



**Minutes of the Faculty Council
Meeting of December 13, 2019
Michael E. Charles Council Chamber (GB 202)**

PRESENT: Doug Reeve (Speaker), Christopher Yip (Dean), Raviraj Adve, Grant Allen, Gisele Azimi, Evan Bentz, Sourojeet Chakraborty, Warren Chan, Hai Ling Cheng, Will Cluett, Jim Courtney, Thomas Coyle, James Davis, Victoria DelCampo, Ruknoon Dinder, Khuong Doan, Jennifer Drake, Greg Evans, Jennifer Farmer, Ramin Farnood, Carolyn Farrell, Zahir Firoze, Marie Floryan, Jacob Foster, Jason Foster, Danny Ghanem, Alexander Gilvesy, Emily Goridkov, Aidan Grenville, Michel Hache, Ali Hooshyar, Jennifer Hsu, Harry Jiang, Ankita Khanda, Dawn Kilkenny-Rocheleau, Jonathan Kong, Christopher Kousinioris, Deepa Kundur, Elias Kyriacou, Peter Lehn, David Lie, Steven Mann, Mirjana Mijalkovic, Emily Moore, Mahyar Mozaffari, Shivani Nathoo, Jun Nogami, Awale Omar, Vladimiro Papangelakis, Nicolas Papernot, Nelly Pietropaolo, Chloe Quijano, Jonathan Rocheleau, Daniel Rozhko, Jeremy Sharapov, Patricia Sheridan, Hamid Timorabadi, Brent Sleep, Micah Stickel, Kenneth Tallman, Joseph Tate, Spencer Teetaert, Deborah Tihanyi, Honghi Tran, Morgaine Saskia Van Beers, Chirag Variawa, Victor Xin, Caroline Ziegler (Secretary)

REGRETS: Laura Berneaga, Erin Bobicki, Jose Cadavid, John Harrison, Mindy Thuna

GUESTS: Brohath Amrithraj, Helen Bright, Sharon Brown, Dani Couture, Leanne Dawkins, Sonia De Buglio, Jennifer Fabro, Cathy Grilo, Allan Kuan, Cori Hanson, Phuong Huynh, Victoria James, Akshay Mohan, Marit Mitchell, Don Newton, Estelle Oliva-Fisher, Kristin Philpot, Zeeshan Rayees, Cindy Rottmann, Alex Schroen, Marisa Sterling, Geoff Wichert, Chris Zaran

1. Speaker's Welcome and Adoption of the Agenda

Faculty Council Speaker Doug Reeve welcomed members to the second Council meeting of 2019-2020 and acknowledged the University's use of traditional land.

This month marks the 30th anniversary of the massacre of 14 female engineering students at l'École Polytechnique de Montreal. The university and our Faculty commemorated this tragic event at ceremonies on December 6, the National Day of Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women. Members of Council were invited to observe one minute of silence to honour the women of the Polytechnique.

The agenda and meeting package were distributed on December 3, 2019. The minutes of the October 31, 2019 Council meeting were distributed on December 11, 2019.

On a motion duly moved, seconded and carried, it was resolved –

THAT the agenda be adopted.

2. Introduction of New Faculty Member

Deepa Kundur, chair of The Edward S. Rogers Sr. Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, introduced her new faculty member, Nicolas Papernot.

3. Adoption of the Minutes of Previous Meetings

No errors or omissions were noted in the minutes of the previous meeting and on a regular motion duly moved, seconded and carried, it was resolved –

THAT the minutes of the meeting of October 31, 2019 be approved.

4. Report of the Dean

Dean Chris Yip welcomed members to Council and provided the following comments.

(a) Ontario Professional Engineers Awards Gala

The Ontario Professional Engineers Awards Gala was held on November 16, 2019. Co-presented by the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers and Professional Engineers Ontario, this prestigious annual event brings together industry innovators, business leaders and policy makers to celebrate engineering excellence and achievement. This year, U of T faculty and alumni were recipients of nearly all the awards presented, including the Engineering Medal, Research and Development; Engineering Medal, Entrepreneurship; and Engineering Medal, Young Engineer.

