

**CGPS GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES AND DELEGATED AUTHORITIES****REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS – A GREEN PAPER****November 5, 2021****INTRODUCTION**

Collegial governance is the foundation of a cohesive and engaged university community. Confidence in the CGPS' governance structure and its processes are essential for the college to meet institutional objectives. To revise the CGPS governance structure is a major goal in the CGPS strategic plan 2025 (Objective 10). In 2020/21 CGPS performed a systematic comparison of graduate council and committee structures with U15 institutions and undertook a consultation process to understand the challenges in the current state and identify opportunities to improve. The comparator report and other background materials are located on our Collegial Governance Review [website](#). There was significant engagement by CGPS Council members and committee chairs over the course of the year. An update with a [summary](#) of the major issues raised was delivered to the community at the Graduate Faculty meeting of May 11, 2021 followed by a call for a working group to draft recommendations. There was insufficient uptake to participate in the working group. Rather than wait for the fall to continue the work this report was drafted based on the input that had been gathered to date including discussions with various Deans and Vice Provosts at comparator institutions on the pros and cons of their systems. **The analysis and set of recommendations are delivered as a green paper to generate discussion and gather further input and build consensus for changes.** In addition, an accompanying draft by-laws document {insert link} that conforms to university standards was formulated from the CGPS Policy and Procedures Manual Section 19 (CGPS Graduate Faculty, Committee Structures, Responsibilities) that reflects many of the changes recommended in this report and may be helpful to review to understand how the recommended changes would be operationalized.

**CURRENT STATE OVERVIEW**

The mandates and composition of various governing bodies of CGPS are covered in the [Section 19](#) of the CGPS Policy and Procedures Manual.

CGPS' **Graduate Faculty** is the highest governing body of the college composed of all voting graduate faculty with its composition specified in the same way as a disciplinary college faculty council. There are over 1800 faculty members, a few students, and *ex officio* members. Graduate Faculty chaired by the Dean meets annually and has delegated most of its authorities to the CGPS Graduate Council.

There are two standing committees of Graduate Faculty - the Credentials Committee and the **Nominations Committee**<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 19 says the Nominations Committee is a standing committee of the College, not Graduate Faculty [Council].

The **Graduate Council** is composed mostly of *ex officio* members who represent units delivering graduate programs – often delegated by Department Heads to the Graduate Chair. Representation also includes many *ex officio* members, student and postdoctoral fellow representatives and a few graduate faculty members elected at large. The council meets at least twice per year and occasional special council meetings are called by the Dean.

There is one standing committees of Graduate Council, the **Executive Committee** chaired by the Dean. The Council has delegated many responsibilities to its Executive Committee which in turn sub-delegated certain responsibilities to its 9 standing sub-committees.

