



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL
Approved Minutes
Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

June 16, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

Zoom

Voting Members

Penny Werthner, Co-Chair
Tara Beattie, Academic Co-Chair
Kristin Baetz
Mark Bauer
Barbara Brown
Michael Hart
Shaziah Jinnah Morsette
Dawn Johnston – left during Item 7
Kirsten Nepriily – arrived during Item 6
Malinda Smith

Regrets

Marjan Eggermont
Dora Tam

Invited Guests

John Brown, Dean, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape – present for Item 5
Amy Dambrowitz, Registrar – present for Item 7
Rob Deardon, Associate Professor, Biostatistics, Department of Mathematics and Statistics – present for Item 3
Jennifer de Roaldes, Associate Registrar, Information, Admissions and Recruitment – present for Item 6
Sarah Ha, Undergraduate Program Specialist, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape – present for Item 5
Michael Kallos, Professor and Head, Department of Biomedical Engineering, Schulich School of Engineering – present for Item 4
Karen Kopciuk, Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Statistics – present for Item 3
Jeffrey Priest, Assistant Dean MEng, Schulich School of Engineering – present for Item 4
Leslie Reid, Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning – present for Item 7
Verity Turpin, Vice-Provost Student Experience and Co-Chair of the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee – present for Items 5 – 7
Jingjing Wu, Associate Head, Graduate Programs, Faculty of Science, Department of Mathematics and Statistics – present for Item 3
Robin Yates, Dean and Vice-Provost, Graduate Studies, and Co-Chair of the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee – present for Item 3 & 4

Observers

Sandra Amin, Students' Union Vice-President (Academic)
Michael Brown, Manager, Communications and Government Relations, Students' Union

Non-Voting Members

Hannah Ashton
Melanie Zimmer

Secretary

Courtney McVie

Scribe

Cherie Tutt

Resource Personnel

Jaclyn Carter, Institute for Teaching and Learning,
Consultant – present for Items 3 & 4
Kelly Hoglund, Partner, Program Innovation Hub – present
for Items 3 & 4
Christine Johns, Senior Director, Program Innovation and
Planning
Elizabeth Pando, Partner, Program Innovation Hub –
present for Items 3 & 4

The Co-Chair provided the territorial acknowledgement and called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the June 16, 2023 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting be approved.

Carried

2. Remarks of the Co-Chair and Academic Co-Chair

The Co-Chair remarked on the recent convocation ceremonies at the University of Calgary in Qatar. The Co-Chair reported that the Nursing program in Qatar will be winding down over the next two years and is no longer accepting applications for admissions to the Bachelor of Nursing Regular Track or Post Diploma programs. The transition to Qatar delivering its own nursing education is a positive step forward for the country.

The Academic Co-Chair thanked the members of the Committee for their efforts over the 2022-2023 meeting year and for taking additional time out of their schedules to attend and prepare for this additional meeting.

3. Approval of the Creation of the Specialization in Biostatistics within the course-based Master of Science (MSc) in Mathematics and Statistics

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Mary Grantham O'Brien, Rob Deardon, Karen Kopciuk, and Jingjing Wang presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Co-Chair of the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS) reported that the addition of a new Specialization in Biostatistics within the course-based MSc in Mathematics and Statistics responds to student demand and clearly identifies a student's area of focus on their parchment. The proposal to create this Specialization is being recommended by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the GAPS.
- The proponents then explained that the new course-based Specialization in Biostatistics will complement the existing thesis-based program and utilize existing resources. The proponents provided an overview of the proposed program requirements.
- The Committee commented on the quality of the proposal documents, the optimization of existing resources, and expressed their support for the creation of this program in response to both industry and student demand

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of the Specialization in Biostatistics within the course-based Master of Science (MSc) in Mathematics and Statistics as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

Carried

4. **A. Approval of the Restructuring of the Master of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering from Thesis-based to Course-based**

B. Approval of the Termination of the thesis-based Master of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Robin Yates, Mike Kallos, and Jeffrey Priest presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Co-Chair of the GAPS explained the proposed restructuring of the Master of Engineering, Biomedical Engineering (BMEN) program from thesis-based to course-based, noting that the proposed course-based program better aligns with MedTech/HealthTech industry needs and is open to a diverse range of students with engineering backgrounds. It was explained that the thesis-based program will be terminated if the course-based program is approved.
- The proponents then reviewed the program structure and requirements and how the restructuring will create better alignment with other MEng programs in the Schulich School of Engineering
- In response to a question, it was reported that the enrolment target for the first year will be 20 ramping up to 50 at steady state
- A member of the Committee commented on the opportunities and goals of the program to bring MedTech/HealthTech healthcare solutions to rural and Indigenous populations, and the importance of attracting Indigenous Students and ensuring the curriculum integrates perspectives of these different populations

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the Restructuring of the Master of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering from Thesis-based to Course-based, as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

Carried

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the Termination of the thesis-based Master of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering, as set out in the proposal provided to the Committee, and as recommended by the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee.

