



**FOR RECOMMENDATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Academic Board

**SPONSOR:** Sioban Nelson, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
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**PRESENTER:** Elizabeth Smyth, Chair, Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

**CONTACT INFO:** [liz.smyth@utoronto.ca](mailto:liz.smyth@utoronto.ca)

**DATE:** March 6, 2017 for March 29, 2017

**AGENDA ITEM:** 2

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Proposal for the closure of the Master of Urban Design Studies (M.U.D.S.), Faculty of Arts and Science

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

Under the *Academic Board Terms of Reference*, proposals for the closure of graduate programs may be approved by the Board, subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee.

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for Recommendation] (March 29, 2017)
2. **Academic Board [for approval] (April 20, 2017)**
3. Executive Committee [for confirmation] (May 4, 2017)

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

The proposal to close the Master of Urban Design Studies (M.U.D.S.) was approved at the Faculty of Arts and Science Faculty Council on March 22, 2017.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

This is a proposal is to close the Master of Urban Design Studies (M.U.D.S.) degree program. The program commenced about fifteen years ago to provide post-professional training in urban design. Originally, it had a close relationship with the Master of Urban Design, a two-year post-professional program offered by the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, but this relationship has shifted over time and the two programs are no longer

synergistic. Demand for M.U.D.S. program has been low. Originally conceived to have an intake of 10 students per year, the program has had only two or three students enroll in most years. There are currently no registered students in this program. Closing the program will free up faculty resources and allow the department to better serve students by providing more and varied course offerings. The courses required for the M.U.D.S. degree program will continue to be offered as part of the Master of Science in Planning degree program on a rotating basis.

Admissions to the program were administratively suspended in October 2014. There is one lapsed student who is within the time limit under SGS regulations to be reinstated into the program. The program has informed this lapsed student that the program will be closed and that the program will support the student's completion of the program until it closes. The closure date is aligned with the last session the lapsed student may register under SGS regulations.

The program has consulted with alumni of the program, the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, the Director of the Urban Studies program at Innis College and the President's office to ensure all are aware of the proposed closure. There was no significant feedback.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no negative implications to the degree proposal closure. As noted in the proposal, the required courses of the program will no longer be offered every year and this will allow faculty members the flexibility to offer courses for which there will be more demand among students.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Be It Resolved

THAT subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee

THAT the proposed closure of the Master of Urban Design Studies (M.U.D.S.), Faculty of Arts and Science dated November 3, 2016, to which admissions were administratively suspended in October 2014, be approved with an anticipated program closure date of August 31, 2020.

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#### **DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

Proposal for the closure of the Master of Urban Design Studies (M.U.D.S.), Faculty of Arts and Science



## University of Toronto Proposal for the Closure of an Existing Program (Graduate)

*(This template has been developed in line with the University of Toronto's Quality Assurance Process.)*

*The process followed for the closure of any program is the same as that required for the approval of any new such program.*

<b>Closure Proposed:</b> <b>Please specify precisely what is being closed:</b> i.e., Graduate diploma, field, certificate, option within a program (e.g., specialist, major, or minor), entire program, or degree (graduate or undergraduate)	Master of Urban Design Studies. Urban Design Studies program and M.U.D.S. degree
<b>Department / Unit (if applicable):</b>	Geography & Planning
<b>Faculty / Academic Division:</b>	Arts and Science
<b>Faculty / Academic Division contact:</b>	Joshua Barker, Vice Dean, Graduate Education
<b>Department / Unit contact:</b>	Richard DiFrancesco(Program Director)/Virginia Maclaren (Dept. Chair)
<b>Effective date admissions were administratively suspended:</b>	October 2014
<b>Effective date program will be closed to new admissions:</b>	September 1, 2017
<b>Effective date of full closure of program:</b> (date by which students currently in the program will be expected to graduate)	August 31, 2020
<b>Version Date:</b>	03 November 2016

# 1 Brief Summary

This is a proposal to close the Master of Urban Design Studies Program (MUDS) graduate degree and program effective August 31, 2020. The program is a post-professional (i.e., for individuals who have been working in a related field and who possess suitable academic backgrounds), course-based program that can be completed in one year if taken full time. There are currently no registered students in this degree program and admissions were closed in October 2014. There are 3 lapsed students (discussed in Section 4, below).

