

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**  
**THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**  
**REPORT NUMBER 176 OF THE COMMITTEE ON**  
**ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS**

**October 27, 2015**

To the Academic Board,  
University of Toronto

Your Committee reports that it met on Tuesday, October 27, 2015 at 4:10 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, with the following present:

**Present:**

Professor Elizabeth M. Smyth (Chair)  
Professor Sioban Nelson, Vice-Provost,  
Academic Programs  
Professor Robert B. Gibbs  
Professor Tara Goldstein  
Mr. Magno M. Guidote  
Dr. Richard Hegele, Chair, Department of  
Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology,  
Faculty of Medicine  
Professor Susan Jaglal  
Dr. Allan Kaplan, Vice-Dean, Graduate  
and Academic Affairs, Faculty of  
Medicine  
Mr. Ray Khan  
Ms Jennifer J. Lau  
Professor Reid B. Locklin

Professor Alice Maurice  
Professor Lacra Pavel  
Professor Russell N. Pysklywec  
Professor Michael J.H. Ratcliffe  
Ms Melinda Scott  
Professor Nicholas Terpstra  
Professor Ning Yan  
Ms Alena Zelinka  
Ms Nana Mohan Zhou  
  
Mr. Richard Levin, Executive Director,  
Enrolment Services and University  
Registrar

**Secretariat:**

Mr. Patrick F. McNeill

**Regrets:**

Professor Maydianne Andrade  
Professor Locke Rowe  
Mr. Ken Chan  
Ms Mariam Hanna  
Professor Jim Yuan Lai  
Professor Markus Stock  
Ms Emily Tsui

**In Attendance:**

Professor Ravin Balakrishnan, Chair, Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS)  
Professor Joshua Barker, Vice Dean, Graduate Education & Program Reviews, FAS  
Mr. Horatio Bot, Director, Financial Services, FAS  
Professor David Cameron, Dean, FAS  
Ms Meg Connell, Director, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Medicine  
Professor Nancy Copeland, Associate Chair, Department of English and Drama, University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM)  
Professor Alberto Galasso, Program Director, Management of Innovation Program, UTM  
Ms Justine Garrett, Coordinator, Academic Planning and Reviews, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Professor Hugh Gunz, Director, Institute for Management and Innovation, UTM  
Dr. Daniel Hass, Dean, Faculty of Dentistry  
Dr. Daniella Mallinck, Director, Academic Programs, Planning and Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Professor Amy Mullin, Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, UTM  
Ms. Teresa Nicoletti, Administrative Coordinator, Office of the Dean, FAS  
Professor Robert Reisz, Vice-Dean, Graduate, UTM  
Professor Anna Shternshis, Director, Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies, FAS  
Professor Vince Tropepe, Department of Cell and Systems Biology, FAS  
Professor Alan Walks, Acting Chair, Department of Geography, UTM  
Professor Sandy Welsh, Vice-Provost, Students  
Professor Melanie Woodin, Director, Human Biology Program, FAS  
Professor Nick Woolridge, Program Director, Biomedical Communications, Faculty of Medicine/UTM  
Dr. Trevor Young, Dean, Faculty of Medicine

ALL ITEMS ARE REPORTED FOR INFORMATION

**1. Reviews of Academic Programs and Units, Part I**

The Chair reminded members that the Committee had general responsibility for monitoring the quality of education and research activities within the University. Part of this responsibility, outlined in the *Accountability Framework for Cyclical Review of Academic Programs and Units*, was to undertake a comprehensive overview of reviews of academic programs and units, monitoring the results of the reviews and administrative responses.

The Chair welcomed representatives from the units/programs who were present to answer questions.

**a) Follow-up Report from Previous Reviews**

The Chair stated, under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP), the Committee could request a follow-up report when concerns were raised in an external review that required a longer period of response.

Professor Nelson added that to date, of the 58 reviews considered by the Committee since the establishment of the UTQAP in 2011-12, 18 follow-up reports had been requested. The

Committee's follow-up request rate of about 30% reflected its careful attention to the reviews and the importance of the Committee's work within the formative UTQAP review process.

**Faculty of Medicine: Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology and its programs**

The Chair stated that the Committee had requested a one-year follow-up report that outlined steps taken to respond to changes in the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) funding model.

Professor Nelson reported that she had been in conversation with Dean Young since the review report was originally considered by the Committee, and that she was pleased to receive the follow-up report.

Professor Nelson said that Dean Young had outlined a number of important steps taken in anticipation of changes to the CIHR funding model. The department had diversified its research funding base; increased interdepartmental research collaborations; and heightened the department's online visibility.

There were no questions from the members.

**b) Semi-Annual Report on the reviews of Academic Units and Programs, April 2015-September 30, 2015**

The Chair stated that since the last report to the Committee, seven external reviews of units and/or programs, all commissioned by Deans (Decanal Reviews), had been received by the Office of the Vice-President and Provost. All were brought forth to the Committee for information. The submissions included the signed administrative responses from each Dean, which highlighted action plans in response to reviewer recommendations and a summary of the review.