Carried

5. **Approval of the Creation of the Indigenous Pathway Program within the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Verity Turpin, Sarah Ha, and John Brown presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Co-Chair of the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee (CCS) reported that the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (SAPL) is proposing to create an Indigenous Student Pathway Program for students applying for Fall 2024 admission into the new Bachelor of Design in City Innovation (BDCI) program. She then reviewed the discussion at the CCS relating to program funding and course requirements.
- The proponents then explained that when the BDCI program was approved SAPL committed to creating an Indigenous Pathway program to remove identified admission barriers and to provide more supports for Indigenous students and has based its program on existing pathways programs in Arts, Science, and Engineering. The proponents recognized the Office of Indigenous Engagement (OIE) and the Writing Symbols Lodge for providing valuable input and feedback into the proposal.
- The Committee expressed its support for this proposal and how it comports institutional commitment to the Indigenous Strategy and discussed SAPL's history of engagement with Indigenous communities, the need for and importance of holistic, wrap-around advising supports for Indigenous students
- In response to questions, it was reported that SAPL has:
 - Recently introduced a new Director of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) and that there is similar future work to be done in this area
 - Hired a young Indigenous Architect for Fall 2023 to act as a mentor and resource person for Indigenous students, and who will also be a sessional instructor in the BDCI program
 - Connected with the advisors in Arts, Science, and Engineering to hear learnings from their programs and to discuss how to best support students and what training is beneficial for advisors
- The Committee recommended that:
 - SAPL should specifically connect with instructors of the courses that will be utilized in the pathway program in addition to the conversations held at the Associate Dean level

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of an Indigenous Student Pathway Program for admission into the Bachelor of Design in City Innovation, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, as set out in the document provided to the Committee and as recommended by the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee, effective for the Fall 2024 admission cycle.

Carried**6. A. Approval of Changes to the Undergraduate Admission Sections of the University Calendar**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Verity Turpin and Jennifer de Roaldes presented this item.

Highlights:

- The Co-Chair of the CCS reported on the discussion at the subcommittee regarding the changes to the undergraduate admissions sections of the University Calendar, and the direction provided by CCS on the proposed language in the Open Studies and Diverse Qualifications sections to be made in consultation with the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (OEDIA) and the Writing Symbols Lodge

- The proponent then explained that the proposed changes to the Undergraduate Admissions sections include several key changes to introduce and enhance equitable and inclusive pathways and supportive admissions processes. It was noted that these changes are just the start of this work and that there will be several stages where feedback will continue to be sought as these practices are implemented, and the proponent acknowledged various groups for their feedback to date.
- The proponent reviewed some of the updates that have been made to the Admissions sections in response to feedback, such as the removal of “personal hardship” language
- In response to questions regarding the SAPL Pathways Program, it was reported that:
 - Science 20 and 30 are approved courses for admission but are not required courses for the Indigenous pathways. The Faculty has determined that for student success it is important for applicants to have one of the 30 level specific science courses and will not accept Science 20/30 at this time.
 - Conversations began in the Fall about the use of various pathways terminology and work is ongoing to standardize and add clarity, so both applicants and the campus community understand the differences between bridging versus pathway program
- In response to questions, about the Equitable and Inclusive Admission Process, it was confirmed:
 - That there is not a minimum percentage applicants must achieve in the courses presented for admission, and the percentage needed will be at the discretion of the Faculty
 - That this process is geared toward equity-deserving groups, but an applicant whose grades/academic success were impacted because of an illness or their commitment to extracurricular activity could also be considered under this process
- The Committee discussed:
 - Support for the removal of the reference requirement for individuals applying through the Equitable and Inclusive Admission Process
 - The due diligence and consultation done for these changes, and that this could serve as a model for future proposals
 - That much of the proposed language aligns with other University EDIA initiatives and messaging and this is important and removes any deficit language
 - That the existing Diverse Qualifications process was challenging, and the proposed Equitable and Inclusive Admission Process is much clearer and supportive
 - The importance of all programs systematically admitting students through the Equitable and Inclusive Admission Process and that having ongoing conversations with Deans’ Council, Department Heads, and Graduate Program Directors will go along way to moving this culture forward
- It was suggested that the proponent consider if adding more information about why and when an interview may be required under the Equitable and Inclusive Admission Process may remove any unintended intimidation factor

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the changes to the undergraduate Admissions sections in the University Calendar, as set out in the document provided to the Committee, effective for the Fall 2024 admissions cycle, and as recommended by the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee.

Carried

7. Approval of the Changes to Academic Regulations: M.1 Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Verity Turpin, Amy Dambrowitz, and Leslie Reid presented this item.

Secretary's Note: An additional document for this item, submitted on the meeting date by the Students' Union (SU) representative on the Committee, was provided to the Committee prior to the meeting.

