



Academic Council Graduate Studies Committee
Tuesday, October 22, 2024
9:00 a.m. – 9:38 a.m.

Via Google Meet

[Graduate Studies Committee Agendas, Materials and Minutes 2024-2025](#)

MINUTES

Present: C. Cesaroni (Chair), J. Abbas Dick, J. Arcand, R. Bailey, A. Cooper, C. Davidson, F. Gaspari, L. Harkins, S. Jackson, A. Kiani, O. Marques, C. McGregor, P. Mirza-Babaei, D. Papke, F. Quereshi, J. Stokes, A. Tokuhiko, R. Van Oostveen, L. VanVeen, N. Wattie, K. Wilson, A. Wingate

Staff & Guests: K. Ayotte (Secretary), S. Baglay, N. Crow, M. Heslip, S. Heydari, A. Kassaris, K. McCartney, J. Pereira, S. Windsor

Regrets: D. Bonetta, K. Clarke, K. Elgazzar, L. Livingston, H. MacPherson, S. Marsh, A. Slane

C. Cesaroni called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and read aloud the Land Acknowledgement.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by N. Wattie and seconded by R. Bailey, the October 22, 2024, GSC agenda was approved as presented.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 24, 2024

Upon a motion duly made by F. Gaspari and seconded by J. Arcand, the September 24, 2024 Minutes were approved as presented.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

4. Comments from the Chair

The Chair began by highlighting several upcoming events, starting with the Annual GSC Graduate Student Poster Showcase on November 27, 2024, at Charles Hall, noting that 43 students are already registered, and that the deadline has been extended to October 24, 2024. She also mentioned a virtual town hall on November 7, 2024, focused on managing student mental health and faculty wellness, with

registration details included in the materials package. Lastly, she highlighted a Graduate Studies Info Session for third to fifth-year undergraduates with a GPA of 2.7 or higher on October 30, 2024, in the UB Mezzanine, aimed at recruiting students into graduate programs.

In response to a question regarding the recruitment of graduate students from outside Ontario Tech, the Chair confirmed ongoing efforts, which include a recent meeting with the recruitment team. J. Stokes mentioned a focus on Ontario universities, with plans to attend a dozen grad fairs, as well as online webinars to reach students from other provinces and abroad in the future. He also noted that despite international caps, they continue to recruit international students. The Chair also noted plans to streamline external student inquiries to the recruitment team and acknowledged the suggestion to provide supervisors with tools, such as a one-page summary of financial aid, to support recruitment, particularly for thesis-based programs.

The Chair highlighted recent events, including the Hackathon Idealathon for fusion energy with Brilliant Catalyst, the Strategic Partnership Office and the Canadian Nuclear Laboratory (CNL) on October 9th and 11th and reminded attendees about the Inspiring Students tab on Basecamp, which features graduate students who have recently defended their thesis.

5. New Program Proposal

5.1 Faculty of Business and IT, PhD Cybersecurity* (M)

The Chair invited S. Heydari to present the FBIT PhD in Cybersecurity new program proposal. S. Heydari noted that this is the first PhD program at FBIT and of its kind in Canada.

In response to a question regarding pathways for students from non-research-based professional degrees like the Master of Information Technology Security (MITS) program, S. Heydari clarified that the admission requirements align with typical PhD programs at Ontario Tech and currently, a pathway exists for MITS graduates who have completed the project-based program and have worked with a faculty member, provided they meet certain academic requirements. He noted that the current focus is on MITS graduates due to their course content suitability, but there may be potential to consider pathways from other professional master's programs in the future.

S. Heydari corrected that the projected enrollment would start in Fall 2025.

Responding to a question regarding core course requirements, S. Heydari clarified that the program includes three core courses, determined by the student's research area and chosen by their supervisory committee. Students without an IT security background must complete two prerequisite courses: Fundamentals of IT Security and Law and Ethics of IT Security. Applicants from

a professional program like MITS will also take the Research Methods course, totaling nine credits in prerequisites before the core courses. Students with a MITS background only require the Research Methods course plus the three core courses. He noted that applicants with a master's in cybersecurity may not need prerequisites and will take three specialized courses instead. He highlighted that course requirements will vary based on the student's background.

Motion:

Upon a motion duly made by P. Mirza-Babaei and seconded by J. Arcand, that GSC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the PhD in Cybersecurity program and the subsequent recommendation of the program to the Board.

6. Reports

- i. Faculty of Business and IT
 - No updates
- ii. Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science
 - No updates
- iii. Mitch and Leslie Frazer Faculty of Education
 - R. Van Oostveen noted that recruitment has been successful, including a series of seminars that were hosted throughout the Fall.
 - A. Cooper noted that the traditional thesis model of the EdD program creates capacity challenges in the department. An open meeting with faculty will be held to discuss strategies for managing faculty workload and making the program experience more practical.

The Chair noted a request to allow for virtual participation in the upcoming Research Showcase, recognizing that many faculty and graduate students are located off-site. They are committed to offering a virtual component next year for those unable to attend in person.

R. Van Oostveen suggested that, since the FEd BA program is fully online, virtual recruitment for third and fourth-year students would be beneficial. The Chair acknowledged this and mentioned it would be discussed at upcoming recruitment meetings, along with plans to consider a follow-up virtual recruitment option after assessing attendance at the in-person session.

- iv. Faculty of Health Science
 - J. Abbass Dick noted that they have two alumni events happening that will have alumni from Trent and Ontario Tech present their research and provide tips and tricks to current students in November.
- v. Faculty of Science
 - No updates.
- vi. Faculty of Social Science and Humanities
 - Reference submitted written report.

- vii. Graduate Student Report
 - No updates.
- viii. Library Report
 - Reference submitted written report.

7. For Information

7.1 2024-2025 Revisions to the Graduate Academic Schedule*

7.2 2024-2025 Draft GSC Work Plan*

7.3 Associate Graduate Faculty

- Materials Science, Rachel Wortis, Faculty of Science
- Materials Science, Aaron Slepkov, Faculty of Science
- Materials Science, Balaji Subramanian, Faculty of Science
- Materials Science, Andrew Vreugdenhil, Faculty of Science
- Materials Science, Carlo Bradac, Faculty of Science
- Materials Science, Rayf Shiell, Faculty of Science
- Materials Science, Bill Atkinson, Faculty of Science
- Applied Bioscience, Peter Lewis, Faculty of Business and Information Technology
- Computer Science, Eric Rapos, Faculty of Science
- Computer Science, Nicholas Provard, Faculty of Science

8. Other Business

C. Davidson volunteered to provide the November Land Acknowledgement.

The Chair reminded attendees that immediately following this meeting, the Colleagues Exchange will be discussing Thesis- Based admissions and the upcoming Mental Health Seminar.

Termination

There being no other business, upon a motion duly made by F. Gaspari the October 22, 2024, GSC meeting terminated at 9:38 a.m.

Kirstie Ayotte, Assistant University Secretary