



## CGPS Collegial Governance Review – Update

Universities are built on a foundation of strong collegial governance. Today graduate studies are a dynamic growth area which requires cohesive and flexible decision-making procedures which can be in tension with the traditional practices of collegial governance and the balance of responsibilities for programs between a central oversight body such as CGPS and the disciplinary units where programs are delivered. Regular review of governance structures is a healthy exercise to ensure the mandates, composition and delegated authorities meet the ever evolving and complex needs of a growing institution. Goal 10 of the CGPS Strategic Plan 2025 is to “Revise the CGPS Governance Structure” including creation of fresh college bylaws and empowerment of disciplinary colleges and schools in the management of programs, courses, and the student experience. The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies derives authority from University Council and the 1995 University Act of Saskatchewan. The governing structure has evolved over many years and a variety of committees established with delegated authorities. The array of governance structures includes Graduate Faculty [Council], CGPS Council, Council Executive and 10 standing committees. The goal of this review is to reconsider our decision-making framework and redefine it through the lens of representative and participative procedures which we need to avoid insularity in graduate governance and to create better coordination. Once we have affirmed confidence in our governing bodies, we can begin to address the relationships with colleges and schools delivering graduate programs and the balancing of responsibilities for graduate programs – (Strategic Plan 2025 - Goal 11).

A project plan was presented at the CGPS Council meeting in October 2020. To begin the process, we engaged members of our committees in preliminary consultations over the fall and winter 2021/22 where terms of reference of the committees were considered. In winter 2021, the dean commissioned a comparative analysis of Graduate Academic Governance across the U15. The research was performed by Oxana Pimenova, a doctoral student in JS GS. The full report is available at [Collegial Governance Review - College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies - University of Saskatchewan \(usask.ca\)](https://www.usask.ca/graduate-studies/collegial-governance-review/). The main objective of the report was to demonstrate how other universities govern graduate policy and affairs and to inform the work of a working group on revision to CGPS collegial governance. The report is a first step that creates a primary resource to undertake the task of revising our governance bodies to better align with the current needs.

A few interesting findings contained in the report and found through concurrent consultations with committee members are:

- CGPS Graduate Faculty as a governing body is unique among U15 and is defined and approved by University Council.
- CGPS Council is similarly composed to several other institutions although some have smaller bodies with proportional representation. The Council meets infrequently and has delegated much of its authority to an Executive Committee relative to other institutions (anecdotally due to difficulty in achieving quorum).
- CGPS Council and its Executive have a large number of standing committees relative to comparators (See Report Appendix 1 Chart).



- There is a lack of coordination and communication between the committees despite the interrelatedness of a significant amount of the work.
- There is a need to carefully consider committee composition to ensure balance of members with respect to EDI and in disciplinary perspectives.
- There are questions as to who is responsible for driving the policy or strategic work of several committees (e.g. Equity and International, Graduate Academic Affairs).
- The election of chairs for standing committees at the first meeting in the fall is problematic for continuity for several committees.
- A few committees have become moribund and have overlapping responsibilities with other committees and there are questions whether they are necessary (e.g. Credentials)
- There is a need to create better delineation between role of academic governance committees, responsibility for creating strategic directions of the college and the formation of strategic working groups and the administrative and operational responsibilities for certain committees such as the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee.

We are now at the point where a working group will be struck to craft recommendations for change as well as move governance policy into college bylaws as required by university council. While the time involved in the program approval process and approvals for changes to programs (and courses) has garnered significant concern by leadership on campus, much of the issues involve the university council level committees and their work and improvement of the program approval pathway will be dealt with more comprehensively through the joint exercise with University Governance that is underway in 2020/21.

**Working Group Composition:**

Dean CGPS - Chair

Associate Dean CGPS

5 Faculty Members including a Co-Chair

Graduate Student – nominated by the GSA

Postdoctoral Fellow – nominated by SPS

Project Support: Lori Lisitza (Executive Assistant to Dean CGPS)

Resources: Office of the University Secretary and Chief Governance Officer

CPGS staff supporting committees.

A nomination call will follow the May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of Graduate Faculty. Retreat-style working group meetings will occur in early June, late August, and Sept with the goal to bring forth recommendations for consultation in October.