i o n   \* \* \**

*Items approved by FGS Academic Planning & Policy Committee acting with summer authority for Council on June 13, 2018*

**Changes in Degree Requirements  
Graduate Program in Sociology**[**Change to course requirements to make Sociology 5995 3.0: “MA Seminar” compulsory, and remove mandatory workshop series (MA)**](http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2018/09/fgs-council-sociology-ma-workshop-requirement-october-2018.doc) **(.doc)**  
[**Change to remove non-credit workshop series, to be replaced with two required credited one-semester courses; new required courses to count towards PhD course requirements: Sociology 6001 3.0: “Doctoral Seminar I: Professional Development Workshop Series” in the first year and Sociology 6002 3.0: “Doctoral Seminar II: Professional Development Workshop Series” in the second year (PhD)**](http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2018/10/fgs-council-sociology-phd-workshop-requirement-october-2018.doc)**(.doc)**  
[**MA Learning objectives**](http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2018/09/fgs-council-sociology-ma-learning-objectives-october-2018.pdf) **(.pdf)** |[**PhD Learning objectives**](http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2018/09/fgs-council-sociology-phd-learning-objectives-october-2018.pdf) **(.pdf)**

*Items approved by FGS Academic Planning & Policy Committee acting with summer authority for Council on July 11, 2018*

**Graduate Diploma Closure**[**Graduate Diploma in Theatre Studies**](http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/files/2018/09/fgs-council-theatre-studies-graduate-diploma-closure-october-2018.pdf)(includes learning objectives)

**4.  Business Arising from the Minutes**

No business arising from the minutes.

**5.  Dean's Remarks**

In the context of ongoing governance conversations at York in relation to FGS and the anchor Faculties, the Dean provided an overview of Council and the various committees. Councillors can discuss governance matters further during the Graduate Community Perspectives item on the agenda.

**6.  Council Orientation**

**\***Highlighted the orientation slide for new members.

Council is the body that approves or disapproves what committees enact. Committees are made up of faculty colleagues and students, and changes are proposed there.

Council is a body that approves; however, the hope for the future is that Council will also become a discussion forum, about governance and other substantive matters, receiving input from programs and members of FGS.

The main access to Council is APPC, which oversees program changes, development, enrollment items, etc. It is the Grad Studies home of Quality Assurance. FGS APPC is the substantive body doing quality assurance at York. While criticisms can be offered by APPC to proposals, members are acting as if they are a Quality Assurance body that is external to York. APPC tries to emulate what that external body would say, so proposals don’t go to the province only to be turned away for further thought/revisions. APPC works with programs for intellectual and academic discussion, but then also very practical matters, such as substantive editing of program proposals.

Sub-committee helps expedite minor changes to courses and programs.

Nominating committee helps people join committees.

We need a vice-chair for Council, and we are seeking volunteers.

We need a program representative to stand for election as vice-chair for APPC. Join if you're interested in program development. It is interesting work exploring how programs are changing.

We also need an AD Academic. Ideally, we want to find someone from the STEM disciplines. Please bring forth recommendations.

Petition committee oversees petitions to provide external thought on student matters.

Awards committee. Dissertation awards, scholarships, teaching. Heavy reading but a great joy.

Questions? Volunteers?

**7.  Graduate Community Perspectives  
*Post-strike and for the future***

*Perspectives from graduate students, faculty members and the Faculty of Graduate Studies*

\*Dean commenced the conversation; was an active GPD and then became Dean on July 1.

FGS is a conduit between resource Faculties. FGS has oversight of and then administers several CUPE Collective Agreement items. The experience demonstrates how important the Collective Agreement is to grad funding and how it operates, and the confines left to FGS in terms of oversight. Processes exist in so many different offices across the university, and FGS has to do lots of liaising from an administrative point of view to help guide remediation. It was interesting to see how little power and voice FGS has in the process, but we have a large facilitation role in terms of advocacy and problem-solving.

