

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
REPORT NUMBER 80 OF THE COMMITTEE ON
ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS

May 24, 2000

To the Academic Board,
University of Toronto.

Your Committee reports that it held a meeting on Wednesday, May 24, 2000 at 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, at which the following were present:

Professor Wendy Rolph (In the Chair)
Professor Ruth Gallop (Vice-Chair)
Professor Carolyn Tuohy, Deputy Provost
Professor David Cook, Vice-Provost
Professor Derek Allen
Dr. Claire Alleyne
Professor Clare Beghtol
Professor Rorke Bryan
Professor Philip Byer
Professor Francois Casas
Professor Raisa Deber
Professor Gerald Goldenberg
Professor Hugh Gunz
Mr. David Kaplan
Professor Gretchen Kerr

Professor Angela Lange
Professor J.J. Berry Smith

Non-Voting Assessors:

Professor Heather Munroe-Blum, Vice-President, Research and International Relations
Professor Ian Orchard, Vice-Provost, Students
Ms Karel Swift, University Registrar

Secretariat:

Ms Susan Girard

Regrets:

Ms Rakhi Bhavnani
Mr. Eric Brock
Ms Debbie Chachra
Professor Carl Corter

Mr. Michael Derzko
Ms Joy Fitzgibbon
Professor Ian McDonald
Professor Emmet Robbins

In Attendance:

Mr. Louis Charpentier, Secretary of the Governing Council
Professor Umberto De Boni, Associate Dean, Division IV, School of Graduate Studies
Mr. Peter Munsche, Assistant Vice-President, Technology Transfer
Professor Catharine Whiteside, Associate Dean of Interfaculty and Graduate Affairs, Faculty of Medicine
Professor Linda Wilson-Pauwels, Director, Division of Biomedical Communications, Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine

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ITEM 4 IS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL. ALL OTHER ITEMS ARE REPORTED FOR INFORMATION.

1. Time of Adjournment

On motion duly moved and seconded,

It was agreed

THAT the meeting adjourn no later than 4:45 p.m.

2. Report of the Previous Meeting

Report Number 79 of the meeting of May 3, 2000, was approved.

3. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

Item 7 Report on Student Awards Established, Amended and Withdrawn

The Chair recalled that a member had asked about the value of awards that were withdrawn last year. Ms Swift reported that the amount was \$24,000. She noted, however, that the value of new established awards was \$900,000.

4. Policy on Research Involving Human Subjects

The Chair welcomed Professor Munroe-Blum and Dr. Munsche. Professor Munroe-Blum gave a brief presentation of the new Policy, the highlights of which were:

- in 1998, the federal granting councils had issued the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans
- the University had developed the proposed Policy in response to the Tri-Council Statement following broad consultation within the University community and drawing heavily on the expertise of Professor Bernard Dickens
- the Tri-Council Statement applied to all research involving human subjects done by faculty, students and staff of the University and funding would be dependent on compliance with the Statement
- the University's Policy must be implemented in 2000
- the proposed Policy covered all research, funded or unfunded, including course-based research, secondary use of data, and observations of behaviour in natural settings; issues related to conflict of interest would be considered in the ethics review process for research proposals
- the mandated review structure was very different from that currently in place: committees would meet in person and have a minimum of five members with specified backgrounds; there would also be a standing committee structure
- there would be continuing annual review for projects that span more than one year
- a Policy was being presented for Governing Council approval, and the administration was developing Revised Guidelines and New Operating Procedures, including a process for an expedited review; all were being harmonized with the relevant policies and guidelines of the University's affiliated teaching hospitals

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4. Policy on Research Involving Human Subjects (cont'd)

- the new process would lead to greater consistency of review. Although there would be an increased volume of applications requiring more committee members, no negative effect on turnaround time was anticipated.

The Chair noted that only the Policy was before the Committee for approval and she encouraged members to focus their questions on the Policy.

The members who spoke were in favour of the Policy but had a number of questions arising from the implementation of the Guidelines.

