



University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Planning and Budget Committee

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DATE: March 10, 2008 for April 2, 2008

AGENDA ITEM: 6

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Faculty of Arts and Science: Proposal to establish the Dunlap Institute for Astronomy and Astrophysics as an Extra-Departmental Unit B (EDU:B).

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

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

4.4.1. The Committee advises the Academic Board on the planning and resource implications of plans and proposals to establish, disestablish or significantly restructure academic units, here defined as “faculties, schools, colleges, departments centres and institutes with teaching, or teaching and research functions, undergraduate degree programs, and graduate degree programs”, regardless of the source of funds.

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

Governing Council approved that the David Dunlap Observatory lands be declared surplus to University requirements on October 30, 2007. At that time, it was noted that all of the net proceeds received by the University from the sale of the David Dunlap Observatory lands will be allocated to an endowment which support the Dunlap Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences proposes the establishment of the Dunlap Institute for Astronomy and Astrophysics as an Extra-Departmental Unit B (EDU:B). The attached proposal outlines the rationale for the establishment of the interdisciplinary unit.

The Institute’s proposed mission is to achieve a prominent leadership position in research, teaching and advanced training and in public outreach with an aim to promote interaction between astronomers engaged in observations, experimentation, simulation, and theory. It will provide the leadership and core strengths to create major national and international research collaborations; promote advanced training opportunities for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and research associates via the exploration and use of new technologies in advancing research in astronomy and astrophysics. The Institute will provide a primary means for channeling information on astronomy and astrophysics to the general public.

The establishment of the Dunlap Institute will enable the involvement of faculty of international stature in a stimulating research environment with an active visitors program, including specialized workshops and scientific meetings. With a focus on technology and instrumentation, the Institute will sustain an instrumentation development fund, leading-edge computing equipment, workshops and laboratories, and technical personnel.

The establishment of the Institute will enable the already excellent program in astronomy and astrophysics at the University to become even stronger. There has been consultation with members of the Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics and there is support for the proposal. The Chair of the Department has consulted with the Departments of Physics, Chemistry, Geology, the Canadian

Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics and Institute for Optical Sciences (Faculty of Arts and Science); the Institute for Aerospace Studies, Emerging Communication Technologies Institute (Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering), and SciNet. The proposal has been developed in consultation with appropriate partners. The Faculty of Arts and Science Council approved the proposal on March 3, 2008.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:

As per the *Guidelines for Administrative Functions and Protocols of Extra-Departmental Units*¹

EDU:B have a critical mass of interdisciplinary activities that allow for the unit to engage in the admission of students to a program of study. EDU:B units do not have primary faculty appointing rights and cross-appointment of faculty members rests with the Dean and associated departments or colleges.

The financial plan has been reviewed by the Faculty of Arts and Science. The creation of the Institute will have no immediate resource requirements beyond those committed from the Faculty of Arts and Science. When the sale of Dunlap lands is closed, the net proceeds will be deposited in an endowment to support the Institute.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Budget Committee recommends for approval:

THAT the Dunlap Institute for Astronomy and Astrophysics be established as an EDU:B within the Faculty of Arts and Science, effective immediately.

¹ <http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/policy/interdisciplinary.htm>
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