



FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

SPONSOR: Susan McCahan, Vice Provost, Academic Programs
CONTACT INFO: (416) 978-0490, vpacademicprograms@utoronto.ca

PRESENTER: See above
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: October 18, 2018 for November 1, 2018

AGENDA ITEM: 2

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Follow-up Reports on Reviews:

- a) Department of Historical Studies, and its programs (University of Toronto Mississauga)
- b) Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences, and its programs (University of Toronto Mississauga)

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) is the point of entry into governance for reports, summaries and administrative responses on the results of reviews of academic programs and units commissioned by academic administrators. The role of the Committee is to ensure that the reviews are conducted in accordance with University policy and guidelines, that an appropriate process has been followed, that adequate documentation is provided and consultations undertaken, and that issues identified in the review are addressed by the administration. Under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process, the AP&P may request a one-year follow-up report when concerns are raised in an external review that require a longer period of response.

This report is forwarded, together with the record of the Committee's discussion, to the Agenda Committee of the Academic Board, which determines whether there are any issues of general academic significance warranting discussion at the Board level. The same documentation is also sent to the Executive Committee and Governing Council for information.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for information] (November 1, 2018)**
2. Agenda Committee of the Academic Board [for information] (November 13, 2018)
3. Academic Board [for information] (November 22, 2018)

4. Executive Committee of the Governing Council [for information] (December 4, 2018)
5. Governing Council [for information] (December 13, 2018)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

At its meeting on November 2, 2017, AP&P considered the following reviews:

- a) The February 2017 review of the Department of Historical Studies, and its programs (University of Toronto Mississauga), and the October 3, 2017 decanal response. AP&P requested a one-year follow-up report that addresses the issue of staff morale.
- b) The February 2017 review of the Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences, and its programs (University of Toronto Mississauga), and the October 2, 2017 decanal response. AP&P requested a one-year follow-up report that addresses the progress made in considering the sustainability of astronomy within the Department.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- a) The Department determined there are two issues negatively affecting staff morale. First, the lack of faculty presence on campus, an issue also identified by the reviewers. In response to this, faculty have started organizing new graduate and undergraduate opportunities and events that take place on campus. These additions have had a positive impact on faculty presence, which has been well received by staff who appreciate their involvement in the various opportunities. An additional change to be implemented in 2019-20 will require faculty who teach two courses in the same semester to teach the courses on different days.

The second issue affecting staff morale is in regards to some identified human resource issues and staff workload. To address this, the Chair is working with the Dean's office to create a PM role with managerial authority. Additionally, the Department is working with HR to assess staffing distribution and needs. The Department anticipates completing these tasks by the end of the 2018-19 academic year.

- b) The Department discussed the sustainability of astronomy at the 2017 Departmental Retreat, and at a faculty meeting on May 30, 2018. While there are limited resources to offer the program, there continues to be a commitment to offering astronomy given the continuing student interest and enrolment and the strong relationships with physics and earth sciences.

Moving forward, the Department notes that the astronomy program can be supported both through physics and mathematics curricular offerings and by hiring two new astronomy faculty, one teaching-stream and one tenure-stream. Courses on astronomy taught by new faculty hires would also be cross-listed to physics to benefit students in these programs as well.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

- a) Department of Historical Studies, and its programs (University of Toronto Mississauga) Follow-up Letter from Acting Vice-Principal and Academic Dean Angela Lange, dated October 1, 2018.
- b) Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences, and its programs (University of Toronto Mississauga) Follow-up Letter from Acting Vice-Principal and Academic Dean Angela Lange, dated October 1, 2018



OFFICE OF THE DEAN

October 1, 2018

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Office of the Vice-President and Provost
University of Toronto

Follow-up Report: External Review of Undergraduate Programs in UTM's Department of Historical Studies

Dear Susan,

In a letter dated May 1, 2018, Sioban Nelson requested a one-year follow-up report to the February 2017 review of the undergraduate programs in the Department of Historical Studies. The letter conveyed a request from the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) to follow up on the issue of staff morale.