- In response to concerns raised about two examples concerning transportation studies and interviewing to collect data, both of which would not lead to any identifiable personal data, Professor Munroe-Blum noted that ethical review was an evolving area. Norms were needed to make the Policy understandable, but every situation required a normative judgement. Whether humans were the subject of the research or the medium through which data were collected, both types of research projects required review. Dr. Munsche continued that the Guidelines did not set rules, rather they guided judgement. The review would be done on a case-by-case basis. Observation of human subjects in a natural setting was subject to review but not a highly detailed ethical review. A process of expedited review was being established to be used in instances where there was little or no risk to human subjects.
- A member noted that there would be insufficient time in a single-term course for the students to write a proposal, have it reviewed and complete the work, even using an expedited review process. This was a logistical problem. She also noted that in public policy studies, interviewees were often asked for information that, while not relating to the interviewee *per se*, could require confidential treatment in order to protect the interviewee in his or her employment context. Would such studies fall within the orbit of this Policy? If so, this would potentially capture a broad range of studies -- a scope which reinforced the need for expedited review.
- Another member commented on the increased number of faculty and staff who would be required to serve on the review committees and wondered whether it would be possible to recruit the individuals needed. Professor Munroe-Blum agreed that it would take an extraordinary volunteer effort as was the case even now. Her Office planned to stagger the terms of committee members and ensure that an individual's service was appropriately recognized in PTR/merit consideration. Dr. Munsche indicated that the quorum requirements were a minimum and that more members could be added. Balance in the expertise of members was important.
- A member commented that because of the wide-ranging implications for research, communication to all members of the University community would be extremely important. A brochure would be useful. Another member did not think that any application form was simple. In response to a question, Professor Munroe-Blum indicated that a self-review did not fulfill the requirement for a review as called for in the Tri-Council Statement.

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4. Policy on Research Involving Human Subjects (cont'd)

- A member suggested that the Policy might be ignored. Professor Munroe-Blum was cognizant of the administrative burden of implementing the Policy. She believed that a normative process would emerge concerning the effective appraisal of risk level and that the community would become well-versed with time.
- A member noted that a researcher could not tell a subject that the research proposal had been reviewed. She queried the reasoning behind this point in the Guidelines. Another member suggested that an indication that the project had been reviewed might exert undue pressure on the subject to cooperate with the research project. Professor Munroe-Blum agreed with the second member's comment.

On motion duly moved and seconded,

YOUR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS

THAT the Policy on Research Involving Human Subjects, dated April 19, 2000, a copy of which is attached hereto as Appendix "A", be approved.

The Chair noted that the motion had passed unanimously.

5. School of Graduate Studies: Master of Science in Biomedical Communications and Sheridan College Post-Graduate Certificate in Computer Animation

The Chair welcomed Professor Wilson-Pauwels, Associate Dean De Boni and Professor Whiteside to the meeting and invited Professor Tuohy to introduce the proposal.

Professor Tuohy was pleased to recommend approval of the collaborative proposal between the University's master's program in biomedical communications and Sheridan College's post-graduate certificate in computer animation. There would be no change to the structure of the master's program. The four half-courses from the certificate program would be co-taught by University of Toronto and Sheridan faculty and would fulfill the requirements for the project for one of the streams within the master's degree.

Professor Wilson-Pauwels explained that the master's program was conducted over two years in six semesters. For students who elected this option in the field of biomedical visualization, the last two semesters would be spent at Sheridan College. The four joint courses would constitute the required master's project and the applied art portion of this stream. Five students had already taken the certificate program following the master's degree. This consecutive approach took an extra eight months. By combining the two programs, students would save some tuition as well as time. Sheridan College was currently constructing a new Centre for Animation and Emerging Technologies (SCAET) which would be one of the leading centres for the study of 3-D computer animation worldwide. U of T students would be using exceptional facilities.

A member noted that the students who elect to take this program would be receiving credit twice for the same academic work, once for completion of a master's degree and a second time for a Sheridan certificate. Professor Whiteside disagreed with the comment noting that there would be two transcripts, two sets of fees and the students would not receive two

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**5. School of Graduate Studies: Master of Science in Biomedical Communications
and Sheridan College Post-Graduate Certificate in Computer Animation** (cont'd)

University of Toronto degrees. Professor De Boni said that the Sheridan certificate attested to proficiency in use and that it could be characterized as a competency level certificate. He assured the Committee that the students would be expected to work very hard to obtain the Certificate. Professor Tuohy noted that there was an analogy to the granting of transfer credits from another institution.

