



OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ASSOCIATE PROVOST

TO: Members of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs  
SPONSOR: Carolyn Tuohy  
CONTACT INFO: 978-2181; c.tuohy@utoronto.ca  
DATE: October 6, 2003 for meeting of October 15, 2003  
AGENDA ITEM: 6

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Proposed Amendments to Policy on Diploma and Certificate Programs, dated October 6, 2003

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

Under the Policy on Diploma and Certificate Programs, the Committee has authority for approval of diploma and certificate programs.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

The Policy on Diploma and Certificate programs was approved by Governing Council in June 1999. Four years of experience with the policy have suggested the need for a few minor revisions as follows:

**1. Diploma and Certificate programs offered in conjunction with degree programs:**

This amendment has been precipitated by a request from the Faculty of Law (also to be considered by the Committee at its October 15 meeting); but it is expected to have broader application over time. It allows for diploma and certificate programs offered as enhancements to degree programs in specialized areas warranting particular recognition.

Experience in other universities and jurisdictions suggests that such diploma and certificate programs provide vehicles for encouraging and recognizing interdisciplinary study (as is the case with the Law proposal for a Certificate in Environmental Studies). They can also provide a way of recognizing intensive training in particular skills related to degree programs, such as language training.

**2. Level of approval for graduate diploma programs:**

OCGS Guidelines noted above require OCGS approval for most types of graduate diplomas. Our existing policy does not explicitly require SGS/OCGS approval for graduate diplomas, although we have followed that practice, treating SGS as the "relevant division" for graduate diplomas. The revised policy makes the jurisdiction of the School of Graduate Studies explicit.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs recommend to the Academic Board for approval:

The amendments to the Policy on Diploma and Certificate Programs at the University of Toronto, as described in the attached document dated October 6, 2003, effective immediately.

~~May 26, 1999~~

## **Policy on Diploma and Certificate Programs**

### **1. Objective:**

- a) to ensure consistency in the use of the terms “diploma program” and “certificate program” across the divisions of the University of Toronto, in order that their meaning be clear to students, employers and the general public
- b) to ensure appropriate standards of quality in diploma and certificate programs
- c) to ensure that the resource implications of diploma and certificate programs are appropriately addressed
- d) to establish a categorization of diploma and certificate programs, and an approval process appropriate to each category

### **2. Application:**

This policy applies to all courses of study leading to the conferral of a form of certification other than a degree.

### **3. Program Categories:**

#### **a) Diploma programs:**

- require completion of an undergraduate or graduate degree for admission<sup>1</sup>
- comprise a coherent sequence of courses
- provide for a mechanism of assessment of student performance
- students are registered as University of Toronto students, and receive diplomas at Convocation
- may include courses offered for credit in a graduate degree program, for which credit may be transferred if the student enrolls in the degree program

#### **b) Post-secondary certificate programs:<sup>2</sup>**

- require completion of secondary school as a condition of admission
- comprise a coherent sequence of courses
- provide for a mechanism of assessment of student performance

---

<sup>1</sup> Diploma programs are typically offered in specialized professional areas, with a content different than that expected in a graduate degree program. A list of diploma programs currently offered is appended to this policy.

<sup>2</sup> Several such certificate programs are currently offered at the University, as indicated in the attached list. The University does not anticipate a significant expansion of this type of academic programming.

- students are registered as University of Toronto students, and receive diplomas at Convocation
- may include courses offered for credit in an undergraduate degree program, for which credit may be transferred if the student enrolls in the degree program

**c) Diploma and Certificate programs offered in conjunction with degree programs:**

- Diploma programs may be offered in conjunction with a graduate degree. Students must be admitted to the graduate degree program in order to qualify for such diploma programs
- Certificate programs may be offered in conjunction with an undergraduate degree. Students must be admitted to the undergraduate degree program in order to qualify for such diploma programs
- The content of the diploma or certificate program should complement that of the respective degree program
- Completion of such diploma and certificate programs is to be recognized through an appropriate form of attestation by the division offering the program; students do not receive diplomas at Convocation.

**d) Certificate programs in continuing education:**

- open admission, but may be targeted to particular professional and quasi-professional areas<sup>3</sup>
- comprise a coherent sequence of courses
- credit may not be transferred to degree programs
- students are not registered as University of Toronto students, and do not receive diplomas at Convocation

**4. Program Nomenclature:**

- a) Divisions wishing to offer a form of certification to recognize the completion of a course of study other than a degree program shall normally use the following terms:
- “diploma” for programs as defined in 3(a) and 3(c)
  - “certificate” for programs as defined in 3(b) and 3(c)

---

<sup>3</sup> In some cases these programs may be designed to fulfill the requirements of external professional, quasi-professional or other organizations.

- “certificate in continuing studies” or “certificate in continuing education” for programs as defined in 3(~~de~~)
  - with the approval of the Provost, terms such as “certificate in professional development” or “certificate in executive development” for programs as defined in 3(c) as consistent with program content and clientele
- b) In exceptional circumstances, the terminology prescribed in 4(a) may be varied to align program nomenclature at the University of Toronto with that in peer institutions offering similar programs, or with that in common use in a given professional or quasi-professional area.

## 5. Approval criteria:

Programs must meet the following criteria:

- a) quality control:
- for programs in categories 3(a), ~~and 3(b)~~, and 3(c), curriculum and instructors must be approved through an established process involving full-time faculty at the divisional<sup>4</sup> level; and a process for periodic review must be in place. Programs in category 3(c) should be reviewed in conjunction with the relevant degree program.
  - for programs in category 3(~~de~~), curriculum and instructors must be approved by the academic head of the division
- b) institutional fit: the program should draw upon established strengths of the sponsoring unit
- c) student demand: the program should respond to an identified student demand
- d) resource implications: certificate programs in continuing education (category 3c) must be self-funding

## 6. Level of approval by University governance:

- a) programs in categories 3(a), ~~and 3(b)~~, and 3(c) require approval by the relevant divisional council<sup>4</sup> and by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. For programs without resource implications for the University’s operating budget, no further approval is required.

---

<sup>4</sup> For diploma programs, the relevant division is the School of Graduate Studies.

- b) programs in category 3(~~de~~) must be approved by the relevant divisional council and reported for information to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs
- c) for programs in categories 3(a), ~~and 3(b)~~ and 3(c), any resource implications for the University's operating budget must be reviewed by the Planning and Budget Committee and approved by Governing Council as necessary

**7. Other academic activities:**

- a) Auditing of courses may be allowed by a division as provided for in the University's Policy on Auditing of Courses. Certificates of Attendance may be issued by the division as provided by that Policy.
- b) Certificates of Attendance or Certificates of Completion may be issued by divisions to recognize other continuing education activities, provided that the certificate makes it clear what is being signified – for example, attendance at a course or workshop (specifying the length), passing of an examination, etc.
- c) Credit for audited courses or other continuing education activities may not be transferred to degree programs.