



University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

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AGENDA ITEM: 3

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Undergraduate Program Review Audit Committee (UPRAC) - Report of the Auditors on the 2001 U of T Undergraduate Program Review

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The Committee has monitorial responsibility for annual reports on reviews of academic programs and units.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

HIGHLIGHTS:

As a result of the 1993 Report of the Task Force on University Accountability (Broadhurst Report), the Ontario government had indicated that it wanted to initiate a process whereby there would be direct external review of undergraduate programs. In Memorandum 93-VI, the Ontario Council of University Affairs proposed a province-wide review process to be carried out by an independent Academic Quality Audit Committee.

The Ontario Academic Vice-Presidents noted that the proposed initiative was (a) far too intrusive into universities' internal affairs and (b) likely to increase costs and bureaucracy substantially. Over the next three years, there were discussions among the Vice-Presidents Academic, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and the government about how to construct a system-wide review process that synthesized (a) the government's goal of accountability with b) the universities' insistence on maintaining autonomy.

In December 1996, COU accepted an initiative proposed by the Vice-Presidents Academic group. A sub-committee of the group, now formalized as the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV), would oversee a regular 'audit' of the procedures used by universities in reviewing their undergraduate programs. This process is applied both to existing programs, as well as to the introduction of new programs. The process was designed to satisfy the needs for accountability identified in the Broadhurst Report and by the Ontario Council on University Affairs in its Advisory Memorandum OCUA 93-VI Academic Audit Review, while preserving the principles of university self-regulation and autonomy.

In 2001, the University Program Reviews Audit Committee (UPRAC) audited the University of Toronto' review system by selecting a sample of completed U of T reviews and the University's own *Guidelines for Review of Academic Programs*.

The Audit Committee presented its Report to the University in January 2004 (see attached). The Report made a number of recommendations and suggestions as to how processes at the University of Toronto might be improved. The UPRAC report was on the agenda for the Committee's meeting in June 2004, but it was agreed that it should be deferred to a later meeting.

The *UPRAC Audit Guidelines* apply two tests: the conformity of institutional policy, procedures, and practices (i.e., the review process as a whole) to the UPR process, and the conformity of institutional procedures and practices to institutional policy. The reviewers concluded that the review process at U of T is "essentially very sound" with a number of features that "are laudatory and worthy of emulation". The reviewers also noted that U of T's *Guidelines for Review of Academic Programs* were tied to the planning process and our challenge would be to develop an overarching review policy.

In framing their report and presenting their findings, the Auditors have found it helpful to distinguish between recommendations and suggestions. Instances where the Auditors considered the policies and procedures not to be in conformity with the UPR Process are cast as recommendations. Suggestions are offered in cases where, although the institution's measures are in conformity with the Process, those measures could, in the opinion of the Auditors, be improved.

The UPRAC recommendations and suggestions were in general constructive and particularly helpful as they came at a time when the University was entering the new academic planning cycle, *Stepping UP*, and had begun the process of consolidating and updating the *Guidelines for Review of Academic Programs*. As we were beginning, however, to incorporate the recommendations and suggestions of reviewers into the *Guidelines for Review of Academic Programs*, OCAV approved its own revised *UPRAC Review and Audit Guidelines* on February 4, 2004. These revisions were based on the general findings of the first cycle of reviews across the entire system.

We have received the revised *UPRAC Review and Audit Guidelines* and have worked to consult with the U of T divisions and Principals and Deans to revise the University's review guidelines and develop an overarching review policy for both new and existing programs and units. The Policy is being presented to Governing Council for approval (see Agenda Item #4) along with procedural Guidelines for the internal assessment of proposed new programs and units and the review of existing programs and units at the University.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

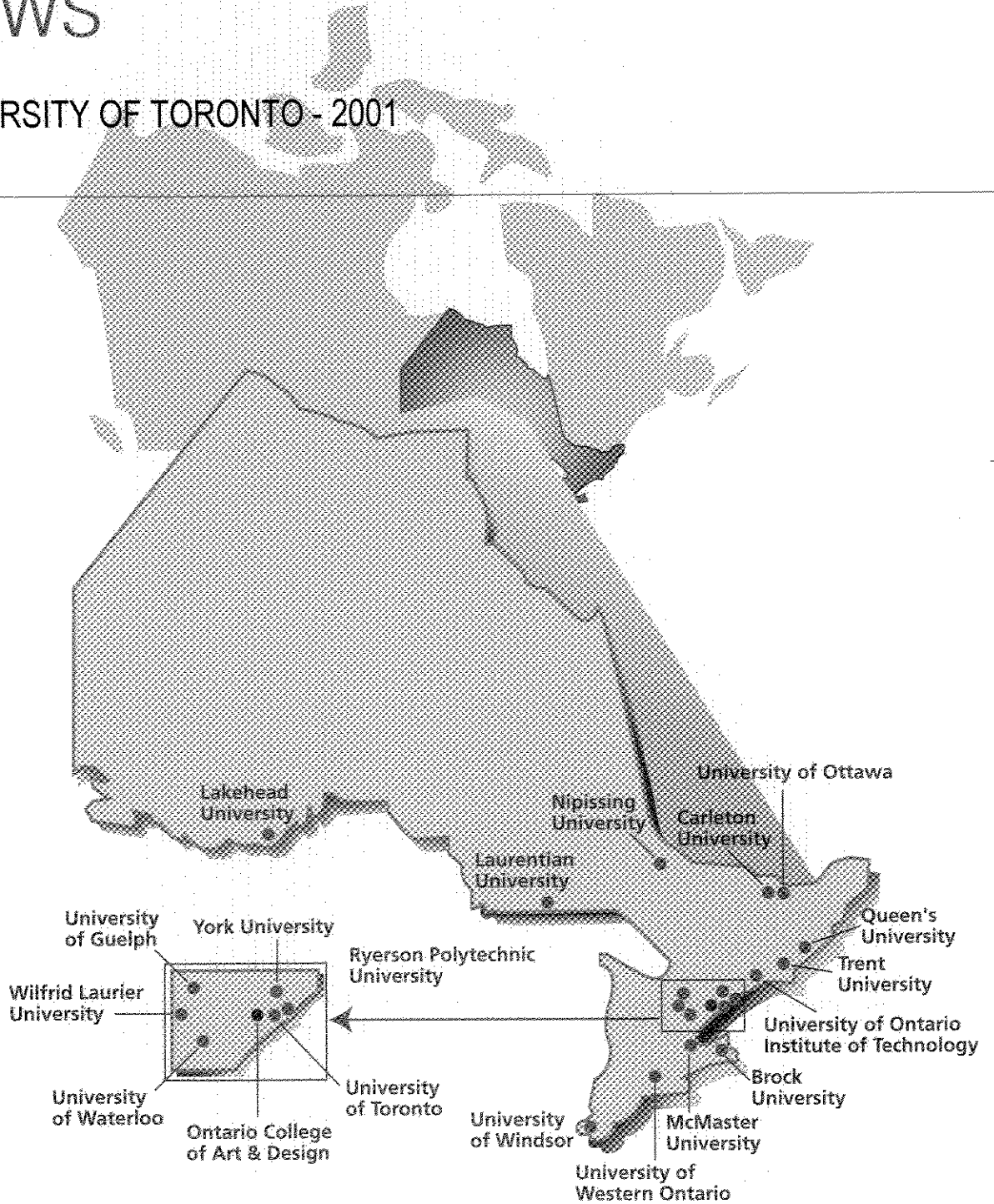
There are no new/additional financial resources required to receive the UPRAC audit report and implement the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information.

REPORT OF THE AUDITORS ON UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEWS

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO - 2001



COUNCIL OF
ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

CONSEIL DES
UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

**Report of the UPRAC Auditors on
Undergraduate Program Reviews at
University of Toronto**

November 2001

Prepared under the authority of the
Undergraduate Program Review Audit Committee,
a committee of the
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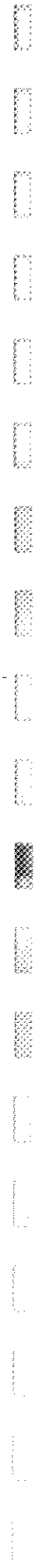


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Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

Related to Audit:

Consultant	The external expert entrusted with the responsibility of reviewing academic units and their programs
COU	Council of Ontario Universities
MET	Ministry of Education and Training
MTCU	Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
OCAV	Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents
OCGS	Ontario Council on Graduate Studies
UPRAC	Undergraduate Program Review Audit Committee
<i>UPRAC Guidelines</i>	Refers to <i>UPRAC Audit Guidelines: Methodology for the Audit of Undergraduate Program Reviews</i> established by OCAV
UPR Process	Refers to “Undergraduate Program Review Process” and its “Objective, Structure and Elements” found in <i>UPRAC Audit Guidelines</i> , section 1

Related to the University of Toronto (see Appendix 5 for a description of the University of Toronto’s organization and governance structure):

AP&P	Committee on Academic Policy and Programs
FAS	Faculty of Arts and Science
<i>Guidelines</i>	Refers to <i>Guidelines for Reviews of Academic Programs and Units</i>
<i>Guidelines 2</i>	Refers to <i>Guidelines for Divisional Submissions</i>
<i>Raising Our Sights</i>	Refers to <i>Raising Our Sights: The Next Cycle of White Paper Planning Key Priorities for 2000-2004</i>
UTM	University of Toronto at Mississauga
UTSC	University of Toronto at Scarborough
<i>White Paper</i>	Refers to <i>Planning for 2000: a Provostial White Paper on University Objectives and Strategies</i>

1 Introduction

In October 1996, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) approved the establishment of a procedure for the systematic auditing of the policies and processes in place at all Ontario universities for the conduct of periodic quality reviews of undergraduate programs. The procedure and guidelines specify that auditing of processes includes the examination of a representative sample of the quality reviews. Subsequently, in February 1997, the Guidelines were amended to include the auditing of the mechanisms used by the universities for the implementation of new undergraduate programs. Authority for the organization and management of the audits is vested in the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV). The detailed oversight of the audit procedure is devolved to a committee of OCAV, the Undergraduate Program Review Audit Committee (UPRAC), whose responsibilities are set out in Bylaw 1 of the OCAV Constitution. One of UPRAC's duties is to recommend to OCAV the schedule of audits, which started in 1997. The schedule for the first cycle was approved by OCAV at its meeting of February 27, 1997 and was subsequently amended slightly on October 13, 1999; it is given in its entirety in Appendix 1.

The audits themselves are conducted at arm's length by at least three Auditors who are appointed by UPRAC according to the criteria in the bylaw: "Auditors shall be chosen for their recognized strength in the development and operation of undergraduate programs. They shall not hold an administrative appointment in an Ontario university during their terms as Auditors." (See Appendix 2 for the names and affiliations of the Auditors for this audit.) The procedures to be followed by the Auditors are spelled out in *UPRAC Audit Guidelines: Methodology for the Audit of Undergraduate Program Reviews*, hereafter called *UPRAC Guidelines*. They describe in some detail "the objective, structure and elements" that "any credible periodic undergraduate program review procedure undertaken by an institution must include." For convenience, these key review components of the Guidelines will be referred to as the UPR Process.

UPRAC Guidelines applies two tests: the conformity of institutional policy, procedures, and practices, i.e., the review process as a whole, to the UPR Process, and the conformity of institutional procedures and practices to institutional policy. At the beginning of the first audit cycle, many of the program reviews chosen for audit were conducted under policies that were already in place before the Guidelines were adopted. In consequence, in the early rounds the test of conformity of practice with universities' own policies proved to be particularly important, since experience with institutional policy provides clues about particular strengths of the local assessment culture, or, contrarily, of problems that needed to be addressed as part of the more general effort of complying with the UPR Process. Even, however, after all Universities have taken steps to bring their internal policies into line with the UPR Process, the Auditors expect that the test of the conformity of practice to institutional policy will remain important, and should be subject to audit. An important benefit of this test is to identify good practices that should be emphasized and retained. The audit of such practices recognizes measures that go beyond the minimum requirements of the UPR Process, that promote programs of high quality, and that reflect the unique character and mission of each institution.

As regards the conformity of institutional process as a whole to the UPR Process, the Auditors have been sensitive to the appearance of unfairness that would have resulted from the retroactive application of the standards of the UPR Process to institutional policies that were not, and could not possibly have been, designed to satisfy them. At the same time, the Auditors are bound to apply these standards, since it is now expected that all Ontario universities have adopted program review policies that meet the minimum standards set by the UPR Process. The way the Auditors have dealt with this potential appearance of unfairness while at the same time discharging their obligation to apply the UPR standards is to treat the components of the Process as "best practices," and to frame their suggestions and recommendations in order to assist institutions audited to comply with the new standards adopted by OCAV.

In organizing their report and presenting their findings, the Auditors have found it helpful to distinguish between recommendations and suggestions. Instances where the Auditors considered the policies and procedures not to be in conformity with the UPR Process are cast as recommendations. Frequently, recommendations may be technical in nature, not substantive. Such is the case when the review practice is in compliance even though the policy is not. Suggestions are offered in cases where, although the institution's measures are in conformity with the Process, those measures could, in the opinion of the Auditors, be improved.

The audit process carried out under the authority of OCAV was approved by COU in 1996. It was designed to satisfy the need for accountability identified in the final report of the Task Force on University Accountability (the Broadhurst Report published in May 1993) and by the Ontario Council on University Affairs (OCUA) in its Advisory Memorandum 93-VI, *Academic Audit Review* (issued in July 1993), while preserving the principles of university self-regulation and autonomy.

In 1996-97, the then Ministry of Education and Training delegated to each university the collection and evaluation of information relating to the criteria used for the funding of new, non-core programs.¹ The Auditors noted during the conduct of the first audits that *UPRAC Guidelines* does not deal with these MET (now MTCU, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities) requirements. Therefore, in the fall of 1997 the Auditors recommended to OCAV that the audit should extend to the policies of universities pertaining to the establishment of new programs and, where applicable, should consider the integrity of the information that is collected to satisfy MTCU's criteria. OCAV agreed with this recommendation and modified its Guidelines accordingly. All new program proposals should be backed by a thorough review. That principle has been endorsed by OCAV.

¹ The non-core programs are those specified in the Ministry's list of Group A programs in its memorandum of August 10, 2000.

The Auditors selected the single-department review of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts and Science, St. George Campus, (FAS) as a representative program from the humanities. They also chose, for illustrative and background purposes, the review of Philosophy at the University of Toronto at Scarborough (UTSC), recognizing that it had not progressed beyond the self-study stage. [For different reasons, none of the 1999 and later reviews at UTSC and the University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM) were complete, but not to include even an incomplete review from one of those campuses would give short shrift to Toronto's tri-campus organization.]

