



OFFICE OF THE VICE-PROVOST, SPACE AND FACILITIES PLANNING

TO: Planning and Budget Committee

SPONSOR: Ron Venter, Vice-Provost, Space and Facilities Planning

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DATE: March 4th, 2003 for March 18th, 2003

AGENDA ITEM: #7.1

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Project Committee to Upgrade and Renovate the Undergraduate Chemistry Laboratories within the Lash Miller Building.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Under the Policy on Capital Planning and Capital Projects, section 5.A, the membership and terms of reference of Project Committees shall be reported to the Planning and Budget Committee.

BACKGROUND:

Undergraduate laboratories are located on the basement, first and second stories of the Lash Miller Building at 80 St. George Street. These facilities were built in 1961 and, with the exception of two rooms, have not been updated since. Several factors necessitate the immediate renovation of three laboratories, rooms 217, 221 and 224 in time for the 2003 Fall session.

Firstly, the projected enrolment increase for 2003 first-year chemistry courses due to the double co-hort, cannot be handled within the existing laboratories. While the lecture sections can accommodate additional students, the laboratory sections have reached available capacity. As this enrolment advances, there will be increased pressure on facilities for upper year courses and enrolments would have to be capped at 2002 levels if these renovations do not occur.

Secondly, the lab capacity as built, has been diminished by as much as 50% due to increased health and safety awareness and legislation. Increasing throughput in the existing facilities is not possible without significantly sacrificing safety and detracting from the overall learning experience.

Thirdly, the current locations for teaching staff are largely inaccessible to students as they are situated behind laboratories throughout the building. Accessibility to teaching staff is considered key to enriching the learning experience for students.

Lastly, methods for delivering the laboratory portion of chemistry courses have changed over the last 40 years and the current arrangement does not facilitate updated teaching methods. Consequently, compared with other peer institutions there is a loss of quality in delivering the programs.

To accommodate 2003 enrolment, renovations must be made to three second-floor first-year laboratories, rooms 217, 221 and 224 as the first phase of improvements with the second phase of renovations to the remaining upper year instructional laboratories occurring in the following year. The report of the Project Committee will address the first phase of the renovations.

PROPOSED COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

S. Whittington, Professor & Acting Chair, Department of Chemistry
S. A. Mabury, Professor and Associate Chair Undergraduate Studies, Department of Chemistry
A. De Francesco, Building Program Manager, Department of Chemistry
R. de Souza, Director Planning & Facilities, Arts and Science
E. Sisam, Director, Campus and Facilities Planning
J Binks, Capital Projects, University of Toronto
TBA, Undergraduate Student

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

The terms of reference for the Project Committee are as follows:

1. Determine a space program for the undergraduate laboratory facilities for the Department of Chemistry that will accommodate enrolment increases, current health and safety standards and flexible teaching methods, at 80 St. George Street.
2. Demonstrate that the proposed space program will take into account the Council of Ontario Universities and the University's own space standards.
3. Plan to realize maximum flexibility of space to permit future allocations as program needs change.
4. Identify the capital cost of construction, data and communications requirements and the cost of equipment and furnishings.
5. Identify any costs associated with the transition during construction and secondary effects resulting from construction of this project.
6. Identify all proposed sources of funding.
7. Report by April 1, 2003.

RECOMMENDATION:

For information only.