For the review process, the Chair noted that members had been broken into four reading groups and that each group was given a list of programs and/or units to review. To guide their review, members of these groups were asked to consider three questions:

- i) *Does the summary accurately tell the story of the full review?*
- ii) *Does the administrative response address all issues identified?*
- iii) *Are there any questions, comments or substantive issues that the Committee should consider? Is there need to ask that the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs to bring forward a follow-up report?*

In each instance, the spokesperson of each group would be asked to present the findings of the group to the Committee. Input would also be sought from all group members and Committee members could ask questions. The Chair would then indicate whether the Committee had identified any matters that should be brought to the attention of the Agenda Committee or whether a follow-up report to the Committee was necessary.

The Chair invited Professor Nelson to make general remarks about the seven reviews.

Professor Nelson stated that the reviews provided an excellent cross-section of the academic diversity at the University. She noted that the scope of a review commissioned by a Dean could include the unit itself with its undergraduate and graduate programs, programs alone, or jointly offered programs. Overall, the themes raised in the seven reviews echoed those in previous compendia: these included an emphasis on the excellence of the University's research reputation and the outstanding quality of its programs.

Professor Nelson reminded members that the UTQAP reviews would be ultimately reported to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council) as Final Assessment Reports and Implementation Plans (FAR/IPs).

### **Faculty of Medicine & University of Toronto Mississauga: Master of Science Biomedical Communications program (BMC)**

The spokesperson for the Reading Group reported that the summary was comprehensive and covered the full review which was overall very positive. The Reading Group was impressed with the Deans' joint administrative response which had adequately addressed all the identified issues. She noted that the reviewers had presented some suggestions for improvement.

In response to several questions raised by the reading group, Professor Mullin stated that the graduate program was contemplating possible small enrolment increases, especially given demand from international applicants. Space could be reconfigured to accommodate expansion on this scale.

Professor Young stated that the BMC was an inspiring and exciting program and one of only four accredited programs in the world. He spoke about the ongoing need for additional anatomy instruction and related space challenges across the health sciences. A new graduate anatomy course was being designed for approval this academic year. The Faculty of Medicine and UTM would continue to work together to address the challenges.

No follow-up report was requested.

### **Faculty of Arts and Science: Human Biology undergraduate programs**

The spokesperson for the Reading Group reported that the summary was comprehensive and covered the full review. They raised several issues regarding the quality of the program as it related to its focus, structure and overlap, faculty complement, delivery and access to resources.

The group agreed that the Dean's administrative response overall addressed the identified issues and presented a forward-looking plan. The Reading Group highlighted the program's new mentorship initiatives and engagement with the Arts & Science STEP Forward program.

Professor Cameron stated that Professor Melanie Woodin had been appointed as the new Director. The Dean would turn his attention to faculty complement and present the issue for discussion to the Faculty Appointments Review Committee. He noted that a new full-time administrative position had been created to support the program. Renovations to the Ramsay Wright Laboratories would double the lab space available and create high quality space for the program.

Professor Cameron commented that the review had helped to concentrate the issues and that it would be used to assess progress against its recommendations.

A follow-up report was requested in one year to address modifications to the Global Health and Environment and Health undergraduate programs, as well as improvements to facilities, and the faculty and staff complements.

### **Faculty of Arts and Science: Department of Computer Science and its programs**

The spokesperson for the Reading Group stated that, overall, Computer Science was an impressive department and considered one of the top ten programs internationally. He reported that the summary was accurate and that the administrative response was thorough, although it had appeared to place greater emphasis on short-term action versus long-term strategy that would be required to address ongoing challenges.

The group asked the Dean to comment on several issues including limited undergraduate student interaction with faculty and involvement with research; time to completion and attrition for graduate students; and faculty morale and communication issues.

Professor Cameron stated that it was important to understand that, unlike any other FAS department, the Department of Computer Science was subject to the “boom and bust” of the industry. This had a substantial impact on student demand – both positive and negative. The department was now expected to experience a high demand for its programs. FAS had made a one-time only financial allocation and had adjusted the Department’s base budget. It had also allocated FAS faculty appointments to accommodate the department’s needs. Opportunities outside the academy and competition amongst top institutions made recruiting and retaining faculty uniquely challenging but the Faculty was committed to meeting those challenges.

Professor Balakrishnan stated that the department would be increasing the number of undergraduate students involved in research activity especially during summer months when faculty could access NSERC and other funding to hire undergraduate students. Additional monitoring processes would help to address time-to-completion for graduate students. The retention of high quality graduate students had continued to be a challenge as many students were being offered good paying jobs in the private sector before completing their programs.

