



**MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF  
THE COUNCIL OF THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
OPEN SESSION**

**September 29, 2014 at 10:00 am room H-767**

PRESENT

Ex-officio members: B. Bacon, J. Beaudoin (Secretary), P. Wood-Adams (Chair).

Voting members: A. Akgunduz (for C. Mulligan), A. Arvanitogiannis, K. Boies, S. Brutus, J.-C. Bustros, L. Caminati, S. Chauhan, A. Dolatabadi, B. Farnesi, T. Gould, P. Joyce, M. Kanji, M. Khan, W. Khreich, M. Mehmet Ali, B. Nelson, A. Piekny, R. Raut, K. Riad, K. Schmitt, S. Snow, V. Venkatesh, A. Whitelaw.

Non-Voting members: M. C. Bolton, M. Jordan (Recording Secretary), B. Tucker.

Guests: P. Kelley, F. Martin, C. Raso, C. Tocco.

REGRETS

Voting members: E. Diamantoudi, E. Peltier-Wagner, K. Riad, A. Sebak.

Non-voting members: W. Cheaib, J. Powlowski.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order immediately following the Closed Session.

2. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed new members to the Council and thanked continuing members for their contributions to graduate studies through the approval of important documents and discussion on issues related to graduate education, generally and at Concordia.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved and seconded (K. Schmitt, S. Snow). Carried.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Meeting of May 15, 2014

Moved and seconded (B. Nelson, K. Schmitt). Carried.

5. Chair's Remarks

Due to a heavy agenda, the Chair waived her remarks.

6. Question Period

There were no questions.

**Consent Agenda**

7. Election/Ratification

7.1 Steering Committee members CSGS 1415 1 D1

7.2 Ratification – Faculty Tribunal Pool nominees CSGS 1415 1 D2

8. Proposed Graduate Calendar Changes

**School of Graduate Studies**

8.1 Grading System CSGS 1415 1 D3

Moved and seconded (K. Schmitt, L. Caminati). Carried.

**Discussion**

9. Summary of Changes to the Policy on Postdoctoral Fellows (VPRGS-4) CSGS 1415 1 D4

9.1 Revised Policy on Postdoctoral Fellows VPRGS-4 CSGS 1415 1 D5

The Chair invited Dr Brad Nelson to provide an overview of the changes to the Policy on Postdoctoral Fellows. Dr Nelson stated that due to a recent provincial labour board ruling postdoctoral fellows will henceforth be considered employees and will consequently see benefit deductions to their salary/stipend. The rate at which benefits will be charged was not official at the time of the meeting but it is expected to fall between 10% and 25%. Additionally, a minimum salary standard of \$30K per year has been established which is commensurate with other Montreal-area universities and with Tri-Council norms. Future postdoctoral appointments will also require the signature of the Dean of Graduate Studies. It was noted that while the number of postdoctoral fellows is reported to the ministry, Concordia receives no funding. However, postdocs are considered in space calculations by the government. It is not clear as to whether or not a faculty member who 'tops up' a postdoc with his or her own funding will be required to allocate for benefits for the additional 'topped up' salary; this will be clarified. We currently have 88 postdocs, approximately 75% of whom are funded by faculty members. In response to a question about the exit interview mentioned in the policy, it was clarified that the interview is not obligatory and serves as an opportunity for the postdoc to relay feedback to the School. Another question was raised about the termination procedure in place for postdocs and if it left them particularly vulnerable. It was noted that all provisions of the labour code apply to postdocs. The changes to the policy will go before the Faculty Councils for discussion,

then will be brought back to the Council of the School of Graduate Studies and Senate for approval.

10. SGS Highlights 2013-2014

CSGS 1415 1 D6

Dr Wood-Adams provided a summary of the major activities and accomplishments of the School over the 2013-2014 academic year. The document will be circulated electronically to the membership.

**Presentation**

11. Benoît-Antoine Bacon, Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs and  
Patrick Kelley, Chief Financial Officer  
*2014-2015 Budget Update*

Dr Bacon began by informing members that the presentation was a follow-up to the one given to the Councils in April. At that time, universities were permitted to carry a deficit and Concordia presented a balanced budget. Mr Kelley continued the discussion by reminding Council that all Quebec universities and many across Canada and abroad are facing times of austerity. This year, universities will not be permitted to carry a deficit and it is likely that future years will be as difficult, financially speaking, if not more so. Concordia is currently undertaking measures to weather the storm and is expected to come through reasonably well. One of those measures is the Voluntary Departure Program, which will be capped at 180 staff members. Faculty members are not eligible. The cost of the program is to be repaid over several years. Dr Bacon stated that this is a first step and that positions and needs will be studied globally once the VDP has been completed. Mr Kelley reminded Council that the program is entirely voluntary in that one should neither encourage nor discourage employees considering it, yet supervisors should be open to discussing the program with individuals. Interested parties may attend one of the upcoming information sessions.

**Discussion**

12. *Policy on Intellectual Property*  
Allison Beck, Legal Officer, General Counsel  
Graham Carr, Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies  
Justin Powlowski, Assoc. Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies (Strategy & Operations)  
Shelley Sitahal, Associate Director, Research Partnerships and Innovation, Office of Research

12.1 Intellectual Property Working Group Report

CSGS 1415 1 D7

12.2 Revised Policy on Intellectual Property

CSGS 1415 1 D8

Dr Carr provided an overview of the changes to the Policy on Intellectual Property. The substantive change to the policy is that the University will not make IP claims on students in undergraduate and course-based graduate programs. Dr Carr also reminded Council that the provisions of the CUFA collective agreement remain in place despite the IP policy. In response to a question by a Council member, Ms Sitahal stated that the Office of Research is currently working on a template for capstone projects undertaken with industry partners. The changes to the policy will go before the Faculty Councils and then on to Senate for approval.

## **Information**

### 13. Council of the School of Graduate Studies

- |      |                                      |                 |
|------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 13.1 | Council Membership 2014-2015         | CSGS 1415 1 D9  |
| 13.2 | Powers of Council                    | CSGS 1415 1 D10 |
| 13.3 | Call for Honorary Degree nominations | CSGS 1415 1 D11 |

**Other**            Next Meeting: October 20, 2014 from 10:00 am – 12:00 noon in H-767

## **Other Business**

Next Meeting: September 2014

## **Adjournment**

Moved and seconded (L. Caminati, B. Nelson). Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Jordan  
Recording Secretary  
Council of the School of Graduate Studies