A member suggested that there were resource implications for the University in that it was proposed to offer fellowships to defray the Sheridan tuition and asked why the University was subsidizing Sheridan College. Professor Tuohy noted that resource implications would be addressed by the Planning and Budget Committee. Professor Wilson-Pauwels said without doubt that there was a small subsidy. But the academic work could not be done without high-end equipment. The synergy was good with Sheridan College. Professor Whiteside referred members to the Memorandum of Agreement concerning the funding of the program which had been signed by the University.

A member asked what would happen to students who did not or could not complete the courses at Sheridan College. Professor Wilson-Pauwels indicated that they would return to the University and complete a different research project. Those students would lose a semester. However, in her opinion this would be a very unlikely circumstance since the students who would participate in the program would be subject to stringent selection criteria. The Sheridan program enrolled only 15 students a year.

On motion duly moved and seconded,

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED

The proposal for a combined University of Toronto Master of Science in Biomedical Communications (MScBMC) and Sheridan College Post-Graduate Certificate in Computer Animation, as described in the submission from the School of Graduate Studies, dated April 25, 2000, effective July 1, 2000, subject to a review of the resource implications.

6. Reports of the Administrative Assessors

Professor Tuohy recalled that last year, the Committee had held a meeting in the summer to consider a number of academic reviews. This year, it was planned that this meeting would be held in September. However, a summer meeting would still be necessary to consider the strategic research plan, a necessary part of the Canada Research Chairs program. It was estimated that the University would receive approximately 250 chairs through the program, divided evenly between tier 1 (senior) and tier 2 (junior) chairs. The University was required to identify areas of research strength and priorities. The administration was drafting procedures for the allocation of the chairs within the University. These procedures had been discussed with principals and deans and with other senior administrators. Professor Sedra was expected to make a presentation on the program to the Planning and Budget Committee later in the day. Central to the allocation of the chairs was a research plan. The Canada Research Chairs program was intended to strengthen the research capacity in the universities. The research plan would be broad ranging because of the size of the University and current research

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6. Reports of the Administrative Assessors (cont'd)

activity. The plan must be approved by governance before being submitted to the Canada Research Chairs program. It was expected that the meeting of the Committee to consider the plan would be in late July. Professor Munroe-Blum added that the plan would represent the interface between the academic plans and research activities. These chairs provided a terrific opportunity to strengthen research activities and would build on an evolving framework of planning. She noted that President-designate Birgeneau has been involved in the process of developing the procedures for allocation.

In response to a question, Professor Tuohy said that the question of overhead would be dealt with by the Planning and Budget Committee.

Professor Tuohy briefly outlined the process for drafting the research plan. Procedures were being prepared by the Provost's Office and would be sent to the Principals and Deans next week. This memorandum would seek advice from the academic division in the identification of overall research thrusts, for example, materials research, and the research clusters in which chairs could be appointed. Following the materials research example, two clusters might be optical science and biomaterials. The President, Provost and Vice-President, Research and International Relations would then review the proposals. Appointment to individual chairs would be consistent with the Policy and Procedures on Academic Appointments. Because the University was in the final stages of developing divisional academic plans, it was well-positioned to articulate the required strategic research plan. Work was indeed ongoing in the divisions and it was expected that the research plan would be ready in July. In response to a question, it was noted that research thrusts would be expected to change less over time than the research clusters which would be expected to change as new fields of research emerged.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The Chair noted that the date of a summer meeting has yet to be determined.

8. Other Business

This was Professor Rolph's last meeting as Chair of the Committee. She thanked the members for their dedication and thoughtful contribution. She also offered her gratitude to the Vice-Chair, Professor Ruth Gallop, to the Committee's assessors - Professor Carolyn Tuohy, Professor David Cook, Professor Heather Munroe-Blum, Professor Ian Orchard and Ms Karel Swift - and to the Secretary, Ms Susan Girard. The Committee thanked Professor Rolph for her excellent service as Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Secretary

Chair

May , 2000