(b) Industry Partners Reception

Over 140 people attended the 2019 Engineering Partners Reception in the Myhal Centre on November 13, 2019. Representatives from industry, government and non-profit organizations joined faculty and staff to celebrate the annual partner awards and reflect on successful collaborations from the past year, worth over \$16M, an increase of almost 20 percent from 2018. Keynote speaker Gillian Hadfield, director of the new Schwartz Reisman Institute for Technology and Society, emphasized the necessity of close collaboration between engineering and the social sciences to responsibly implement far-reaching technologies like robotics and artificial intelligence.

(c) Engineering Alumni Network Awards

Thirteen accomplished members of our alumni community were recognized at the annual Engineering Alumni Network Awards on November 7, 2019 for their outstanding contributions to the Skule community and remarkable career achievements in which their creativity, technical knowledge and leadership skills have made life better for people around the world.

(d) Administrative Staff Awards Program

Nominations for the Faculty's administrative staff awards will be accepted until January 31, 2020. Packages should be sent to the Faculty's Director, Awards and Honours. Submissions from departments and divisions are encouraged, as are self-nominations. Previously unsuccessful nomination packages may be resubmitted, but all materials must be current.

(e) Director, Information Technology

Alex Tichine has been appointed the Faculty's Director, Information Technology. This is a new position, recommended by the Dean's Task Force on Information Technology. Since 2008, Mr. Tichine has been an active contributor to cross-departmental and cross-divisional teams of IT professionals who have delivered innovative technology solutions to students, faculty and staff. In this position, Mr. Tichine will establish and lead a Faculty Information Technology (FIT) office.

(f) Coffee with Chris

Approximately 60 students and staff attended the first Coffee with Chris (formerly Dean's Town Hall) on November 4, 2019, where discussions focused on mental health, student experience, and equity, diversity and inclusion. The next Coffee with Chris will be held in February 2020 and a similar event for graduate students will be organized by the office of the Vice-Dean, Graduate Studies in early 2020. All are encouraged to attend. We are considering changing the format of the sessions (for example, a different time frame or number of discussion tables) and recommendations are welcome.

The Speaker thanked Dean Yip for his report.

5. Major Curriculum Changes for the 2020-2021 Academic Year

The following item will be considered by a regular motion, requiring a simple majority of members present and voting to carry.

Evan Bentz, chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, presented Report 3639 Revised, proposed curriculum changes for the next academic year affecting cross-disciplinary minors and certificates and undergraduate courses and programs in Civil and Mineral Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Engineering Science, First Year Core 8, Studies in Transdisciplinary Engineering Education and Practice, Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, and Mechanical and Industrial Engineering.

Professor Bentz stated that after the report was circulated to Council, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee was asked to remove *STA314: Statistical Methods for Machine Learning I* and *STA414: Statistical Methods for Machine Learning II* from the technical elective list for the Machine Intelligence Major in Engineering Science from section 4.6 of the report, as they have exclusions that are essentially equivalent to other courses in the major. The Speaker confirmed that we will proceed with the motion as written, that this change will be noted in the Council minutes, and that an updated report will be posted on the Council website.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the following motion was moved and seconded –

THAT the proposed curriculum changes for the 2020-2021 academic year, as described in Report 3639 Revised, be approved.

Members discussed a recommendation in section 4.1 of the report to switch the order of two courses in Engineering Science's Foundation Curriculum: *PHY180: Mechanics* will be moved to the spring semester and *MSE160: Molecules and Materials* will be moved to the fall semester. This change will accommodate the math requirements for the PHY180 course and is based on informal feedback received from Term 1F students in the PHY180 course over many years. Moving PHY180 to the second semester will allow students to be more prepared, and offering MSE160, which requires grade 12 chemistry, in the first semester will result in an easier transition from high school. Switching the order of these courses will not affect resource allocation or the number of contact hours in 2020-2021.

