ARTS AND SCIENCE COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCE COUNCIL held on Wednesday, November 21, 2018 at 9:00 am in the Governing Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall

Present

David Cameron (Dean)  Gillian Hamilton (Chair)  Kanishka Goonewardena  Dwayne Benjamin  Dwayne Benjamin
Igor Samardzic (Vice-Chair)  Daphne Goring  Michael Kessler  Kyoungrok Ko  Eric Cazdyn
Deborah Robinson (Secretary)  Haseeb Hassaan  Amelia Klassen  Sarah Louisa Namer  Scott Dolderman
Thomas MacKay  Ikran Jama  Kyoungrok Ko  Abdullah Malik  Emma Ferguson
Martha Harris  Rebecca Jockusch  Brock MacDonald  Katherine Patton  John Fox
Kevin Mak  Sharon Kelly  Abdul Malik  Francois Pitt  Max Friesen
Donald Ainslie  Michael Kessler  Ramtin Taramsari  Foti Vito  Art Weis
Dwayne Benjamin  Pamela Klassen  Guillaume Thomas  Marie-Anne Visoi  Helen Yang
Brent Berry  Kyoungrok Ko  Marten van Kerkwijk  Fozi Vito  John Zilcosky
Alana Boland  Reid Locklin  John Zilcosky  William Watson  John Zilcosky
Brian Boland  Riyad Ainslie  Haseeb Hassaan  Sarah Louisa Namer  Ira Wells
Bernardo Galvao-Sousa  Dhvani Ramanujam  Michael Ratcliffe  Mirella Pasquarelli-Clivio  Runqun (Helen) Zheng
Kanishka Goonewardena  Dhvani Ramanujam  Dhvani Ramanujam  Katherine Patton  John Zilcosky

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:09 am by Professor Gillian Hamilton, Vice-Chair (Teaching Staff) of Council. As the Chair was unable to attend the meeting, Professor Hamilton substituted as Chair for this meeting in her capacity as Vice-Chair. She announced that the meeting would start with the reading of a memorial resolution.

Memorial Resolution respecting Victims of the Shooting at the Tree of Life – Or L’Simcha Congregation and University of Toronto Alumna, Joyce Fienberg

The memorial resolution was read by Dean Cameron. A minute of silence was observed after the resolution was read. The text of the resolution is included in these minutes at the end of the document.

A member noted that there was a roundtable discussion event held on campus the previous night to explore implications of the shooting and other recent incidents of antisemitism. He felt that it was a thoughtful occasion to observe and report on the event. The Chair thanked the member for his comment.
1. **Approval of Minutes of the October 17, 2018 Meeting of Council**

The Chair called on a motion to approve the minutes, which was carried. There was no business arising from these minutes.

2. **Report of the Dean**

The Dean began his report by noting the unexpected death of Professor Arthur Hosios. Professor Hosios was the Chair of the Department of Economics for ten years and was most recently the Faculty’s Senior Academic Advisor to the Dean, Strategic Financial Projects. There will be a memorial resolution recognizing Professor Hosios at the next Council meeting.

In addition, the Dean announced that external reviewers had visited the Faculty. By asking thoughtful and penetrating questions, the external reviewers secured a good understanding of the Faculty. The Dean was pleased with their work, and he anticipates that a strong report with useful advice for the Faculty.

A guest raised a question regarding an upcoming agenda item as he would need to leave the meeting early. He asked if the Dean’s Office would be able to distribute a copy of the report of the Arts & Science Working Group on First-Year Academic Offerings and make it an item for discussion at a future meeting. Professor Pamela Klassen, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate & International, responded that this report was shared at various other meetings at the Faculty level. She indicated that she would speak to the First-Year Foundations Council later in this meeting and would be open to have a subsequent discussion of the report of the working group in the future.

The Chair thanked Dean Cameron for his report.

3. **(For Approval) Contemporary International History – New Field, Department of History (Master of Arts) – Dwayne Benjamin, Vice-Dean, Graduate Education**

As this item contained a motion requiring a vote, the Chair sought and received confirmation from the Proctors that quorum was reached.

Professor Dwayne Benjamin, Vice-Dean, Graduate Education, presented the proposal to create a new field, Contemporary International History within the Department of History’s Master of Arts. This field intends to prepare students for various types of careers. Students will benefit from the different workshops, lectures, visiting professorships, and internships organized by the Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History. A core of 10 faculty members will be responsible for teaching in this field. There was extensive consultation with various academic units and stakeholders.

