UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

REPORT NUMBER 175 OF THE COMMITTEE ON

ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS

September 16, 2015

To the Academic Board,
University of Toronto

Your Committee reports that it met on Wednesday, September 16, 2015 at 4:10 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, with the following present:

Professor Elizabeth M. Smyth (Chair)
Professor Maydianne C.B. Andrade
   (Vice-Chair)
Professor Sioban Nelson, Vice-Provost,
   Academic Programs
Professor Locke Rowe, Vice-Provost,
   Graduate Research and Education,
   Dean of the School of Graduate Studies
Mr. Ken Chan
Mr. Magno M. Guidote
Ms Mariam Hanna
Professor Richard Hegele
Professor Susan Jaglal
Dr. Allan Kaplan
Professor Jim Yuan Lai
Ms Jennifer J. Lau

Professor Reid B. Locklin
Professor Alice Maurice
Professor Lacra Pavel
Professor Russell N. Pysklywec
Ms Melinda Scott
Professor Nicholas Terpstra
Professor Ning Yan
Ms Alena Zelinka
Ms Nana Mohan Zhou

Mr. Richard Levin, Executive Director,
   Enrolment Services and University
   Registrar

Secretariat:
Mr. Patrick F. McNeill

Regrets:
Professor Robert B. Gibbs
Professor Tara Goldstein
Mr. Ray Khan
Professor Michael J.H. Ratcliffe
Professor Markus Stock
Ms. Emily Tsui

In Attendance:
Ms Jennifer Francisco, Coordinator, Academic Change, Office of the Vice-Provost,
    Academic Programs

Dr. Daniella Mallinick, Acting Director, Academic Programs, Planning and Quality
Assurance, Office of the Vice- Provost, Academic Programs

1.   Welcome and Orientation

The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the year. The Chair introduced
herself, the Vice-Chair, Professor Maydianne Andrade, the senior assessor, Professor
Sioban Nelson, Vice- Provost, Academic Programs, and non-voting assessor, Mr. Richard
Levin.

The Chair then invited members to introduce themselves, and to note their role on the
Committee (teaching staff member, administrative staff member, student member, alumni
member).

The Chair and Vice-Chair presented an orientation that highlighted the structure and related
functions of the governance process and specifically, the responsibilities of the Committee
on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P). The Chair explained that the Committee
worked to ensure the excellent quality of academic programs by considering proposals for
new academic programs and monitoring reviews of existing programs. It oversaw policy
matters in such areas as admissions, awards, degree requirements, academic regulations,
grading practices, research and the products of research, and academic services. As the
entry-level body, the Committee was responsible for a detailed review of the matters
brought before it, before either approving the matter, or making a recommendation for
approval to the Academic Board.

The Chair concluded the orientation by encouraging members to participate in discussions,
to ask questions and provide feedback. She also asked members to become familiar with
the Committee's Terms of Reference, to review documentation prior to each meeting and
to request clarification and additional information if necessary.

2.   Calendar of Business: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

The Chair drew the attention of members to the Calendar of Business that had been
included in the agenda package. Professor Nelson provided a brief overview of some of
the anticipated items that would be brought forward to the Committee in 2015-16.

3.   Presentation: University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process – UTQAP

Professor Sioban Nelson delivered a presentation on the University of Toronto Quality
Assurance Process (UTQAP) which covered the development of the process, its distinctive
features and the relationship between the UTQAP and governance.

Professor Nelson explained that as a result of a new approach to Quality Assurance (QA)
by the Province, the University had developed an institutional QA process [IQAP]
governing the creation, modification and review of academic programs called the
"UTQAP". The process had been fully operational since 2011-12.

She noted that the QA process was distinguished by: the responsibility of the University for QA; the equivalency of processes for graduate and undergraduate program reviews and new program proposals; the delegation of significant authority and responsibility to the Faculties/Divisions; an emphasis on formative rather than threshold reviews, and on continuous improvement; and transparency.

Professor Nelson stated that "peer review", a key feature of the UTQAP, was central for both proposal development and approval for new programs. Peer review was also central to ongoing cyclical reviews of all academic programs and units. As part of the cyclical review process, the Committee would consider each review and the Dean's administrative response, as well as make recommendations concerning the need for a follow-up report.

The Committee's role was to ensure that:
- reviews were conducted in line with the University's policy and guidelines;
- the Provost's Office had managed the review process appropriately;
- all issues relative to the quality of academic programs had been addressed or that there was a plan to address them.

