



FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: Academic Affairs Committee

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PRESENTER: Professor Heather Miller, Vice-Dean, Teaching & Learning
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DATE: April 27, 2020 for May 4, 2020

AGENDA ITEM: 4

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Reviews of Academic Programs and Units

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Section 5.6 of our Terms of Reference states that the Academic Affairs Committee shall receive for information and discussion reviews of academic programs and/or units, consistent with the protocol outlined in the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **Academic Affairs Committee [For Information] (May 4, 2020)**
2. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs [For Information] (May 6, 2020)
3. Agenda Committee of the Academic Board [For Information] (May 19, 2020)
4. Academic Board [For Information] (May 28, 2020)
5. Executive Committee of the Governing Council [For Information] (June 16, 2020)
6. Governing Council [For Information] (June 25, 2020)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

No previous action was taken on this proposal.

HIGHLIGHTS:

This report will address the external reviews of academic programs offered in the Department of Philosophy and the Master of Biotechnology (MBiotech) Program. These reviews were hosted at UTM in February and March of 2019. External reviews of academic programs are an important part of the academic planning process as it ensures the quality of our programs through rigorous and consistent assessment by peers.

For both external reviews the review teams were provided with the Terms of Reference; previous External Reviewer Reports and Administrative Responses; a Departmental/ Program Self-Study; Faculty CVs; UTM Degree Level Expectations; UofT Facts & Figures; UTM Divisional Academic Plan 2017; UTM Vision Statement 2017; UTM Academic Calendar; UTM Viewbook; UofT Domestic Viewbook; and the Tri-Campus Framework document.

During the two-day site visit, the Philosophy reviewers met with the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean; Associate Dean, Undergraduate; Chair of the Department; Acting Chair of the Graduate Department of Philosophy; Director of Graduate Studies for the Graduate Department of Philosophy; Assistant and Associate Professors; Sessional Instructors and Part-Time Lecturers; current undergraduate students; graduate students; and departmental administrative staff.

For the MBiotech Program, the two-day site visit included meetings with the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean; Acting Vice-Dean Teaching & Learning; Director of the Institute for Management & Innovation (IMI); Director of the MBiotech Program; Associate Director of the MBiotech Program; Science and Management teaching stream faculty; current students; program alumni; program administrative staff; and IMI administrative staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no net implications for the campus' operating budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is presented for information.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

Presentation on External Reviews;
Review Summary and Administrative Response: Department of Philosophy
Review Summary and Administrative Response: Master of Biotechnology Program



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**Semi-Annual Report:
External Reviews of
Departments and Programs**

Philosophy & MBiotech

Heather Miller, Vice-Dean, Teaching & Learning
Academic Affairs Committee

May 4, 2020

External Review Process

- An internal self-study, using a standardized template, is prepared by the department chair/ program director after widespread consultation with faculty, staff, cognate units and students.
- The self-study discusses faculty research, teaching, administrative/ organizational structure, and internal/ external relationships in the context of a department's current academic programs and curricular alignment with DLEs and PLOs.
- After a two day site visit, external reviewers prepare a report for the Dean. Their report provides a detailed evaluation of programs and curriculum.

External Reviewers

- Selected on the basis of expertise in field and administrative experience
 - Typically try to strike balance between male/female and Canadian/ US reviewers
- Assist in determining the quality of the academic programs (design, deliver, innovation, etc.), make recommendations for improvement, and raise any significant areas of concern.

