UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Graduate Education Council
Tuesday, March 19, 2024
3:00 – 5:00 p.m., Microsoft Teams

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. The Dean began the meeting by acknowledging the land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and study on this land.

1) **Approval of the Agenda of the Graduate Education (GEC) Meeting of March 19, 2024**

    MOTION (*duly moved by Professor Vina Goghari and seconded by Professor John Peever*)
    THAT the agenda of the Graduate Education Council meeting of March 19, 2024, as circulated with the agenda, be approved.

    The motion is **CARRIED, unanimous.**

2) **Dean's Remarks** – item #4, Graduate Funding Working Group Update.

3) **Report of the Vice-Dean, Research and Program Innovation, Professor Vina Goghari**

    i. Professor Goghari reported on the pilot project of the **Graduate Education Innovation Fund** created to support teaching innovation for graduate education. Over the five cycles, 24 projects were funded for a total of $118K in total funding, $179K including matching funds. The deadline for final submissions is April 3, 2024, with ten seed grants of a maximum of $5,000 each are available on annual annually. This initiative will be showcased as part of the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI) annual showcase and recipients will also share their work as part of the Conversations with SGS series.

    ii. **Graduate Faculty Membership (GFM) Guidelines: Proposal** – At the University of Toronto, teaching staff must meet specific criteria in order to teach or supervise graduate students. Professor Goghari explained the current GFM ranks, level of responsibilities, and the faculty categories eligible for each rank of membership. She noted that the SGS Calendar (section 1.5) currently only refers to rank and level of responsibilities. Over the past couple of years, in cooperation with the Office of the Vice-Provost Faculty and Academic Life (VPFAL) a review has taken place to map the GFM categories to the nature of the faculty positions. A table explaining proposed changes was shared. Changes will be brought forward to SGS Graduate Education Council in May 2024 for final approval, the GFM website will then be updated, and a GFM explorer tool will help clarify eligibility. Please direct questions and scenarios to vina.goghari@utoronto.ca.

    iii. **Supporting Early Exits from a Doctoral Program**: An Ad hoc Working Group convened to review existing resources and consider potential mechanism and support for doctoral students who want or need to exit their studies prior to the completion of their PhD program. Initially the group was struck to discuss an *along the way MPhil* they ended up looking at three scenarios where doctoral students could benefit from supports and off-ramps. Professor Goghari described three possible cases, i) pre-candidacy supportive termination, ii) pre-candidacy transfer to masters, and iii) post-candidacy recognition of milestones. For each she noted recommendations from the Working Group, and possible mechanisms. Members wishing to discuss this should contact Professor Goghari.

4) **Graduate Funding Working Group – Update** - The Dean reviewed the purpose, activities and key themes from the Graduate Funding Working Group struck last year to enhance understanding of the graduate funding landscape at UofT, and to identify a series of funding considerations and strategic recommendations for divisions to employ to maximize graduate funding. The reports will be shared broadly as SGS consults with key stakeholders to receive feedback and begin to implement recommendations. The educational report provides a comprehensive overview of graduate funding at UofT; the context and recommendations report contains a set of funding considerations and recommendations that can be applied by various graduate stakeholders to guide their funding-related decisions, increase alignment, and optimize available resources for funding packages. Data was shared showing sources contributing to graduate funding packages, base funding rates at other Canadian institutions and funding package information across the SGS Divisions. The Dean highlighted key recommendations and work being done to facilitate their implementation.

- Reaffirm the principle that PhD programs need to be funded for the minimum program length;
- Move away from monitoring graduate student income and toward a focus on academic progress to improve time-to-completion;
- With guidance from SGS, academic divisions should review al master's programs and assess the programs' funding status, taking into account the conversation rate from masters to PhD;
- SGS should collate best practices, develop templates, and offer guidance on funding-related communications to support graduate units. Graduate units should clearly communicate their funding and top-up practices on their websites, in their graduate student handbooks, and through an annual funding letter.
- Academic divisions, in collaboration with SGS, should strengthen incentives for students to seek out award opportunities by developing a more principled approach to top-ups and enhancing education on the professional benefits and pedagogical purposes of external awards. Students should feel they are adequately rewarded for the successful attainment of external funding.
- + more here.