The “Back-to-Class” legislation of the provincial government arrived, and FGS had to remind many offices that grad students are both students (back to *class*) and employees (back to *work*). FGS found that while university messaging to its community would reference “students,” the presumption and usually the information wording involved undergraduate students. FGS kept inserting the different information needed by graduate students as students, which seemed to get lost in the conversation. Graduate students as employees worked to remediate undergraduate courses; however, many graduate students also required remediation of the graduate courses in which they were students. So, FGS’s advocacy and oversight roles are important, but not holding the reins to steer the direction and make things happen was difficult. It was an eye opener and proved to be very instructive regarding what to think about for the future – both for FGS and for the anchor Faculties.

What are the needs and wants of this group?

Responses:

Councillor: Clarity in instructions is needed. Clearer long-term planning. The plan for coming back to work and class didn’t go so well.

There seemed to be a lack of coordination with filling out and submitting a remediation plan, first with the Provost's Office, but then the Dean of LA&PS afterwards wanted different remediation plans.

FGS: As FGS isn’t a hiring unit, and remediation involves hiring unit tasks, FGS couldn't impact the different plans from Dean's offices.

Councillor: From Unit 1 perspective, there was a lot of confusion with who needs to sign off on what, whom to contact, having to re-submit forms. Information did not get disseminated consistently, at least in one speaker’s department.

FGS: More direction coming from the department level seems like it could have been helpful.

FGS's responsiveness on what was possible in their scope was appreciated, but still there is a problem with uneven pay for TAs during remediation. Another problem involves the number of students who will be ineligible for funding due to incompletes.

FGS: Are they strike-related incompletes? Does the normal rule apply in this case? This is something to look into and discuss. Could you elaborate?

Councillor: Problems arose initially with 2nd year PhDs, who had incompletes on their records, their GPAs were affected, and so they were deemed ineligible for funding.

FGS: Incompletes don’t affect the student’s GPA calculation, but the employment system may have read them as ineligible (a glitch that didn’t get patched). When you hear of any such case, always alert FGS so we can try to get to the bottom of why.

FGS: We are holding at bay incompletes that turn to F grades, so this should not be happening. If it's that kind of case, we can assist.

\*The program will follow-up.

Councillor: The TA CUPE workload form during remediation was a challenge, in part because it was a paper-based operation. It was difficult to see how so many hiring units seemed to have incomplete records. It was difficult for course directors. Is there an electronic solution, a comprehensive database?

FGS: These concerns need also to be presented to your Faculty councils. Not every department keeps digital records around TA employment

FGS: TA placement is a constant, constant issue. Getting the right match between courses and TAs still seems too *ad hoc*. Sometimes FGS is a keeper of a system but doesn't have any say in processes. Perhaps FGS can have a better say with CUPE on how these processes play out, and not simply during a bargaining year.

FGS: FGS needs to ensure that a TAship is disciplinary-specific professionalization beyond just being employment. There needs to be a searchable database that can help with this matching of student to disciplinar, “in-field” work-professionalisation. The information on the CUPE blanket app and the undergraduate course timetable should be tagged for searchability and thus matchability. Here is a place where FGS would love to be at that table. We want to ensure a TAship helps someone in their program and is a good match.

Councillor: I’ve been teaching for 40 years, I don't need more experience in teaching. I'd rather be matched to assist with someone through a GAship that would assist with my development. But there are no GAships available, which is unfortunate. That isn't an issue we will resolve here, but in terms of feedback, a) the matching is important to ensure a good fit, and b) unfortunately there aren't other options. There are different demographics now; not everyone is 25-35 doing a PhD. There are many more mature students with specific needs.

FGS: After a strike, we need to shift the focus that employment positions are paid positions, yes, but it needs to be a central part of students’ education.

Councillor: I want to echo the value of GAships, I had an excellent GAship in my master's and it assisted me greatly. Unfortunately with GAshps now, supervisors are burdened with having to pay 80% of the benefits, even if they are not used, so it dissuades faculty from hiring students and agreeing to supervise a GA. If that burden can be improved, lifting some of these could help offer more GAships and offer more work in the education sense and satisfying the funding sense.

FGS: The academic part of that argument FGS can help, but the specifics need to be brought up at your local Faculty councils.

