

Report of University of Toronto Council of Ontario Universities

Academic Colleague

Some members of the Academic Board might not be familiar with the structure of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU). Each university has two members: the Executive Head and the Academic Colleague. On decisions that have to be ratified by the Council at large, which are relatively few, both members have one vote. Until 2007-2008, meetings of Executive Heads, of Academic Colleagues, and of the Council at large took place in parallel. This year was the first under a new structure. Meetings of Executive Heads and of Academic Colleagues now do not necessarily mirror one another, and their agendas are quite different. Academic Colleagues, as a group, have no independent executive authority.

Each year the Academic Colleagues prepare one or two extensive reports on issues of concern and interest to the Council. In 2007-2008 the Academic Colleagues prepared a report on academic integrity and a report on educational technology. Both reports attracted considerable interest and were widely distributed.

A major item on the agenda of the Academic Colleagues in 2007-2008 was the review of the Ontario Council of Graduate Studies and the OCGS Appraisals Process. The review was the final step of a larger review of the Council of Ontario Universities overall. The Academic Colleagues reviewed, discussed, and advised on recommendations made about the OCGS in the larger review, and went on to prepare a series of recommendations in response to the detailed review that followed. The Academic Colleagues were consulted by Professor Richard Van Loon, who conducted the reviews for the COU.

As the University of Toronto's Academic Colleague, and given the university's major involvement in graduate studies, I invested a lot of time in drafting both of the Academic Colleagues' submissions, and was a member of the steering committee that prepared the Colleagues' report for the detailed review. One consequence of the

detailed review was the establishment of an Implementation and Transition Committee, which will comprise three Executive Heads, two deans of graduate studies, two Academic Colleagues, and one external adviser. I am one of the Academic Colleagues on the committee. Dean Susan Pfeiffer has established an internal steering committee to support this work, which will continue through the summer and into the next academic year.

Academic Colleagues also serve on standing committees of the Council of Ontario Universities. In 2007-2008, I was a member of the Committee on Relationships with Other Institutions. Most of that committee's business this year had to do with the recognition of credits and degrees awarded by community colleges. There have been no conclusions or final recommendations. There has been a proposal for a common "portal" through which students may gather information of programs and admission. There has been some discussion of a merger of application centres.

Also in 2007-2008 the Academic Colleagues met with the presidents of SSHRC and NSERC.

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