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OFFICE OF VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Planning and Budget Committee

SPONSOR: Shirley Neuman, Vice-President and Provost
CONTACT INFO: 416 978-2122, provost@utoronto.ca

DATE: February 25, 2003 for the meeting of March 5, 2003

AGENDA ITEM: #6

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Proposal to discontinue the fifteen credit (three-year) degree at the University of Toronto at Scarborough.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Committee recommends on plans and proposals to establish, disestablish, or significantly restructure academic units and programs, here defined as “faculties, schools, colleges, departments, centres and institutions with teaching, or teaching and research functions, undergraduate degree programs, and graduate degree programs”, regardless of the source of funds.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

The proposal will be considered at the Academic Policy and Programs Committee on March 5th.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The discontinuation of the 15-credit BA and BSc degrees at the University of Toronto at Scarborough is consistent with curriculum reform including an emphasis on writing proficiency, scientific literacy, computer competency and experiential learning and it establishes a single standard for degree completion at UTSC eliminating the potential for confusion on the part of other institutions as to the status of the 15- and 20-credit baccalaureates. In addition, with the increased emphasis on co-op over the last decade, there has been, and will continue to be, a significantly decreased number of programmes that can be completed in three years.

The decision to discontinue the 15-credit degree at UTSC is decoupled from any decision on the target enrolment for the Faculty. Enrolments will be determined by enrolment agreements principally within the University and in the larger context of Enrolment Target Agreements

(ETA) with the Government. Intake targets will be adjusted to ensure that UTSC stays within the agreed upon target enrolment range. The proposal therefore has, of itself, no resource implications.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Planning and Budget Committee recommend to the Academic Board:

THAT the proposal for discontinuation of the 15 credit BA and BSc degrees, as described in the University of Toronto at Scarborough submission, dated February 26, 2003, be approved, effective for students registering at the University of Toronto at Scarborough in the Summer of 2004.

February 26, 2003

Professor Shirley Neuman
Vice-President and Provost
Office of the Vice-President and Provost
Room 225, Simcoe Hall
University of Toronto

Dear Shirley,

The motion to discontinue of the three-year (fifteen course) degree at the University of Toronto at Scarborough has passed successfully through the UTSC governance process and I am writing to recommend its elimination to you.

Under the constitution of the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC), the authority for all academic decisions has been devolved by Council to its Academic Committee. The issue of discontinuing the three-year (15-course) degree was first discussed by the Academic Committee at its meeting on Tuesday February 22, 2000. It was introduced through a motion by Professor John Perz (professor of physics) and seconded by Mr. Liam Mitchell (a forth-year student member)

That the Academic Committee recommends in principle that UTSC moves towards the withdrawal of the three-year degree

After considerable discussion, **the motion was tabled** pending further consultation and study of the impact of withdrawal of the three-year degree.

No further discussion took place until October 30, 2001 at the meeting of the Executive Committee of Council. In my report, as Principal, I noted that the Faculty of Arts and Science would soon only be offering four-year (20-course) undergraduate degrees and that while no action in that direction had been taken at UTSC, the percentage of three-year degree students was declining yearly as a function of the programme changes taking place – especially the increasing number of co-op programmes all of which require the completion of 20 courses. At that time, the convocation statistics indicated that 15-course degrees were awarded to fewer than 20% of the students.

At its meeting of November 12, 2002, the Academic Committee **debated and passed** a motion introduced by Professor Ragnar Buchweitz (Vice-Dean) and seconded by Professor Wayne Dowler (professor of history)

Be it resolved that admission to the three-year degree at UTSC be discontinued taking effect summer of 2004.

The reasons in favour of its discontinuation were substantially the same as those presented by the Faculty of Arts and Science, namely that the change is consistent with curriculum reform including an emphasis on writing proficiency, scientific literacy, computer competency and experiential learning and that the change establishes a single standard for degree completion in the Faculty and eliminates the potential for confusion on the part of other institutions as to the status of the 15- and 20-credit baccalaureates. In addition, with the increased emphasis on co-op over the last decade, there has been, and will continue to be, a significantly decreased number of programmes that can be completed in three years. It is not responsible to allow prospective students to assume that they can complete a three-year degree at UTSC when the range of options for doing so is small and decreasing.

The decision to discontinue the 15-credit degree at UTSC is decoupled from any decision on the target enrolment for the Faculty. Enrolments will be determined by enrolment agreements principally within the University and in the larger context of target enrolment agreements (ETA) with the Government consistent with the University's SuperBuild commitments. Intake targets will be adjusted to ensure that UTSC stays within its agreed upon target enrolment range. The proposal therefore has, of itself, no resource implications.

Sincerely,

Paul Thompson
Principal and Vice-President
University of Toronto at Scarborough