

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**  
**THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**  
**REPORT NUMBER 212 OF THE COMMITTEE ON**  
**ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS**

**February 17, 2022**

To the Academic Board,  
University of Toronto

Your Committee reports that it held a virtual meeting on Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 3:10 p.m. with the following members present:

**Present:**

Ernest Lam (Chair), Aarthi Ashok (Vice-Chair), Susan McCahan (Vice-Provost, Academic Programs and Innovations in Undergraduate Education), Joshua Barker (Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Vice-Provost, Graduate Research and Education), Catherine Amara, Christian Caron, Moses Cook, James Davis, Raisa Deber, Maryanna Diab, Ana Djapa, Stark Draper, Angela Esterhammer, Adam Fox, Robert Gibbs, Nadine Janes, Gretchen Kerr, Jeannie Kim, Zhino Maanavi, Fabian Parsch, Maureen Simpson, Eric Stubbs, David Tieu

**Regrets:**

Walid Houry, Karen Ng, Rosa Saverino, Markus Stock

**Non-Voting Assessors:**

Angelique Saweczko (University Registrar)  
Leah Cohen (Vice-President, Research and Innovation, and Strategic Initiatives)

**Secretariat:**

Timothy Harlick, Secretary

**In Attendance:**

William Gough, Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, UTSC  
Mary T. Silcox Vice-Dean Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, UTSC  
George Arhonditsis, Chair, Graduate Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences, UTSC  
Randy Boyagoda, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, FAS  
Dwayne Benjamin, Vice Provost, Strategic Enrolment Management  
Donna Wall, Director, Financial Aid & Awards  
Jennifer Francisco, Coordinator, Academic Change

## **1. Chair's Welcome**

The Chair welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

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

Professor Susan McCahan, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs and Innovations in Undergraduate Education, offered an update on academic continuity as it related to the COVID-19 pandemic. She reminded the Committee that the *Policy on Academic Continuity* granted to the Provost and Academic Board the authority to declare an academic disruption under extraordinary circumstances and noted that one additional program disruption was declared in January in the Faculty of Pharmacy's PharmD program.

Professor McCahan reported on the progress of the University's return to in-person activities and noted that course offerings continued to move to in-person delivery as had originally been planned and scheduled for the Winter term.

Professor Leah Cohen, Vice-President, Research and Innovation, and Strategic Initiatives, offered an update on research operations and noted that with the University's announcement of a gradual return to campus as of February 7, 2022, in-person research spaces had been able to increase capacity from 65% to 100% in areas where safe distancing could be maintained.

### *Discussion*

In response to a member's question regarding research-related travel, Professor Cowan reported that the University's travel related policies were currently under revision as a result of a series of updates to advisories for specific regions made by the federal government.

In response to a member's question regarding the *UCheck* app, Professor McCahan reported that the University had updated its *UCheck* questions to ensure alignment with provincial requirements for health screening. The University had also added a non-mandatory option for community members to upload their proof of booster vaccination as a proactive measure in the event it became a requirement under a public health order.

The Chair thanked Professors McCahan and Cowen for their reports.

## **3. New Program: MSc, Environmental Science, UTSC**

The Committee received and reviewed the proposal for a new graduate program: Master of Science (MSc) in Environmental Science, University of Toronto Scarborough. Professor William Gough, Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, UTSC; Professor Mary T. Silcox Vice-Dean Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies UTSC; and, Professor George Arhonditsis, Chair, Graduate Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences, UTSC were in attendance to answer questions.

Professor McCahan reported that the purpose of the proposed MSc was to train Bachelor of Science or Engineering graduates in the design, execution and dissemination of research that is focused on the interfaces between traditional disciplines in dealing with fundamentally scientific, environment-focused issues. It was also reported that the proposal had undergone extensive consultation.

Professor Silcox added that the development and consultation of this program emphasized science research as a differentiating factor from other Environmental Science offerings at the University. She further noted that with the addition of this new program into the suite of existing Environment Science programs, the University would be a leader in this area of study.

#### *Discussion*

In response to a member's question regarding the continuation of studies into a PhD program, Professor Silcox discussed generally the pathways of students entering the PhD program in Environmental Science and noted that an important design consideration of this MSc was to complement the PhD program.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried

IT WAS RECOMMENDED,

THAT the proposed degree program, Master of Science (MSc) in Environmental Science as described in the proposal from the University of Toronto Scarborough dated January 26, 2022, be approved effective May 1, 2023.

