



To: Faculty Council

**From: Professor Graeme Norval
Vice-Chair, Curriculum Committee**

Date: May 6, 2010

Item: Proposal for Guidelines Governing Undergraduate Academic Certificates in Engineering

The Curriculum Committee has proposed the following guidelines for Undergraduate Academic Certificates in Engineering, which can be offered by the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering.

Preamble

- Named “Undergraduate Academic Certificates in Engineering” offer the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering a low-cost but high-impact way of achieving and recognizing a degree of academic engagement in a particular area of study. The idea is that the certificate should recognize an achievement that is significantly beyond a single course, but considerably less than a minor.
- The Faculty currently has two academic certificates, one in Preventive Engineering and Social Development and another in Entrepreneurship. (There are also non-academic or co-curricular certificates like those in Leadership offered through the Leaders of Tomorrow office. These are not the subject of the current Guidelines.)
- The Guidelines below apply to the two existing academic certificates and these two existing programs will be brought forward for approval under these new Guidelines. All previously granted certificates will of course remain valid.

General Guidelines Regarding Undergraduate Academic Certificates in Engineering

- “Undergraduate Academic Certificates in Engineering” should require considerable investment typically representing three courses or course equivalents and considerable personal commitment. As a rough guideline, academic certificates represent a work load of about “half of a minor.” Programs of study will consist of some combination of specified or core courses and possible electives. Certificates will be named and recognized in areas that are not normally considered part of a regular Departmental or Engineering Science Major; they should be a specialization that merits and achieves special knowledge or skill.
- The same rules for completion that apply to minors would apply to Academic Certificate Programs.

- Progress and achievement toward any Undergraduate Academic Certificate in Engineering will not appear on a student's official record but lists of students being granted certificates will be maintained by the CDP office. Students can of course claim, upon being awarded a certificate, achievement of a Certificate in their resumes and CVs.
- These Certificates should be brought forward by the CDP office first to Chairs and Directors and the Faculty's Curriculum Committee for comment and approval; then they should be brought forward, under the recommendation of the Faculty's Executive Committee, to Faculty Council for approval.
- Simple rules and procedures for signing up for, for achieving and for awarding certificates should be handled centrally through the Faculty's Cross-Disciplinary Programs Office.