The Chair thanked Vice-Dean Benjamin and proceeded to read the following motion:

**Be It Resolved**

THAT the proposed new field in Contemporary International History within the Master of Arts, as described in the attached proposal dated November 14, 2018, be approved effective for the academic year 2019-20.

The motion was moved and seconded.

A member inquired about the timeframe to which the term “contemporary” in Contemporary International History would refer. Professor Carol Chin, the Acting Chair of the Department of History responded that in order for historians to exert more influence on current policies, they need to be informed about history. Vice-Dean Benjamin added that while there is a vague sense of what is considered contemporary, one of the external reviewers visiting the Faculty last month had indicated that contemporary history is one of the hottest fields in the United States.
A member asked if consultation had taken place with the Department of Political Science. Professor Chin indicated that there was consultation. Vice-Dean Benjamin added that the MA program has been in existence for a few years.

A member asked if the completion of 6.0 full credits of undergraduate history courses would be required in order to apply to the program. Professor Chin replied that this could be negotiable.

On the vote the motion was carried.

4. (For Discussion) Graduate Student Funding Planning – Dwayne Benjamin, Vice-Dean, Graduate Education

Vice-Dean Benjamin reported good news with respect to graduate student funding. He provided background to the 2016 Funding Initiative prior to delving into the objectives of the recent funding review covering the period from 2019-20 to 2021-22. A common question that the Faculty faces is whether the funding packages are attracting the best students. As a result, the recent funding review adhered to the objectives of both supporting graduate students and promoting excellence.

The Faculty is given a $4 million budget to work with and would need to be prudent due to budget uncertainty. Program Level Fellowships will continue unchanged as they are still at a reasonable level of funding, and there is not a need to increase funding for the Milestones and Pathways programs which currently include a $2 million amount that has not yet been spent. Instead, the Faculty has decided to focus on increases to base funding to support students’ high cost of living in Toronto and to compete with post-secondary institutions in cheaper locations. The Faculty considered a number of options in terms of increases to base funding. In the end, the Faculty will proceed with a $1,500 increase over three years to ensure that graduate funding would increase at a level comparable to inflation.

The Faculty has a working group devoted to the graduate student experience. This would provide an opportunity for the Faculty to fine-tune funding down the road.

A member asked about the decision not to opt for a base increase of $2,000 over three years. Vice-Dean Benjamin replied that there were other priority issues identified during the funding review and that the Faculty would like to respect the $4 million budget cap.

A member asked if there would be any changes to funding for international students. Vice-Dean Benjamin responded that with the recent change in tuition fee structure (at the graduate level), the fee for support is the same between domestic and international students. As a result, the Faculty would be cautious in terms of increasing funding for international graduate students.

The Chair thanked Vice-Dean Benjamin for his report.

5. (For Discussion) First-Year Foundations Council – Pamela Klassen, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate & International

Professor Pamela Klassen, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate & International provided a brief overview of the First-Year Academic Offerings Working Group. The working group was struck by Dean Cameron with the objectives of reviewing the current state of first-year offerings, re-examining what type of first-year opportunities already exist and their impact on students, as well as developing recommendations to be brought for consultation and planning. Over a 12-month period, this working group, which consisted of faculty members, undergraduate and graduate students, College Registrars and more, worked together to come up with a list of recommendations. Vice-Dean Klassen encouraged Council to read the report to learn more about the Arts & Science First-Year Foundations framework as well as the suggested recommendations.
To determine the best way to implement the recommendations of the working group, the Faculty has established the First-Year Foundations Council, with member representation from all three sectors and students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. A few of the proposed changes being examined include: rethinking first-year seminars, investing in large classes in new ways, and the establishment of a Society of Fellows.

A change being implemented with respect to first-year seminars is bringing them into the curricular governance process. These first-year seminars have traditionally been labelled by their breadth category and not by the department actually offering the courses. This has made it challenging for incoming students to locate these courses in the Calendar. Starting in 2019, these first-year seminars will be published in the Calendar under the relevant departments’ sections and scheduled with other regular course offerings. It is hoped that this would allow students to explore first-year opportunities in a more meaningful way.