Response to External Reviewer Report

- External Reviewer Report is reviewed to ensure no factual errors.
- Final External Reviewer Report is submitted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs (VPAP). The VPAP Office provides a summary and formally requests an administrative response from the Chair/ Program Director and Dean.
- The review summary and decanal response shared with:
 - Academic Affairs
 - Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P)
 - Academic Board

Department of Philosophy

February 28 & March 1, 2019

Chair: Diana Raffman

Review Team: McGill University &
Indiana University, Bloomington



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Major Findings - Positive Elements

Programs & Curriculum

- Minors in Philosophy of Science, and in Ethics, Law, and Society are innovative programs tailored to attract students from a wide range of disciplines
- Courses employ a range of innovative and appropriate evaluation methods, tailored to the subject matter and the level of the course.
- Students report great satisfaction with the teaching in the department, and interactions with faculty, lecturers, teaching assistants, and staff

Faculty/Research

- Faculty research is published by first-rate philosophy journals and university presses, and members regularly present at refereed conferences. Member contributions are highly ranked, nationally and internationally.
- Scope of areas covered by faculty is impressively wide and directly relevant to the teaching mission of the department

Administration

- Department makes good use of human resources, as evidenced by their high quality programs, recent curricular improvements, and high level of student satisfaction

Recommendations

Programs & Curriculum

- Identify ways of expanding class sizes for courses in areas that have proven attractive to students (specifically STEM students)
- Increase faculty participation in outreach efforts

Faculty

- Develop a five-year complement plan that addresses challenges of enrolments and possible retirements
- Prioritize hiring in Asian Philosophy

Administration

- Develop a fair procedure for prioritizing leave requests so that no more than 25% of faculty are on leave simultaneously
- Consider appointing a director of undergraduate studies to assist the Chair in course scheduling, curriculum oversight, organization of co- and extra-curricular events, etc.

Response to Review

Programs & Curriculum

- PHL204H5 (Philosophy in Everyday Life), a course designed specifically for STEM students, has expanded from 90 to 140 seats in the last three years
- Faculty are working closely with their Undergraduate Philosophy Society to develop additional co- and extra-curricular opportunities

Faculty

- Department has already developed a detailed complement plan that strategically accounts for three expected retirements in the near future
- Need is anticipated in the areas of Political Philosophy, South Asian Philosophy, and Chinese Philosophy

Administration

- Department has implemented a shared calendar for faculty to identify preferred sabbatical terms for the next ten years; sabbaticals will be scheduled to minimize number of faculty on leave in a given academic year
- The Department's first Associate Chair, Undergraduate was appointed in 2019-2020



Master of Biotechnology Program

March 25 & 26, 2019

Program Director: Leigh Revers

Review Team: University of Calgary, Cornell University
& McGill University

Major Findings - Positive Elements

Programs & Curriculum

- Excellence of the MBiotech Program is widely recognized, regionally and nationally
- New Digital Health Technologies field is well conceived and has great potential for training students in important emerging technology sector
- Opportunities for experiential learning beyond the classroom are very strong
- “High-functioning and high-performing Master’s Degree program” with 297/303 surveyed graduates fully employed

Administration

- MBiotech has a very strong and positive internal and external identity, and a remarkably positive ‘market brand’
- Extensive and active alumni network
- Program has strong management and leadership with a well articulated vision

Recommendations

Programs & Curriculum

- Consider opportunities for MBiotech to take a leadership role in recruiting international trainees
- Explore opportunities to introduce more cutting-edge faculty research into program through elective offerings

Faculty

- Consider hires in Computational Biology and Analytics & Business Intelligence to support the delivery of research-focused courses in the Program

Administration

- Organize an annual retreat to allow for the exchange of ideas and to strengthen the program's identity
- Establish an Industry Advisory Board for MBiotech to further enhance opportunities for interaction, networking, and lobbying

Response to Review

Programs & Curriculum

- MBiotech is launching an International Ambassadors Program aimed at developing opportunities for international exchange; contacts in Paris and Vienna are currently being explored
- Program is actively bringing research faculty back into teaching by rejuvenating mandatory science courses and developing new elective courses, such as special topics courses that can showcase research in the classroom

Faculty

- MBiotech to organize *State of the Program* lunches to increase contact and improve connections with departments that support the Program; with resolution of faculty and teaching concerns a specific priority

Administration

- First annual retreat held October, 2019
- Industry Think-Tank (ITT) Group (replacing current Advisory Board) to launch Spring-Summer 2020