



Western Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies

GRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL (GEC)

April 28, 2025

12:00 – 1:30pm - Zoom

[Zoom link](#)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order K. Siddiqui
2. Land Acknowledgment C. Burt
3. Confirmation of Quorum
4. Approval of Draft Minutes – **Exhibit A**
5. Business Arising
6. New Business for Approval
 - 6.1 GEC Academic Policy Committee Business

6.1.1 Senate Course Numbering Policy, Essay Courses, and Hours of Instruction - **Exhibit B**

Proposal #1: That the Graduate Education Council approve for recommendation to the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, and Senate that effective September 1, 2025, the Course Numbering Policy, Essay Courses, and Hours of Instruction be revised as presented in Exhibit B.

6.1.2 Senate Admissions Policy – **Exhibit C**

Proposal #2: That the Graduate Education Council approve for recommendation to the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, and Senate that effective September 1, 2025, the Admissions Policy be revised as presented in Exhibit C.



Western Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies

7. Other Business

8. Adjournment



Western Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies

EXHIBIT A

GRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL (GEC)

February 13, 2025

12:00 – 1:30pm

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order
K. Siddiqui called the meeting to order at 12:20pm.
2. Land Acknowledgment
I. Namukasa offered a Land Acknowledgement.
3. Confirmation of Quorum
Quorum was confirmed.
4. Approval of Draft Minutes
The Draft Minutes of October 2, 2024 were approved as presented.
5. Business Arising
There was none.
6. New Business for Approval
K. Siddiqui noted the first two items for approval are from GEC sub-committees with new members to complete the committee memberships for 2024-2025.

6.1 GEC Academic Policy Committee Business – Exhibit B

Proposal #1: That the Graduate Education Council accept and approve the proposed new members for the 2024-2025 GEC Academic Policy Committee as presented in Exhibit B.

APPROVED

6.2 GEC Postdoctoral Affairs Advisory Committee Business – Exhibit C

Proposal #2: That the Graduate Education Council accept and approve the proposed new members for the 2024-2025 GEC Postdoctoral Affairs Advisory Committee as presented in Exhibit C.



Western Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies

APPROVED

K. Siddiqui welcomed Kathleen Brown-Blake, the new Legal Advisor, Appeals and Policy in the Secretariat's Office, and David Foster who is part of our University Legal Counsel.

K. Siddiqui added for each of the following three policies for approval we have also included the related Undergraduate and Graduate procedures as well as some feedback and current policies for information.

D. Foster noted that his office with the Secretariat's office have been working on revisions to academic relief and scholastic offence policies to remove confusing language and inappropriate requirements and align with other Senate policies. The changes were substantive, thus tracked change versions were not included.

6.3 Requests for Relief from Academic Decisions – Policy – Exhibit D

Proposal #3: That the Graduate Education Council approve for recommendation to the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, and Senate that effective September 1, 2025, the Policy on Requests for Relief from Academic Decisions be introduced as presented in Exhibit D.

Mover: L. Davies

Second: C. McLeod

APPROVED

It was suggested and agreed that the categories on page 4 under 5.01 be merged into one using existing language in the graduate policy.

6.3 Scholastic Offences – Policy – Exhibit E

Proposal #4: That the Graduate Education Council approve for recommendation to the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, and Senate that effective September 1, 2025, the Policy on Scholastic Offences be introduced as presented in Exhibit E.



Western Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies

Mover: C. McKenzie

Second: A. Quan-Haase

APPROVED

D. Foster noted the main changes to this policy appear in 2.00 Definitions including a new number 10.

It was suggested and agreed to use the word 'trustworthiness' instead of 'trust' in 2.00 Definitions, Academic Integrity.

It was suggested and agreed to remove the hyperlink under 2.00 Definitions, the last paragraph of number 1.

It was noted that a course outline would speak to accessibility requirements related to electronics.

6.4 Senate Review Board Academic Appeals – Policy – Exhibit F

Proposal #5: That the Graduate Education Council approve for recommendation to the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, and Senate that effective September 1, 2025, the Policy on Senate Review Board Academic Appeals be introduced as presented in Exhibit F.