Only a few FAS programs were reviewed on a stand-alone basis. To cope with its large number of programs and the short time-frame of the review period (see sections 3 and 4 for more information on Toronto's program review protocol) the Faculty of Arts and Science, St. George Campus, introduced a novel and significant approach to program reviews: the grouping of related programs into 'clusters' of graduate and undergraduate programs. The Auditors understand that this tactic was unique to FAS and may not be repeated in future review cycles. Nevertheless, the twelve cluster reviews covered all FAS programs, and so no audit would be complete without including one in the sample. For the purposes of the audit, these undergraduate constituents of Cluster 1 were selected: Aboriginal Studies, Criminology, Social and Cultural Anthropology, Women's Studies, Anthropology, Philosophy and Sociology.

From the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, the Auditors chose the program in Chemical Engineering, which includes the collaborative program in Environmental Engineering. To obtain a full appreciation of this division's approach to program reviews, they also looked at one of the faculty-wide 'Horizontal Reviews' that dealt with issues cutting across all programs. The selected 'Horizontal Review' had as its focus best practices in: undergraduate engineering education; communication across the curriculum; ethics; and breadth versus depth in the undergraduate curriculum. To represent both the small faculties and the health sciences, the Auditors chose the Pharmacy program review.

The interdisciplinary program in European Studies offered by the University of Toronto at Mississauga was selected as an example of how the University implements new programs.

Having met and reviewed the documentary record, the Auditors visited the University on November 22 and 23, 2001. The Auditors would like to record their appreciation for the assistance and cooperation they received from all those involved with their visit and the provision of documentation. (The complete list of those who met with the Auditors during the visit to the University of Toronto is provided in Appendix 4.)

2 Methodology and Verification Steps

UPRAC Guidelines calls for the institution undergoing an audit to provide “general documents that present the [undergraduate program] review policies, procedures and practices adopted and implemented by the institution” and any “additional documents they deem appropriate.” The institution is asked to supply a complete list of programs showing which reviews have been completed, which are underway, and which scheduled. When the Auditors have selected the reviews to be audited, they request relevant documentation, including the following:

- the internal review policies in place at the time of the review of each program where they differed from those currently in force;
- the complete record of the reviews chosen for audit;
- the programs' self-appraisal documents;
- the evaluations of external consultants;
- the appraisals by peers internal to the university but outside the program under review;
- the responses at all levels, if any, to the evaluations;
- the minutes of any discussion at Senate (or one of its standing committees) and the Board of Governors (or the equivalent bodies in the unicameral governance structure at the University of Toronto); and
- evidence that mechanisms are in place to act on the recommendations arising from the process.

In accordance with this requirement, the University of Toronto provided the Auditors with copies of the current policies adopted by the University to govern the conduct of undergraduate program reviews and the implementation of new programs, plus the schedule of programs that had been reviewed and those slated for future review. Once the Auditors selected the programs they intended to consider, Toronto was asked to forward documents relevant to the review of those existing programs and to the implementation of the new program chosen for consideration. (A list of the principal documents provided by the University is included in Appendix 3.)

In selecting a sample of program reviews for the audit, the Auditors are enjoined by *UPRAC Guidelines* to “take into account the diversity of educational programs offered by the university, whenever possible.” Several aspects of the University of Toronto were considered in making this selection: the very large size and complexity of the institution; the wide range of disciplines; the multi-campus structure and, the existence of more than one program in the same discipline; and a review policy that allows for some decentralization and divisional/faculty variation in the conduct of reviews. As reported by the University, “prior to 1999, policies and practices for the conduct of reviews were divisionally based, and varied somewhat across the University.” Since a university-wide review protocol was introduced in 1999, one that incorporated *UPRAC Guidelines*, the Auditors decided to include in the audit sample only program reviews conducted under this new process.

3 Program Reviews at the University of Toronto

3.1 Existing Programs

The year 1999 marked a new approach to undergraduate program reviews at the University of Toronto. In the summary of "Recent History and Current Practice" of undergraduate program reviews, the University reported that "prior to 1999, policies and practices for the conduct of [internally mandated] reviews were divisionally based, and varied somewhat across the University with regard to matters such as the data collected for the purpose of the review, the involvement of the reviewers from within and outside the University of Toronto, and the breadth of circulation of the review report." These pre-1999 reviews normally took place on a five- to seven-year cycle, coinciding with the end of the term of the unit head: the dean of a faculty, the chair of a department, etc.

In 1999, the University made several important changes to its review process with the implementation of institutional-wide *Guidelines for Reviews of Academic Programs and Units* (hereafter *Guidelines*) that introduced "greater consistency to matters such as the content of the self-study, the use of external reviewers, and the circulation of the review report, while allowing for flexibility at the divisional level." Perhaps more than in other reports some elaboration on the etiology of the review process document is warranted here.

In 1994, the University's Provost issued a comprehensive framework to guide academic planning at the University from 1994 to 2000. *Planning for 2000: a Provostial White Paper on University Objectives and Strategies*, known as the *White Paper*, set out a series of objectives for the institution that are "central to the mission of the University." Building on the success of the first cycle of academic planning, the University undertook a second cycle with the publication in 1999 of *Raising Our Sights: The Next Cycle of White Paper Planning Key Priorities for 2000-2004* (hereafter *Raising Our Sights*). As well as continuing to give pre-eminence to the objectives of the *White Paper*, *Raising Our Sights* also sets out two procedural emphases – self-assessment and external review, and broad consultation – that form the basis for much of what appears in *Guidelines*.

Toronto's *Guidelines* was originally issued by the Provost as a "companion document" to *Raising Our Sights* on February 1, 1999. The undated version of *Guidelines* followed by divisions and units is essentially the companion piece without the introduction and with the addition of an appendix containing "Elements of the Self-study." *Guidelines* is an administrative document issued by the Provost for the conduct of reviews; it is not a policy of the University's Governing Council (see Appendix 5 for a brief description of the governance structure), though it had as its origin key parts of *Raising Our Sights* that were endorsed by the Academic Board and ultimately by the Governing Council itself. It is the *Guidelines* document that the Auditors have used as the policy statement for the conformity test carried out in section 5.1 of this report.

Since *Guidelines* allows for divisional variation in the conduct of reviews, this document alone is not the last word on undergraduate programs reviews. Thus, the Faculty of Arts and Science followed essentially the same process but with some variations. Also, the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering commissioned several faculty-wide reviews that covered issues of relevance and importance for each program. Additionally, some comments on these local variations will be found in 5.2.

“Elements of the Self-study,” referred to above, forms an essential ingredient of the program review protocol, and it enjoins academic units to “assess each of its programs against the criteria established in Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 of the *White Paper*.” These Objectives also constitute part of the charge to external reviewers. Reviews of undergraduate programs, then, are conducted as part of the review of the relevant units. In addition to these University unit reviews, some undergraduate programs undergo external accreditation reviews.

A further dimension of the undergraduate review picture at the University of Toronto is found in what is termed by the institution as the “portal to governance.” In keeping with the Broadhurst Report on University Accountability (and later *UPRAC Audit Guidelines*), the University had undertaken “to ensure that summaries of all academic program reviews are provided to Governing Council.” *Guidelines* outlines how review reports are to be submitted for information to the Committee on Academic Policy and Program (AP&P), and then on up to the Governing Council, itself. The authority for this reporting structure is found in the “Accountability Framework for Reviews of Academic Programs and Units,” which was approved June 14, 1999 by the Executive Committee of the Governing Council.

The program reviews selected for this audit were all conducted as part of the University’s recent comprehensive academic planning exercise. *Guidelines* addresses a number of issues that are specific to these reviews, and the adjustments that were necessary as part of an ambitious planning exercise. For example, *Guidelines* states that the administrative response forming part of the review process should take “the form of the academic plan for the unit,” demonstrating how academic planning and program reviews were inextricably linked. The adjustments will be commented on later in this report as appropriate

As part of the Provostial *Raising Our Sights* planning process, all programs were to be reviewed over the course of a year, though provision was made for exemptions and deferrals and some were granted. In light of the recency of the reviews, the University has not prepared a schedule of future reviews of undergraduate programs, but it has indicated that “the cycle of reviews would likely correspond to the cycle of academic planning.”

3.2 New Programs

The University of Toronto policy governing implementation of new undergraduate programs is found in the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs document entitled *Guidelines for Divisional Submissions*, which was approved by the Academic Board on September 30, 1993 and amended by the Committee on September 15, 1999. These guidelines are not limited to new program implementation. In addition to what are termed "Major Academic Program Proposals," such as new degree programs and extensive restructuring, they also apply to changes in divisional grading practices, and admissions policies and practices.

4 General Principles and Guidelines Used for Undergraduate Reviews by the University of Toronto

4.1 Existing Programs

As described in section 3.1, Toronto's current process governing the review of its existing undergraduate programs is embodied in *Guidelines*. It sets out in comprehensive fashion the review protocol in five sections: Purpose, Application, Process, Contents of Review, Administrative Response, and Circulation of the Report and Submission to Governance. For reference, the document is reproduced in full in Appendix 6.

In section 5, certain aspects of the protocol and process will be discussed in the context of the conformity tests, the core part of the audit. Here the Auditors wish to highlight a few distinctive or noteworthy features. One meta-feature has been alluded to already and that is the position of *Guidelines* as a review protocol issued by the Provost, making the review process appear more executive- or management-driven than in other institutions. Nevertheless, that there should be reviews of all programs following a common university-wide process was a decision of the Governing Council. *Guidelines* additionally distinguishes two other categories of feature. The first comprises those features that apply to all reviews conducted under *Guidelines*, and they would apply whether reviews were conducted as part of a university-wide planning exercise or as stand-alone individual reviews; the second category draws on *Raising Our Sights* and what were identified as "Issues Specific to the 2000-2004 Planning Cycle," a supplement to *Guidelines*.

First, some aspects of *Guidelines* applicable to all reviews:

- International Bench-marking - Reviews are intended to provide an assessment of "how the program compares to the best of its field among international peer institutions," i.e., "the first rank of public research institutions;"

- Extensive Use of Data - The nature and amount of data provided centrally to all units supports evidence-based reviews and planning;
- Divisional Variation - *Guidelines*, while aiming to achieve greater coherence in review processes across the institution, reflects the size and complexity of the University by allowing “variation and flexibility in divisional practices in the conduct of reviews;”
- Role of the Dean/Principal - In the case of multi-departmental divisions, the Dean (if faculties) or Principal (if UTM or UTSC) rather than the Provost commissions the reviews;
- Learning Environment - Units in their self-studies are asked to comment on the quality of the learning environment both inside *and outside* the classroom.

The second set of distinctive or unique features, though a product of the *Raising Our Sights* planning exercise, are significant in their own right as well as for the possibility that they may be repeated should the University choose to have the next round of reviews coincide with the post-2004 planning initiative. Some of the notable features are:

- Integration of Reviews and Planning - To a degree not seen elsewhere, program reviews form an integral part of academic planning and resource allocation decisions.
- Simultaneous Reviews - The *Raising Our Sights* exercise was distinguished by the ambitious and challenging goal of having the academic plans of every unit founded on the reviews of every program that they offer, and of having the reviews completed over a single year. That not all reviews were completed in this time frame - complications of enrolment planning at UTM and UTSC delayed them - takes nothing away from the monumental achievement of the Provost and the Deputy Provost of putting in place and marshalling to its conclusion this *tour de force*. Likewise at the divisional level, the Deans of the large and complex multi-departmental faculties (Applied Science and Engineering, Arts and Science and Medicine) introduced program reviews and faculty-wide reviews that were executed in a remarkably short period of time.
- “Horizontal” Reviews - Multi-departmental divisions were advised to undertake faculty-wide or “horizontal” reviews of various dimensions bearing upon the quality of the students’ educational experience.” The audit included one of the “horizontal” reviews conducted by the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering.
- Grouping of Units - With over 300 programs in the Faculty of Arts and Science, it was not possible to review all of them separately in the time allotted for the *Raising Our Sights* planning exercise. After discussions with the Chairs, the Dean proposed, and the Provost agreed, that the units and programs would be combined into twelve

clusters of related and cognate academic fields. The Auditors chose one of the clusters for their sample.

- Administrative Responses - *Guidelines* requires the academic administrator (the Provost or Dean in the case of multi-departmental divisions) who commissioned the review to prepare an administrative response to the review report. The response for *Raising Our Sights* purposes takes “the form of the academic plan for the unit.”
- Governance Consideration of Reviews - The deliberations of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) are supported by summaries prepared by the Provost's Office. Under the *Raising Our Sights* simultaneous and university-wide reviews, these summaries provide opportunities to identify issues needing attention at an institutional or divisional level as well as within particular programs. There is also an opportunity to identify and communicate “best practices” since the mandate of the committee encompasses both reviews of programmatic issues and administrative responses.

4.2 New Programs

The full text of Toronto's policy governing implementation of new undergraduate programs, *Guidelines for Divisional Submissions*, is reproduced in Appendix 7. This set of guidelines lays down the jurisdiction of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) in the area of major academic program proposals; defines what a major academic program proposal is; distinguishes “major” proposals, which are within the purview of the AP&P, from other proposals, which are not; and finally specifies the procedures to be followed as regards submission format, presentation to the Committee, and Annual Reporting.

All proposals for new academic programs are accompanied by an executive summary, as well as detailed descriptions as appendices to the executive summary. In the case of new programs, or substantial changes to existing ones, for example, the Committee expects to see calendar descriptions before considering proposals. The principle governing the Committee's information requirements for a new program proposal is the ability of AP&P members “to ascertain sufficiently the implications of and justifications for the proposal.”

5 Conformity of the University of Toronto's Review Process for Existing Undergraduate Programs to the Expectations in UPRAC Guidelines

UPRAC Guidelines specifies that the report of the Auditors will include comments on how well the review policy and process as a whole conform to "the objective, structure, and elements" described in the UPR Process. The Guidelines also specify that the Auditors should provide details on "how well the review procedures and practices conform to the institution's own policies."

Accordingly, these comments on conformity are organized into two parts:

- conformity of the University of Toronto's policy and process for program reviews to the UPR Process (5.1), and
- conformity of the University of Toronto's procedures and practices for program reviews to its policy (5.2).

5.1 Conformity of the University of Toronto's Review Process for Existing Undergraduate Programs to the UPR Process

The conformity review that follows evaluates Toronto's review protocol, *Guidelines for Reviews of Academic Programs and Units*, against the objective, structure and elements of the Undergraduate Program Review Process contained in *UPRAC Guidelines*. These components of the UPR Process appear in italics below.

5.1.1 Objective of the Undergraduate Program Review

The objective of the institutional periodic undergraduate program review process is to assess the quality of the undergraduate programs that the university, including its federated and affiliated institutions, provides in all areas of study.

The objectives of the program review process are well and strongly stated in *Guidelines* in a manner consistent with the UPRAC requirement. Section 1. outlines the purpose of reviews of academic programs and units: "to maintain and improve the quality of those programs." It goes on to link reviews of programs with a review of the academic unit(s) which offer them "to ensure and improve quality in all of [its] aspects." Not explicitly mentioned in *UPRAC Guidelines*, but underlying their very existence, is the need to provide public accountability to all stakeholders in higher education. *Guidelines* portrays the review system as part of a structure of internal and external accountability.