I don't think you understand what is happening at the local Faculty levels. My colleague was accepted to York, but had a difficult time navigating how to get CUPE employment to satisfy her funding package. She is being told “Yes, there are GAships, you have to look for them yourself,” but as I'm trying to help her find GAships she is not being told *how* to find GAships. There are no instructions. Do they exist? She gets vague answers back which are not helpful. Due to a lack of concrete or tangible answers, every door she goes to proves that she is in the midst of a Kafka story. So, we need to go to FGS for support in the oversight of this.

FGS: Yes, this type of thing we need to hear about. We can assist in getting to the source. In the old days FGS could control that, but we can’t control it now. But we have to hear it in order to help.

FGS: A student isn't guaranteed a certain role, but clarity is certainly needed in this. Send this student to us and we can assist. But a GAship as a specific role cannot be promised.

Councillor: There are also differences between getting a fellowship and getting a unionized job.

Yes, and better clarity needs to be offered on the Fellowship model.

FGS: There is a lot of will to improve non-unionized benefits at York. It is being looked at.

Councillor: Question about extensions: 6 months of my year interrupted, no access to library, not wanting to cross a picket line, there has been little information on extensions for PhD students. Or support in this area.

FGS: The issue was brought up centrally, but every Faculty Dean said “no” to extensions. The logic was that a strike does not have to impede students’ ability to continue in their studies while still doing picket work. With 18 terms, a student can make up what progress was slowed. FGS offered the argument that for PhD students early in their programs, courses and fieldwork components were rendered impossible, so for these students in certain programs the extension argument has some justification. FGS lobbied for students and there were sympathetic ears, but the Deans opted only to consider arguments from master’s programs.

FGS: We will continue to speak with programs about milestones and how flexibility can be provided. But FGS has little say in assisting about the matter of extensions *with* funding, since the funding component is an anchor/resource Faculty matter now.

Councillor: In past strikes did this happen?

FGS: They did, but the university closed in those instances. Everything was halted; however, in this instance, as the university remained open and many programs continued during the strike. That is the ground of the rationale as to why there was not a blanket approach taken this time. Students can petition for time extensions, but not with funding, as we do not control the funding.

**8.  Faculty of Graduate Studies / Faculties  
*Shared services and governance***

*Updates and graduate community thoughts*

FGS: It is a good segue to governance, with petitions as a good example. We can work in concert with a Faculty on academic matters, but unfortunately funding is controlled by anchor Faculties, and it is their decision. It is a partnership now with the resource Faculties, if a resource element is to be added. We are trying to determine with Faculties what works best at the Faculty level, and what works best at FGS. If as a GPD you have good relations with your AD grad, that is great. But if not, then you can imagine the issues. If enrollment shrinks in certain areas, then Faculties need to think about the consequences. There are real challenges with an activity-based budgeting model, and good alignment needs to take place. FGS needs to be a part of making sure that effective and efficient decision-making “aligns.” We would like to get a sense from resource Faculties what is working best.

FGS: As an example, with Health, how is this proceeding so far?

Health programs: There have been some conversations on how graduate governance is included in Faculty plans, but clarity is still needed. Will existing mechanisms change? These are being thought about. It makes more sense to do more things in the department, and not at the Faculty of Health level as a whole, because we know our department.

FGS: Thank you to everyone for this excellent conversation.

FGS: A heads up that there is a Graduate Community of Practice, and there is forum now that recognizes that many York services cater to undergrads and we need weave in grad students needs and the what/why/how York services are used/needed. There will be a survey instrument in the future to get this out to students to collect feedback.

Councillor: Will there be action items with this meeting?

FGS: This meeting was a discussion forum. We need to know this feedback and it is helpful to us moving forward.

\*Motion to adjourn completed.

**9.  Curriculum Changes**

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Members of Council may view these documents by contacting M. Michael Schiff, Coordinator, Faculty Governance.

*Approved by the FGS Academic Planning &Policy Committee’s Academic Affairs Subcommittee on June 8, 2018, and received for information by Academic Planning &Policy Committee on June 13, 2018*