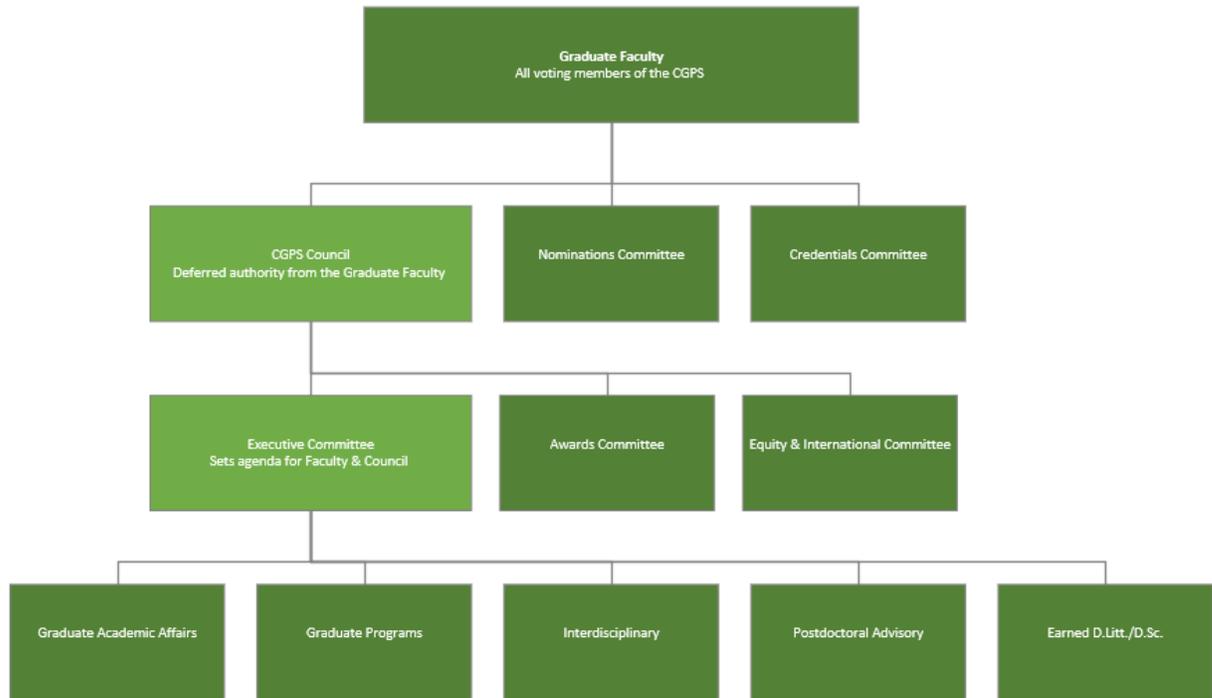


Figure 1: CGPS governance structure current state

The official standing sub-committees are:

- Awards Committee
- Equity and International;
- Graduate Academic Affairs;
- Programs Committee;
- Interdisciplinary Studies;
- Postdoctoral Fellows Advisory Committee;
- Earned D. Litt.;
- Earned D. Sci;
- Credentials;

Including Nominations and Executive there are 11 college governance committees.

The chair of each committee is elected at its first meeting of the academic year except for the Executive Committee that is chaired by the dean.

Ad hoc committees and working groups have frequently been struck for strategic work.

The college has a few additional committees, advisory groups and forums that are not defined in the CGPS Policy and Procedures and therefore sit outside the formal collegial governance structure. These include the Distinguished Graduate Mentorship Award Selection Committee, the Graduate Chair forum, the Indigenous Strategy working group, the Associate Dean Graduate Advisory Circle, and the CGPS Staff EDI committee.

	GRADUATE COUNCIL	EXEC	AWARDS	POLICY	APPEALS	PROGRAM/ CURRICULUM	STUDENT ACAD AFFAIRS	Unique: Postdoc, Professional Dev, Mentorship	TOTAL Committees
Montreal*	YES							Senate-level Committee For Graduate	1
Laval*	YES								0?
McGill*	YES							Associate Deans Advisory	1
McMaster	YES	YES	YES			By Faculty			2
Queen's	(Each Faculty)	YES	YES*		YES*				3*
Waterloo	Senate Committee								
Toronto	YES <a href="#">link</a>	~YES (Vice-Deans Grad)	YES		YES	YES		Student Matters – (student experience)	6
Western	YES			YES		*Senate Comm for grad only		<input type="checkbox"/> Mentorship & Prof. Dev. <input type="checkbox"/> Postdoctoral Scholar	3
UBC	YES		YES	YES		YES			3
Alberta	YES		YES	YES	YES				3
Dalhousie	YES	~Gov	YES	YES		YES		PDF Fellowship	5
Calgary	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES				4
Ottawa	YES					*Senate Comm for grad only		Senate – Strategic Committee advises on all aspects of policy and student experience Senate – Grad Program QA	3
Manitoba	YES	YES	YES	YES					3
Saskatchewan	YES	YES	YES		(in GAAC)	YES	YES (GAAC)	PDF, Nominations, Interdisciplinary, Equity and International, Credentials, D.Litt., D.Sc. (Distinguished Mentor)	11

\*need to inquire about standing committees as websites are difficult to search

Table 1 comparison of Graduate Studies Committees across the U15

## **COMPARISON TO CANADIAN RESEARCH-INTENSIVE UNIVERSITIES**

The comparison (see Table 1) of our governance structure and committees relative to comparators showed variation in the overarching structure of a Faculty or School of Graduate Studies led by a Dean, Vice-Provost and Dean, or Vice-Provost. We are unique in using the term College, and it is equivalent to Faculty or School at other institutions.

All have a Council that draws representatives from units delivering graduate programs that has responsibility for all aspects of graduate education.

The majority have an Awards and Scholarship Committee and a committee devoted to policy work.

Approximately half have distinct Graduate Programs, Executive and Appeals Committees.

All had 6 or fewer standing committees compared to our 11 (see Appended Table).

A few institutions have graduate specific committees that are part of the University-level governance and no sub-committees of their Graduate Council.