#### **4. Program Closure: Specialist in Christianity and Culture (HBA), Faculty of Arts and Science**

The Committee received and reviewed the proposal for a program closure: Specialist in Christianity and Culture (HBA), Faculty of Arts and Science within the Faculty of Arts and Science. Professor Randy Boyagoda, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, Faculty of Arts and Science was in attendance to answer questions.

Professor McCahan reported that through the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Program (UTQAP) a total of 63 programs and program structures at the University had been closed. She noted that the 2013-14 UTQAP review of the Christianity and Culture programs recommended suspending or closing the Specialist program due to a decline in student interest. Enrolment into the program was suspended in 2015 and as of 2017 there were no active students.

In response to a question, Professor Boyagoda provided the Committee with the general enrolment numbers of the Christianity and Culture programs.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried

IT WAS RESOLVED,

THAT the proposed closure of the Specialist in Christianity and Culture, Faculty of Arts and Science, dated January 20, 2022, to which admissions were administratively suspended on April 1, 2015, be approved with an anticipated program closure date of April 30, 2022.

## **5. Annual Report: Student Financial Support, 2020-21**

The Committee received and reviewed for information the Annual Report: Student Financial Support, 2020-21. Professor Dwayne Benjamin, Vice Provost, Strategic Enrolment Management and Donna Wall, Director, Financial Aid & Awards were in attendance to answer questions.

Angelique Saweczko, University Registrar, reported that the Report was provided annually in accordance with the University's *Policy on Student Financial Support*. She noted that the Report provided information on need-based aid by academic division, Ontario Student Assistant Program ("OSAP") debt-load for students graduating from undergraduate direct-entry programs, and funding for graduate students in doctoral stream programs. Ms Saweczko also noted that in 2020-21, the University had spent \$248.9M in total student assistance, compared to \$241 million for the year prior. Total OSAP funding to U of T students increased by \$24M to \$360M in 2020-21, compared to \$336M in the previous year and 51% of UofT students received OSAP funding which was the highest number of students in lower-income families relative to other universities in Ontario.

The University had launched the University of Toronto COVID-19 Emergency Grant Program in March 2020. \$6.3M in grant funding had been issued to approximately 5,400 students during fiscal year 2021. Since its inception, more than \$11M in COVID-19 Emergency Grants had been disbursed to more than 8,000 students. The grant continued to be administered to students adversely affected by COVID-19

Professor Benjamin provided a summary of the University's financial aid program and its relationship with OSAP and noted that the University's financial aid program was being reviewed to determine any potential improvements. The review would also provide improved demographic data of recipients.

In response to a member's Question, Ms Saweczko confirmed a minor numerical error in the Report and that it would be corrected.

## **6. Annual Report: Student Awards Established, Amended and Withdrawn, July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021**

The Committee received and reviewed for information the Annual Report: Student Awards Established, Amended and Withdrawn from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021. Professor Benjamin and Ms Wall remained in attendance to answer questions.

Ms Saweczko reported that during 2020-2021, 231 new awards had been established, with a total endowment value of \$28.9 million. A total of \$19,779 in expendable awards had

been withdrawn because the expendable fund had been exhausted or the donor commitment ended.

There were no questions from members.

## **7. Update on the Guidelines Regarding Access to the Official Student Academic Record**

The Committee received and reviewed for information the updates to the Guidelines Regarding Access to the Official Student Academic Record.

Ms Saweczko reported that the guidelines had been originally drafted in April 2008 and since then Ontario's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("FIIPA") had been amended. The University had also created a supporting set of student record retention guidelines and so it was timely to update the guidelines to align with legislation, clarify definitions within the guidelines, and recognize the supporting documents that had been established.

In response to a member's question regarding outstanding student financial obligations and their ability to access official transcripts, Ms Saweczko provided an overview of the University's *Policy on Academic Sanctions for Students who have Outstanding University Obligations* and noted that it is currently under review.

## **8. Report of the Previous Meeting: Report 211, January 11, 2022**

The Report of the previous meeting was approved.

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

There was no business arising from the Report of the previous meeting.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting – April 12, 2022, at 3:10 p.m.**

The Chair confirmed that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022.

## **11. Other Business**

There were no items of other business.

The meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

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Secretary

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Chair

February 18, 2022