During a period of high international competition for faculty and students, the Dean stated that there had also been an impact on faculty morale. Efforts would be made to encourage more interchange between junior and senior faculty; short-term renovations would be

examined to address space issues; and longer-term planning would try to address the need to accommodate all faculty in a single building rather than the current situation of faculty being dispersed over four buildings.

No follow-up report was requested.

### **University of Toronto Mississauga: Department of Geography and its programs**

The spokesperson for the Reading Group reported that the reading group felt that the summary had accurately told the story of the full review. He added that the administrative response addressed most of the issues identified; however issues surrounding course availability and the suggestion of identifying external funding for experiential learning and field courses had not been addressed.

Professor Walks noted that the department had moved forward with new courses in digital mapping and cartography. In response to a question he stated that a faculty retreat had been held in June to identify specific research clusters in Geography at UTM, including clusters in geomorphology and soil science; and environment management and policy. The department continued to be known across the three campuses for its strength in quantitative methods and GIS.

Professor Mullin stated that UTM would continue to look for external funding opportunities to support its exceptional experiential learning offerings and field courses. They were also in the planning stage to examine research space needs such as dry space labs.

No follow-up report was requested.

### **University of Toronto Mississauga: Management of Innovation program**

The spokesperson for the Reading Group reported that the summary accurately told the story of the full review, and overall, it had been a positive review. The Dean's administrative response was thoughtful and had covered most of the issues identified by the reviewers.

In response to a member's question about curricular content related to business ethics and creativity, Professor Galasso explained that they had discussed whether to address this curricular content through electives shared across the programs offered by the Institute for Management and Innovation (IMI).

Consultation with others to develop an appropriate course of action to address the issues contained in the review had already been undertaken.

No follow-up report was requested.

## **Faculty of Arts and Science: Jewish Studies programs**

The spokesperson for the Reading Group stated that the review was very positive and included a comprehensive response by the Dean. The reviewers recognized the program for its research and teaching.

Although the Reading Group had no major comments, two questions were raised about increased space needs of the program and additional student financial aid for undergraduate students.

Professor Shternshis responded that there were challenges to find good accessible space, especially for special lectures and events. She noted that most events were oversubscribed which spoke to the strong interest of faculty, students and members of the community.

Professor Shternshis clarified that existing endowed funds were restricted to support graduate students; however it would be a priority to seek out endowed support for undergraduate students. The program had participated in the University's work study program to hire undergraduate students.

The Committee acknowledged the strong sense of community among students, staff and faculty.

No follow-up report was requested.

## **University of Toronto Mississauga: Department of English and Drama and its programs**

The spokesperson for the Reading Group reported that the summary accurately told the story of the full review; however the group felt that the Dean's administrative response had not adequately addressed the sexist incidents, and issues of gender equality and diversity that had been identified by the reviewers.

Professor Mullin stated that, prior to receiving the review report, the Chair of the program had been unaware of the incidents and was grateful to the reviewers for raising them. A number of steps had been undertaken to address them including meeting with both instructors to discuss the sexist incidents and following up directly with the two students. A forum for the teaching staff had been held with UTM's Equity and Diversity Officer to discuss proactive measures. Professor Mullin stated that she was committed to ongoing efforts and would work collaboratively with faculty, UTMSU, student leaders and all students on the issues.

Professor Mullin stated that the reviewer's comments regarding the delayed promotion of female colleagues could not pertain to UTM faculty because all eligible female colleagues in English at UTM had been promoted to full professor or were undergoing a promotion review. There was agreement that the department needed to build a more diverse faculty which had been a key consideration in all faculty searches.

Professor Copeland stated that the Department Chair had appointed a Director of Undergraduate English Studies who would be undertaking a curriculum review which would also take diversity issues into consideration.

Professor Nelson added that diversity was an important priority across the University and that her office would be enhancing strategic tools to support diversity in hiring and advancement.

A follow-up report was requested in one year regarding the actions taken to address the issues raised in the review regarding the sexist incidents, and issues with gender equality and diversity identified by the reviewers.

The Chair expressed her appreciation to the Deans and other faculty representatives in attendance for their thorough work and active engagement.

The Chair thanked the members of the Reading Groups for their work. She also thanked Dr. Daniella Mallinck and Ms Justine Garrett of the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs for assembling the Review Compendium.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

On motion duly moved, seconded and carried

YOUR COMMITTEE APPROVED

THAT the consent agenda be adopted.

### **2. Report of the Previous Meeting: Report 175 – September 16, 2015**

Report Number 175 (September 16, 2015) was approved.

### **3. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting**

There was no business arising from the previous meeting.

### **4. Date of Next Meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting was scheduled for January 12, 2015 at 4:10 p.m.

## **END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

### **5. Reports of the Administrative Assessors**



There were no reports of the administrative assessors.

**6. Other Business**

There was no other business.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

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Secretary

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Chair

October 28, 2015