Postdoctoral Fellows are under the auspices of graduate studies in 11/15 universities with only one comparator having an advisory committee dedicated to postdoc fellows.

CGPS has far more committees.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CGPS COLLEGIAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

### **General Recommendations:**

Clarify the identity and role of Graduate Faculty relative to Graduate Council by renaming the Graduate Faculty body as Graduate Faculty Assembly (GFA).

Adopt a set of bylaws to govern the Graduate Faculty Assembly and Graduate Council that will replace Section 19 of the Policy and Procedures Manual.

Model Graduate Faculty Assembly like the university General Academic Assembly in terms delegating its authority to Graduate Council with a provision to constitute a meeting.

To increase the frequency of standing meetings of Council to provide regular campus-wide input in support the continuous improvement of college policies and to foster meaningful two-way communication between the units and the administration.

To promote strong participation in CGPS Council with consideration for balance, fairness, and size of the body to be able to engage in meaningful discussion, consider limiting participation to one voting representative per unit delivering graduate programs and an alternate who can attend and vote when the primary delegate cannot.

Clearly define which *ex officio* members are voting and those that are non-voting.

Determine if there is sufficient student and postdoctoral fellow representation at Council. Consider having a representative of Program Administrators on CGPS Council.

Include the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement as an *ex officio* voting member of CGPS Council.

Adopt a set of guiding principles for committees including how to define mandates, delegation/sub-delegation of authority and committee composition that are sensitive to EDI-D. Use the guiding principles to examine composition and terms of reference of each committee.

Provide orientation to all new committee members and EDI training for all committee members each year.

Commit to a regular cycle of review of the by-laws.

For transparency and enhanced collegiality, avoid holding meetings *in camera* unless necessary to protect privacy of students or supervisors (e.g. Admissions to Special Case PhD) and invite proponents to speak to their proposals and answer questions.

Seek to reduce the number of committees and in some cases the membership. The reduction in number of committees will reduce the burden and difficulty in finding enough faculty to serve on all the committees in addition to reducing the administrative burden to support all the committees. Keeping the number of people required to a reasonable number is especially important to address the need for specialized expertise on the committees.

#### **Mandates:**

There needs to be clarity between governance responsibilities to approve policies and academic decisions and strategic work that the college undertakes. In practice, standing committees of council should be focused on governance work and *ad hoc* committees or working groups struck when project or strategic work is required.

Where committees carry both governance and managerial responsibilities, accountability to the Dean CGPS must be clear for the managerial aspects. For example, the Chair of the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee needs to report to the Dean and should be appointed by the Dean as recommended in the external review of the program (2021).

#### **Chairs:**

- When a new committee chair is required they should be selected in the spring for the next year and be named when the Nominations Committee recommends the membership for all committees to Graduate Council.
- The terms of the chair should be 3 years.
- Consider naming vice-chairs for committees

**Meetings & Schedules:** As much as possible meeting schedules should be regularized and consistent year-to-year and those volunteering for committees must be able to commit to attending in the time slots.

#### **Recommendations for Specific Committees:**

**Nominations Committee:** Specify in the composition of members to ensure expertise in EDI and Decolonization. *Representation from the OVPIE.*

**Executive Committee:**

To provide communication among all committees and the senior administrators of the college and support the strategic objectives of the CGPS, reformulate the composition of the Executive Committee to be more similar to University Council's Coordinating Committee in having all the committee chairs.

Transfer sub-committees to be sub-committees of Council.

Various responsibilities of the committee changed to align with a coordinating mandate and return of certain authorities to a refreshed and active CGPS Council such as delegation of approval of new and revised programs to the programs committee<sup>2</sup> and charging the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee to lead the work on policy changes as directed by Council.

**Awards:** Provide specifics in the composition to ensure expertise in EDI and Decolonization.

**Credentials Committee:** Disband committee and specify in Council responsibilities to consult with Deans Council on credentials for membership in the college.