5.1.2 Structure of the Undergraduate Program Review Procedure

The institutional undergraduate program review policy statement should:

(1) *identify an authority responsible for application of the policy;*

Authority for the approach set out for program reviews in the Provostial-issued *Guidelines* can be traced to the endorsement given by Governing Council (see previous sections). In *Guidelines*, operational authority is clearly assigned to the Commissioning Officer, the academic administrator to whom an academic unit reports: the Dean, or Principal, or the Provost in the case of single-departmental divisions, and *Guidelines* is "to aid them in discharging their responsibilities of academic leadership."

Guidelines also speaks of the responsibility of the University governors "to ensure that appropriate mechanisms for reviewing academic programs with a view to ensuring and improving their quality are in place." In discharging this responsibility they are to certify that academic administrators are reviewing programs and units on a regular basis and are responding to the reviews. Another document, "Accountability Framework for Reviews of Academic Programs and Units," (see 3.1) further lays out precisely the distinctive roles of Governing Council, its Executive Committee, the Agenda Committee of the Academic Board, AP&P, the Provost, and the Dean/Principal of a multi-departmental division.

Institutions commonly distinguish between operational and statutory authority for program reviews, and that distinction may be found in Toronto's process, though it is not explicitly delineated as such. As described above, the Toronto model assigns authority and ensuing responsibilities for each step in the review process – what the Auditors take to be operational matters. Here (and elsewhere, as will be noted later) they found it necessary to piece together the full picture from *Guidelines* and several other documents. For those who understand the review process and its place within a wider framework of academic planning and public accountability that is not an issue. To the extent that this is an accountability exercise, adding coherence to the documentary record would be a benefit to those who need a complete appreciation of the process and the roles of the many players.

Unlike the program review protocols of the other institutions visited by the Auditors, Toronto's does not emanate directly from the Academic Board, Toronto's "Senate." That the protocol, in that sense, is not "collegially-owned" is outside the purview of the audit. Under *UPRAC Guidelines* institutions have considerable latitude in designing a policy and process that conforms to local traditions and forms. The Auditors note, also, that the Terms of Reference of neither the Academic Board, nor the Committee of Academic Policy and Programs mention program reviews and quality assurance. They suggest that, in the interest of clarity, the University consider explicitly assigning statutory, or formal, authority for undergraduate program reviews to an appropriate body.

Suggestion 1: In order more readily to be seen to be in conformity with *UPRAC Guidelines*, the University of Toronto should consider rendering more visible the over-all framework for undergraduate program reviews. Specifically, for the benefit of those within and outside the institution, the University might review its documentation regarding undergraduate program reviews with the aim of achieving greater coherence and clarity in one free-standing statement. Toronto might also consider the advantages of explicitly assigning the formal authority for reviews to an appropriate statutory body.

(2) define the undergraduate program review criteria;

The Auditors have noted elsewhere that the term "criteria" is ambiguous: it can be taken to refer to the issues to be addressed in the review or to the standards by which performance is to be judged. They have used the former interpretation in the past and continue to do so here. Toronto's *Guidelines* conform well to this UPRAC requirement. Those preparing self-studies of their programs, as well as external consultants, are asked to assess programs against the same detailed list of eight criteria and, furthermore, they are instructed "to assess the educational experience provided to students both within and outside the classroom" against another list of seven factors. Additional thorough guidance in preparing the self-study is provided.

Some degree of divisional variation in the conduct of reviews is understandable in a very large and complex institution like Toronto. Since, however, the review criteria must conform at a minimum to *UPRAC Guidelines*, it is essential that divisions not deviate from the mandated list of criteria – they may add to, but not subtract from, the core criteria.

Suggestion 2: Since Toronto's *Guidelines* allow for some degree of divisional variation and flexibility in the conduct of program reviews, it should make clear which review criteria form the core that must be addressed in order for reviews to be conducted in conformity with UPRAC Guidelines.

(3) specify an appropriate role for the faculty deans in the review process;

This is a new component of the UPR Process, as of May 2000, and clearly, there are many possible opportunities for deans as senior academic officers to have a close and significant involvement with the review process. What is important is not so much the exact prescription, but that the decanal role be instrumental in ways consistent with the ethos of the institution.

Toronto's review process does not assign a role applicable to all Deans. Only if a Dean heads a multi-departmental faculty is a role specified, and then the role is that of Commissioning Officer for the review. As the Commissioning Officer the Dean would: initiate the reviews; select the external reviewers in consultation with the unit; determine the

interviewees for the reviewers; set their terms of reference; and prepare the administrative response. For single-unit divisions, the Provost, as Commissioning Officer, would be responsible for these steps, and within *Guidelines*, the Dean does not have a defined role or designated responsibilities in such cases.

Since Toronto's protocol does not include an explicit role for the Dean *qua* Dean, a strict reading of *UPRAC Guidelines* might lead to the conclusion that *Guidelines* is not in conformity. The Auditors, nevertheless, are satisfied that the University's approach is entirely "appropriate" given the wide variation in the size and complexity of the divisions. Where a faculty is small and has no departmental structure, the Dean acts essentially as the chair, and it would be redundant to assign a second "hat." Where a division has several departments or other academic units, the duties and responsibilities assigned to the Dean as Commissioning Officer seem quite appropriate, especially since the Provost continues to have identifiable responsibilities in the accountability framework. Here as elsewhere, the University might consider making more obvious and explicit what can be derived from *Guidelines*.

(4) *prescribe at least the following steps:*

a) *self-appraisal by professors and students participating in the program;*

To appreciate fully the importance Toronto places on self-studies in the undergraduate review process and the expectations for how they should be carried out, reference should be made to *Raising Our Sights*. That seminal document asserts that the *Raising Our Sights* academic planning exercise is to be marked by an emphasis on self-assessment and external review, and on broad consultation. It goes on to state that every unit "will be expected to undertake a process of evidence-based self-study," and it calls for the "full engagement" in this process of faculty, staff, and students.

Taken as a whole, the Toronto documentation issued by the Provost's Office gives due emphasis to the importance of self-studies, and in two places it provides academic units with detailed instructions. A companion piece to *Raising Our Sights* on how units might involve students is absolutely first-rate and could be used as an exemplar. The Appendix to *Guidelines* containing "Elements of the Self-study" (taken from *Raising Our Sights*) outlines every component that units should include in their self-studies. The data that should be used are listed by various categories followed by instructions on how the data are to be used to inform the analysis and assessment of the programs. The Appendix is a thoughtful and comprehensive piece, and in places goes well beyond the specific points listed in the Elements section of *UPRAC Guidelines*. For example, it asks units to assess the positive and negative changes in the learning environment for students by looking at the availability and utilization of teaching development programs, student academic counselling services, writing support and experiential learning opportunities.

If *Guidelines* is to serve as Toronto's continuing and free-standing protocol for the conduct of undergraduate program reviews, it should be a comprehensive document that clearly sets out all aspects of the review process. Any lacunae must be filled in; for example reference must be made to the involvement of faculty and students. Even more important, the essential nature of the self-study and its overarching importance as a critical and reflective exercise, inviting searching scrutiny of the program under review, should be given prominence in the main text of *Guidelines*.

Recommendation 1: To establish firmly the status of *Guidelines* as the University's free-standing undergraduate program review protocol, it must be a comprehensive document that fully incorporates all expectations and requirements for program reviews, some of which are now found only in *Raising Our Sights*. In particular, the description of the self-study should stress the reflective and self-critical nature of this key ingredient in the review process. Other UPRAC-mandated features, for example, the participation of faculty and students, must also be added.

b) evaluation, including a site visit, by at least one expert from another university, including universities outside Ontario. The expert(s) must be at arm's length from the program under review;

Guidelines exceeds the UPRAC minimum by demanding at least two external reviewers, suggesting that they should normally be from outside Canada. The "arm's length" requirement is implied by the call for balance between "sufficient distance to allow for objective assessment" and "familiarity with the unit under review." *UPRAC Guidelines*, however, require that an arm's length relationship with external reviewers be explicit rather than implicit. The Auditors recommend that the University of Toronto spell out its interpretation of this requirement, as they have for all other Ontario universities.

Recommendation 2: Though there is no evidence to question the impartiality of the external consultants who have been chosen by the University of Toronto, it is recommended that the University include within its policy the requirement that external consultants be at arm's length from the program under review, along with its interpretation of what is entailed by the principle (for example, not relatives, collaborators, supervisors/supervisees, and so on).

c) appraisal by peers chosen among professors from the institution who do not participate in the program under review;

This obligation in the UPR Process demands an independent internal-external assessment role that expresses an institutional, rather than a disciplinary, perspective. It should contribute some university-wide uniformity and continuity in the review process and ensure

that institutional standards for review are achieved. How universities meet the requirement may vary according to their size, organization and ethos. Accordingly, the Auditors have been mindful of the need to look for conformity to the purpose and function of this criterion, and not to a structure.

That there can be a variety of structures has been recognized by OCAV with the recent addition of a footnote to *UPRAC Guidelines*. It states that "Appraisal by peers could consist of either or both of: I) one or more internal-external reviewers, ii) a committee that receives and acts on the self-appraisal study and reviewers reports." Toronto's *Guidelines* permits, but does not require, the use of an internal review committee in addition to external reviewers. Though the criteria for appointment to the internal review committee are not specified, it appears that the members would have to be at "sufficient distance [from the program] to allow for objective assessment." In addition (presumably) to the material received by the external reviewers, the internal reviewers would also be provided with the external reviewers' reports. Since internal review committees are optional, they cannot be identified in themselves as the means by which the *Guidelines* conform to this UPRAC requirement. (As they were not part of any of the reviews in the audit sample, the Auditors are unable to comment on how effective they might be.)

Where internal reviewers are not (a mandatory) part of the process, most often the Auditors have determined that the "appraisal by peers" step in the review process is carried out by a senate committee or sub-committee. The Auditors looked, then, at the role of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. In assessing whether the AP&P committee can be considered to fulfill this function, they have been guided by the *UPRAC Guidelines* footnote, quoted above, and the points in the first paragraph. As well they have recalled two previously enunciated essential features of "appraisal by peers," viz., I) the responsibilities assigned must involve more than simply "receiving" the documentation, and ii) the appraisal should enter into the process at least before there is a final determination on the part of all those affected about what is to be done in response to the consultants' reports.

AP&P is first mentioned in *Guidelines* at the stage of "submission to governance," where it states: "Review reports are to be submitted for information to governance through the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs of the Academic Board." The reports are presented in a "compendium of summaries of review reports submitted annually to AP&P," and the summaries are prepared by the Provost's Office following a template, the key sections of which are: Findings and Recommendations, comprising Overall Assessment and Specific Issues, and Administrative Response. Members of AP&P may also consult the complete review reports. The summaries can be brief and cover undergraduate and graduate programs. In the case of the Arts and Science clusters, one summary dealt with a number of programs in a combined fashion.

The role of AP&P at this stage is not identified separately from that of the other governance bodies mentioned in *Guidelines*. They – AP&P, the Agenda Planning Committee of the Academic Board and the Executive Committee of Governing Council – consider the reviews

in order to “discharge their responsibility to ensure that academic administrators are reviewing programs and units on a regular basis and are responding to these reviews in a manner that achieves the purpose of maintaining and improving program quality.” Elsewhere (Report Number 83 of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs - October 4, 2000) the role of AP&P was described this way:

. . . although academic reviews were presented for information, the Committee [AP&P] had an important role to play. This Committee was the point of entry into governance for the reviews and it was here that the reviews would be under the closest scrutiny. It was not the Committee’s mandate to redo the reviews but rather to ensure that they had been done, that they had been conducted using an appropriate process and full documentation, and that issues that were identified by the reviewers were addressed by the administration.

As a statement of what the discharge of accountability entails this is remarkably sound and rigorous, and the Auditors are satisfied that it is consistent with the spirit and intent of the “appraisal by peers” section of *UPRAC Guidelines*. They note also that, according to the Deputy Provost, AP&P uses this mandate as an opportunity “to raise questions with the Deans who commissioned and responded to reviews” and the Committee has suggested changes in several instances. Nevertheless, the Committee’s involvement appears to be limited in many cases. For example, it made no comments on the reviews of four of the twelve Arts and Science Clusters in the time available and, likewise, two of the ten Applied Science and Engineering programs received no comments.

As might be expected, the manner by which institutions have incorporated “appraisal by peers” in the review policies varies widely, and the Auditors have been sensitive to their need to devise an approach that is respectful of local culture and structure. While Toronto’s protocol has much to commend, *Guidelines*, itself, does not capture the role AP&P plays in fulfilling this function. If the Committee is to exercise this role, with the attributes described above, in addition to being the “point of entry into governance,” *Guidelines* should be amended to make that explicit. The Committee should exercise this role for every review, and the record should so demonstrate.

Recommendation 3: Toronto’s *Guidelines* should be amended to make clear that the undergraduate review process includes, in some manner appropriate to the unique structure and culture of the University, the “appraisal by peers” step for every program undergoing review. To this end, *Guidelines* should specify the Committee’s existing mandate vis-à-vis undergraduate reviews (i.e., to ensure that reviews have been performed; that they were conducted appropriately; and that issues identified by reviewers were dealt with by the administration). *Guidelines* should also mention that AP&P must satisfy itself that issues identified in the self-study have been addressed. In discharging its responsibility to fulfil the “appraisal by peers” UPRAC

requirement, AP&P must give due attention to every program undergoing review.

d) the university may also, where appropriate, seek the advice of others such as representatives of industry, professions and practical training programs;

Provision for seeking the advice of non-academic external reviewers who have knowledge of the field is not found in the Toronto protocol. This is an optional component of *UPRAC Guidelines*, but given its large number of professional programs, the University might find some advantage to including it as a possibility for units undergoing reviews.

Suggestion 3: The University might consider making available to programs undergoing review the option of seeking “the advice of others such as representatives of industry, professions and practical training programs.”

(5) specify the mechanism for action on the recommendations arising from the undergraduate program review;

How institutions follow-up on recommendations emanating from program reviews, as with other key steps in the review process, will vary according to institutional traditions and structure. What is critical is not so much the precise procedures they have in place for how they effect the follow-up, but rather that they have a process that assigns responsibility, is capable of being monitored, and is transparent.

Recently, OCAV elaborated further on what is expected of such a mechanism:

This mechanism should bring closure to the undergraduate program review by specifying the actions to be taken (and not taken) as a result of the recommendations of the external expert(s), and other aspects of the review process. The mechanism should also describe the monitoring steps that will be followed to ensure that the actions have been taken. (*UPRAC Audit Guidelines*, footnote 3.)

Guidelines addresses this requirement by mandating the Commissioning Officer to “respond formally to the review report, indicating areas of agreement and (if relevant) disagreement, and describing the action to be taken in response to issues raised in the review.” This is admirably clear as far as it goes, and it may well be that under the *Raising Our Sights* planning exercise no further elaboration was necessary since closure was achieved through divisional plans, and resource allocations were one of the main outcomes of the reviews. Nevertheless, not all recommendations emanating from reviews have resource implications and *Guidelines* applies to other reviews. Monitoring of outcomes should, therefore, be made part of the process. It would be a relatively simple addition to have AP&P (or some other

body) charged with this oversight function, and for the administration to prepare a report after some appropriate interval, say a year.

