



TO: Planning and Budget Committee

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DATE: December 10, 2007 for January 9, 2008

AGENDA ITEM: 5

ITEM IDENTIFICATION: School of Graduate Studies / Faculty of Medicine: Proposal for a Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Sciences (M.H.Sc.)

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

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

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

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

HIGHLIGHTS:

The proposed two-year Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Science (attached) is a professional, non-thesis graduate degree program to be offered through the Institute of Medical Science, in collaboration with the Department of Radiation Oncology in the Faculty of Medicine.

The program is designed to provide radiation therapists with the advanced knowledge, skills and judgment to excel as academic clinicians in the field of radiation medicine. It is a professional master's degree program without a thesis requirement. Applicants with a previous four-year undergraduate bachelor's degree in Medical Radiation Science or its equivalent and a license to practice in Ontario (or proof of eligibility for license) will further develop their analytical, critical, scholarly, professional and knowledge translation skills to promote continuous improvement in the delivery of radiation therapy and in the care of their patients.

The program was approved by the Institute of Medical Sciences Executive Committee. The Faculty of Medicine Faculty Council (November 5, 2007) and the Graduate Education Council (November 20, 2007) approved the proposal.

The proposal will be presented to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs Committee on January 8, 2008.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

The Planning and Budget Office has reviewed the budget for the proposed program. The resources necessary to offer the program will be provided by a combination of funding from the tuition and BIU revenue generated by student enrolment. Under the Institute of Medical Science, the Department of Radiation Oncology and the Faculty of Medicine have committed to provide all the resources needed for this program.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Budget Committee concurs with the recommendation of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs:

THAT the proposal to establish the Master of Health Science in Medical Radiation Sciences (M.H.Sc.) within the Faculty of Medicine be approved, effective September 2008.

Master of Health Science (MHSc) in Medical Radiation Sciences

Executive Summary

The proposal for a Master of Health Science (MHSc) in Medical Radiation Sciences program in the Institute of Medical Science (IMS) is vital to harnessing and contributing to the evolution of practice of the radiation therapy profession in Toronto, across the nation, and indeed around the world. The past decade has seen an impressive shift in the academic contributions of radiation therapy clinicians to the radiation medicine enterprise, and to further facilitate this group's potential, graduate level education is needed. This program will enable these clinical leaders to further develop their analytical, critical, scholarly, professional, and knowledge translation skills to promote continuous improvement in the delivery of radiation treatments and in the care of their patients. As a unique program in a jurisdiction of high demand and virtually no competition, we expect to attract interest from across the country and perhaps beyond.

This is an 8.0 FCE; 2-year program designed for expert radiation therapy clinicians who want to expand their academic competence and contribution. They must be licensed, experienced practitioners who have demonstrated leadership and excellence in their current practice. The program will be composed of course work (required and elective), clinical practica and a major research project designed to provide foundational radiation medicine content, expand clinical skills and reasoning, and further develop the skills of enquiry, innovation, knowledge translation and evidence-based practice. There is no thesis requirement.

This program speaks to one of the major objectives of the Faculty of Medicine's Academic Plan 2004 – 2010 which articulates the need to “Advance our scientific and professional training platform for the 21st century”. It also responds to the strategic educational direction of the University of Toronto Department of Radiation Oncology (UTDRO) as articulated in the 2001 Strategic Plan to “develop graduate research and professional training in medical radiation sciences with the aim of developing academic leadership”. At this time, the program will offer only one stream of specialization – Radiation Therapy – but over time additional streams in the Medical Radiation Sciences domain will be considered.