A student pointed out that moving MSE160 (which covers molecular chemistry as it relates to the properties of materials) will result in chemical engineering content no longer being available in the fall. This will be a disadvantage to students who switch programs after the first semester; without being exposed to chemical engineering content, they may consider the Chemical Engineering program a less viable choice. The Vice-Dean, First Year Engineering stated that *APS110: Engineering Chemistry and Materials Science* is shared between Materials Science and Engineering and Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry, and contains content from both disciplines.

It was also mentioned that moving PHY180 (a lab course) to the spring where there are already other technical courses will result in workload disparity between the first and second semesters.

The chair of Engineering Science welcomed feedback and said that if there is significant concern about this change, it can be withdrawn from the report. The former chair of Materials Science and Engineering also welcomed input from Engineering Science students regarding MSE160, as the department is looking to revamp the course.

The following motion to amend was moved and seconded –

THAT the proposed curriculum changes for the 2020-2021 academic year, as described in Report 3639 Revised **and amended to remove section 4.1 (switching order of PHY180 and MSE160)**, be approved.

The amended motion was carried.

6. Reports and Recommendations of Standing Committees

The following reports were approved by the Executive Committee of Council at its November 21, 2019 meeting and are being presented for Council's information.

(a) Engineering Graduate Education Committee Update

Julie Audet, Vice-Dean, Graduate Studies and chair of the Engineering Graduate Education Committee, presented Report 3640. Graduate curriculum changes include approval of a new APS course and a new MIE course.

There were no questions and the report was received for information.

(b) Admissions Cycle 2019

Jason Foster, chair of the Admissions Committee, presented Report 3642 Revised, statistics regarding applications for admission, offers of admission, registration figures and characteristics of the 2019 first year class.

A student requested that more detail be given on the geographic origins of prospective students and incoming classes, inside and outside of Canada. Professor Foster said that the committee monitors this and can include more information in future admissions cycle reports.

The report was received for information.

(c) Teaching Methods and Resources Committee Goals for 2019-2020

Ken Tallman, chair of the Teaching Methods and Resources Committee, presented Report 3643. The committee's first goal for the academic year is to review the Divisional Items in the FASE online course evaluations and bring recommendations forward to a subsequent Council meeting. The committee had undertaken to review the Divisional Items in 2013-2014, when they were first approved by Council. Discussions about Question 15 in particular will be of interest as many feel it does not provide an opportunity for meaningful feedback, but other questions can also be improved. The committee's second goal is to review the use of teaching evaluations in promotion, tenure and PTR and to develop divisional guidelines for professors, as the existing teaching criteria document is outdated.

Members also discussed educating students about implicit and unconscious bias to help them write evaluations.

The report was received for information.

7. Teaching Assistant Awards, 2019

The Teaching Assistant Award was established by Council in May 2010 to recognize TAs who demonstrate outstanding performance in classroom instruction, consultation with students outside class, effective use of teaching methods, and development of course material. Dean Yip presented the 2019 award to Mario Badr, PhD candidate in Electrical and Computer Engineering, and to Allan Kuan, PhD candidate in Civil Engineering.

8. Report of the Joint Task Force on Academic Advising and Mental Health

Julie Audet, Vice-Dean, Graduate Studies; Tom Coyle, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate; and Don MacMillan, Faculty Registrar, members of the Joint Task Force on Academic Advising and Mental Health, presented Report 3644, the group's final report, for discussion.

The Joint Task Force on Academic Advising and Mental Health was struck by Dean Cristina Amon in April 2019 to review the work of the Dean's Task Force on Academic Advising (2016) and the Decanal Mental Health Task Force (2017) and make further recommendations. The Joint Task Force focused on academic advising resources, staff complement and training; mental health and wellness training for students, staff, faculty and teaching assistants; and reviewing Faculty policies and resources with a mental health and wellness lens.

Key recommendations developed by the Joint Task Force relating to undergraduate students include: (1) continue to foster a culture of caring and support in the Faculty and destigmatize mental health challenges, (2) create a Dean's Advisory Committee on Student Mental Health and a mental health officer position in the Faculty, (3) offer and promote more mental health training resources to Engineering staff and faculty, (4) identify student mental health and wellness training for all student-facing staff, (5) ensure new job postings and interview questions for academic advisors include language related to advising-based competencies, (6) create a full-time academic advisor position to support first-year international students in the First Year Office and make Engineering Science's new academic advisor position permanent after the one-year contract ends, (7) review academic advising caseloads, frequency of complex cases and petition volume by department/division, (8) develop a proactive advising notification system in the Academic Advising Portal, (9) standardize academic advisors' out-of-office and auto-response messages to include links to helpful resources and services, and (10) increase the number of scholarships that recognize those of our students who have overcome challenges.