Recommendation 4: Assignment of oversight responsibility (perhaps to AP&P) for the monitoring of the action taken to implement the recommendations coming out of program reviews should be added to the Toronto review protocol.

(6) determine the maximum period for cycle of reviews; this should not exceed 10 years for a university's full set of programs;

Though *Guidelines* contains much very sensible comment on the timing of reviews, it does not specify a time limit for the interval between reviews. The importance of having reviews on a timely basis was made evident by an observation that one department had gone eleven years without a review, and a member of AP&P wondered if that "was the reason for some of the problems not being dealt with earlier."

If Toronto intends to time reviews to coincide with its academic planning cycle, or with the end of terms of Deans and Chairs, or with other reviews, e.g. OCGS, then it may not be possible to specify an exact time interval for reviews. Nevertheless, *Guidelines* should as a matter of policy state that programs must be reviewed at a minimum every ten years.

If all programs are to be reviewed at roughly the same time as part of a planning cycle, a schedule of reviews is not important (as long as the planning cycle is ten years or less). On the other hand, if reviews are timed to coincide with other events, then it would be advisable to prepare a schedule in order to ensure that all programs, especially those that are not coterminous with one academic unit, are included.

Recommendation 5: At a minimum, *Guidelines* should state that the time interval between reviews must not exceed ten years. In the interests of continuity and clarity it would be preferable to prepare a schedule of reviews that includes all undergraduate programs offered by the University.

(7) require the publication of a report (excluding all personal information) that summarizes the outcomes, findings and conclusions of the institutional undergraduate quality review for each program. The report should include a statement of the strengths and weaknesses of the program, and the action to be taken on the recommendations arising from the undergraduate review. This summary report is to be presented to the Senate and Board of Governors of the university.

Toronto's undergraduate review protocol conforms admirably to this requirement of *UPRAC Guidelines*. Section 5.1.2 (4) c) appearing above summarizes the steps in the process of

“submission to governance.” As noted there, much of the description appears in the Accountability Framework, and the University should consider adding it to *Guidelines* in order to make that document free-standing. So doing would also add a step that is in the Framework, but is missing from *Guidelines*. In compliance with *UPRAC Guidelines*, the Accountability Framework requires summary reports on reviews to be presented to Governing Council, the Toronto equivalent to Senate and Board of Governors. (The documentary record shows that this step was followed.)

Recommendation 6: *Guidelines* should be amended to reflect the fact that program review summaries are presented to the Governing Council. The University might also consider adding the Accountability Framework to *Guidelines*.

5.1.3 Elements of the Undergraduate Program Review

The institutional procedure for review of existing undergraduate programs should address the following points:

(1) consistency of the program with the general objectives of the institution's mission and development plan;

This point is explicitly covered as one of the criteria that the external reviewers are asked to address. Indeed, under the *Raising Our Sights* exercise, the chief output of program reviews is an academic plan for the units and divisions offering the programs.

(2) appropriateness of the admission requirements, e.g., achievement and preparation, for the educational objectives of the institution and the program;

While units are told to provide frequency distributions of entering OAC averages in their self-studies, they are not asked to comment on the “appropriateness of admission requirements,” nor are the external reviewers. Also, this matter has been amplified by OCAV since Toronto's *Guidelines* was issued, and it needs to be amended to deal with the additional questions.

Recommendation 7: The Toronto review protocol should be updated to include reference to the additional questions regarding admissions requirements now included in *UPRAC Guidelines*. Academic units and external reviewers should be asked to respond to these additional questions as well as the general point about the appropriateness of the admission requirements.

(3) appropriateness of the program's structure and curriculum for its educational objectives;

Raising Our Sights identified "improving the structure and content of our academic programs" as one of the three key priorities for the round of academic planning it launched. Yet, notwithstanding this emphasis, *Guidelines* does not explicitly direct academic units to assess how well a program's curriculum and structure contributes to its educational objectives, though it does tell units to "comment upon **changes and innovations** [emphasis in original] in program structure and content." General instructions are given to external reviewers to "assess the quality of the educational experience . . .," but they are not requested to comment directly on the appropriateness of a program's structure and curriculum.

Given the centrality of this UPRAC element to assessing the quality of programs, it is important that it not be given short shrift, and for that reason the requirement should be stated more baldly than at present. Simply put, programs need to ask themselves "what is it we want students to learn, and how do we design our programs to achieve those learning objectives?" This point needs reinforcing especially when program reviews are part of a planning and resource allocation exercise. In such an environment, critical assessment of curriculum may not receive sufficient emphasis as was the case in some of the sample reviews seen by the Auditors.

Recommendation 8: To reflect the clear importance Toronto intends to give to curricular matters, *Guidelines* should include explicit reference to the importance of addressing the appropriateness of a program's structure and curriculum for its educational objectives.

(4) appropriateness of the mode of delivery and the methods used for the evaluation of student progress;

Toronto is to be commended on how well this element is covered in *Guidelines*. To illustrate, external reviewers are asked to comment on such aspects of the learning environment as: "the extent to which the program makes appropriate use of a variety of learning formats . . .; the extent and appropriateness of program enhancements beyond the classroom . . ." as well as "the quality of teaching and evidence that research and scholarship is brought to bear in teaching." Units in preparing their self studies are "to assess changes in the learning environment, both positive and negative." *Guidelines* gives a prominent place to the assessment of the quality of the educational experience of students, both within and outside the classroom.

(5) *appropriate utilization of the existing human/physical/financial resources;*

This element is thoroughly dealt with in Toronto's review process. For example with respect to their budgets, units are instructed to comment on "the appropriateness of the level and distribution of financial resources in support of [their] academic programs . . ." Human and physical resources are also well covered. *Guidelines* goes further by directing units to provide data and analysis on student financial support, research activity, philanthropic support and organizational issues.

(6) *definition of indicators that provide evidence of:*

- *quality of faculty*
- *student clientele (applications and registrations)*
- *student quality, and*
- *outcomes of the program (graduation rate, length of studies, etc.)*

The University of Toronto has given much thought to the definition of indicators, and, as might be expected for a program review protocol that is built on evidence-based self-studies, a rich array of data is provided centrally to units. The data greatly exceed what is required by UPRAC Guidelines.

5.2 Conformity of the University of Toronto's Procedures and Practices for the Review of Existing Undergraduate Programs to its Policy

In this section the Auditors consider further the application of policy: they look at and comment on how well the University's procedures and practices for reviews conform to its policy on undergraduate program reviews as set out in Toronto's *Guidelines*.

In general, the University has developed an impressive set of mechanisms for monitoring and assessing its undergraduate programs and stimulating improvement of academic standards and teaching practices. The institution also deserves high praise for reviewing all its undergraduate programs on the St. George campus simultaneously rather than serially. This exercise will, no doubt, give the University much useful baseline data. It also seems to have encouraged a high level of faculty "buy-in" to using more systematic methods of academic quality assurance and so will enhance the University's capacity to monitor and improve academic standards. As well, many examples were shared with Auditors during the site visit of how the process fostered interdepartmental cooperation and creativity in reshaping academic offerings and teaching practices.

As with audits of undergraduate programs at other universities, the site visit proved to be critical in bringing into focus several elements of Toronto's policies and practices that were not always obvious from the paper-trail. For example, while *Guidelines* articulates a role for the Commissioning Officer, the documentation did not indicate fully how the reviews were

initiated, nor who did what in ensuring that the review process was satisfactorily completed. Since the Toronto approach is to devolve responsibility for reviews to the divisional level, since decisions have yet to be made about the timing of the next round of reviews, and since a new Provost has been appointed, it would be instructive and timely for the University to spell out – perhaps in the form of a handbook, an annotated version of *Guidelines*, or a web site – the responsibilities of the Commissioning Officer and others, and to provide further details on what is expected at each step of the review process.

Suggestion 4: The University might consider providing additional written guidance for all parties involved with reviews on the roles and responsibilities of the various players and further details on the steps in the review process.

Guidelines includes an excellent statement about demonstrating public accountability through academic quality assurance processes. Enhancing the quality of the educational experience of students and improving the structure and content of academic programs were also singled out in the *Raising Our Sights* document as two of the three key priorities for the 2000-2004 cycle of academic planning. Though “Elements of the Self-Study,” the appendix to *Guidelines*, invited comments on changes and innovations in program structure and content, including fostering of research-teaching linkages and interdisciplinary developments and innovations in learning, in practice few written reports contained more than a paragraph or two on these topics. It seemed as if resource allocation issues completely overshadowed academic concerns in almost all of the reviews audited (Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry and Pharmacy being exceptions). Recommendation 8 in section 5.1.3 (3) addresses this point, but more than a mere change to the text of *Guidelines* may be necessary to reinforce the desired searching, evaluative and analytical nature of self-studies. They must be constructively critical and aimed at the overall objective of program improvement. Emphasis on this focus will be especially important if program reviews are to continue to be an integral part of the next planning exercise. The linkage between program evaluation and academic planning was a key feature of Toronto’s *Raising Our Sights* exercise, but a curricular perspective must underpin the review process if it is to provide the level of programmatic quality assurance anticipated by *UPRAC Guidelines*.

The need to embed in *Guidelines* itself reference to the participation of faculty and students was made in Recommendation 1. Yet, as noted earlier, units were provided elsewhere with ample instruction on this requirement. In the fourth paragraph of Section VI of *Raising Our Sights* the following statement is made:

This self-scrutiny must also involve a broad sense of participation at the divisional level. In the past, the involvement of faculty, students and staff in determining priorities also varied greatly across divisions This time, divisions will be expected to demonstrate that their plans have been developed through a process that allowed for a number of perspectives in making decisions

The same spirit can be observed in the memorandum of November 16, 1998, issued by Dean Amrhein of the Faculty of Arts and Science, which says the planning process "should include discussions with undergraduate and graduate students, administrative staff, and academic staff, and a description of the process should be reported in your plan." However, most self-study documents, including those from Engineering and Pharmacy, were silent on the means used to solicit input from students and faculty. It was clear from the site visit, nevertheless, that many of the programs in the audit sample actually attended to these matters with varying degrees of success, particularly with respect to student participation. The efforts taken and the contributions made should be recorded. Though the need to encourage student participation in academic review exercises is certainly well recognized by the University, the University might consider undertaking a study of the problem and measures to encourage greater student participation in program-related assessments.

The Auditors heard about several examples of the use of departmental web sites to provide information on the review process and to invite comments on preliminary drafts of reports. Faculty intranet sites might also be used to share examples of "best practices" in components of reviews, such as how to obtain student participation in self-studies.

Suggestion 5: Toronto might identify where faculty and student involvement in self studies was strongest and weakest, and publicize those factors that seem to promote fuller participation of faculty and students, and the consequent benefits.

Many academic units at the U of T evidently make use of student surveys to assess courses, teaching performance and/or aspects of the learning environment. However, little evidence was given to indicate whether and how such information and data might have been used to identify academic issues or problems in the learning environment. Greater use of such data in preparing self-study reports should be encouraged, and the Auditors applaud the university community on having achieved agreement to make course evaluations publicly available. They, of course, are not the only window on the learning environment. In the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering a submission on problems in the learning environment, prepared on behalf of the Engineering Society and student body, formed part of the package provided to the external reviewers.

To assist units with the compilation of statistics for their self-studies, the administration undertook, through the Planning Office, to provide centrally much of the data that was needed. It appeared to the Auditors, however, that the use of the data by the units was uneven. In some cases the data were used for purely information purposes and not as a basis of analysis. The Provost's Office concurred, observing that those who analysed the data learned more from the self-study. It is noted that in *Raising Our Sights* the paragraph introducing "Elements of the Self-Study" that makes reference to the use of data was omitted from *Guidelines*. Perhaps that paragraph, or some version of it, might be added to

Guidelines to reinforce the importance of data as a foundation for a critically evaluative self-study.

Suggestion 6: The importance of the analytical use of data in self-studies might be emphasized in *Guidelines* by adding the paragraph, or similar wording, from *Raising Our Sights* that introduces “Elements of the Self-Study.”

The above comments on self-studies are of a fairly general nature, but since *Guidelines* allows for divisional differences in the conduct of reviews and, as might be expected, all of the reviews in the audit sample manifested some degree of variation, a few comments on each of them is warranted. But first, it is necessary to refer to the tri-campus nature of the University (see appendix 5) as it bears on undergraduate reviews in the arts and science disciplines.²

In an earlier audit of a multi-campus institution, the Auditors found that the reviews of programs that were offered by more than one academic division/campus/faculty were reviewed at the same time, and at least one of the external examiners was assigned to review all of the programs. This program-centric approach to reviews did not suit Toronto since its reviews were integral to an academic planning exercise focussed on the academic units offering the programs. (This approach is not unusual and this observation is not intended as a criticism. Notwithstanding *UPRAC Guidelines'* program orientation to reviews, most Ontario universities approach program reviews from the perspective of the offering academic unit.) So to aid in their understanding of how Toronto reviewed programs under *Raising Our Sights*, the Auditors selected Philosophy, a program that is offered by the Faculty of Arts and Science on the St. George campus and at Mississauga (UTM) and by UTSC. (Philosophy was also part of one of the departmental/program Clusters used by Arts and Science – see below)

The divisional variation in the conduct of reviews permitted by *Guidelines* is evidenced in the Philosophy review. The Arts and Science Dean's Office issued a template for departments to follow in preparing their self-studies, labelled “plans” in keeping with the orientation of *Raising Our Sights*. The template was designed to elicit a series of plans that were readily comparable in structure and content. Though it asked departments to comment on the “state of undergraduate programs,” it also elicited their resource requests for: faculty positions, administrative positions, infrastructure needs and other expenses. From reading the Philosophy plan, the Auditors were struck – not surprisingly – by what seemed to be a rather formulaic approach to the document, with rather more emphasis on documenting resource issues than is usually found in self-studies. During the site visit interview, however,

² These comments would apply likewise to any discipline that might be offered at more than one campus. To a degree unknown and undeterminable by the Auditors, their comments may have been overtaken by the University's new framework for UTM and UTSC., and the restructuring of their relationship with the St. George campus.

the departmental representatives conveyed the sense that much more in the way of critical self-evaluation occurred than was conveyed in the plan. In a different meeting, the Dean observed that the plans were, in general, less self-reflective than was desirable. The Philosophy review serves, then, to reinforce the point that Toronto's challenge, if it intends to incorporate reviews into the planning process, is to devise an approach that rewards critical self-evaluation of academic programs as part of a resource allocation exercise (as evidenced by the success enjoyed by the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering in doing precisely that.) It was also noted that the Philosophy plan paid little or no attention to the several programs that are combinations of Philosophy and another discipline – see section 7.

