



School of Graduate Studies

University of Toronto

DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND
VICE-PROVOST GRADUATE EDUCATION

Memorandum

To: Academic Board

From: Susan Pfeiffer, Dean and Vice-Provost

Subject: Graduate Governance Document

Date: January 6, 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Susan Pfeiffer'.

In the years since 1922 when the School of Graduate Studies was established, graduate education at U of T has transformed from an activity pursued by only a few faculty to one that is both ubiquitous and highly valued across our institution. The Final Report of the Task Force on Graduate Education (2004) recommended that steps be taken to further engage this expanded community in the delivery of strong, high quality graduate programs, and provision of an excellent graduate experience.

The Report focused on two main areas, administration and governance of graduate education. Its first recommendation was implemented with the approval by Governing Council, at its meeting of June 29, 2005, of the creation of the position of Vice-Provost, Graduate Education. Governing Council simultaneously approved my appointment to this position. As the Report recommended, a Graduate Education Co-ordinating Committee has been established and is overseeing the activities of two working groups, one on governance and one on administration.

The implementation of the third recommendation of the Report, to align governance functions to reflect new Faculty and Graduate School responsibilities, requires a modified approach to graduate governance and administration. The attached document proposes steps toward that end. It proposes an integrated suite of changes that focus on governance, but will also affect graduate administrative functions. In brief, it integrates Faculty deans into the graduate reporting structure and proposes repositioning the SGS Council as a Graduate Education Council, with a clear link to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) of Governing Council. The Graduate Education Council will remain the core body for matters of policy within our unitary Graduate School, and for matters going forward to OCGS.

The program changes that have been the responsibility of SGS divisional executive committees will instead be approved within each Faculty. These Faculty approvals

will take place within a framework that will provide broad consultation and the monitoring of quality.

It is proposed that various activities that are now organized along SGS divisional lines will be placed in task-based portfolios. The identification of two SGS vice-dean positions, for student matters and for program matters, will provide efficient and consistent action in areas of focal concern. Each vice-dean will chair a standing, interdisciplinary committee that will focus on policy matters. The SGS deans will regularly meet with, and work with, Faculty decanal representatives who hold graduate responsibilities. Major changes and new initiatives in graduate education will be considered by the Graduate Education Council, following broad consultation and Faculty approval.

This discussion paper represents not only the work of the Graduate Education Working Group, but also the constructive feedback and support of P&D, and dialogue with many colleagues, including the chairs of AP&P and Academic Board. At its December 7 meeting, AP&P discussed those aspects of the proposal that pertain to their activities, namely that graduate matters that now go to AP&P for information will do so in the form of an annual report, and that two graduate items that now go to AP&P for approval will be delegated to the Graduate Education Council and the annual report. These two items are admission requirement changes and admission direct to PhD. It was concluded that the committee would try out the new arrangements and monitor the outcome, on the understanding that current practice could be resumed.

The changes proposed in the discussion paper require that divisions examine their constitutions to ensure that appropriate protocols are in place to approve graduate program changes. If protocols are lacking, they will need to make amendments to their constitutions before June 30, 2006. Staff in the Office of the Governing Council and in the Office of the Vice-President and Provost are holding a workshop on constitutional review for **Thursday, January 19, 2006, from 9 - 11 am** in the Governing Council Chamber.