Other programs in the Department of Geography and Planning are:

- PhD in Geography
- MA in Geography
  - The MA and PhD have the following fields of study:
    - Environmental Geography and Resource Management
    - Historical / Social / Cultural Geography
    - Physical Geography and Natural Systems
    - Spatial Information Systems
    - Urban / Economic Geography
- PhD in Planning with the following fields of study:
  - Cities in Global Context: Economic Development and Social Planning
  - Environmental and Sustainability Planning
  - Urban Development, Design and the Built Environment
- Master of Science in Planning with the following fields of study
  - Economic Planning and Policy
  - Environmental Planning
  - Social Planning and Policy
  - Urban Design
  - Urban Planning and Development

Undergraduate programs offered by the department are:

- Specialist, Major & Minor in Environmental Geography
- Minor Environment and Energy
- Minor in Geographic Information Systems
- Specialist, Major & Minor in Human Geography
- Minor in Asian Geographies (offered jointly with the National University of Singapore)
- Minor in Geographic Information Systems
- Specialist, Major & Minor in Physical and Environmental Geography

MUDS is most allied with the Master of Science in Planning (MScPI) program, with MUDS students sharing course work with the MScPI. The closure of MUDS may have some small effect on the year-to-year offerings in the MScPL program, but will have no other direct effect on program offerings

## 2 Rationale

There are several rationales for closure of MUDS.

- The MUDS program was first created approximately 15 years ago to provide post-professional training in urban design. Originally, it was conceived to have a close relationship with the Master of Urban Design, a two-year post-professional program at the Daniels School of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, but this relationship has shifted over time and the two programs are no longer synergistic. As to synergies, we originally offered two courses that were required as part of the Master of Urban Design (MUD) program at the Daniels School: Urban Design and Development Controls (PLA1655H) and Urban Design History and Theory (PLA1650H). Over time, The Daniels School created their own, parallel courses to cover these subject areas. For Urban Design History and Theory, people at the Daniels School felt that our course (PLA1650H) was not suiting their needs, and they created their own with somewhat different content. We continue to offer our own version as it is required for our UD field of study in the MScPI program, although we are reconsidering these requirements to make them more flexible. For some years, we also offered joint studios, but this was discontinued at Daniels' request several years ago. We do still have Daniels students in our Planning and Real Estate Development course (PLA1651H – taught by Peter Zimmerman), and this represents the only real substantial point of contact between the two programs. This is an important and popular course in our program, and we have no plans to discontinue its teaching.
- The MUDS program has had little demand. Originally conceived to have an intake of 10 students per year, the program has had only two or three students enroll in most years.
- There are five or six required courses for MUDS program, depending on the background of the entering student. The department must mount these courses every year for a very small number of students. Two professors are responsible for these courses. Therefore, the program puts significant limits on what these professors can teach and creates little flexibility for teaching new types of course or courses that would have higher demand. While these courses will be offered in a rotating fashion to incoming MScPI students in our Urban Design field of study, not being bound to these courses every year, for each professor, offers these Faculty members, as well as the unit, more flexibility in terms of accommodating programmatic needs and the teaching desires of these faculty members. So, while we are closing the MUDS program, the Department of Geography & Program in Planning will continue to offer courses in urban design, just as part of the existing MScPI program (which is how it worked prior to the creation of the MUDS program).

## 3 Impact on other programs/units of the proposed closure

Closure of the program has been discussed and approved within the department by the Planning Committee, responsible for oversight of the graduate planning programs in the department including MUDS, the Program Director, the Department Chair, and the Department Council.

