



FOR RECOMMENDATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

SPONSOR: Susan McCahan, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
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PRESENTER: Same as above
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: April 23, 2019 for May 8, 2019

AGENDA ITEM: 6

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Program Closure: Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Science, Faculty of Medicine

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs recommends to the Academic Board approval of proposals for the closure of existing degree and graduate programs. (*AP&P Terms of Reference, Section 4.4.a.iii*)

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for Recommendation] (May 8, 2019)**
2. Academic Board [for approval] (May 30, 2019)
3. Executive Committee [for confirmation] (June 10, 2019)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

The proposal to close the Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Sciences (MHSc) was approved at the Faculty of Medicine Faculty Council on April 22, 2019.

HIGHLIGHTS:

This is a proposal to close the Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Sciences (MHSc) degree program. The degree program is housed in the Institute of Medical Science. Faculty teaching in the program have their U of T appointments in the Department of Radiation Oncology, a clinical department in the Faculty of Medicine, and are graduate faculty members of the Institute of Medical Science.

The effective date of the closure will be August 31, 2019. There was one student registered in 2018-19 who completed their degree program requirements on January 18, 2019 and will graduate in June 2019.

The MHSc in Medical Radiation Sciences degree program was developed to prepare expert radiation therapists, who have a bachelor's degree in medical radiation sciences for practice at an advanced level within the evolving radiation medicine domain. It received its first student cohort in 2009 and has graduated a total of 12 students as of December 2018. The main reason for low enrolment was that an anticipated new “advanced practice” radiation therapist role in the practice environment was slow to take hold and jurisdictions outside of Ontario lacked the momentum to take up the new model of care. Despite concerted efforts to promote the program and address many of these issues in the past 10 years, the Faculty was not able to generate a sustained pool of students to the program. After multiple consultations with the faculty and radiation therapists' representatives, the decision was made to propose closure of this program.

Admissions to the program were administratively suspended in June 2018. All mandatory courses of this program will be closed. However, there is the intention to repurpose some content to other enrichment activities for trainees in the clinical department and/or as continuous professional development opportunities for practicing professionals in radiation medicine.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no negative implications to the degree proposal closure. As noted in the proposal, the required courses of the program will no longer be offered.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be it Recommended

THAT the proposed closure of the Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Sciences (MHSc), Faculty of Medicine dated February 15, 2019, to which admissions were administratively suspended in June 2018, be approved with an anticipated program closure date of August 31, 2019.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

- *Proposal for the closure of the Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Sciences (MHSc), Faculty of Medicine*



University of Toronto Proposal for the Closure of an Existing Program (Graduate or Undergraduate)

(This template has been developed in line with the University of Toronto's Quality Assurance Process.)

The process followed for the closure of any program is the same as that required for the approval of any new such program.

Closure Proposed: Please specify precisely what is being closed:	Master of Health Science, Medical Radiation Sciences
Department / Unit (if applicable):	Institute of Medical Science (IMS)
Faculty / Academic Division:	Medicine
Faculty / Academic Division contact:	Allan Kaplan, Vice Dean, Graduate and Academic Affairs Rachel Zulla, Graduate Affairs Officer, Graduate and Life Sciences Education
Department / Unit contact:	Mingyao Liu, Director, IMS
Effective date program was administratively suspended to new admissions:	June 2018
Effective date of full closure of program:	August 31, 2019
Version Date:	February 15, 2019

1 Brief Summary

- *Please clarify precisely what is being closed*
- *What is the relationship between what is being closed and any remaining offerings:*
 - *If only part of a program is being closed, please clarify the relationship between this and those portions of the program that will remain open*

This is a proposal to close the professional Master's degree program, Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Sciences (MHScMRS). The degree program is housed in the Institute of Medical Science. Faculty teaching in the program have their U of T appointments in the Department of Radiation Oncology, a clinical department in the Faculty of Medicine and are graduate members of the Institute of Medical Science. The effective date of the closure will be August 31, 2019. There was one student registered in 2018-19 who completed her degree program requirements on January 18, 2019, and will graduate in June 2019. Admissions to the program were administratively suspended in June 2018.

2 Rationale

Background:

- *You may wish to speak to when the program was first created / how long has it been offered / past success of the program*
- *What has led to the decision to close the program?*
- *Please provide a full academic rationale*
 - *You may wish to refer to changing enrolment; changing disciplinary landscape; shifting expertise of the professoriate; poor quality of the academic offering; overlap with other existing programs*
 - *Where appropriate, you may want to quote from recent unit or program reviews.*
 - *Explain alignment with the unit's academic plan*

The MHScMRS program was developed to prepare expert radiation therapists, who have a bachelor's degree in medical radiation sciences or in an equivalent field, for practice at an advanced level within the evolving radiation medicine domain. It received its first student cohort in 2009 and has graduated a total of 12 students as of December 2018. There is one student who has completed the program requirements as of January 18, 2019. This student has been recommended for June 2019 convocation.

