



# University of Toronto

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OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

SPONSOR: Edith Hillan  
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DATE: September 15, 2004 for the meeting on September 22, 2004

AGENDA ITEM: 11(l)

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

School of Graduate Studies: Proposal of the Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education for a Flexible-time Ph.D. option within the Higher Education and Educational Administration Programs, effective September 2004.

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The Committee has general responsibility for policy on, and for monitoring, flex-time options for Ph.D. students approved by SGS Council.

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

The School of Graduate Studies approved this proposal at its Council meeting on May 25, 2004.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

A strength of the doctoral programs in Theory and Policy Studies is that the students come from a wide variety of backgrounds. The programs attract relatively few students directly into doctoral stream master's degree studies and even fewer directly from undergraduate studies. Maturity and professional experience, preferably in areas related to theory and policy studies, prior to enrolment, are advantageous for students and for the department. To capitalize fully on that strength, the department proposes to offer a Flexible-time Ph.D. In order to be considered for admission to the program, students will have to demonstrate the relevance and applicability of the flex-time Ph.D. to their professional work, to their proposed courses of study, and to the doctoral research that they propose to pursue.

**FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no new/additional financial resources required to implement the flex-time option.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

For Information.



# School of Graduate Studies

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University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

May 28, 2004

Professor Vivek Goel  
Interim Vice-President and Provost  
Room 225, Simcoe Hall  
27 King's College Circle  
University of Toronto

Dear Professor Goel:

At its meeting of May 25, 2004, the Council of the School of Graduate Studies approved the following motion:

**THAT** SGS Council approve the proposal of the Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education for a Flexible-time Ph.D. option within the Higher Education and Educational Administration Programs, effective September 2004.

The motion and supporting documentation are attached. Division II Executive Committee approved the proposal at its meeting of May 5, 2004.

On behalf of the Council of the School of Graduate Studies, I am presenting this item to Governing Council committees, for information.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Alderdice  
Secretary to SGS Council  
and Coordinator of Policy, Program and Liaison

Encl. (1)  
/smr

c.c.	S. Acker	N. Bascia	A. Drummond (attachments)
	C. Johnston	D. Lang	V. Makarovska
	L. Yee	S. Zaky (attachments)	

H:Council/FollowUp/2003-2004/May 25/TPS Flex-time Ph.D.

## Motion

### School of Graduate Studies Council Tuesday, May 25, 2004

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Item 7.

#### 7. New Options within Existing Degree Programs

##### 7.4 Theory and Policy Studies in Education, Flexible-time Ph.D.

**MOTION ( / )** THAT SGS Council approve the proposal of the Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education for a Flexible-time Ph.D. option within the Higher Education and Educational Administration Programs, effective September 2004.

*See the proposal attached.*

#### **NOTE:**

Division II Executive Committee approved this proposal at its meeting of May 5, 2004.

With SGS Council's approval this item will go to Governing Council committees for information.

PROPOSAL TO OFFER THE FLEXIBLE-TIME PH.D. IN THE DEPARTMENT OF  
THEORY AND POLICY STUDIES IN EDUCATION, OISE/UT

Motion 1: That the Higher Education program in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, OISE/UT offer the Flexible-time Ph.D., in addition to its existing Ph.D. program, commencing in September, 2004, in accordance with the regulations approved by the SGS Council in May, 1995.

Motion 2: That the Educational Administration program in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, OISE/UT offer the Flexible-time Ph.D., in addition to its existing Ph.D. program, commencing in September, 2004, in accordance with the regulations approved by the SGS Council in May, 1995.

Discussion

A strength of the doctoral programs in Theory and Policy Studies is that our students come from a wide variety of backgrounds. The programs attract relatively few students directly into doctoral stream master's degree studies and even fewer directly from undergraduate studies. That is not a weakness. Maturity and professional experience, preferably in areas related to theory and policy studies, prior to enrolment, are advantageous for students and for the department. To capitalize fully on that strength, the department proposes to offer the Flexible-time Ph.D. beginning in September 2004.