Mover: L. Davies

Second: C. McKenzie

APPROVED

D. Foster noted that the main changes in this policy pertain to the grounds of an appeal at the program level and SRBA level. He added that a new definition has been included for 'unreasonable', and more information has been included under 5.02B with updates to point a. and c. that align with recent changes in SRBA.

It was noted that having to withdraw as a ground for appeal was intentionally removed. It was added that these cases generally result in a reconsideration at a lower level as normally a student would only be required to withdraw due to disciplinary action, which is covered by SRBA, or progression requirements which are explained in performance expectations. Given this, it was not felt another category outside of these two options was necessary.



Western Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies

It was noted that the definition used by similar institutions for 'Reasonable Apprehension of Bias' was followed.

It was noted that new evidence not available at the time of the Dean's decision would have to be discovered before the appeal deadline as noted in 4.00 expired.

7. For Discussion

K. Siddiqui noted this item is presented for information about the many GEC member terms coming to an end this year.

8. Other Business

There was none.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:58pm.

Course Numbering Policy, Essay Courses, and Hours of Instruction

Policy Category:	Registration and Progression
Subject:	Course Numbering, Essay Courses, and Hours of Instruction
Subsections:	Course Numbering Policy for Undergraduate Courses ; Blended Courses ; Essay Courses (Undergraduate Degrees) ; Hours of Instruction for Undergraduate Courses ; Hours of Instruction – 1000-1999 Courses ; First Year Courses/Classes ; Graduate Course Offerings
Approving Authority:	Senate
Responsible Committee:	Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Awards (SCAPA)
Related Procedures:	*
Officer(s) Responsible for Procedure:	*
Related Policies:	*
Effective Date:	April 22, 2022 September 2025
Supersedes:	April 22, 2022 September 2019

COURSE NUMBERING POLICY FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

Course Numbering

1. **Course Numbers:** Courses are labelled with a ten-character field where the first four characters are numeric and the last six characters may be used for an alphabetic suffix.

Course Titles: If the title exceeds 30 characters the course must be given an

alternate “short title” of 30 characters or less for use by the Registrar’s Office.
Course Descriptions: May not exceed 50 words.

2. Each course will be identified by the department/program offering it. If the course is to be cross-listed and offered by more than one department/program, this should be stated clearly in the original proposal for the course.
3. Courses will be numbered according to the following format:

0001 - 0999* Pre-University level introductory courses
1000 - 1999 Year 1 courses
2000 - 4999 Senior-level undergraduate courses
5000 - 5999 Professional Degree courses in Dentistry, Education, Law, and Medicine
6000 - 6999 Courses offered by Continuing Studies
7000 - 8999 *Not yet designated*
9000 - 9999 Graduate Studies courses

* These courses are equivalent to pre-university introductory courses and may be counted for credit in the student's record, unless these courses were taken in a preliminary year. They may not be counted toward essay or breadth requirements, or used to meet modular admission requirements unless it is explicitly stated in the Senate-approved outline of the module.

Undergraduate Course Suffixes

1. All suffixes are in upper case and indicate the following with regard to course weight and session. The suffixes I and O will not be used to avoid confusion with numbers.
2. Suffixes will be added according to the following format:

No suffix	1.0 course not designated as an essay course
A	0.5 course offered in first term
B	0.5 course offered in second term
A/B	0.5 course offered in first and/or second term
C	January courses in the Faculty of Law (4.0 credit weight)
D	February/March/April (FMA) courses in the Faculty of Law
E	1.0 essay course
F	0.5 essay course offered in first term
G	0.5 essay course offered in second term
F/G	0.5 essay course offered in first and/or second term
H	1.0 accelerated course (8 weeks) in the School of Nursing
J	1.0 accelerated course (6 weeks) in the School of Nursing
K	0.75 course (integrated curriculum of HBA1 program) at the Richard Ivey School of Business

L	Unassigned
M	Unassigned
N	Unassigned
P	Unassigned
Q	0.25 course offered in the first half of first term
R	0.25 course offered in the second half of first term
S	0.25 course offered in the first half of second term
T	0.25 course offered in the second half of second term
U	0.25 course offered in other than a regular session
V	0.375 course offered by the Faculty of Education
W	1.0 accelerated course offered in first term
X	1.0 accelerated course offered in second term
Y	0.5 course offered in other than a regular session
Z	0.5 essay course offered in other than a regular session

Undergraduate Course Offerings

1. Course Designations

In most cases:

- a) A full course (1.0 course) will have no suffix or will have an E suffix. A full course has a minimum of 48 contact hours.
- b) A half course (0.5 course) will have an A, B, F, G, Y or Z suffix. Two 0.5 courses are the equivalent of one 1.0 course, whether or not they have been taken in the same subject. A half course has a minimum of 24 contact hours.
- c) A quarter course (0.25 course) will have a Q, R, S, T or U suffix to indicate the term. A quarter course has a minimum of 12 contact hours.

