

Memorandum to: Members of the Academic Board

From: Ellen Hodnett, Chair, Academic Board

Subject: **Academic Board and Committees – Terms of Reference:
Revisions Re Approval of Academic Programs**

Date: March 10, 2011

There is need to consider changes to the terms of reference of the Academic Board, the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs and the Planning and Budget Committee as they concern the review and approval of academic programs. The need arises from three other changes:

- The Governing Council’s approval, on October 28, 2010, of the Report of its Task Force on Governance,
- The Governing Council’s approval, on June 24, 2010, of the revised Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and its receipt of the detailed University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (the U.T.QAP), and
- The adoption of the new budget model.

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs has been asked to consider recommendations to amend its terms of reference, as shown in Attachment “A”. Because of the strengthened process for review of academic programs and units, and because of the strengthened governance oversight of that process, it is possible to delegate more authority for the approval of modifications to existing programs to the academic divisions offering those programs. Such action is also appropriate in the light of the recommendation of the Task Force on Governance for delegation of authority with respect to transactional matters to the lowest appropriate level of governance.

Similarly, the Planning and Budget Committee has been asked to consider recommendations to amend its terms of reference as shown in Attachment “B”. The University’s new budget model enables each academic division to allocate its own net revenue – the revenue it generates minus its share of University-wide expenses, its contribution to student aid, and its contribution to the University Fund. Therefore, proposals for most programs, which would require no allocation of additional resources to the division, and which would have no major effect on other divisions, would be considered solely on their academic merits by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. That again would be consistent with the recommendations of the Task Force on Governance, which sought to avoid duplication. The Planning and Budget Committee

would increase its focus on review and approval of divisional academic plans, which presumably would include plans for new academic programs, again facilitating appropriate delegation to divisional Councils to deal with new programs and their resource implications.

In addition to considering the amendments to their terms of reference proposed by the two Committees, it is recommended that the Academic Board consider certain recommendations to its own terms of reference. Section 5.3 of the Academic Board Terms of Reference classifies matters coming to the Board from its Committees into three categories: matters requiring Governing Council approval, matters requiring Executive Committee confirmation, and matters for information. It is proposed that amendments to this section be of two types.

First, Recommendation 15 of the Task Force on Governance states that there should be delegation of authority with respect to transactional matters to the lowest appropriate level of governance. It is proposed that responsibility for approval of certain new programs, program closures, and program renaming require the approval of the Academic Board, with the confirmation of the Executive Committee. They include

- (i) undergraduate programs leading to new degrees;
- (ii) graduate programs and degrees;
- (iii) the closure of existing degrees;
- (iv) the addition and termination of joint degrees and programs with external institutions;
- (v) the renaming of degrees; and
- (vi) programs that establish significant new academic directions for a Faculty or are anticipated to have a substantial impact on relationships amongst divisions or with the public.

There would be no longer be need for consideration of such proposals by the full Governing Council. The Academic Board has sufficiently broad, expert and representative membership to act as the “appropriate level of governance” for approval of new academic programs. Confirmation by the Executive Committee is, however, appropriate to meet safely the provisions of the University of Toronto Act.* Proposals for other new academic programs, as defined by the University’s Quality Assurance process, would be considered for approval by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs.

* Section 2(14)(n) of the University of Toronto Act enables the Governing Council to delegate to a Committee, not consisting of a majority of its members, authority for determining and regulating “the contents and curricula of all programs and courses of study and the requirements for graduation.” Section 2(14) (j) requires action by the Council, or a committee consisting of a majority of members of the Council, to “provide for the granting of . . . degrees”

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It is proposed that the section 5.3. of the Terms of Reference of the Academic board be amended as follows.

Current Provision	Proposed Provision
<p>5.3.1. Matters requiring Governing Council approval:</p> <p>New degree programs</p>	

Current Provision	Proposed Provision
<p>5.3.2. Matters requiring Executive Committee approval:</p> <p>Extensively restructured and/or renamed degree, diploma and certificate programs</p>	<p>5.3.2. Matters requiring Executive Committee confirmation:</p> <p>(i) undergraduate programs leading to new degrees; (ii) graduate programs and degrees; (iii) the termination of existing degrees; (iv) the addition and termination of joint degrees and programs with external institutions; (v) the renaming of degrees; and (vi) programs that establish significant new academic directions for a Faculty or are anticipated to have a substantial impact on relationships amongst divisions or with the public.</p>

Recommendation

It is recommended;

- (a) THAT the proposed amendments to sections 3, 4.4, and 4.9 of the terms of reference of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, and the proposed amendments to the section of the Guidelines Regarding Levels of Approval dealing with Academic program proposals, be approved;
- (b) THAT the proposed amendments to the terms of reference of the Planning and Budget Committee, as described in Attachment “B” hereto, be approved; and
- (c) THAT the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Academic Board, as described herein, be approved.