At the undergraduate level there are three academic divisions offering Philosophy programs: FAS - St George, UTM and UTSC (while at the graduate level there is only one Department). It is, however, the Auditors' understanding that UTM academic programs come under the academic authority of FAS even though the course offerings may differ slightly due to differences in teaching complement. The Principal of UTM has monetary authority, but not academic authority. At UTSC the picture is different. The undergraduate academic programs are completely independent of FAS, and the Principal has both monetary and academic authority. Notwithstanding these differences, at both UTM and UTSC reviews of the Philosophy program would, according to the Deputy Provost, "typically be reviewed as part of their respective Divisions of Humanities." At the time of the audit, the program reviews at UTSC had been completed up to the stage of the external review, while according to the Deputy Provost "at UTM, the decision was made to conduct the reviews after a plan had been developed and to ask reviewers to comment on both the self-study and the plan," something anticipated under *Raising Our Sights*. The delays in completing the reviews may have been reasonable – academic planning was overtaken by enrolment planning issues – but, nevertheless, the academic program reviews were not completed.

How Toronto organizes itself for program reviews is, of course, not the business of the Auditors as long as *UPRAC Audit Guidelines* is observed by its review policy and the reviews are conducted in accordance with its own policy. Yet, as *UPRAC Audit Guidelines* states that the objective of reviews "is to assess the quality of the undergraduate programs," the Auditors believe Toronto might profitably consider the advantages to having at least some co-ordination among the reviews of the programs in the same disciplines in order to ensure that any quality issues that cut across all three campuses get addressed. They do recognize that fully integrated omnibus reviews may not be possible for reviews that are conducted under a divisional planning mode, but they think it is important for the University to do what it can to ensure a tri-campus perspective at the program level so that students enjoy the same high quality regardless of the campus of registration.

The written record supports this view. The external reviewers for Philosophy pointed out that faculty at UTM, who teach very large classes, are not assigned sufficient teaching assistants. This criticism comes in a report that was commissioned by the Dean of FAS, and no further reference to this issue appears in any of the subsequent documents that were

provided to the Auditors, all of which concerned the St. George Philosophy program. (Perhaps it was identified later in the review of the Division of the Humanities at UTM.) To follow up on this point, the Auditors asked the Principals of UTM and UTSC whether they had any views on integrated reviews. There was general support for that approach, particularly from the UTM Principal as long as it was not the only one.

Suggestion 7: Since many programs that are essentially the same, or nearly so, are offered at more than one campus of the University, Toronto might profitably design its review process to facilitate a tri-campus perspective on the quality of similar programs is obtained.

Cluster reviews were a novel feature of the FAS part of the *Raising Our Sights* exercise; they are described in section 2 of this report. While born of the necessity to cover much territory quickly, the Auditors discovered from their examination of the documentation for selected components of Cluster 1 and interviews with representatives that the St. George cluster reviews apparently had some inherent advantages:

- an intelligent, if not infallible, process was undertaken to put together clusters that actually made sense to members of the programs under review;
- all programs turned their attention to the specified issues at the same time promoting more internal discourse on the matters of program evaluation;
- the same time frame for all reviews allowed for better comparison of results since conditions and context were the same;
- clusters may well have strengthened ties among units not necessarily used to thinking together; and
- reviewers (of clusters) were given a larger overview of FAS and this is reflected in the respective reports in the FAS audit sample, i.e. Philosophy cf. Cluster 1.

In the Cluster I interview the participants seemed generally pleased with the process. Indeed, the smaller programs, even more than the larger ones, appeared quite satisfied with the outcome and the attention they received in the external review. However, one small unit made clear that the cluster process was not adequately in depth, and for the next review it would like to be looked at as a single discipline. That view is certainly consistent with what the Auditors have observed elsewhere regarding umbrella reviews of many programs by the same reviewers: it simply is not possible to find reviewers with the appropriate range of expertise, the curriculum cannot be submitted to the same degree of scrutiny, and there is not time enough to dedicate the necessary attention to each program grouped under the umbrella. Were the reviewers to have dealt with every element in their terms of reference, their report would have been many times longer. A compounding factor is that graduate programs were being reviewed at the same time.

As it was, many of the smaller programs received only a page or so of comment. Likewise the administrative responses from FAS, and the Provost as well as the report to AP&P and discussion by AP&P did not have the detail the Auditors are used to finding, and they mostly

emphasized faculty planning, though there was some good coverage of a few broad themes that came out of the reviews. (Philosophy, which was originally identified as part of Cluster 1, was allowed to "opt out" of the cluster review; certainly, its "stand-alone" review was more thorough than those of Anthropology and Sociology, the other large departments in that cluster.)

Thus, successful as the cluster review process may have been for Toronto's purposes in this round, it had limitations that could be corrected only by more focussed reviews by reviewers from the actual disciplines being reviewed. Given the size and complexities of FAS, it is difficult for the Auditors to make specific suggestions on how to preserve the value of the clusters and overcome their shortcomings. One general observation is that perhaps too much is attempted in this one planning methodology.

In addition to having cluster reviews included as part of the planning cycle, focussed as it is on resource matters, there might be room for reviews of undergraduate departmental programs that emphasize program quality concerns, such as curriculum design, delivery, student evaluation and achievement. If the goal remains to review all programs as part of a planning exercise, another approach might be to review all departments independently and attach to those reviews the smaller interdisciplinary programs for which the department has major responsibility. For example, Actuarial Studies might be reviewed along with Statistics using only one external reviewer. In that way departments might not have to participate in as many clusters. The remaining interdisciplinary programs might be clustered. Toronto has many programs that might be called "double majors." It will be important to ensure that they are reviewed. (Curiously, some were identified in a cluster, e.g., Chemical Physics, while others e.g., Chemistry and Geology, were not.) See also section 7 of this report.

Suggestion 8: Though Toronto's innovative clustering of programs and departments for review purposes had many advantages, it also had some limitations. If clusters continue to be used, the FAS Dean and the Provost's Office should ensure that the review design allows for each program included in a cluster to receive the necessary attention as mandated by the UPR Process.

One of the great advantages of reviewing all units and programs within a multi-departmental division over the same period was that it introduced the opportunity to undertake "horizontal" reviews "of various dimensions bearing upon the quality of the students' educational experience, such as student counselling."(from *Guidelines*). As part of their examination, the Auditors looked at the faculty-wide curriculum review that was conducted by the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering. This review covered important issues that almost certainly would be ignored in a review of a single unit, and the faculty is to be commended for undertaking it. The Auditors were told that FAS likewise established several faculty-wide reviews that led to valuable outcomes. Reviews such as these that go beyond the current *UPRAC Audit Guidelines* are additional evidence that an institution is engaged in maintaining and improving the quality of education provided to its undergraduates. Other

universities might wish to adapt “horizontal reviews” to their own quality assurance programs.

The self-studies for the reviews of Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry, and Pharmacy were well done. They included good use of data and covered thoroughly the requirements set out in *Guidelines*. To ensure wide participation, Pharmacy had a facilitator at the meeting to begin the process of developing their self-study.

One of the purposes Toronto had for conducting reviews was to determine how programs compared “to the best in its field among international peer institutions.” As one way of achieving that goal, it was decided that for all reviews, normally, at least one of the external reviewers had to be from outside Canada. The Auditors commend the University for its efforts to appoint international reviewers, and they were impressed by the academic stature of the external reviewers for the programs in their audit sample.

Course descriptions provide an important window on curriculum strength and program quality, and they were made available to the external reviewers even though they are not specified in *Guidelines*. Toronto might consider specifying that they should routinely be provided.

Suggestion 9: To ensure that external reviewers always have access to course descriptions, *Guidelines* might remind units that they should be provided.

Guidelines states that the “head of the unit under review should have the opportunity to respond” to the external reviewers’ report(s), and then in the following section it goes on to instruct that the report “should be circulated within the unit reviewed.” Having the unit head respond is fine as far as it goes and is consistent with common practice. However, since the self-study, which informs the external reviewers, should be completed as a collegial effort, the University might consider making clear that the response should likewise reflect the views of the unit as a whole.

To be effective, reviews should lead to unambiguous outcomes. For this to happen, clear and realistic recommendations must be made, and the appropriate authorities need to respond unequivocally. Toronto’s review process closely integrated reviewing, planning and budgeting – to a greater degree than has been seen elsewhere – and the end results in all cases were decisions on resource allocations, as well as the identification of some broad issues for which action was needed. As noted in section 5.1.2 (5), “the mechanism for action on the recommendations arising from the undergraduate review[s]” is admirably clear. The Auditors, however, noted that, in comparison with many other external reviewers’ reports that they have seen, the recommendations in the Toronto sample were not as clearly isolated. Certainly, it was obvious from the text where some specific recommendations were made, but their overall impression was that more recommendations could have been inferred from what the reviewers wrote. There was, therefore, no easy way of tracking any implied or

mended recommendations through the administrative responses and plans in order to be sure a decision was made for each of them. Perhaps in future reviews the reviewers might be asked to highlight their recommendations. The point of this observation is not to find fault, but rather to suggest how external reviewers' evaluations might be even more beneficial as part of a program quality review that covers all aspects of the UPR Process.

6 Relationship of Undergraduate Program Reviews to Professional Accreditation Reviews

The UPR Process recognizes that there may be some overlap, "to a greater or lesser degree," between reviews conducted for professional accreditation purposes and those carried out to satisfy the undergraduate program review process. Provision is made for institutions to use accreditation review material where it is "consistent with the objectives, structure and elements" of the UPR Process, and to supplement the accreditation review "so that the broader requirements [of the program review] are met."

It seems appropriate to emphasize again that, although data gathered for purposes of accreditation reviews (teaching loads, c.v.s, and the like) may be used in conducting the periodic quality review, the objectives may well be, in some cases, quite distinct. Any review for purposes of accreditation must concern itself with criteria of minimum professional competence, though there are certainly instances where the process does not reach far into the sphere of critical self-appraisal.

Toronto's *Guidelines* accords with this view, stating unequivocally that such reviews "serve different purposes than those commissioned by the University." Hence, rather than adopting what amounts to the default position that the accreditation review satisfies the internal review requirement, the U of T policy makes the opposite assumption, explained as follows:

Internally-commissioned reviews should not be waived because an externally-commissioned review, such as an accreditation review, has recently been conducted. In such cases, however, the University process may be streamlined by supplementing documentation as necessary and possibly by returning to the same external reviewers with supplemental questions.

The clear separation of accreditation and program review processes in Toronto's review system is commendable. Accreditation status, however, is a recognized means of assessing academic standards. In the case of professional programs, it may also be tied to the ability of graduates to obtain professional certification or licensure. Thus, it would be useful to note the accreditation status of a program in self-study reports and to identify any pertinent recommendations received from accrediting bodies and actions taken in response.

7 Review of Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Programs

The Objective section of the UPR Process states that institutional policies should “include joint programs and multi- or interdisciplinary programs in a way that is appropriate for the institution.” This statement is expanded in section 1.5:

In order to conform with UPRAC guidelines, the review of undergraduate interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programs, however they are managed, must be clearly shown to have effectively considered such programs as entities distinct from the larger academic units within which they may be included.

In the Appendix to *UPRAC Guidelines*, three categories of multi- or interdisciplinary programs are identified, and further details are provided as to what reviews of them should entail.

Guidelines itself does not refer directly to multi- or interdisciplinary programs, but it does make clear Toronto's intent with respect to these programs, of which there are many. They fall within the definition of a “program” used for the purpose of these guidelines. The definition is a good one:

[a program is] an identified set and sequence of courses within an area of study, which is completed in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the granting of an undergraduate or graduate degree.

There is one caveat – *Guidelines* applies only to programs that have dedicated resources. Programs composed entirely of courses drawn from other programs and requiring no administrative coordination are not subject to the self-study and external consultant components of reviews. For these programs “the head of the relevant units should periodically review enrolment trends and curricular coherence.”

Based on an examination of the schedule of reviews for *Raising Our Sights*, it appears that all of Toronto's programs that fall within UPRAC multidisciplinary categories 1 and 3 were reviewed. For example, Aboriginal Studies and Equity Studies, two programs that seem to have few, if any, dedicated resources and might be considered to fall within category 3 of *UPRAC Guidelines* were included in Cluster 1.

There is one category of programs that needs some further comment, viz. Toronto's programs that have the characteristics of what are referred to by UPRAC Guidelines and other institutions as double majors or joint honours. These are, in Toronto's terminology, Specialist programs that comprise courses from two academic units. In the case of Philosophy, one of the program reviews in the audit sample, it was noted earlier in section 5.2 that several of these programs, Philosophy and Political Science, Philosophy and Religion and Philosophy and Sociology (all of which are to be found in the Philosophy section of the FAS Calendar), received no coverage in the review. Bioethics, on the other hand, another program offered by the Department of Philosophy was included. UPRAC requirements are minimal – merely that double majors “should be reviewed as

past of each of the contributing programs." In revising its review policy, Toronto needs to be attentive to these programs.

Recommendation 9: Toronto's review *Guidelines* should direct divisions that offer multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary programs that come under category 2 of UPRAC Guidelines (double majors or double honours) to include them adequately in their review processes.

8 Conformity of the University of Toronto's Policy and Procedures for the Implementation of New Undergraduate Programs to the UPR Process for New Programs

The UPR Process for the implementation of new undergraduate programs states that:

The institution should provide documentation to the Auditors regarding the implementation of new undergraduate programs, including;

a) the institutional process for the implementation of new undergraduate programs, which should address points [5.1.3 (1) - (5)], above and provide evidence of the quality of the faculty; and

b) evidence that the institution has evaluated and met the criteria established by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) (formerly the Ministry of Education and Training) for the approval and funding of new non-core programs when the university has applied to MTCU for authorization to count the students enrolled in a new non-core program toward its BIU entitlement. Specifically, the university should provide documentation related to each of the six criteria identified in the program approvals certification form.

In a manner similar to that for the audit of the review process for existing programs, the Auditors apply two compliance tests to the process for the implementation of new programs. The first test looks at the conformity of the institutional process to the UPR Process. The points covered in *a)* and *b)* above plus the identification of an authority responsible for the application of the policy and the definition of the criteria that will be applied constitute the factors in this test. The second test assesses the conformity of institutional practice to institutional policy.

In response to the request for its policy on the implementation of new programs, the University supplied the Auditors with the document entitled *Guidelines for Divisional Submissions* (hereafter *Guidelines 2*). Reference to this document can be found in section 3.2 of this report and a brief description is given in section 4.2. The document is reproduced in full in Appendix 7. The Auditors

were also provided with a flow chart that outlines the steps in the approval process for programs that are to be offered at UTM.

Guidelines 2 assigns authority for the approval of new degree programs to the Academic Board of the Governing Council, which receives recommendations from AP&P after that committee has reviewed the proposals. "All major changes within existing academic programs" where "'programs' includes the curriculum within a particular degree" also come under the ambit of the Academic Board. These proposals (and other matters) originate in the academic divisions (faculties and schools) and are forwarded to AP&P after "hav[ing] been approved by the relevant divisional council." Elsewhere, however, some ambiguity is introduced as to the authority level for the approval of new programs within a degree. The Terms of Reference for AP&P vests final authority with that committee in certain cases: "Major changes, such as the removal or addition of a program stream within a particular degree, are *approved* (emphasis added) by [AP&P] or forwarded to the Academic board for approval, depending on the nature of the change."