Closing the program will free up faculty resources and allow the department to be more flexible with its course offerings and better serve existing students and their interests. There are no significant negative implications for the department.

The most negative impact will be for Alumni, who will have a degree from a no longer existent program. We have done some informal consultation for Alumni, who have expressed regret that the program will close, but seem to be understanding of the rationale for doing so.

The only other unit with a clear interest in the program would be the Daniels Faculty of Landscape, Architecture and Design. At one point, there were courses offered in the MUDS program that were also requirement for Daniels' students in their two-year Master of Urban Design program. This is no longer the case, as Daniels now has their own courses for their students. In this way, there is not direct impact on Daniels. The Dean of Daniels has been informed of our intention to close MUDS and has given no objection.

Master of Science in Planning students also took many of the courses that were required by the MUDS program, with some fulfilling specialization requirements. Most of these courses will still continue to be offered, although perhaps not every year. For example, PLA1653H, Advanced Studio in Urban Design and Planning tends to have low enrollment when offered every year, and may be offered only on alternative years. Other courses that were required by MUDS may be modified or replaced by courses that may have higher demand. PLA1652H, Introductory Studio in Urban Design and Planning, PLA1653, Advanced Studio in Urban Design and Planning, and PLA1654, Urban Design Research Methods will continue to be offered to students in the MScPI program on a rotating basis.

Innis College has an undergraduate Urban Studies program. The closure of MUDS will have no impact on this program because MUDS was a post-professional program, designed for people who had already completed an aligned degree and wanted to add skills in urban design. We have alerted the Director of the Urban Studies program at Innis, Professor Shauna Brail, about our intent to close the MUDS program. Professor Brail is also the Presidential Advisor on Urban Engagement. She has informed President Meric Gertler about the program closure, and reported that he has no concerns.

## 4 Student Accommodation

**Table 1: Annual Enrolment (Last 6 Years)**

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
<b>Headcount</b>	1	2	1	6	3	0

At the time of writing, there are three former MUDS students whose registration has lapsed. One has not been registered since winter 2004, and has passed their "last permitted registration session." One transferred to the MUD degree program and graduated in June 2005. The third started the degree program in 2011 as a part-time student, and completed 2.5 FCE of the required 4.0 FCE before lapsing, indicating that he is unable/unwilling to take the necessary time away from work to complete the program.

As a part-time student, this student's program has a six-year time limit. The final year for registration within this time limit is the current academic year (September 2016-August 2017). The student may

also request, from the School of Graduate Studies, three one-year program extensions on top of this. If these extensions are granted, the student’s last permitted registration session is May-August 2020. The program closure date (August 31, 2020) aligns with the student’s last possible registration session, enabling the student to complete the program should he wish to do so. The student has been notified, in writing, of the impending program closure, and informed that his program completion will be supported until he can no longer register.

Admissions to MUDS were administratively suspended as of October 2014 for the 2015-16 academic year. There are currently no students registered in the degree program. There are, therefore, no impacts on existing students.

The urban design content of the program will still be offered to students in the Master of Science in Planning, although not all of it will necessarily be available every year, and some content may be modified to better serve students in this continuing, very healthy program.

## 5 Faculty / Staff Accommodation

The closure will only increase the flexibility of existing faculty. There will be no other faculty impacts.

## 6 Governance Process

	Levels of Approval Required
<b>Decanal / Provostial Sign-Off</b>	
	Faculty/Divisional Council (approval of closure of minors, where there is a continuing (specialist or major)
<b>Submission to Provost’s Office</b>	
	AP&P (approval of program closures: undergrad specialists/majors; minors where there is no specialist of major; graduate fields or diploma, and collaborative programs)
	Academic Board (approval of degree, graduate program, diploma closures)
	Executive Committee of Governing Council (executive confirms degree, grad program, closures)
<b>Inclusion in Annual report to Quality Council</b>	
<b>Inclusion in Annual report to MTCU (in case of closure of degree)</b>	