



TO: Planning and Budget Committee

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AGENDA ITEM: 5

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

University of Toronto Mississauga: Proposal to disestablish the Institute of Communication and Culture and establish an Institute of Communication, Culture and Information Technology (EDU:A) and a Department of Visual Studies.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Committee recommends to the Academic Board on plans and proposals to establish, disestablish, or significantly restructure academic units and resulting planning and resource implications.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

Governing Council approved the establishment of the current University of Toronto Mississauga departmental structure, including the Institute of Communication and Culture (ICC), on May 29, 2003.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The current University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) departmental and extra-departmental unit structure was approved in 2003 in order to define a more finely individuated departmental structure, strengthen the core disciplines, encourage the thriving of interdisciplinary activity, and create a size and coherence that represents a critical mass of faculty, brought about by expansion at UTM. Based on an external review of the Institute of Communication and Culture and extensive consultation within the unit, across the three campuses and with the Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, UTM proposes the disestablishment of the Institute of Communication and Culture and establishment of an Institute of Communication, Culture and Information Technology and a Department of Visual Studies. The attached proposal sets out the rationale for the restructuring.

The increase in teaching and research activity has posed a serious challenge in the leadership, direction and effective management and promotion of the ICC. It has become clear in the recent external reviews that the structure is no longer optimal and that the needs of the teaching staff and students would be better supported through two separate academic units. The new Department of Visual Studies will consist of the former Centre for Visual and Media Culture (CVMC), the Blackwood Gallery (a non-academic unit), and the Visual Resources Library (VRL). The new Institute will incorporate the following units: Communication, Culture and

Information Technology (CCIT) and Professional Writing and Communication (PWC). Finally, Biomedical Communications (BMC) will be relocated to the Department of Biology at the UTM.

The proposed structure will provide a more fertile environment for improving the teaching and research missions of the individual units. The academic rationale for the restructuring is described in the proposal. In terms of its curricular impacts and the delivery of academic programs, the establishment of the two units will result in a series of program relocations. The Visual Culture and Communication Specialist program currently delivered in CCIT, the Cinema Studies Minor currently housed in the Department of Language Studies, and CVMC's Art History and Art and Art History programs (jointly with Sheridan) will move to the Department of Visual Studies. The academic programs (jointly with Sheridan) as well as the Professional Writing and Communication (PWC) program will move to the new Institute. Biomedical Communications will move its undergraduate minor and graduate programs to the Department of Biology while maintaining their current relationship with the Institute of Medical Sciences at the graduate level.

The Human Communication and Technology Specialist program and the Health Science Communication Major program will be discontinued. The proposal for the deletion of these programs has been approved by Erindale College Council on December 4, 2009 and will be brought to the Committee on Academic Programs and Policy for consideration on March 2, 2010¹.

UTM is in the process of developing a proposal for an undergraduate program to be offered through the proposed Institute. This program will be offered at UTM and with teaching provided both by UTM and Faculty of Information teaching staff.

There has been extensive consultation regarding the proposal within UTM. The proposal was approved by the UTM Resources Planning and Priorities Committee and Academic Affairs Committee on January 18, 2010 and the Erindale College Council on January 29, 2010.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

The establishment of two new academic units will not result in any changes in ongoing funding resources at a University level. The increases in funding to support the two new units are described in the proposal and will be allocated from existing operating resources or through appropriate mechanisms within UTM.

Complement planning, implementation strategies, and communication to students are delineated with the proposal. This reorganization will effectively focus efforts on two separate areas, thus enabling targeted leadership, planning and advocacy. The existing undergraduate programs will be unaffected as they are either already distinct from each other or the provision has been made in the proposal for collaborative arrangements to be continued. Students in the programs that are planned for deletion will be able to complete their programs.

The proposed restructuring will not affect the current tri-campus graduate structure; new academic units will align with the existing graduate departments. The Chairs of these departments as well as the Deans of Arts and Science, Information, UTSC and the School of

T¹ The external review report of the ICC will be presented to the Committee on the same date.

Graduate Studies have been consulted and view this change as a positive step forward for UTM. Sheridan is in agreement with the proposal and has written in its support.

The teaching staff, administration and budget of the current Institute will be redistributed and transferred to one or other of the two new academic units. There are needs for additional academic and administrative staff, and the Dean of UTM has outlined a plan to provide funding for these positions, an academic administrative stipend for each academic unit and the costs for additional administrative offices.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Budget Committee recommends for approval that:

The University of Toronto Mississauga Institute of Communication and Culture be disestablished coincident with the establishment of the new Institute of Communication, Culture and Information Technology (EDU:A) and new Department of Visual Studies, effective July 1, 2010.