The demand for this program has consistently been modest since its inception, without a clear trend for improvement. We believe the reasons for this low enrollment rate are multiple. Primarily, changes anticipated in the practice environment have been slow to take hold. These relate mostly to the successful pilot project conducted in Ontario testing an optional model of radiation treatment delivery that centred on the development and implementation of a new "advanced practice" radiation therapist role. The conversion of this

work from pilot project to permanent integration has been much slower than expected with jurisdictions outside of Ontario still lacking the momentum to uptake the new model of care. This has resulted in an inadequate applicant pool for the program (limited primarily to local applicants due to the uniqueness of the radiation therapy specialty role in Canada at this time). While the quality of our program has always been seen to be high and the department remains committed to development of radiation therapy as a profession, the sustainability of the program in its current format has been a challenge due to the small number of students and high investments associated with developing and maintaining the program curriculum.

Despite our concerted effort to promote the program and address many of these issues in the past 10 years, we were not able to generate a sustained pool of students to the program. After multiple consultations with the faculty, management and radiation therapists' representatives, the decision was made to request closure of this program.

3 Impact on other programs/units of the proposed closure

- *Please provide evidence of consultation with any programs/units/faculties that will be affected*
- *What are the positive and negative implications that need to be considered in the closure*
- *Impact on the nature and quality of the division's program of study*
- *Impact of closure on other units including inter-divisional and inter-institutional agreements/contracts*
- *Please mention if the courses that supported this degree, program, or program option will continue to be offered*

In consultation, IMS and the Department of Radiation Oncology agree that there is little or no impact on other programs/units/faculties with this proposed closure. All mandatory courses of this program will be closed. However, there is intention to repurpose some content to other enrichment activities for trainees in the clinical department and/or as continuous professional development opportunities for practicing professionals in radiation medicine.

4 Student Accommodation

Please include:

Current enrolment showing breakdown by year in the program / option being closed

Table 1: Graduate Enrolment Breakdown

Year	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19
Total Enrolment	3	2	4	4	3	3	0	3	3	1 (recommended to graduate)

- *Provide details concerning how students in progress will be accommodated*
 - *Will students be allowed to complete their program or be transferred to another program. (In the latter instance please comment on the ease with which they can complete the requirements of the new program and show evidence of consultation if relevant)*
 - *Deadline by which accommodated students must complete the program – if there are grounds for concern, what are their options if they have not completed the program by that deadline?*
 - *Capacity/course availability to accommodate affected students*
 - *Can inactive students reactivate to the closed program?*
- *What will the impact of the proposed closure be on the range of academic options available to students in the future? (i.e. are there other programs or options that will fill the void that may/may not be created by the closure?)*
- *Consultation with students*
 - *Please provide details concerning consultation with students around the proposed change including:*
 - *Meetings / Town halls/ Emails /Questionnaires*
 - *Describe any response/ feedback received*
 - *How will students be notified of the change following approval?*
 -

The MHScMRS program is dedicated to supporting the one current student in the program to see them to completion. This student has completed all program requirements and has been recommended for graduation for June 2019. There are no anticipated issues.

As part of the consultation leading up to this proposal, the program conducted a review of other academic opportunities available to future students. Several options were identified including other “online” international programs. For example, Sheffield Hallam University in Sheffield, UK offers several course based master’s degree – Radiation Oncology in Practice and Advanced Practice. They also offer case based postgraduate diplomas in the radiation oncology domain. Trinity College Dublin in Ireland also offers a course based master’s degree in Advanced Practice.

Given the low enrolment over the last nine years, the closure of this program is not expected to have a great impact on the radiation therapy community.

5 Faculty / Staff Accommodation

- *What is the impact, if any, on faculty and staff of the closure?*

The faculty who delivered the program are clinical, status only faculty in the Department of Radiation Oncology with graduate appointments in the Institute of Medical Science. These faculty participate in educational programs as part of their academic commitment to the department.

The closure of the MHScmRS will have little impact on the faculty's ability to find teaching opportunities. With undergraduate, graduate, fellowship and continuing medical education initiatives, plenty of opportunities continue to exist. It is anticipated, therefore, that there is little to no impact on faculty, staff or department. The activities of the current Program Director will be redirected to other priorities within the clinical unit.

6 Governance Process

	Levels of Approval Required
Decanal / Provostial Sign-Off	
	Faculty/Divisional Council (approval of closure of minors, where there is a continuing (specialist or major)
Submission to Provost's Office	
	AP&P (approval of program closures: undergrad specialists/majors; minors where there is no specialist of major; graduate fields or diploma, and collaborative programs)
	Academic Board (approval of degree, graduate program, diploma closures)
	Executive Committee of Governing Council (executive confirms degree, grad program, closures)
Inclusion in Annual report to Quality Council	
Inclusion in Annual report to MTCU (in case of closure of degree)	