Professor Nelson reported that 7 decanal reviews would be presented to the Committee at the Cycle 2 meeting. She advised that 4 Reading Groups would be established to consider and report on 1-2 reviews each. The groups would be responsible for responding to three questions relative to each review:
1. *Does the summary accurately tell the story of the full review?*
2. *Does the Dean's administrative response adequately address all the issues identified?*
3. *Are there any questions, comments or substantive issues that the Committee should consider?*

Professor Nelson asked that each Reading Group focus on the discussion of the quality of academic programs rather than on any administrative issues noted in the units.

In response to Members' questions, Professor Nelson explained that programs were reviewed based on a 8-year cycle and that by 2016-17 reviews of all academic programs and units would have been scheduled under the new institutional QA process; the 8-year cycle would then begin again. The process did not preclude a Dean from initiating a review apart from its normal UTQAP review at any time. She noted that such an additional review would not fall under the provincial QA requirement for reporting purposes.

The Chair thanked Professor Nelson for her presentation.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly moved, seconded and carried

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED

THAT the consent agenda be adopted.

4.   Report of the Previous Meeting: Report 174 – May 12, 2015

Report Number 174 (May 12, 2015) was approved.

5.   Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

The Chair provided a brief summary of the results of the 2014-15 annual evaluation survey of members. She noted the good rate of participation and positive response to questions regarding the amount of information provided to the Committee to make informed decisions, the amount of time allocated for discussion and decision-making, and the usefulness of cover sheets. The Chair added that when asked "*what were the most valuable aspects of the meetings*" or highlights of last year's AP&P activity, the respondents commented that the academic program reviews were the most "significant" items of business brought forward in Cycles 2 and 5.

6.   Date of Next Meeting:

Members were reminded that the next meeting was scheduled for October 27, 2015 at 4:10 p.m.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

7.   Reports of the Administrative Assessors

She invited the administrative assessors to present their reports.

Professor Nelson reported on the following:
- The Office of the Vice- Provost, Academic Programs had launched a new website: http://vpacademic.utoronto.ca;
- New Collaborative Program (CPs) Guidelines had been developed, with a goal to continue to ensure that CPs continued to receive substantive reviews under the UTQAP. The guidelines would help focus the review and administration on program elements specific to CPs;
- The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council) had approved 4 graduate programs previously considered by the Committee in 2014-15 (Biomedical Engineering, M.Eng.; Master of Financial Insurance, M.F.I.; Master of Financial Risk Management, M.F.R.M.; and Graduate Diploma in Professional Accounting, G.Dip.P.A.);
- Professor Nelson had attended her first meeting, as a new member, of the Quality Council which was responsible for reviewing and approving all new undergraduate and graduate programs in Ontario. She noted that U of T had played a role in the formation of the Council in 2010.

Professor Rowe reported on the following:
- The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and the Office of Student Life had entered into a new partnership to expand the outreach provided by Health & Wellness to better meet the needs of graduate students;
- A Wellness Counsellor had been hired and graduate students could access counselling services at the School located at 65 St. George Street;
- Workshops would be provided regarding conflict resolution and other important student life related issues that would be designed specifically for graduate students;
- SGS would redevelop the supervisory guidelines jointly with the Graduate Students' Union (GSU);
- SGS would continue to review graduate student funding (including transparency) and time-to-completion issues;
- Visits to graduate departments would be scheduled by SGS and Student Life to discuss graduate student issues and services.

In response to a question, Professor Rowe said that SGS would be developing an online platform for graduate student life services with the help of the GSU.

A member noted that as part of the health and wellness initiatives, SGS should consider the "drop off" in diversity between undergraduate and graduate students.

Professor Rowe expressed appreciation for the feedback provided by the Committee regarding the collection of post-graduate employment data.

The Chair added that a future AP&P agenda item could include a full presentation by SGS on non-academic graduate student matters.

Mr. Levin reported on the following:
- two reports would be brought forth to the Committee at the Cycle 4 meeting for information: a report on all new, amended and withdrawn awards annually; and, the Report on Student Financial Support;
- the successful June launch of the new student web service ACORN (Accessible Campus Online Resource Network). It has already experienced 1.4 million log-ons;
- the 2015-16 admissions and registration results. He answered several questions regarding the acceptance rates and other admission process indicators.

8.   Other Business

There was no other business.

<div align="center">The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.</div>

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Secretary   Chair

September 17, 2015