



**FOR RECOMMENDATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Academic Board

**SPONSOR:** Cheryl Regehr, Vice-President & Provost  
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**PRESENTER:** See Sponsor  
**CONTACT INFO:**

**DATE:** February 24, 2014 for March 20, 2014

**AGENDA ITEM:** 5

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Change in the name of the “Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” to the “Department of Social Justice Education”, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

Name changes in academic divisions (excluding namings) are considered by the Academic Board and confirmed by the Executive Committee. (*AB Terms of Reference, Section 5.2.7*)

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. **Academic Board (March 20, 2014) – for approval**
2. Executive Committee of Governing Council (March 27, 2014) – for confirmation

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

The establishment of the “Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” was approved as part of a proposal for the departmental restructuring of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education by Governing Council on February 16, 2012. The proposal encompassed the disestablishment of the Department of Adult Education and Counselling Psychology and the renaming of three OISE Departments:

- the “Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology” to the “Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development”
- the “Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education” to the “Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education”
- the “Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education” to the “Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education”

The proposal to change the name of the “Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” to the “Department of Social Justice Education” was approved by the OISE Faculty Council on February 19, 2014.

## **HIGHLIGHTS:**

This is a proposal to rename the existing “Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” to the “Department of Social Justice Education”. The existing department was created effective July 1, 2012 as part of a proposal that restructured the Faculty: disestablishing one department, renaming three of the remaining four units, and moving a number of academic programs between units. Associated with this structural change, and to reflect the full scope of faculty research interest and expertise, the name of the then “Sociology of Education” programs (M.A., M. Ed., Ph.D., and Ed. D.) was changed to “Humanities, Social Sciences, and Social Justice Education” effective July 1, 2013.

Subsequently, the new “Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” has worked to expand the scope of the existing programs (M.A., M. Ed., Ph.D., and Ed. D.). Approved changes, effective 1 September 2014, have included the closure of a field, changes to requirements, and a corresponding adjustment to the learning outcomes to reflect the evolving program scope. The programs continue to focus on social justice and equity issues relative to education from a wide and expanding range of perspectives. As a final element of this process of program review and renewal, the Department has agreed on a new, more concise and appropriate name for the four programs: “Social Justice Education”. This program name change was approved at OISE on November 1, 2013 and will be effective July 1, 2014.

The current proposal to change the name of the Department to the “Department of Social Justice Education” forms the last element in this evolutionary process. As explained in the proposal, colleagues understood the initial unit name to be a placeholder and have worked together to agree on the new name as a reflection of their academic mission and focus.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

None are anticipated with the exception of small expenditures to update web sites and printed materials. These costs will be met at the Faculty/Divisional level.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Academic Board approve, subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee:

THAT the name of the “Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” be changed to the “Department of Social Justice Education”, effective immediately upon approval.

**DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

Proposal to change the name of the “Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” to the “Department of Social Justice Education”, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

OISE Council

**Agenda Item 5-D-1**

**Date:** February 19, 2014

**Subject:** Renaming the Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education to: Department of Social Justice Education

**Sponsor/Mover:** Clare Brett

**Speaker:** Abigail Bakan

X For Approval

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**Recommendation:**

THAT Council approves the proposal to change the name of the *Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education (HSSSJE)* to the *Department of Social Justice Education (SJE)*.

**Background**

The Department of “Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” (HSSSJE) was established as part of the general restructuring of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in 2012. One of the four graduate departments at OISE, this unit—formerly the Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education—resulted from the amalgamation of faculty engaged in two areas: Sociology in Education and History and Philosophy of Education. The current name of the unit was established to reflect the new scope of the faculty interests. The existing degree programs in Sociology in Education (MA, M.Ed., PhD and EdD) were reconceptualised and renamed HSSSJE (MA, M.Ed., PhD and EdD) to better reflect the breadth of scholarship and expertise in the department.

Building on historical strengths of the two aforementioned program areas while encouraging growth of new concepts and perspectives, the department now represents a new and unique constellation of disciplines that distinguishes OISE from other faculties of education and will make a significant contribution to education broadly defined.