The FAS flow chart shows the steps that proposals follow for both the St. George campus and UTM, though no evidence was presented to show that these steps are drawn from a divisional policy document or whether the chart records commonly understood practice .

Criteria for the implementation of a new program are defined in the sense that the process is outlined step by step and, at the university level, the documentation needed to support the proposal is specified.

The UPR Elements for which evidence is required, and comments on Toronto's conformity to them follow:

(1) consistency of the program with the general objectives of the institution's mission and development plan;

The Auditors are satisfied that this requirement is covered in *Guidelines 2*, though the language used does not mimic that found in *UPRAC Guidelines*. *Guidelines 2* requires that all new program proposals "should be accompanied by an executive summary prepared by the division which [among other things]:

- identifies important initiatives in the proposal and gives the rationale for the proposal;
- describes their expected impact on the nature and quality of the division's program of study and any impact that such major proposals may have on other divisions"

Presumably what is in the executive summary would normally be found in greater detail in the proposal submission itself.

(2) appropriateness of the admission requirements, e.g., achievement and preparation, for the program's educational objectives;

This point is not explicitly mentioned. Moreover, *UPRAC Guidelines* now has a footnote to elaborate on the expectation that this provision would include reflection on the university-level admissions requirements, when appropriate.

(3) appropriateness of the program's structure and curriculum for its educational objectives;

(4) appropriateness of mode of delivery and of methods used for the evaluation of student progress;

Guidelines 2 states that the executive summary must explain "the pedagogical and other academic issues underlying the proposed changes and the benefits expected as a result of their implementation." The submission additionally is expected to include "program description and requirements." To ensure adequate attention has been given to these important pedagogical concerns, and, in so doing, ensure that new program proposals fully comply with *UPRAC Guidelines*, this statement in *Guidelines 2* should be expanded along the lines of the above points (in italics).

(5) appropriate utilization of the existing human/physical/financial resources;

The executive summary "includes an indication of the expected resource implications," for such areas as staffing, space, libraries, and computing facilities, and revenue/costs. Otherwise, it must indicate "clearly if there are no or only minimal resource implications."

UPRAC Guidelines also specifies that new program proposals provide evidence of the quality of the faculty. At present Toronto's protocol merely instructs proposers to list "faculty members involved, where known," yet one of the "Objectives" in *Raising our Sights*, stated that "The University of Toronto will give particular emphasis to . . . developing programs that "have associated faculty who are leading scholars, and who bring their scholarship to bear in their teaching." It would be consistent with this objective to amend *Guidelines 2* so as to require that proposals are accompanied by more than just the names of faculty.

Recommendation 10: Toronto's *Guidelines for Divisional Submissions* should be reviewed against *UPRAC Audit Guidelines* and, to bring it fully into conformity, should be amended in ways specified above.

Suggestion 10: For the clear guidance of all concerned, either in *Guidelines for Divisional Submissions* or in a companion piece, the University might consider producing a comprehensive outline of the processes that are followed for the approval of new undergraduate programs. Divisions might

be encouraged to do likewise where such documentation does not exist.

The conditions for the other part of the test for conformity with the UPR Process are set out in section *b*) above: the Auditors must determine whether the policy charges the institution to evaluate and meet the criteria established by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) for the approval and funding of new non-core programs. (Though the MTCU Program Approvals Policy applies only when the university is requesting MTCU for authorization to count the students enrolled in a new non-core program toward its BIU entitlement, these criteria could be expected to be found in any sound policy for new program implementation.)

All of the MTCU criteria except “societal demand” and “duplication” would be covered, at least to some degree, in the documentation that is required for submission to AP&P. When amending *Guidelines 2* (see Recommendation 10), the university might refer proposers to the MTCU requirements. Additionally, AP&P members would be made aware that to submit new “non-core” programs for funding, the University must certify that the MTCU criteria “have been evaluated and met” and that evidence must be submitted to show “that any duplicative similarities to existing program in Ontario or Canada are justifiable for reasons of public funding” (MTCU “Program Approvals Certification Form”).

The second test is the test of conformity of institutional practice to institutional policy and for this purpose the implementation of the European Studies Program at UTM was chosen. A close examination of the documentation that was provided revealed a more involved approval route than the flow chart requires. Even so, there was no indication that the proposal had received the scrutiny of the FAS Committee on Academic Standards prior to being forwarded to AP&P. The proposal did, however, appear to have been carefully reviewed and information obtained during the on-campus interview confirmed this impression.

The program is similar to the one offered on the St. George campus and that may account for the brevity of the summary of the written program proposal. Also, with the exception of one new course, it draws entirely on existing courses from several departments. Even though it is an area studies program and technically comes under the MTCU rubric of “Non-Core Programs,” it is reasonable, therefore, for the University to have treated it as a “Core Arts and Science Program.”

The Auditors are essentially satisfied that the proposal was dealt with adequately, but implementation of Recommendation 10 (and Suggestion 10) will help to ensure that the approval process is always followed routinely and completely.

9 Conclusion

Though in many respects the University of Toronto approach to undergraduate program reviews is a departure from what the Auditors have seen at other institutions, it is essentially very sound. A number of features are laudatory and worthy of emulation, but having grown out of an environment that is unique to the largest and most complex university in the province, the review process is tailored to a greater extent than other review policies to meet the requirements of the home institution. The basic document used for the audit, *Guidelines*, reflects the recent planning context for program reviews, and Toronto's challenge will be to develop an overarching review policy that will serve all categories of undergraduate program reviews. A protocol for the introduction of new programs is in place and with some minor changes will readily be brought in line with *UPRAC Guidelines*.

10 Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions

For ease of reference the Recommendations and Suggestions are repeated here:

Recommendation 1: To establish firmly the status of *Guidelines* as the University's free-standing undergraduate program review protocol, it must be a comprehensive document that fully incorporates all expectations and requirements for program reviews, some of which are now found only in *Raising Our Sights*. In particular, the description of the self-study should stress the reflective and self-critical nature of this key ingredient in the review process. Other UPRAC-mandated features, for example, the participation of faculty and students, must also be added. (p. 14)

Recommendation 2: Though there is no evidence to question the impartiality of the external consultants who have been chosen by the University of Toronto, it is recommended that the University include within its policy the requirement that external consultants be at arm's length from the program under review, along with its interpretation of what is entailed by the principle (for example, not relatives, collaborators, supervisors/supervisees, and so on). (p. 14).

Recommendation 3: Toronto's *Guidelines* should be amended to make clear that the undergraduate review process includes, in some manner appropriate to the unique structure and culture of the University, the "appraisal by peers" step for every program undergoing review. To this end, *Guidelines* should specify the Committee's existing mandate vis-à-vis undergraduate reviews (i.e., to ensure that reviews have been performed; that they were conducted appropriately; and that issues identified by reviewers were dealt with by the administration). *Guidelines* should also mention that AP&P must satisfy itself that issues identified in the self-study have been addressed. In discharging its responsibility to fulfil the "appraisal by peers" UPRAC requirement, AP&P must give due attention to every program undergoing review. (p. 16)

Recommendation 4: Assignment of responsibility (perhaps to AP&P) for the monitoring of the action taken to implement the recommendations coming out of program reviews should be added to the Toronto review protocol. (p. 18)

Recommendation 5: At a minimum, *Guidelines* should state that the time interval between reviews must not exceed ten years. In the interests of continuity and clarity it would be preferable to prepare a schedule of reviews that includes all undergraduate programs offered by the University. (p.18)

Recommendation 6: *Guidelines* should be amended to reflect the fact that program review summaries are presented to the Governing Council. The University might also consider adding the Accountability Framework to *Guidelines* . (p. 19)

Recommendation 7: The Toronto review protocol should be updated to include reference to the additional questions regarding admissions requirements now included in *UPRAC Guidelines*. Academic units and external reviewers should be asked to respond to these additional questions as well as the general point about the appropriateness of the admission requirements. (p. 19)

Recommendation 8: To reflect the clear importance Toronto intends to give to curricular matters, *Guidelines* should include explicit reference to the importance of addressing the appropriateness of a program's structure and curriculum for its educational objectives. (p. 20)

Recommendation 9: Toronto's review *Guidelines* should direct divisions that offer multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary programs that come under category 2 of UPRAC Guidelines to adequately include them in their review processes. (p. 31)

Recommendation 10: Toronto's *Guidelines for Divisional Submissions* should be reviewed against *UPRAC Audit Guidelines* and, to bring it fully into conformity, should be amended in ways specified above. (p. 33)

Suggestion 1: In order more readily to be seen to be in conformity with *UPRAC Guidelines*, the University of Toronto should consider rendering more visible the over-all framework for undergraduate program reviews. Specifically, for the benefit of those within and outside the institution, the University might review its documentation regarding undergraduate program reviews with the aim of achieving greater coherence and clarity in one free-standing statement. Toronto might also consider the advantages of explicitly assigning the formal authority for reviews to an appropriate statutory body. (p. 12)

Suggestion 2: Since Toronto's *Guidelines* allow for some degree of divisional variation and flexibility in the conduct of program reviews, it should make clear which review criteria form the core that must be addressed in order for reviews to be conducted in conformity with UPRAC Guidelines. (p. 12)

Suggestion 3: The University might consider making available to programs undergoing review the option of seeking "the advice of others such as representatives of industry, professions and practical training programs." (p. 17)

Suggestion 4: The University might consider providing additional written guidance for all parties involved with reviews on the roles and responsibilities of the various players and further details on the steps in the review process. (p. 22)

Suggestion 5: Toronto might identify where faculty and student involvement in self studies was strongest and weakest, and publicize those factors that seem to promote fuller participation of faculty and students, and the consequent benefits. (p.23)

Suggestion 6: The importance of the analytical use of data in self-studies might be emphasized in *Guidelines* by adding the paragraph, or similar wording, from *Raising Our Sights* that introduces "Elements of the Self-Study." (p. 24)

Suggestion 7: Since many programs that are essentially the same, or nearly so, are offered at more than one campus of the University, Toronto might profitably design its review process to facilitate a tri-campus perspective on the quality of similar programs is obtained. (p. 26)

Suggestion 8: Though Toronto's innovative clustering of programs and departments for review purposes had many advantages, it also had some limitations. If clusters continue to be used, the FAS Dean and the Provost's Office should ensure that the review design allows for each program included in a cluster to receive the necessary attention as mandated by the UPR Process. (p. 27)

Suggestion 9: To ensure that external reviewers always have access to course descriptions, *Guidelines* might remind units that they should be provided. (p. 28)

Suggestion 10: For the clear guidance of all concerned, either in *Guidelines for Divisional Submissions* or in a companion piece, the University might consider producing a comprehensive outline of the processes that are followed for the approval of new undergraduate programs. Divisions might be encouraged to do likewise where such documentation does not exist. (p. 33)

Appendix 1 — Schedule for Program of Audits in First Cycle: 1997-2003

Year in Cycle	Academic Year	Universities	
		Fall	Winter/Spring
1	1996-1997	N/A	<i>Brock</i> <i>Ottawa</i>
2	1997-1998	---	<i>Western</i> <i>Windsor</i>
3	1998-1999	---	<i>Carlton</i> <i>Nipissing</i> <i>Queen's</i>
4	1999-2000	---	<i>York</i>
5	2000-2001	<i>Lakehead</i>	<i>Ryerson</i> <i>Trent</i>
6	2001-2002	<i>Toronto</i>	<i>Laurentian</i> <i>Waterloo</i>
7	2002-2003	<i>Guelph</i>	<i>McMaster</i> <i>Wilfrid Laurier</i>

Notes:

1. The Fall and Winter/Spring terms indicate the time periods during which the site visits are held. Institutions are asked to submit the necessary documents in the preceding term.
2. The use of italics for the name of the university indicates the audit has been completed.

Appendix 2 — List of the Names of the Auditors

Dr. Alice Baumgart:

Professor Emeritus, Queen's University; Dean, School of Nursing, 1977-1987 and 1994-1997; Vice-Principal (Human Services), 1988-1993.

Dr. James Good:

Professor Emeritus, Department of English, University of Western Ontario; Dean, Faculty of Arts, 1993-1999.

Dr. Ross Rudolph:

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, York University; Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts, 1985-88; Associate Vice-President (Faculties), 1990-1996.

Appendix 3 — List of the Principal Documents Provided by the University of Toronto

GENERAL

Academic Board. *Terms of Reference*.

Agenda Committee of the Academic Board. *Report Number 91*. March 15, 2001.

Amrhein, Dean, FAS. Memorandum to FAS Chairs, Principals and Program Directors re *Raising Our Sights*. November 16, 1998.

---. Memorandum to FAS Chairs, Principals and Program Directors re Preparing the Plan. February 3, 1999.

Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. *Terms of Reference*. Revised August 1996.

---. *Report Number 83*. October 4, 2000.

Executive Committee of the Governing Council. *Report Number 334*. pp. 4-5. April 16, 2001.

Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering Calendar 2001-2002.

Faculty of Arts and Science - St. George Campus 2001-2002 Calendar.

---. *Generic Terms of Reference for Arts and Science External Reviews*. Undated.

Faculty of Pharmacy Calendar 1998-1999.

Governing Council. *Minutes*. p. 16. April 26, 2001.

Guidelines for Divisional Submissions. September 15, 1999.

List of FAS Single Department and Program Cluster Reviews.

List of Undergraduate Program Reviews Completed Since 1996-97.

Office of the Vice-President and Provost. *Guidelines for Reviews of Academic Programs and Units*. Undated.

---. *Raising Our Sights: The Next Cycle of White Paper Planning Key Priorities for 2000-2004*. June 6, 1999.

---. *Planning for 2000: a Provostial White Paper on University Objectives and Strategies*. February 14, 1994

---. *Student Involvement in the Planning Process*. February 9, 1999.