The Department explored the issue and found that while staff identification with the unit was high, two sources of dissatisfaction were negatively impacting morale: the lack of faculty presence on campus and staff working environment.

Faculty Presence on Campus

The reviewers were also concerned with the lack of faculty presence on campus and made recommendations to facilitate the presence of tenure-stream faculty. Over the past year, the faculty have responded by organizing and implementing a number of undergraduate and graduate events and opportunities on campus, such as the workshop "Digital Classics: encoding Latin and Greek texts", regular "Feminist Lunchtime Talks", and a new undergraduate journal *Women, Culture & Society Undergraduate Review*. These initiatives have had a positive impact on faculty presence, which has been acknowledged by staff who have expressed their satisfaction with being included in these events in a variety of roles.

Going forward, the Department recently made the decision to require faculty who are teaching two courses on the UTM campus in one semester to hold these courses on separate days,

ensuring that they will be on campus at least two days a week. This change in policy will be implemented in the 2019-20 academic year.

Staff Working Environment

The Chair discussed areas of concern with department staff members. To address the issues that were raised, we are currently taking two steps:

1. **Assignment of a Professional Manager (PM):** Due to her other responsibilities across two campuses, the Chair is unable to supervise staff on a daily basis. The Department is working with the Office of the Dean to move the current department supervisor from a union to a PM group to ensure full managerial authority over staff.
2. **Staff reorganization:** The Department has consulted with Human Resources and a staff reorganization should alleviate the concerns raised by department staff.

Both of these changes are in progress and should be completed in the 2018-19 academic year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Angela Lange".

Angela Lange
Acting Vice-Principal Academic and Dean

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October 1st, 2018

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Office of the Vice-President and Provost
University of Toronto

RE: Follow-up Report: External Review of Undergraduate Programs in UTM's Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences

Dear Susan,

In a letter dated May 1, 2018, Sioban Nelson requested a one-year follow-up report to the February 2017 review of the undergraduate programs in the Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences (CPS). The letter conveyed a request from the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) to follow up on progress made concerning the sustainability of astronomy within the department.

The reviewer's report stated:

Specialist in Astronomical Sciences & Major in Astronomy relies heavily on subject specific courses offered by the Faculty of Arts and Science on the St. George campus; not as rigorous as similar programs in other universities (pg. 8)

The Department discussed this issue at the 2017 Departmental Retreat and at a faculty meeting on May 30, 2018. The consensus that emerged acknowledged the limited resources available but committed to retaining astronomy as a component of the Department. This commitment is based on:

- 1) **Student interest:** The astronomy program currently has 22 Major and 28 Specialist students, and service courses in astronomy attract strong interest (e.g., AST101 enrolled 230 students in Fall 2018). Eliminating astronomy programs and courses would have a significant impact on our department.
- 2) **Strong relationships between Physics, Earth Sciences, and Astronomy:** Astronomy and physics are partnered at nearly every university: astronomy faculty can teach physics courses, and physics courses benefit astronomy students. The astronomy curriculum can be supported because of synergy with physics offerings, and astronomy faculty can be hired that will strengthen the existing physics and earth sciences groups within the Department.

Going forward, the Department will look for opportunities to incorporate two faculty in astronomy into the complement plan to supplement the existing research-stream position in astronomy. The first position would be a tenure-stream solar (astro) physicist who could collaborate with the (paleo) climate line of research in the Department (Moore, Halfar, etc.). This area of research would also complement astronomy themes on the downtown and Scarborough campuses. The second position would be a teaching-stream astrophysicist to enhance the number of astronomy courses offered at UTM.

Together, these three faculty, plus support from existing courses in mathematics and physics, should be sufficient to ensure that the vast majority of courses required for an astronomy program could be offered at UTM. The seven half-courses taught by the new faculty hires would be cross-listed with physics and could thus benefit students in those programs as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela Lange". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Angela Lange
Acting Vice-Principal Academic and Dean