A member asked how the changes to the First-Year Foundations (FYF) Seminars would take into consideration the different backgrounds and levels of English proficiency and writing capabilities that are apparent between domestic and international students given the asymmetric differences felt in small classes. He also asked what would be the reasoning of making FYF Seminars a requirement for incoming students. Vice-Dean Klassen replied that based on feedback from both students and faculty members, the best time to address students’ language learning and writing capabilities is in their first year. She also acknowledged the need to help these students take advantage of opportunities such as English Language Learning (ELL) and more. In response to the question regarding making FYF Seminars a requirement for all students, Vice-Dean Klassen replied that this would require extensive consultation given the ripple effect it could generate. Currently, 55% of first-year students take these small-size seminar courses.

Another member asked, based on experience as a life sciences student, if a required FYF seminar would replace an existing first-year course requirement. The member expressed concerns that the FYF seminar requirement would impact students who already have a high number of first-year required course, and what the impact would be of the proposed FYF seminar requirement in conjunction with the lowering of the maximum course load to 5.0 FCE in an academic year. Vice-Dean Klassen responded that students wanting to exceed the maximum course load would need to consult with their respective College Registrar’s Offices. As departments bring onboard these FYF seminar courses, they would be able to choose how these courses could contribute to the completion of program requirements. The Faculty is also looking at the feasibility of relaxing the 6.0 FCE maximum limit for 100-level courses used for degree requirement purposes.

A member commented that the Faculty should celebrate these incoming students’ differences in addition to helping them ease into first year. The member felt that very often these students would feel more apprehensive than excited when entering university. Vice-Dean Klassen replied that there’s work to be done in framing students’ perception. She noted the recent opening of the Sidney Smith Commons and the work of the team headed by Ms. Deborah Robinson, Faculty Registrar and Director of Undergraduate Academic Services to make both the student space and classes welcoming spaces for students.

A member expressed concerns that twelve weeks could be very short for an FYF seminar course and questioned why a full-credit (Y) version would not be available for FYF seminar courses. The member also wanted to know why the new FYF seminar courses would have an increased class capacity of 30 as opposed to 22 or 24 in the past. Vice-Dean Klassen responded that attrition is expected with the class capacity of 30 and that the Faculty is cognizant of the issue of space on campus. She also added that it would be beneficial for FYF course instructors to discuss with the corresponding academic units on concerns regarding the pedagogical experience.

A member expressed concerns that the additional faculty members who would have to be hired to teach the increasing number of FYF seminar courses would put a strain on smaller academic units. Vice-Dean Klassen replied that the use of the Society of Fellows to find instructors might be an option but this would be something worth examining more thoroughly.
A member asked if there have been discussions to allow faculty members to teach disciplines outside of departments to which they are affiliated. Vice-Klassen replied that the thematic focus is key when addressing the core questions of a discipline.

A member inquired about the role that the Writing Instruction for TAs (WIT) initiative would play in the new FYF seminar courses. Professor Andrea Williams, WIT Coordinator, responded that she is looking forward to examining how best to integrate writing instruction in these courses in order to improve students’ writing skills in their first year.

The Chair thanked Vice-Dean Klassen for her report.

6. Other Business

A member suggested placing a further discussion of the First-Year Foundations Council as an agenda item in a future meeting. The member felt that the discussion today was truncated.

7. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 am.
MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

For the Victims of the Shooting at the Tree of Life – Or L’Simcha Congregation
and University of Toronto Alumna, Joyce Fienberg (née Libman)

Be it resolved that the Faculty of Arts and Science Council deeply regrets and joins the University of Toronto in mourning the loss of life in the shooting at the Tree of Life – Or L’Simcha Congregation on October 27, 2018 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Let this horrific act be denounced unequivocally in its brutality and senselessness, and as an act of antisemitism and racism.

The University of Toronto and the Faculty of Arts & Science extends deep sympathy to the Jewish community in the Faculty, the University, and around the world. We stand with you in these sad times.

In this tragic event the University lost an alumna, Joyce Fienberg (née Libman), a graduate of University College in 1964. Joyce and her family had deep and abiding ties to University College, and she had returned just this past year to accept, on behalf of her late husband Stephen Fienberg, an Alumni of Influence Award. She was known for her warmth, generosity, and kindness, and we extend condolences to her family and friends.

This terrible event draws out our sadness and resolve in equal measure, and reminds us to support one another. The Faculty echoes President Gertler, in his statement, when he encourages us to take care of one another and reminds us of the counselling and chaplaincy services on campus.

BE IT RESOLVED that this Resolution be inscribed in the Minutes.