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Appendix 4 — Schedule for the Site Visit

Thursday, November 22, 2001

- 9:30 a.m. Dr. Carolyn Tuohy, Vice-President, Policy Development, and Associate Provost
- 10:00 a.m. Dr. Robert McNutt, Principal, University of Toronto at Mississauga
Dr. Paul Thompson, Principal, University of Toronto at Scarborough
- 2:00 p.m. Dr. Carl Amrhein, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
- 3:00 p.m. Dr. Wayne Hindmarsh, Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy
Ms. Lesley Lavack, Assistant Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy,
- 4:00 p.m. Dr. Adel Sedra, Vice-President and Provost
Dr. Carolyn Tuohy

Friday, November 23, 2001

- 9:00 a.m. **Cluster 1, Faculty of Arts and Science (selected components)**
Aboriginal Studies: Dr. Keren Rice
Anthropology: Dr. Hy Van Luong, Chair
Criminology: Mr. William Bateman (Woodsworth College)
Dr. Mariana Valverde
Philosophy: Dr. Barry Brown
Dr. James Brown
Dr. Ingrid Stefanovic
Sociology: Dr. Dennis Magill
Dr. Lorne Tepperman, Chair
Women's Studies: Dr. June Larkin
- 10:00 a.m. **Philosophy**
Dr. Barry Brown, Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Science
Dr. James Brown, Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Science
Dr. Elizabeth Cowper, Chair, Division of Humanities, University of Toronto at Scarborough
Dr. William Seager, former Discipline Representative, Philosophy, University of Toronto at Scarborough
Dr. Ingrid Stefanovic, Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Science
- 11:00 a.m. **European Studies**
Dr. Michael Lettieri, Associate Dean, Humanities, University of Toronto at Mississauga

- 12:00 noon **Student**
Ms. Shannon Dallas, Faculty of Pharmacy
- 1:30 p.m.: **Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering**
Dr. Michael Charles, past Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
Dr. Anastasios Venetsanopoulos, Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
- 2:00 p.m. **Chemical Engineering and "Horizontal Review" of the Undergraduate Curriculum in the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering**
Dr. David Boocock, past Chair, Department of Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry
Dr. William Cluett, Vice-Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
Dr. Douglas Reeve, Chair, Department of Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry
- 3:00 p.m. **Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, some members of the**
Dr. Ruth Gallop, Chair,
Dr. Wendy Rolph, past Chair
Dr. Ian McDonald, former member
Dr. Berry Smith
Dr. Carolyn Tuohy, Presidential Advisor

Appendix 5 - Description of the University of Toronto's Governance Structure and Academic Organization

Governance Structure³

The governing structure of the University of Toronto is unique among Canadian universities. On July 1, 1972 by Provincial Statute, the form of governance at Toronto changed from a bicameral system of Senate and Board of governors to a unicameral Governing Council. Continued in the Governing Council were the powers and duties of the Senate and Board of Governors. The Governing Council is composed of 50 members representing all estates of the University community.

In its present form, Governing Council operates with an Executive Committee and three boards: Academic Board, Business Board and University Affairs Board. Each of the boards has smaller committees to deal with particular aspects of its terms of reference. The boards and committees have authority for approvals which authorize them to make certain policy decisions which are then reported to the Governing Council or the board to which it reports as the case may be. Most major policy decisions require the approval of Governing Council. With the exception of purely academic matters, decisions of the Academic Board are forwarded either to the Executive Committee for confirmation or to Council for approval.

Academic Organization⁴

The College System

The University is organized on a college system: that is, all students in the oldest and largest faculty, the Faculty of Arts and Science, must register in a college. This system breaks up the large numbers and gives the students the advantage of being members of a smaller group where they can be known as individuals. The benefit of college membership has been extended to the professional faculties; accordingly, two of the colleges - Innis and New - are multi-faculty colleges accepting some professional students as well as students in arts and science. The colleges owned and operated entirely by the University are: University College, Innis College, New College, Woodsworth College on the St. George Campus and Erindale College or University of Toronto at Mississauga, 34 kilometres to the west, and Scarborough College or University of Toronto at Scarborough, 34 kilometres to the east.

The federated universities represent separate legal entities with their own independent boards. They appoint their own staff and own their own buildings but their Arts and Science teaching staff, curriculum and students are an integral part of the Faculty of Arts and Science of the University. They are: The University of St. Michael's College, Trinity College and Victoria University.

The Teaching Divisions

The Faculty of Arts and Science is the largest of the teaching divisions; it provides instruction for students who work for the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Commerce degrees. The staff is organized in 30 departments. Arts and science degrees may also be taken at UTSC; UTM is part of the Faculty of arts and Science. Other large faculties, like the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, are also

3 From "A Brief History and Description of the Governing Council of the University of Toronto."

4 From "Outline of the Organization of the University of Toronto."

organized in departments. The other teaching divisions of the University are as follows: Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, Faculty of Dentistry, Faculty of Forestry, School of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Information Studies, Faculty of Law, Joseph L. Rotman School of Management, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Music, Faculty of Nursing, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, University of Toronto Schools, Faculty of Pharmacy, Faculty of Physical Education and Health, Faculty of Social Work, and School of Continuing Studies

Appendix 6 – Toronto's Policy for the Review of Existing Programs

Guidelines for Reviews of Academic Programs and Units

1. Purpose

The purpose of reviewing academic programs is to maintain and improve the quality of those programs. Reviews are intended to provide a sound basis of information and assessment on which decisions about program improvement can be made. They must accordingly address the questions as to what is being done well, what is not being done well, and how the program compares to the best in its field among international peer institutions. For the University of Toronto as a whole, those peer institutions comprise the first rank of public research universities in the world. For any given program, the relevant peers may be drawn from a top tier that includes private as well as public institutions.

The review of an academic program should entail a review of the academic unit(s) which offer it, and *vice versa*. It is the quality of the scholarship of the professoriate, and the degree to which that scholarship is brought to bear in teaching, that is the foundation for the quality of academic programs. More generally, all of the factors that contribute to the collegial and scholarly life of the unit -- academic and administrative complement, research and scholarly activity, infrastructure, governance, etc. -- bear on the quality of academic programs and the broad educational experience of students. Reviews are hence intended to ensure and improve quality in all of these aspects.

Reviews are also important mechanisms of accountability. Academic administrators are accountable for the discharge of their responsibilities through a line of accountability that reaches from chairs and directors to deans and principals to the Provost to the President and ultimately to University governance. As part of this structure of accountability, governors have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate mechanisms for reviewing academic programs with a view to ensuring and improving their quality are in place.

2. Application

a) Scope:

- These guidelines apply to reviews commissioned by academic administrators at the University of Toronto to aid them in discharging their responsibilities of academic leadership.
- Reviews of academic programs by external bodies such as the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS) and professional accrediting bodies form part of collegial self-regulatory systems to ensure that mutually agreed-upon threshold standards of quality are maintained in new and existing programs. Such reviews hence serve different purposes than those commissioned by the University. Academic administrators within the University, moreover, have limited discretion over the conduct of these externally-commissioned reviews; and these guidelines are not intended to apply to such reviews.
- For the purpose of these guidelines, a "program" is defined as an identified set and sequence of courses within an area of study, which is completed in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the granting of an undergraduate or graduate degree. These guidelines apply to all such programs to which resources are dedicated.⁵

⁵ In some cases, programs do not have dedicated resources, but rather are entirely composed of courses offered in other programs and require no administrative coordination. Such programs need not undergo the full process of regular self-study and external review set out in these guidelines. However, the head of the relevant unit should periodically review enrolment trends and curricular coherence in such programs.

b) Reviews of programs and units:

- Given the purpose of reviews as stated above, and to minimize the number of different review cycles as discussed below, the review of an academic unit should normally include a review of each of the programs offered by the unit. Conversely, program reviews should normally be imbedded in reviews of the unit(s) upon whose resources they draw.
- There are some exceptions to the above rule:
 - ◊ In some cases, the inclusion of program reviews in reviews of units is not feasible. Most notably, the review of a multi-departmental division with departmentally-based programs (which are assessed in reviews of the departments) should not include a review of all of these programs, although general issues of curriculum may be considered.
 - ◊ Programs which draw upon the resources of more than one department or division, and which are not administered by a single academic unit, may be reviewed on a stand-alone basis or in the context of reviews of one or more of the participating units.
 - ◊ Programs offered by St. George colleges within the Faculty of Arts and Science should be reviewed in the context of reviews of the relevant Arts and Science department(s) and their programs. The periodic review of the college will not include a review of its academic programs.

c) Divisional variation:

- These guidelines are meant to allow latitude for variation and flexibility in divisional practices in the conduct of reviews, while establishing a broad consistency of understanding regarding the purpose, process and content of reviews, regarding administrative responses, and regarding circulation of the review reports.

3. Process:

a) Commissioning Officer:

- Reviews of academic units and the programs they offer are to be commissioned by the academic administrator to whom the head of the unit reports: the dean or principal in the case of multi-departmental divisions, and the Provost in the case of single-departmental divisions.
- In the case of programs that cut across units, the review should be commissioned by the academic administrator to whom the heads of the relevant units report: the dean or principal where the program cuts across departments within a division; the Provost or the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies where the program cuts across divisions.

b) Timing:

- Reviews should be conducted on a regular basis, frequent enough to ensure that the academic leadership is kept informed of developments in all academic units, but at sufficiently long

intervals that the effects of given actions can be determined and that the system is not overburdened by the logistical demands of the process.

- Reviews of the various programs offered by a given academic unit should be synchronized to the extent possible. Normally this will mean that reviews of both undergraduate and graduate programs will be timed according to the OCGS review cycle.⁶ There may, however, be circumstances in which reviews may be timed on a different basis -- notably at the beginning of a planning cycle.
- For programs that cut across units, care needs to be taken by the appropriate commissioning officer to ensure that they are reviewed on a regular cycle, since the discipline-based units involved in offering such programs are likely to be on differing review cycles.
- Internally-commissioned reviews should not be waived because an externally-commissioned review, such as an accreditation review, has recently been conducted. In such cases, however, the University process may be streamlined by supplementing documentation as necessary and possibly by returning to the same external reviewers with supplementary questions.

c) Selection of reviewers:

- The composition of review panels will vary according to divisional circumstances, subject to the provision that at least two scholars external to the University of Toronto be involved. Normally at least one of these reviewers should be from outside Canada.
- Some divisions may rely entirely on external reviewers; others may strike an internal review committee as well. In all cases the reports of external reviewers should be identifiably separate from internal reports, although the internal review committee, if any, may wish to comment upon the external review(s) and/or to include them as appendices.
- The selection of reviewers, like the commissioning of the review itself, should be done on a "one-up" basis. The commissioning officer should select reviewers in consultation with the unit to be reviewed. In selecting reviewers, an appropriate balance needs to be struck between familiarity with the unit under review and sufficient distance to allow for objective assessment.⁷

d) Conduct of the review:

⁶ This guideline is predicated on the assumption that the OCGS process can be modified to allow for "augmented" reviews including reviews of undergraduate programs and additional terms of reference specified by the University as discussed above. This guideline represents a change from normal practice at the University of Toronto, in which undergraduate programs have been reviewed as part of the review of the relevant academic unit, tied to the term of the head of the unit. Judgment will need to be exercised as to the type and extent of review required at the end of the term of an academic head. The self-study should be up-dated at this point. There is also value in convening an internal review committee. Divisions may choose to devote the first phase of the deliberations of the search committee to this purpose, rather than striking a separate review committee.

⁷ Assuming that a model of "augmented" reviews, at the option of the university, is accepted by OCGS, reviewers would also need to be approved by OCGS, since reviewers will be required to respond to OCGS terms of reference as well as those put to them by the University of Toronto.

- The review should be publicly announced through appropriate University media and submissions invited.
- A thorough self-study should be prepared, as discussed below.
- External reviewers should be provided with a copy of the terms of reference, the self-study of the unit under review, and any submissions received, in advance of a site visit.
- Reviewers may visit either together or separately. During their visit, provision should be made for reviewers to meet with faculty, students and staff as well as members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer.
- External reviewers may submit either individual or team reports. Where a team report is to be submitted, an extra day should be provided at the conclusion of the site visit to allow for reviewers to confer.

4. Content of reviews:

a) Self-study:

- Guidelines regarding the content of self-studies have been set out in *Raising Our Sights*. They are incorporated into the present document as an Appendix.

b) External Reviews:

- The terms of reference for external reviewers should be established by the commissioning officer. These terms may vary to address issues of particular relevance to a given unit. They should however ask reviewers to comment upon each of the following elements, in order to assess each of the programs offered by the unit against the criteria set out in Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 of the *White Paper*:
 - ◊ *demand for the program as evidenced by the quality of students attracted and by applications and offer and yield rates*
 - ◊ *quality of research and scholarship of faculty members*
 - ◊ *quality of teaching, and evidence that research and scholarship is brought to bear in teaching*
 - ◊ *relationship of the program to the evolution of the area of study within which it is offered*
 - ◊ *assessment of the program relative to the best of its kind offered in Canada and internationally, including areas of strength and weakness*
 - ◊ *contribution of the program to the mission of the University of Toronto to rank with the best public research universities in the world*
 - ◊ *extent to which the program exploits fully and efficiently all of the resources of the University that are relevant to an area of study*
 - ◊ *where appropriate, the extent to which the unit has developed partnerships with other universities and with other organizations to foster research and deliver teaching programs*

- *In addition to the above, reviewers should also assess the quality of the educational experience provided to students both within and outside the classroom, commenting upon:*
 - ◊ *the extent to which the program makes appropriate use of a variety of learning formats, with particular attention to courses with large enrolments*
 - ◊ *the extent and appropriateness of program enhancements beyond the classroom, such as opportunities for international mobility*
 - ◊ *the availability and utilization of student advising and counseling*
 - ◊ *the appropriateness of retention and completion rates in undergraduate and graduate programs, including times-to-completion of doctoral programs*
 - ◊ *the extent to which packages of assistance offered to doctoral-stream students are competitive with those offered at major public research universities internationally*
 - ◊ *the extent and effectiveness of measures to recruit and retain students and faculty from demographic groups under-represented in the unit and its programs.*
 - ◊ *factors specific to particular units and programs, at the discretion of the commissioning officer*

6. Administrative Response:

- As part of the discharge of accountability, the academic administrator who commissioned the review should respond formally to the review report, indicating areas of agreement and (if relevant) disagreement, and describing the action to be taken in response to issues raised in the review. This administrative response is an important part of the review process, since it indicates how the recommendations of the review will be dealt with in the broader context of the multi-departmental division or the University as a whole.
- The outgoing, incoming, or continuing head of the unit under review should have the opportunity to respond as well.

7. Circulation of the report and submission to governance:

- The review report is a public document, and should be circulated within the unit reviewed. As noted above, reports of external reviewers should be identifiably separate from the report of the internal review committee, if any.⁸

⁸ The issue of the breadth of circulation of the review report is one on which there is considerable difference of opinion and of divisional practice. Some have argued that confidentiality increases the likelihood of frankness on the part of reviewers. However, if reviews are to have their intended effect of maintaining and improving the quality of programs, and if changes are to be made accordingly, it is important that the reasons for change be transparent. Furthermore, if the review is highly favourable, it can provide important recognition and reinforcement for an academic unit. To release some reports and not others would, of course, invite invidious comparisons. Divisions that follow the practice of circulating review reports, including the reports of external reviewers, moreover, have not found that frankness has been inhibited.

- External reviewers will be asked to make recommendations relating to personnel issues or other matters specifically involving individuals, if any, on a confidential basis to the academic officer commissioning the review.
- Review reports are submitted for information to governance through the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs of the Academic Board (AP&P). A compendium of summaries of review reports is submitted annually to AP&P and discussed at a dedicated meeting. The review reports themselves are filed with the Governing Council office for consultation. The compendium of summaries, as well as the record of the discussion at AP&P, is forwarded to the Executive Committee of Governing Council. These documents are also considered by the Agenda Planning Committee of the Academic Board to determine whether they raise any overall academic issues warranting discussion by the Board. The purpose of this consideration of reviews by governance is to allow governors to discharge their responsibility to ensure that academic administrators are reviewing programs and units on a regular basis and are responding to these reviews in a manner that achieves the purpose of maintaining and improving program quality.