This is a proposal to revise the name of the department to simplify it and bring it in line with the emerging consolidated understanding of the distinctive focus of faculty in the department. It is the product of extended consultation within the department and community, and is informed by the recommendations of the external review of the Faculty’s programs completed in 2011-2012. The name of the graduate degree programs (MA, M.Ed., PhD and EdD) have also been changed to “Social Justice Education (SJE)”.

### ***Rationale***

The following represent key arguments for shortening the name of the Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education to the Department Social Justice Education:

- The proposed shortened name more accurately reflects the strengths and reputation of faculty members as intellectual leaders in social justice education, a field of study that is integral to the scholarly and pedagogical work in the department.
- The degree programs (MA, M.Ed., PhD., EdD) will continue to focus on social justice and equity issues relative to education from a wide range of perspectives, thereby formally recognizing the range of faculty expertise and disciplinary approaches in the program that include philosophy, sociology, anthropology, history, political science, cultural and media studies. The proposed shortened name will, thus, be aligned with and better reflect the focus of the degree programs, supporting the recently approved curriculum changes.
- The name “Social Justice Education” represents a unique growth opportunity for the department. For example, it is becoming desirable to have social justice education certification in school boards and other professional education contexts. OISE is poised to have the only Social Justice Education department in Canada, as well as having the distinction with the University of Massachusetts at Amherst as one of two “Social Justice Education” programs in North America. In addition to attracting world-class scholars (as students, researchers, and educators), plans are being explored with education practitioners to develop certificate programs in this area.

### ***Consultation Process***

The name of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education served an important role in bringing together the faculty engaged in the two abovementioned program areas during the process of general departmental restructuring at OISE in 2012. Following a full year of working together as a newly-restructured department, the faculty members expressed the need to revisit their academic identity as a research and teaching unit.

Most members of our community (faculty, students and staff) have regarded “HSSSJE” as a name to be used only for the transition period, and that the name is “cumbersome” and “lacks meaning and definition.” Hence, at the beginning of the fall term of 2013-2014, the department engaged in discussions regarding the name of both degree programs and the unit. Consultation with students included formal meetings through the Student Caucus—the department’s student governing body—and the Student Advisory Committee to the Chair, which consists of representatives from all degree programs (MA, M.Ed., PhD, and EdD). The department Chair met monthly with the Student Caucus co-chairs from September to December 2013, and had a discussion regarding the shortening of the department name at the full Student Caucus meeting in September. The Chair and Associate Chair also met with the Student Advisory Committee to the Chair in November where the name change was discussed. Student support for the proposed name change has been strong and encouraging. The new, shortened name—the Department of Social Justice Education—is widely seen as a positive step in community building, outreach and growth. Students have expressed some concerns regarding process and more general issues of governance in the department, in light of a period of restructuring and transition in recent years. These concerns are being addressed through the development of a joint faculty, students, and staff committee on departmental governance. Further, the academic needs of all students belonging to programs that have ceased admission, and will be formally closed, have been addressed.

On September 18, the faculty caucus meeting was held where shortening of the current name was discussed. The vote to change the name was a clear majority, and there is renewed energy for the streamlined name. After the consultation process with faculty, students and staff, on November 1, 2013 the OISE Graduate Education Committee (GECO) approved a minor modification to change the name of the degree programs (MA, M.Ed., PhD and EdD) from “Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education” to “Social Justice Education” (MA, M.Ed., PhD and EdD) effective September 1, 2014. As a single-program department, it is essential that the name of the program and Department be aligned.

There are no new/additional financial resources required to implement the name change; however, the costs for this change will be minimal, involving the printing of new faculty business cards, replacing the current temporary sign for the department on the twelfth floor of OISE, and updating electronic signage and website.

The name change is proposed to be effective pending university governance approval.

1 According to the Constitution, OISE Council has delegated authority for the approval of minor modifications to academic programs to various committees (i.e. GECO and ITEC). All such changes shall be reported for information to Council. Major changes to any program require the approval of Council