5) **Updates from the Assistant Dean, Mr. Brian Desrosiers-Tam**

The purpose of the **2022 Career Outcomes Project** was to provide a snapshot of employment outcomes for UofT PhD graduates between 2000 to 2021, and postdoctoral fellows who worked at UofT between 2008-2021. The data will: provide currently/prospective students and postdoctoral fellows with insights into the job market and career possibilities to assist them in structuring their graduate or postdoctoral experience; provide graduate leaders with departmental/divisional-level data to assist them in decision-making related to curricula, supervision supports and professionalization offerings; and increase transparency and "truth -in-advertising" about career outcomes post-graduation. Grace Zhu, Data Analyst, described some of the key findings. he link to the dashboards was shared: Career Outcomes – School of Graduate Studies (utoronto.ca) and Postdoctoral Fellows and their Career Outcomes – School of Graduate Studies (utoronto.ca). Members are invited to explore the data; please direct questions and insights to Sgs.data@utoronto.ca.

CONSENT AGENDA

6) **Report of the Previous Meeting: Graduate Education Council – October 10, 2023 -** The report of the Previous Meeting was distributed with the agenda package. No members wished to discuss items. The report is accepted/approved.

7) **Business Arising from the Previous Meeting -** There was no business arising from the report of the previous meeting.

8) **Reports for Distribution -** The Graduate Education Innovation Fund: Pilot Project Report and the Post-Doctoral Fellows Annual Report 2022-23 were distributed with the agenda for information. Feedback is welcome to sgs.dean@utoronto.ca.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

9) **Date of Next Meeting:** May 21, 2024.

10) **Other Business -** The Dean invited members to bring forward items they wish to discuss at a future meeting.

11) **Move to Adjournment**

The Dean called on Professor Vina Goghari to present the motion.

MOTION that the Graduate Education Council meeting of March 19, 2024 be adjourned.

MOTION *(duly moved and seconded by Professor John Peever)*

There being no further discussion or questions, the Dean thanked Council members for their participation and adjourned the meeting.

Appendix to the Minutes
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO - GRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL
Record of Attendance – March 19, 2024
Microsoft Teams

Present (Voting Members)	Present (Non-Voting Members)	Absent (Voting Members)
Abdolhosseini, Mohaddeseh	Audet, Julie	Alford, Larry *(ex-officio)*
Atkinson, Michael	Boon, Heather	Arhonditsis, George
Barker, Joshua *(Chair, ex-officio)*	Buhagiar, Melodie	Bussmann, Markus
Comeau, Elyse	Cayley, Rachael	Chan, Warren
Dionne, Anne-Katherine	Cummins, Carolyn	Gertler, Meric *(ex-officio)*
Ensminger, Beate	Desrosiers-Tam, Brian	Haidar, Rana
Goghari, Vina *(ex-officio)*	Flessa, Joseph	Magee, John
Hughes, Jill	Freeman, Jane	Miller, Michael
Kim, Junchul	Hampton, Brenda	Mirdehghan, Parsa
Klassen, Pamela	Harrison, Rene	Moghaddam, Amir *(ex-officio)*
Kohn, Peggy	Heximer, Dianne *(Secretary to Council)*	Ross, Jill
Kugamoorthy, Brenaven	Hurlihey, Victoria	Ruocco, Anthony
Kundur, Deepa	Kajan, Aziza	Serles, Peter
Lee, Nana (Hyung Ran)	Kishen, Aneil	Wane, Njoki
Milkie, Melissa	Lee, Eunjung	Young, Trevor *(ex-officio)*
Miller, Jeannie	Nodwell, Justin	
Murphy, Jennifer	Peake, Sarah	
Ossher, Lynn	Rao, Ajay	
Peever, John *(ex-officio)*	Sampson, John	
Schuurmans, Carol	Smith, Natasha	
Ssali, Henry	Stathopoulos, Laura	
Tam, Michelle	St-Cyr, Olivier	
Van Lieshout, Pascal	Widger, Kim	
Wakefield, Sarah	Zhong, Chenbo	
Ware, Matthaeus	Zhu, Grace	
Wells, Brandon		