Key recommendations relating to graduate students include: (1) increase specificity and consistency of graduate student orientations across the Faculty, (2) explore options for graduate chairs to assess the levels of support available for research-stream graduate students and the climate created by their supervisors, (3) clarify supervisory expectations by setting guidelines for personal time off and by promoting best practices in graduate supervision within the Faculty, (4) reduce barriers for research-stream graduate students who need to take medical leaves of absence, (5) require all graduate administrators to complete Identify, Assist, Refer (IAR) training and encourage them to take additional health and wellness training, (6) create clear policies for missed work and late withdrawal in graduate and 500-level courses, (7) make the graduate course schedule available on a centralized website prior to course registration, and (8) continue to support graduate student mental wellness groups.

Members discussed the mandate of the Dean's Advisory Committee on Student Mental Health, which is to assess mental health resources and services within the Faculty, assess staff and faculty training needs and requirements, make recommendations for the improvement of current mental health resources and services, and coordinate and promote mental health training and resources for FASE students, staff and faculty. The Advisory Committee will prioritize actions that will have an immediate, positive impact and will provide updates at subsequent Council meetings.

While it is not possible to guarantee the quality of “end of line” mental health services provided to students, we will continue to advocate on behalf of our students and work with the university’s reports and resources, in particular recommendations created by the Presidential & Provostial Task Force on Student Mental Health, which was struck in March 2019 to review existing services and programs related to student mental health and to explore potential new solutions. The task force, whose membership includes a psychiatrist, may also consider the broader issue of why mental health has become such a prominent issue within universities.

A member asked if the Self-Declaration of Illness Pilot Project, which allows students to submit a self-declaration of illness petition once per term without medical documentation (for assignments worth less than 15 percent occurring over no more than three calendar days), will be fine-tuned by next semester and if additional guidance will be provided to faculty on ways in which they may respond to these petitions. The Registrar’s office is monitoring the appropriate use of this project and will bring forward statistics and recommendations to the Examinations Committee for consideration.

Student workload will be reviewed by the Academic Workload Task Force, including contact hours and other factors such as international students’ transition to Canada. Students will be consulted broadly through emails, surveys and focus groups.

We also recognize the mental health needs of our professors and staff. The role of the mental health officer may include this broader mandate.

The presenters acknowledged the difficulty of knowing the exact ratio of academic advisors to students due to the cyclical nature of academic administrators’ work but noted that two such positions have been created in the Faculty since 2016. This ratio will be audited to ensure its effectiveness. Associate chairs are encouraged to identify time periods when their department’s or division’s academic advisors are overwhelmed and consider hiring additional academic advisors or administrative staff to help offload some of their work. It was stated that not all students are aware of the availability of academic advisors and more advertising is necessary.

A student recommended that mental health information and resources be integrated into the undergraduate curriculum through a lecture or course materials in one of the Faculty’s required courses. The Joint Task Force was unable to develop a strong recommendation that would make this happen since it is difficult to mandate course content, especially if a professor is uncomfortable with the topic. Professors will continue to be encouraged to integrate mental health in their courses, and the Dean’s Advisory Committee on Student Mental Health may consider how to mandate this in the future. In addition, the mental health officer position can act as a resource for professors in this regard.

Members discussed the pros and cons of student rankings. While they can be motivating for some students, feedback indicates that they can be extremely stressful for those at both the top and bottom of the rank. This practice has been eliminated at most engineering schools in Canada. The Joint Task Force has agreed that the Registrar’s office can provide student rank

directly to graduate schools if required but will otherwise not generate this information and so it will not be available to undergraduate students.

9. Other Business

There was no other business.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next Faculty Council meeting is on February 28, 2020.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

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