Highlights:

- The presenters reported that the Academic Regulation relating to *Supporting Documentation and Statutory Declaration* (M.1) was paused in the early stages of the pandemic until June 2023 and that in preparation for the ongoing use of M.1 it is being proposed that the language of the regulation be updated to remove content specific to the operational process for submitting a statutory declaration, as these services are no longer available on campus. Statutory declarations will remain a type of documentation that a student can choose from to support an absence. It was reported that the CCS was supportive of this change, but that the Students' Union representative on the Committee opposed the change.
- It was explained that M.1 is important for the University community, as the University continues to see increases in the number of deferral requests, and a significant number of students whose academic success is impacted, with 36% of students ending up one full grade lower post deferral. Moving forward with the use of M.1. and maintaining a requirement for students to provide some type of documentation ensures both accountability and an opportunity for faculty to connect with students to provide support and guidance.
- The presenters then outlined the communications plan and next steps for consultation on a new student declaration form being considered as another type of supporting documentation
- The SU representative on the Committee expressed concern about the lack of student consultation on the unpausing and use of M.1 stating that this change has a functional impact on students, which warrants consultation, and that conducting consultation with students would demonstrate the University's commitment to its student engagement goal in the proposed Strategic Plan. It was noted the regulation has not been used since 2020 and therefore much of the student population will be unfamiliar with it. This regulation impacts students who may be in a vulnerable situation.
- The Committee discussed:
 - Concerns raised about the vagueness of the language in M.1, how the language could be interpreted by students and faculty, that it is not clear what the requirements for instructors are and that this may lead to inconsistencies in how M.1 is used
 - Concerns about asking students for supporting documentation when they are sick
 - That no longer having commissioner for oaths services on campus has a financial impact for students, and may cause additional stress
 - Concerns about the number of deferrals being requested and that this process may encourage students to pause and consider alternative options before requesting a deferral
 - Impacts on program progression resulting from failing a deferred exam for a course that was a required prerequisite, that students need to be aware of these consequences and that there is ongoing work to support progression
 - That the language in the regulation is meant to be student centric, as it provides students discretion to choose which form of documentation best suits their situation and provides flexibility

- That it would be beneficial to develop a tool, which would centralize and track the number of requests of this nature
- Similar practices in place across other U15 post-secondaries
- The importance of student advisors in helping students navigate these situations
- That it is not being questioned whether students have good/valid reasons for their absences
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - Instructors are required as per the *Course Outlines* Academic Regulation to explain in the course outlines what students should do if they miss required components of the course. Allowing instructors to return to a practice that encourages dialogue around extenuating/personal circumstances, will support better solutions around missed course components.
 - That thorough consultation was done on the existing regulation when it was brought into place and the change before the Committee is to remove information on operational services for obtaining statutory declarations, which the University is no longer able to provide. This starts the groundwork for a future iteration of the regulation and a commitment to consult on next best steps.
- The SU representative suggested that as the University has been operating without utilizing M.1 since early in the pandemic that consultation should occur with the students prior to unpausing this regulation or changing it and that moving forward without further consultation is not supportive of the student body. It was also suggested that consultation with the OEDIA and the OIE should be conducted. It was then requested that a decision on this item be postponed.

Secretary's Note: A motion to postpone approval of the Changes to the Academic Regulation Section M.1 Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration until the September 25 meeting of the APPC to allow for further consultation was moved and seconded, the motion to postpone was not carried on a vote of the Committee, and the Committee proceeded with the original motion.

- In response to questions, it was clarified that:
 - The original motion to approve the changes to M.1 is concerned with the removal of the operational process for obtaining statutory declarations
- Further discussion included:
 - Possible impacts and risks associated with either postponing the decision or moving forward with it
 - That increases in the number of deferrals being requested may be related to student mental health, and that discussions on assessment need to continue
 - That there has been a lack of communication with students on the impacts of deferrals
 - That some students may be fearful of approaching their instructors about their personal situations and that students are facing many issues, such as housing shortages and food insecurity
 - Consultation to date
 - That EDIA should not be used in a polarizing way to separate groups
 - That approving these changes does not prohibit updates to the regulation in the future and that a mechanism is needed now
 - How to enable students to do this with their instructors and what students should do if they get pushback from their instructors

- That student experience is fundamental

Secretary's Note: A motion to approve the Changes to the Academic Regulation Section M.1 Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration, was not carried as a majority of members did not participate in the vote due to abstentions. In accordance with the General Faculties Council Standing Committees General Terms of Reference, an affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present is required to carry/adopt a motion.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee reconsider the original motion to approve the changes to the Academic Regulation Section M.1. Supporting Documentation.

Carried**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the changes to the Academic Regulation Section M.1. Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration in the University Calendar, as it is set out in the document provided to the Committee, for the 2023-2024 University Calendar and as recommended by the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee.

Carried**8. New University Calendar Software: CourseDog Update**

Secretary's Note: This item was moved to in package information item.

9. Report of the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee May 23, 2023 Meeting

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

10. Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Motion to Adjourn**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee adjourn the June 16, 2023 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Courtney McVie
University Secretary