University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

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DATE: December 10, 2007

AGENDA ITEM: **7**

ITEM IDENTIFICATION: School of Graduate Studies / Faculty of Medicine: Proposal for a Master of Health Informatics (M.H.I.)

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:
The Committee has authority to recommend to Academic Board for approval changes which establish a new degree program.

HIGHLIGHTS:
The proposed Master of Health Informatics (MHI) is a full-time professional graduate degree program to be offered by the Faculty of Medicine Graduate Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation (HPME) with the participation of the Faculty of Information Studies (Appendix 1). Integrating the broad spectrum of Health Informatics domains in a world-class graduate level program, the MHI is intended for health sciences practitioners, health professionals and computer or information technologists who share an interest in converging their strengths and skills in the application of clinical, information and communication technologies for solving problems and driving change in health care systems to improve health outcomes. The academic goal is to produce clinically and technically aware solution architects capable of bridging the knowledge and cultural gaps that are pervasive in the clinical and health care delivery sectors.

The program was proposed as a key initiative in the 2004-10 HPME Academic Plan. HPME views the MHI as complementary to current academic programs such the M.Sc. Health Administration and MHSc Health Administration. However, the proposed MHI differs substantially from these existing HPME programs in its emphasis and content, intended audience, and inter-faculty design.

The cooperation between HPME and FIS in offering the proposed program will ensure that the best expertise available at each participating faculty and department is integrated into a program that a) provides the most comprehensive menu of course offerings, and b) encompasses the broad spectrum of Health Informatics domains that unites health sciences and computer/information technologies.

The program was approved by the Health Informatics Curriculum Development Working Group and the Health Policy, Management and Evaluation Curriculum Committee that includes faculty and graduate student representation. The Faculty of Medicine Faculty Council (November 5, 2007) and the Graduate Education Council (November 20, 2007) approved the proposal.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:
The Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation and the Faculty of Medicine have committed to provide all the resources needed for this program. This proposal will be presented to the Planning and Budget Committee on January 9, 2008.

RECOMMENDATION:
The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs recommends to the Academic Board:

> THAT the proposal to establish the Master of Health Informatics (M.H.I.) within the Faculty of Medicine be approved, effective September, 2008.

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