Issues Specific to the 2000-2004 Planning Cycle

As *Raising Our Sights* makes clear, the conducting of external reviews of each academic unit is to be a central feature of the process for developing academic plans. In an institution of the size and complexity of the University of Toronto, this is an enormous undertaking. But it is essential if we are truly to hold ourselves to international standards of excellence in planning for the next cycle.

In order to make these reviews both effective and feasible within the above guidelines, certain adjustments may need to be made as follows:

1) **Supplementation of recent reviews:** Where a unit has undergone an external review in 1997/98 or 1998/99, it may be possible to build upon this review for the purposes of planning. The recent review should be assessed to determine the extent to which the content and the process of the review conformed to the above guidelines. In cases in which the review was in substantial compliance with these guidelines, it can be used as the basis for planning, supplemented by an updating of the self-study and by returning to external reviewers to address additional questions as necessary. Each dean or principal of a multi-departmental division should discuss with the Provost the intentions for dealing with each unit which has undergone a recent external review.

2) **Horizontal reviews:** In addition to reviews of academic units and programs, "horizontal" reviews of various dimensions bearing upon the quality of the students' educational experience, such as student counseling, should be undertaken within multi-departmental divisions. Similarly, a review of various activities that cut across St. George colleges might be undertaken, while allowing for specific attention to each college.

3) **Grouping of units:** The largest multi-departmental division, the Faculty of Arts and Science, has proposed that departments and programs be grouped into cognate "clusters" for the purposes of external review. There are a number of advantages to such a model, both logistical and substantive. Where units are to be grouped for review purposes, however, it will be necessary for the dean to work closely with the Provost to ensure that the process is so designed that sufficient attention and scrutiny is applied to each unit within the cluster.

4) **Central data support:** Much of the data necessary for self-studies can be generated centrally, drawing upon the potential of newly-introduced administrative information systems. These data will be available by the end of January 1999 (except for information from the Repository of Student Information [ROSI], which will be available in February). Divisions should check these data against their own records and experience.

5) **Central financial support:** The costs of the external review process for the purposes of this planning exercise will be defrayed by the Provost. Each dean and principal should consult with the Provost as to an appropriate budget.

6) **Administrative responses:** Since these reviews are for the purpose of informing the 2000-2004 planning exercise, the appropriate administrative response will take the form of the academic plan for the unit.

APPENDIX

Elements of the Self-study

This appendix outlines the elements of the self-studies conducted for the *Raising Our Sights* planning exercise. These elements are to be updated as appropriate in self-studies conducted for regular academic reviews on an on-going basis.

a) Complement -- Academic and Administrative:

- Age distribution and retirement projection for tenure/tenure-stream professoriate, by gender
- Academic staff count by type of appointment and source of funds
- Source of new faculty by institution granting Ph.D., and by specialization, 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Number and specialization of faculty who have left 1994-95 to 1998-99, by reason for leaving
- Gender and visible minority distribution of new appointments 1994-95 to 1998-99
- TA budget and actual expenditures, 1994-95 to 1998-99

- FTE staff and total expenditure for support services by category 1998-99 by source of funds.
Suggested categories:
 - Registrarial and student services
 - Financial and human resources management
 - Technical support, including computing support
 - Alumni relations and development
 - Libraries
 - General administrative support (e.g. secretarial/administrative assistant support)

- Age distribution and retirement projection for support staff

On the basis of this information, the self-study should **offer commentary on the pattern of retirements and other aspects of faculty demographics, and their implications for the capacity of the unit to deliver its programs.** It should also describe **measures taken to recruit, integrate and retain faculty members and assess the effectiveness** of these measures. Finally, it should also **comment upon the appropriateness of the level and distribution of administrative staff resources** in supporting the unit's academic activities, as well as career development support provided to administrative staff.

b) Academic Programs:

Undergraduate First Entry Programs

- Frequency distribution of entering OAC averages 1995-96 to 1998-99
- Applications/Offers/Yield rates 1995-96 to 1998-99
- Intake 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Total enrolment 1994-95 to 1998-99, November 1 headcount and FTE
- Year to year retention rates 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Graduation rates 1994-95 to 1997-98

Measures Specific to Arts and Science Programs

- Specialist and Major Enrolment by program 1994-95 to 1998-99
- November 1 FTE enrolment by sector: B.A., B.Sc., B.Comm., 1994-95 to 1998-99

Second Entry Programs (includes Professional Masters)

- Applications/Offers/Yield rates 1995-96 to 1998-99
- Where applicable, average GMAT/LSAT/MCAT scores 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Intake 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Total enrolment 1994-95 to 1998-99, November 1 headcount and FTE
- Year to year retention rates 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Graduation rates 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Placement of graduates by employment sector

Doctoral Stream Programs

- Applications/Offers/Yield rates 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Entering averages, 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Domestic and international total enrolment 1994-95 to 1998-99
- BIU-eligible vs. ineligible domestic enrolment 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Domestic and international intake 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Median time to Ph.D. 1994-95 to 1997-98
- Ph.D. completion rate 1994-95 to 1997-98
- PhDs granted 1994-95 to 1998-99, with comparison to Canadian and AAU peer programs

- Ph.D. enrolment:graduate faculty ratio 1998-99, with comparison to Canadian and AAU peer programs
- Placement of graduates by employment sector

Instructional Activity

- Instructional Activity Index 1994-95 to 1997-98
- Involvement of faculty in programs offered by other units
- Percentage of courses taught by tenure/tenure-stream faculty, by level

Drawing upon the above information, each unit should **assess each of its programs against the criteria established in Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 of the *White Paper***, as reproduced above. In doing so, it should also comment upon **changes and innovations** in program structure and content, including the fostering of the research-teaching linkage and interdisciplinary developments and innovations in learning formats if any, in the 1994-2000 planning cycle.

c) Learning Environment

- availability and utilization of:
 - teaching development programs
 - student academic counseling services
 - writing support
 - internships, PEY, summer programs, and other forms of experiential learning
- distribution of class size and number of large courses with sections, tutorials or laboratories, 1994-95 to 1997-98

This section should draw upon the above data, together with descriptions of action taken over the 1994-98 period, to assess **changes in the learning environment, both positive and negative.**

d) Student Financial Support

- level of financial support available per FTE student 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Student support by type and by source of funds 1998-99 (N.B. for doctoral stream students include research assistantships and teaching assistantships)
- OSAP and UTAPS participation rates 1994-95 to 1998-99
- level of need unmet by OSAP and grant/loan mix used to meet this need
- availability and utilization of financial counseling

On the basis of these data, each division should indicate **its compliance with the University's Policy on Student Financial Support**, and should describe funding available for students. For doctoral stream students, each unit should describe **its practices regarding the provision of packages of support**, over and above the University's guarantee under that *Policy*.

e) Consolidated Operating Budget

- Gross and net operating budget 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Operating budget 1998-99 and 1999-2000 by major object of revenue and expense
- Divisional carryforward 1994-95 to 1997-98
- Balance of OTO budget reductions to 1999-2000
- Analysis of divisional revenue budget vs. actual 1994-95 to 1997-98

On the basis of the above information, each unit should comment upon the **appropriateness of the level and distribution of financial resources** in support of its academic programs, and the capacity for **flexibility and re-allocation** within existing resources.

f) Research

- Federal granting council awards 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Research grants and contracts 1994-95 to 1998-99
- Research Yield: the ratio of the unit's share of SSHRC, NSERC and/or MRC funding (# of awards and overall \$ amount) to the unit's national share of eligible faculty
- Where relevant, success to date in governmental research infrastructure competitions
- Measures of scholarly and research productivity, selected by the academic unit as appropriate to the discipline

In this area in particular, there will be variation across academic units as to the appropriate measures. Drawing upon the above information, each unit should comment upon **the level of activity in research and scholarship** among its members. In all cases, an assessment of the quality of research output, supported by evidence appropriate to the discipline, will be essential.

g) Infrastructure

- Actual vs. COU Formula-Generated Space, by category: faculty offices, graduate student space, administrative offices, teaching laboratories where relevant
- Instructional technology and equipment
- Research equipment
- Library resources where relevant: volumes, acquisitions, expenditures, 1994-95 to 1997-98
- Unit's record in providing start-up funding for new faculty

Each unit should assess the **adequacy of the infrastructure** available to support its activities, including the capacity for **re-allocation of space and other resources**. Space and/or equipment which might be made available to other units, given appropriate terms of exchange, should be identified. Units with libraries outside the UTL system should address the potential for **consolidation of library resources through UTL**.

h) Philanthropic Support

- By annual fund constituency:
 - Percentage of alumni good addresses
 - Percentage of alumni donors 1994-95 to 1997-98
 - Annual fund donations 1994-95 to 1997-98
- Actual performance against campaign target
- Endowment by major category of activity supported as at April 30, 1998
- Income from endowments and expendable donations 1994-95 to 1997-98

This section should serve as an assessment of the unit's actual and **potential capacity to attract private support**.

i) Organizational Issues

Each unit should describe its organizational structure and relationship to other units, to assess, from an academic perspective, whether these arrangements are **best suited to the delivery of its programs and for program enhancement and innovation** or whether there are any organizational impediments to program development. The potential for linkages with other units should be considered.

The appropriateness of the administrative and governance structure for the effective functioning of the unit should also be assessed.

Appendix 7 – Toronto's Policy for the Implementation of New Programs

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS **GUIDELINES FOR DIVISIONAL SUBMITTIONS**

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs reviews and recommends approval to the Academic Board of the Governing Council on the following:

- major amendments to divisional academic policies or practices, or amendments to University-wide policy in academic matters;
- the academic content and requirements of all new degree programs;
- all major changes within existing academic programs^{1*} or in academic regulations;
- diploma and post-secondary certificate programs;
- the establishment, amendment or rescission of University-wide policy with respect to grading practices and examinations;
- policy on academic services (such as the Library, information and computing services);
- policy on research;
- policy on earned degrees, diplomas and certificates;
- policy on admissions and awards.

In order to carry out its mandate, the Committee receives for its approval proposals from the academic divisions of the University which have been approved by the relevant divisional councils.

I. Major Academic Program Proposals

Major academic program proposals are ones which:

- establish a new degree, diploma or post-secondary certificate program; or
- extensively restructure and/or rename existing degree, diploma or post-secondary certificate programs; or
- add or remove a program stream within an established degree program; or
- involve significant new academic directions for a Faculty; or

¹ Here "programs" includes the curriculum within a particular degree. Examples are: specialist, major and minor programs in Arts and Science, and changes to curriculum within a professional degree, such as revisions to degree requirements.

- are anticipated to have significant impact on relationships amongst divisions or with the public.

[Other, that is, minor academic program changes are delegated to the appropriate divisional councils. Such changes might include:

- reorganizations which involve the rearrangement within existing programs and their resources and are not major as defined above; or
- minor calendar changes, such as the addition or deletion of a course, approved by the divisional council, without significant implications for the nature of the program or the needs of students; changes in the semester in which a course is offered; minor adjustments in the course hours, without significant implications for the objectives of the program; changes in titles and in course descriptions that reflect normal updating; purely stylistic changes in calendar material; etc.]

II. Other Proposals

Divisional Grading Practices - Requests for major changes in divisional grading practices will be considered by the Committee. Minor changes may be approved by divisional councils as long as they are in accord with University policy. They will then be reported to the Vice-President and Provost for information. (in order to ensure that changes under the University Grading Practices Policy can be accommodated, the divisions should consult, in advance to presenting their recommendations, with the Office of Statistics, Records and Convocation and with the University Registrar.)

Graduate Programs - Changes related to graduate programs and regulations (including all degree offerings in the Faculties of Architecture, Landscape and Design, Forestry, Information Studies, Management and Social Work) are normally reported through the School of Graduate Studies.

Admissions - Divisions should ensure that in bringing forward changes to admission policies or practices that consideration be given to the impact on other divisions.

III. Procedures

Major academic program proposals and proposed changes to grading practices policies may be submitted at any time, although changes in academic programs and academic regulations to take effect for the fall should be forwarded no later than the end of the previous February. Divisions are encouraged to consult with the Provost's Office early on in the process of proposal development, and if there is any doubt about whether proposed changes are major and, therefore, require submission for approval.

Proposals are submitted to the Committee through the Provost's Office, which recommends items to the Committee through the Senior Assessor to the Committee, namely, the Deputy Provost. Copies should also be provided to the Committee Secretary, with attachments and the appropriate Assistant Vice-Provost (without attachments).

a. Submission Format

To assist divisions in the preparation of submissions, the Committee has identified below the areas which should be addressed when bringing major academic program proposals forward for approval.

In general, divisional representatives preparing the submission should think of the committee members' position: from the material submitted will they be able to ascertain sufficiently the implications of and justifications for the proposal?

All major program proposals should be accompanied by an *executive summary* prepared by the division which:

- identifies important initiatives in the proposal and gives the rationale for the proposal;
- explains the pedagogical and other academic issues underlying the proposed changes and the benefits expected as a result of their implementation;
- describes their expected impact on the nature and quality of the division's program of study and any impact that such major proposals may have on other divisions;
- provides evidence of consultation with other affected divisions;
- includes an indication of the expected resource implications, including such areas as staffing, space, libraries and computing facilities, enrolment/admissions, revenue/costs, financial aid, or indicates clearly if there are no or only minimal resource implications, for purposes of review by the Planning and Budget Committee;
- explains the appropriateness of the name and designation (e.g. certificate, diploma, non-degree, new degree, stream within an established degree program, combined, collaborative, co-operative, etc.) in accordance with "truth in advertising," to ensure that users recognize the name and know what it means;
- includes program description and requirements, course titles/numbers, and lists faculty members involved, where known;
- is in clean, legible format (ready for photocopying);
- is accompanied by a cover letter from the division head to the Senior Assessor of the Committee which states
 - when the proposal was approved at the divisional level,
 - what the planned implementation date is, and
 - whether approval is being requested or if the item is for information only.

Divisions should include more detailed descriptions as appendices to the executive summary. For example, if a major proposal involves a new academic program or substantial changes to an existing one, then the Committee should receive calendar descriptions, in order to give consideration to the proposal. Normally, the detailed information will be considered only by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. The executive summary will be the document forwarded to the Academic Board, if the Committee cannot, under its terms of reference, approve a proposal itself.

b. Presentation to the Committee

The Senior Assessor brings the recommendation forward for the Committee's approval. Divisional representatives familiar with the details of the proposal will be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee and to answer questions that may arise.

The Committee will normally restrict itself to accepting, rejecting or referring back major proposals concerning curriculum, academic regulations or calendar that have been debated and voted on at the council of an academic division.

Where required, the Committee will forward its recommendations concerning admissions and academic program proposals and other relevant calendar amendments to the Academic Board for its approval.

c. Annual Reporting

Divisional Councils should submit an annual report to the Vice-President and Provost, for information, listing minor academic program and calendar changes made during the year. The Provost's Office will review the Report and advise the division if, in its opinion, these items have been dealt with in accord with these Guidelines and relevant policies.

Amendments approved by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, September 15th, 1999

