



FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: Academic Board

SPONSOR: Susan McCahan, Vice Provost, Academic Programs
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PRESENTER: See above
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: April 10, 2019 for April 17, 2019

AGENDA ITEM: 4

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Follow-up Reports on Reviews:

- a) Celtic Studies programs (Faculty of Arts and Science; housed in St. Michael's College)
- b) Department of Geography and Planning (Faculty of Arts and Science)
- c) Department of Biochemistry (Faculty of Medicine)

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) is the point of entry into governance for reports, summaries and administrative responses on the results of reviews of academic programs and units commissioned by academic administrators. The role of the Committee is to ensure that the reviews are conducted in accordance with University policy and guidelines, that an appropriate process has been followed, that adequate documentation is provided and consultations undertaken, and that issues identified in the review are addressed by the administration. Under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process, the AP&P may request a one-year follow-up report when concerns are raised in an external review that require a longer period of response.

This report is forwarded, together with the record of the Committee's discussion, to the Agenda Committee of the Academic Board, which determines whether there are any issues of general academic significance warranting discussion at the Board level. The same documentation is also sent to the Executive Committee and Governing Council for information.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for information] (April 2, 2019)
2. Agenda Committee of the Academic Board [for information] (April 8, 2019)
3. **Academic Board [for information] (April 17, 2019)**

4. Executive Committee of the Governing Council [for information] (May 7, 2019)
5. Governing Council [for information] (May 16, 2019)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

At its meeting on April 3, 2018, AP&P considered the following reviews:

- a) The October 2017 review of Celtic Studies programs (Faculty of Arts and Science; housed in St. Michael's College) and the March 14, 2018 decanal response. AP&P requested a one-year follow-up report that addresses concerns related to the progress towards the articulation of a clear vision for the program that could lead to strategic and operational sustainability, including the status of any new hires or involvement of cognate faculty.
- b) The September 2017 review of the Department of Geography and Planning (Faculty of Arts and Science), and the March 14, 2018 decanal response. AP&P requested a one-year follow-up report on the status of the working group and curriculum committee conversations regarding undergraduate curriculum development and the sustainability of offerings in physical and environmental geography science, including possibilities for collaboration with cognate units.
- c) The October 2017 review of the Department of Biochemistry (Faculty of Medicine) and the March 16, 2018 decanal response. AP&P requested a one-year follow-up report on the status of Department's strategic planning, the implementation of the rotation system, and the future of the bioinformatics and computation biology specialist.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- a) The University of St. Michael's College, which sponsors the Celtic Studies program for the Faculty of Arts and Science, will continue to direct a combination of endowed and operating funds to support the program. The Faculty of Arts and Science will soon confirm the unit-level planning process, following which the program's academic lead will oversee the development of a unit-level academic plan that will articulate the unit's key academic plans over the next five-year period.

The creation of a continuing-status Teaching Stream appointment in Celtic Studies with a focus on Irish language instruction continues to be a top priority for the program, and an Irish language instructor hired for 2018-19 will be renewed for the coming year. Over the past year the program director and faculty members have cultivated partnerships with the departments of English and History, and will present a new course in Fall 2019 (the Global Irish Diaspora), intended to engage students in History, English and Celtic Studies.

- b) The Department of Geography and Planning has engaged in discussions to evaluate curriculum development and the sustainability of programs in physical and environmental geography (PEG), and struck three working groups to address the issues raised in the external review. With the input of these working groups, the Department is discussing significant curriculum changes. Specifically, they are considering reimagining PEG as a

program that focusses on understanding the science underlying contemporary environmental change, with an emphasis on computation.

This reimagining will occur in tandem with the replacement of a faculty member retiring in July 2019, and the Department will request a Teaching Stream position with expertise in Biogeography/Hydrology and GIS/GIScience/Remote Sensing. While these curriculum and teaching staff changes are being considered, the Faculty will provide a 2-year CLTA to the Department to ensure that existing programs are supported during this transition period. The Chairs of the Department of Geography and Planning and the Department of Earth Sciences have begun to discuss the potential for collaboration in the delivery of their respective curricula, and an interdepartmental working group will further explore this collaboration.

- c) The Acting Chair of the Department of Biochemistry implemented a planning session at the Departmental retreat, which will be repeated annually. The Chair will consult with other department heads to help find a suitable consultant to assist with generating a cogent 5-year plan that allows for discussion around the shape of the Department's undergraduate programs, graduate program, and graduate mentorship, and captures the most important Departmental goals.

A rotation system for graduate placements was instituted in September 2017. Early evidence strongly suggests its success. Since the implementation of the system, students are finding supervisors and projects suited to their interests with greater ease, and no students have needed to be reassigned to new supervisors.

After lengthy consideration and consultation, the Bioinformatics and Computation Biology (BCB) Specialist was moved to the Department of Cell and Systems Biology in 2018. The sole Professor from Biochemistry teaching in the program continues to do so, will serve as Co-Director while new leadership is identified, and will likely continue to be involved through cross-listed courses.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

- a) Celtic Studies programs (Faculty of Arts and Science; housed in St. Michael's College) Follow-up Letter from Dean David Cameron, dated March 6, 2019.
- b) Department of Geography and Planning (Faculty of Arts and Science) Follow-up Letter from Dean David Cameron, dated March 8, 2019.
- c) Department of Biochemistry (Faculty of Medicine) Follow-up Letter from Dean Trevor Young, dated March 1, 2019.