The Flexible-time Ph.D. was approved by the School of Graduate Studies Council in 1995. The Department of Theory and Policy Studies does not propose any amendments or exceptions. We propose to offer the Flexible-time Ph.D. in accordance with the regulations. Indeed, the regulations explain clearly our fundamental objective:

*Such programs will be offered where there is sufficient demand by practicing professionals for design and delivery of Ph.D. programs that, except for short specified periods of time, permit continued employment in areas related to the fields of research. In these programs, theory and praxis would uniquely engage and inform each other. (Flexible-time Ph.D. Degree Regulations, approved by SGS Council on May 25, 1995.)*

This regulation expresses well the department's rationale for proposing to offer the flex-time Ph.D. We have many applicants and students for whom the flex-time Ph.D. was designed, albeit initially by other faculties. A particular reason for our preference for the flex-time Ph.D. is that it will allow us to attract better mid-career students. That might seem counter-intuitive. It isn't. Even with generous financial aid, the conventional Ph.D. program is not feasible for prospective students who want to maintain involvement in their careers and professions. Ironically, students who are able to set aside their careers easily are sometimes persons who have not been notably successful in those careers. We want to accommodate students:

- Who are committed to their careers and professional development.

- Who are so valuable to their institutions and agencies that, first, they will be among our best students and that, second, they need the flex-time option to advance their professional goals.
- Whose research will draw on their professional experience as the regulations assume it will.

The Ph.D. is the preference of most of our students and, given the careers that they pursue and the theses that they write, that preference is reasonable. The availability of a flex-time Ph.D. even though it will offer less financial aid, may attract more and better students because it will allow more permutations and combinations.

The quoted section of the Flexible-time Ph.D. regulations also indicates what will be, in addition to all the normal requirements for admission to a Ph.D. program, an important additional requirement. To be considered for admission to the Flexible-time Ph.D. students will have to demonstrate the relevance and applicability of the flex-time Ph.D. to their professional work, to their proposed courses of study, and to the doctoral research that they propose to pursue.

Because of the OISE/UT system of quotas for admission to all doctoral programs, this introduction of the Flexible-time Ph.D. will have a negligible effect on overall enrolment. The more likely effect will be a change in the mix of enrolment among degrees.

During 2004-2005, students will be admitted to the flex-time Ph.D. by internal transfer only, from either the regular Ph.D. programs or the Ed.D. programs. These will be current students whose paths and progress through either the Ed.D. or the Ph.D. are better suited to the Flexible-time Ph.D. Direct entry will commence in 2005-2006. Transfer will not be automatic. Students will have to apply and present a case for transfer. In the reverse and in the future, students will be allowed to apply for transfer to the regular Ph.D., in which case they will have to compete with new students for the spaces and funding available.

The proposed Flexible-time Ph.D. degrees will fully follow the regulations that were approved by SGS in 1995. In addition, one year of academic residence will be required. This will normally be the first year of registration. Flexible-time Ph.D. students will be allowed to apply for all forms of financial aid normally available to doctoral candidates in the department, but the graduate funding guarantee will not be available to them because they will be assumed to be nominally employed full-time.

By definition, it is difficult to describe a normal course of study for the Flexible-time Ph.D. "Flexible" means flexible, and each student's combination of professional activity and graduate study may be unique. However, judging from the experience of some students who have, after meeting residency requirements, attempted to keep up with their professions as well as their scholarship, it is reasonable to expect that Flexible-time Ph.D. students will complete course requirements and comprehensive examination requirements in two calendar years.

Sample calendar entry

*Flexible-time Ph.D. Program. The flex-time program is intended for practicing professionals who can demonstrate that their employment or other professional work is related to their intended field of study and research interests. The flexible-time Ph.D. differs from the full-time Ph.D. only in design and delivery. All requirements for the Flexible-time Ph.D. are the same as those for the full-time Ph.D. Students who are considering the flexible-time Ph.D. should ensure that they will have adequate time on campus to attend classes and to fulfil the academic requirements of a Ph.D. program. Students must spend at least two full-time academic sessions on campus. Arrangements for fees for flexible students will be the same as in all other flexible time Ph.D. programs in the University of Toronto.*

*Although each flexible-time Ph.D. student may follow a unique path through the program, the following sample program suggest what a student might reasonably expect and prepare for.*

*First Year*

*Required core courses  
One or two elective half-courses*

*Second Year*

*Remaining required elective courses, normally two or three half-courses.  
Completion of General Comprehensive Examination*

*Third Year*

*Preparation of thesis research proposal  
Completion of ethics certificate application (if applicable)  
Completion of Doctoral Specialization Examination*

*Fourth Year*

*Thesis research*

*Fifth Year*

*Thesis research*

*Sixth Year*

*Thesis completed  
Final oral examination*