



TO: Planning and Budget Committee

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AGENDA ITEM: 4

ITEM IDENTIFICATION: School of Graduate Studies / Faculty of Medicine: Proposal for a new Master of Science in Community Health (M.Sc.C.H.) to be offered through the Department of Public Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Excerpt from the terms of reference for the Planning and Budget Committee:

4.4.2. The Committee advises the Academic Board on the planning and resource and proposals to establish, disestablish or significantly restructure academic programs. Implications might include significant planning and budgetary changes within the significant effects on other divisions, the University as a whole and the public.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

HIGHLIGHTS:

This is a proposal for a new Master of Science in Community Health (M.Sc.C.H.) program in the Graduate Department of Public Health Sciences (PHS), together with an OCGS-defined Type 1 Diploma option. The program is intended for practising health professionals who already have, or plan to assume, teaching and public health/clinical leadership positions within their professional fields. It is a non-thesis, professional program, not intended as a lead in to a doctoral program. A brief description of the proposed M.Sc.C.H. program is provided in the attached Executive Summary.

Demand for this program arises from the existing Master of Health Sciences (M.H.Sc.) in the Public Health Sciences program. The M.H.Sc. program does not meet the needs of some applicants/students to that field and program who are more interested in a health practitioner teacher-education type of program. One field (Family and Community Medicine (FCM)) of the existing M.H.Sc. is being deliberately phased out in favour of the proposed program.

The degree name and designation have been proposed to convey the professional nature of the program. The M.Sc.C.H. degree program will have a distinctive focus; it is designed for people who already hold a professional credential and typically will have relevant professional experience. As such, the proposed format of program is not the same as the M.H.Sc. The program offers education and training for professionals in a modular-format through 5 FCE over a twelve month period for full-time students; there is a part-time option with a five-year time limit. The program includes a practicum. The proposal offers the option for a student who completes over half of the degree program requirements to leave the degree

program with a diploma (OCGS Type 1). These students would not be eligible to re-enroll in the degree program in future. A number of the courses will be offered via e-learning, or will have an e-learning component. The program will not be offered as an e-learning program in itself, however.

The proposal has been reviewed extensively within the Faculty of Medicine and the Departments of Public Health Sciences, Family and Community Medicine and Nutritional Sciences. It has been approved by the Curriculum Committee of the Department of Public Health Sciences (August 18, 2006), the Faculty of Medicine, Graduate Curriculum Committee (November 9, 2006) and Graduate Education Standing Committee of Council (January 31, 2007) and by the Faculty Council (February 26, 2007). Support for the new program has also been received from the Chair of the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, OISE/UT, and from the Dean, Faculty of Nursing. The School of Graduate Studies Council approved the proposal on February 27, 2007.

The proposal was presented to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs Committee on March 28, 2007.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

The resources necessary to offer the M.Sc.C.H. will come from the tuition and BIU revenue generated by student enrolment. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been negotiated between the Graduate Department of Public Health Sciences, its partner the clinical department of Family & Community Medicine, and the Graduate Department of Nutritional Science, which outlines the financial and administrative commitments and responsibilities relative to the implementation and delivery of the program. Startup and development funds for the Public Health Nutrition (PHN) field have been secured through the Academic Initiative Fund (AIF) (Graduate Training with Public Health Nutrition, AIF 3, 2006-07). Faculty with primary appointments in the Department of FCM and holding graduate appointments in PHS already offer much of the content of the FCM and Health Practitioner Teacher Education (HPTE) fields, as part of the current FCM field within the M.H.Sc.; therefore only limited development is necessary. The costs associated with the development of the Wound Prevention and Care (WCP) field have been covered by the International Interdisciplinary Wound Care Course.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Budget Committee recommends to the Academic Board:

THAT the proposed Master of Science in Community Health (M.Sc.C.H.) Program at the Faculty of Medicine, Department of Public Health Sciences, be approved, effective September 2007.

and

THAT the proposed Graduate Diploma in Community Health (Dip.C.H.) Program at the Faculty of Medicine, Department of Public Health Sciences, be approved, effective September 2007.

Master of Science in Community Health (MScCH)

Executive Summary

Academic

This proposal for a distinct, new Master of Science in Community Health (M.Sc.C.H.) program in the Graduate Department of Public Health Sciences (PHS) addresses the critical and recognized need for established health professionals to acquire formal professional development through graduate studies, particularly to enhance their teaching and clinical/public health leadership expertise within their disciplines. The program will enable these health professionals to further develop their analytical, critical, scholarly, professional, and knowledge translation skills to promote changes in practice within a wide range of health science disciplines and professions. Since it is a unique program with few competitors, the program is expected to attract students from across Canada and internationally. The program will be offered, largely using a flexible, time-efficient, classroom-based, modular programmatic delivery model. It will use existing facilities and current faculty within the Faculty of Medicine.

Initially, four fields are being proposed for the M.Sc.C.H.:

- Family and Community Medicine (FCM)
- Health Practitioner Teacher Education (HPTE)
- Public Health Nutrition (PHN)
- Wound Prevention and Care (WPC)

The M.Sc.C.H. program is intended for, and entry will be limited to, established health professionals (i.e., highly academically and professionally qualified students). The program requires the completion of 5.0 full course credit equivalents (FCE). All students will complete at least one introductory public health course and the majority will complete one or more graduate courses addressing the theories and strategies of effective teaching. Field specific required courses, electives and one or two supervised field placements or practica round out the program. An OCGS-defined Type 1 Diploma option will consist of 3.5 FCEs, as a *specified* subset of the required courses. There is no thesis requirement.

This new program was included as a key initiative in the most recent (2004-10) PHS Departmental Academic Plan. The proposed program fits squarely within the Faculty of Medicine's Academic Plan 2004-2010, which articulated the need to "Advance our scientific and professional training platform for the 21st century" as a major objective. Four fields are currently being proposed, although PHS views the M.Sc.C.H. as a training platform for a number of other potential, public health-relevant fields such as Infection Control and Global Health. PHS currently offers a Master of Health Science (M.H.Sc.) program, providing research and applied public health training, and a doctoral program. The proposed M.Sc.C.H. differs substantially from these existing PHS programs in its **emphasis and content** (PH core with an education theme), **intended audience** (health professional practitioners) **and delivery model**.

Conservative enrolment projections have been generated based on recent enrollment in the current M.H.Sc. in Family and Community Medicine field plus the Continuing Education courses in the Master Teacher Centre for Faculty Development Programs, Wound Prevention and Care Program, the Family and Community Medicine Academic Fellowship and the M.H.Sc. Community Nutrition Program. Once the M.Sc.C.H. is operational, the FCM field in the M.H.Sc. PHS will be phased out.

Space and Facilities

The Departments of PHS and FCM recently moved to the shared Health Sciences Building complex (155 College and 263 McCaul Streets) with ample office, meeting and classroom space. Students in the M.Sc.C.H. will have full access to all common and shared study areas available to graduate students in Public Health Sciences. In addition, PHN students will also have access to work space in the Fitzgerald Building, with the Department of Nutritional Sciences. Workspace for overall program administration and the academic Program Director for the M.Sc.C.H. will be provided by the PHS and FCM within their current space. Other faculty associated with the program will continue to work from the office/research space already assigned to them in their respective clinical and /or academic settings.

Students

Students will have access to all the facilities and services available to graduate students in PHS and at the University of Toronto, on the same terms and conditions. Students will be subject to all the applicable University policies and procedures relating to graduate students. Students in professional Master's degree programs are not generally eligible for many external and internal awards. It is anticipated that a significant number of students will receive financial and practical support from their employers.