Other designations have also been approved, as follows:

- d) C and D courses are offered by the Faculty of Law
- e) H and J courses are offered by the Faculty of Health Sciences in the Compressed Time Frame Nursing program
- f) K courses are offered by the Richard Ivey School of Business
- g) V courses are offered by the Faculty of Education
- h) W and X courses are accelerated full courses (often language courses) which are offered in one term only. They may not be designated as essay courses and normally will not be scheduled during high demand hours, i.e., Monday to Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

2. Course Inactivation

- a) If a course is not offered for a period of five years, following consultation with the relevant Faculty, School or College, the Office of

the Registrar will inform DAP (the Deans: Academic Programs virtual committee) that the course will be withdrawn from course offerings and removed from the calendar and master timetable.

- b) If a Special Topics course has been offered with the same topic for a period of three years, the Faculty, School or College must introduce the course as a regular course offering and include the former course as an antirequisite for the years it was offered as a Special Topics offering, e.g., "Geography 1106A/B, if taken in 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04."

BLENDED COURSES

Blended courses have both face-to-face and online instruction, as well as on-campus exams. These course offerings are clearly identified by designated section numbers in the undergraduate academic calendar and lecture timetable. In the identified blended courses, at least 30% of student learning integral to the course occurs in the online interactive learning environment. For example, in a half (0.5) course at the undergraduate level, at least 8 of the required 24 contact hours will occur online.

ESSAY COURSES (Undergraduate Degrees)

Students are encouraged to take an essay course in first year.

Only Western courses designated as essay courses may be used to fulfil this requirement.

Departments must identify essay courses, and the courses will be designated as such in the Calendar. However, courses which are not identified as essay courses may require a significant component of course work in the form of essay writing.

The guidelines for the minimum written assignments refer to the cumulative amount of written work in a course but excludes written work in examinations.

An essay course must normally involve total written assignments (essays or other appropriate prose composition, excluding examinations) as follows:

Full course (1000 to 1999):	at least 3000 words
Half course (1000 to 1999):	at least 1500 words
Full course (2000 and above):	at least 5000 words
Half course (2000 and above):	at least 2500 words

and must be so structured that the student is required to demonstrate competence in

essay writing to pass the course.

The structure of the essay course must be such that in order to pass the course, the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course.

The term "essay" is to be understood broadly to include many of the reports, reviews, summaries, critiques, and some laboratory reports that are currently assigned, as well as essays in the strictest sense. The essential point is that the assignments involve assembling information and argument and presenting it in connected prose.

Depending on the course, the language of the essay may be English, French, or any of the foreign languages, but artificial and/or machine languages do not meet this requirement.

Course-wide uniformity of designation is a practical necessity. Where a multisectioned course is identified as an essay course, all sections of that course must include the appropriate essay component.

The alternative of separate courses with different course numbers, differing only in the essay course component (or lack of it), remains. This is consistent with existing regulations but requires "new course" approval through the Dean's Office by means of the Deans: Academic Programs (DAP) committee.

HOURS OF INSTRUCTION FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

The following course prescriptions are established:

- A full (1.0) course at the undergraduate level shall require a minimum of forty-eight (48) contact hours.
- A half (0.5) course at the undergraduate level shall require a minimum of twenty-four (24) contact hours.
- A course with a weight of 0.375, offered by the Faculty of Education, shall require a minimum of twenty (20) contact hours.
- A quarter (0.25) course at the undergraduate level shall require a minimum of twelve (12) contact hours.

HOURS OF INSTRUCTION - 1000-1999 COURSES

The hours of instruction for courses at the 1000-1999 level in the Faculties of Arts and Humanities and Social Science shall not exceed three class hours per week, or a combination of class and laboratory hours not to exceed four hours per week in total.