**Equity and International:** Disband committee and distribute equity and decolonization mandates to all committees.

**Programs Committee:**

Work toward streamlining and improving the course and program approval pathway by:

1. Bringing course approval into the committee or delegating course approval to the teaching colleges with administrative approval by the Dean CGPS (or designate).
2. Fully delegate approval to new and revised programs to the Programs Committee.
3. Have proponents of new programs or revisions to programs present at the Programs committee to explain the proposal and answer questions in real time.
4. Create a set of minimum and maximum requirements for certificates and degrees
  - a. Consider a consent agenda for program revisions that do not go below CGPS minimum standards
5. Consider that the Associate Dean Programs and Policy Innovation be the chair or vice-chair of the Programs Committee for continuity and to set agendas for the committee.
6. Create awareness throughout campus of highly innovative programming by the committee recommending these are presented to Graduate Council by the developers of the programs.
7. Continue to work with Office of the University Secretary to improve the approval pathway
8. Continue to support proponents of new programs

**Graduate Academic Affairs:**

1. Elevate the responsibility of the committee to take a greater role in developing and reviewing policy and mentorship training for faculty.

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<sup>2</sup> At the October 12, 2021 meeting of CGPS Council approved delegation of program approvals to the Programs Committee.

2. Bringing course approval into the committee or delegating course approval to the teaching colleges with administrative approval by the Dean CGPS (or designate).
3. Consider items that could be delegated to an academic administrator for routine decisions.

**Interdisciplinary Studies Committee:**

*Recommendations pending release of 2021 academic program review for the Individualized Interdisciplinary Studies Program.*

**Postdoctoral Studies Advisory Committee**

Consider expanding mandate to include coordination and development of professional development for students and postdoctoral fellows.

**Earned D.Litt:** Disestablish, or consolidate with Distinguished Mentorship Selection Committee into a Faculty Development and Awards Committee

**Earned D. Sci:** Disestablish, or consolidate with Distinguished Mentorship Selection Committee into a Faculty Development and Awards Committee

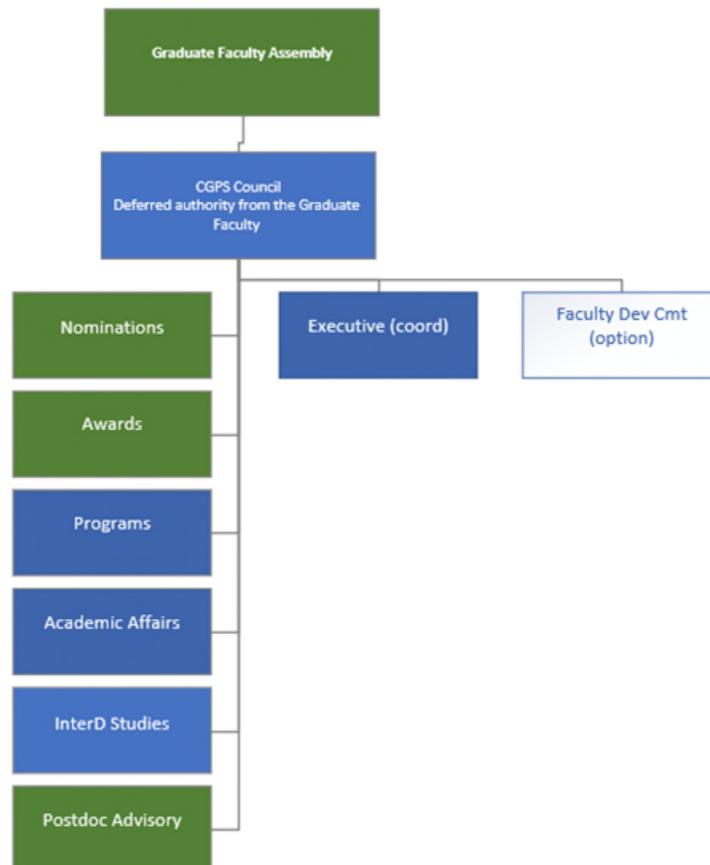


Figure 2 CGPS governance structure recommended future state

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The recommendations provided above represent a step change for collegial governance of the college. The recommendations were informed by the issues stakeholders raised and also with the strategic priorities of the university to address inequities, to embrace EDI. The hope is to create collegial and highly participatory governance structures and practices that promote excellence in graduate education and support the campus community to innovate with respect for the diversity of disciplines, interdisciplinary ventures and many ways of knowing within our university. Respected and trusted collegial governance is essential for establishing and updating our policy frameworks and providing quality assurance in the programs we deliver. At the same time, traditional structures for collegial governance are not only steeped in a colonial mindset, they harken back to the medieval roots of universities. The current set of recommendations will benefit from input to promote Indigenization and stimulate Decolonization. There was not an attempt to address every issue at this stage but to put forward ideas for consideration and promote discussion and gather feedback.

**nīkānītān manācihitowinihk | ni manachīhitoonaan** (“Let us lead with respect”)