FIRST YEAR COURSES/CLASSES

1. In each department, lecturing in first year courses should, in general, be done by members of faculty.
2. Departments will single out the teachers best qualified for first year teaching for assignment to first year classes.
3. Departments will make every effort to ensure that first year classes taught by more than one person have cohesion and continuity.
4. A common curriculum will be established in each course (1000-1999) with multiple sections.
5. Each department periodically will reappraise its first year course offerings to ensure that they adequately accommodate changes in Secondary School curricula, changes in the discipline, and the diverse levels of preparation attained by incoming students.

GRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS

1. Graduate course entries in the course catalogue normally do not include contact hours.

~~4.2.~~ Graduate courses do not use course suffixes to identify course features.

~~2.3.~~ Cross-listed graduate courses

- a. A course should normally only be cross-listed if expectations for completing the course are different (e.g. additional assignments, increased required reading etc.), or are assessed differently (e.g. assignment expectations are greater for one group than another) for two, or more, groups of students based on: degree level (e.g. doctoral vs. masters); academic career level (undergraduate vs. graduate); or, program (e.g. computer science vs. electrical computer engineering).

Admissions

Policy Category:	Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Subject:	Admissions
Subsections:	General ; Proficiency in English
Approving Authority:	Senate
Responsible Committee:	Senate Committee on Academic Policy
Related Procedures:	Procedure for Admission Application
Officer(s) Responsible for Procedures:	Vice-Provost (Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies)
Related Policies:	*
Effective Date:	September 13, 2024 September 2025
Supersedes:	September 13, 2024 ; March 15, 2024; September 16, 2022

1. General

The Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) grants admission to graduate students, only on the recommendation of the program in which the applicant intends to pursue studies. Admission to graduate programs at The University of Western Ontario (Western) is competitive. Thus, applicants meeting or even exceeding minimum admission standards, as described below, are not guaranteed admission to any of Western's Graduate Programs. Admission decisions are not subject to appeal.

For purposes of admission, the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS) determines accreditation, degree, and standing equivalencies for all non-Western degrees.

For students undertaking a thesis as part of their degree requirements, the Graduate Chair must determine that an appropriate thesis Supervisor is available for the student's declared field of research before offering the student admission.

For admission to Master's programs, applicants must possess a four-year degree from a recognized university or college. SGPS requires at least a 70% average in senior level academic courses, as determined by SGPS taken in the last two full-time years of the undergraduate degree. Equivalent qualifications may be considered based on the standards of the discipline or profession.

For admission to most Doctoral programs, applicants must possess a Master's degree or equivalent from a recognized university or college, and provide evidence of research potential. SGPS requires at least a 70% average in the Master's degree, as determined by SGPS. Some Western programs provide transfers from Master's to Doctoral degree status without achieving a Master's degree. Some Western programs offer direct entry to begin a doctoral degree without having a completed Master's degree. Consult the program's regulations for details.

Individual programs commonly have higher admission standards than the minimum. Applicants should contact their program of choice to get information on its admission requirements.

2. Proficiency in English

Applicants whose first language is not English must provide evidence of their proficiency in the use of the English language by a satisfactory* achievement within the last two years in one of the following:

- The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). iBT (internet-Based Test): The minimum acceptable score is 86, with no individual score below 20.
- The International English Language Testing Service (IELTS Academic). The minimum acceptable score is 6.5 out of 9.
- The Duolingo English Test. The minimum acceptable score is 115.
- The Canadian Academic English Language Assessment (CAEL Assessment). The minimum acceptable score is 60.
- Western English Language Centre. The requirement is successful completion of the High-Advanced level.
- Fanshawe College's EAP Program. The requirement is graduation from Level 10, English for Academic Purposes, with a minimum 80% in all components.

*Programs at Western may require a higher minimum score than those listed above.

Applicants who are required to present evidence of proficiency in English must make their own arrangements to complete one of the above tests or programs and to have the official results sent directly to SGPS by the testing agency.

Exemptions:

Applicants may request an exemption by contacting their graduate program(s) of interest.

| For the French ~~and Hispanic~~ Studies programs only, evidence of proficiency in English is a degree requirement but not a requirement for admission.