



**FOR INFORMATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

**SPONSOR:** Sioban Nelson, Vice Provost, Academic Programs

**CONTACT INFO:** (416) 978-2122, vpademicprorgams@utoronto.ca

**PRESENTER:** See above

**CONTACT INFO:**

**DATE:** October 24 for November 1, 2016

**AGENDA ITEM:** 1a

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Follow-up Reports on Reviews:

- a) Faculty of Information and its programs (Faculty of Information)
- b) Department of English & Drama (University of Toronto Mississauga)
- c) Human Biology undergraduate programs (Faculty of Arts & Science)

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) is the point of entry into governance for reports, summaries and administrative responses on the results of reviews of academic programs and units commissioned by academic administrators. The role of the Committee is to ensure that the reviews are conducted in accordance with University policy and guidelines, that an appropriate process has been followed, that adequate documentation is provided and consultations undertaken, and that issues identified in the review are addressed by the administration. Under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process, the AP&P may request a one-year follow-up report when concerns are raised in an external review that require a longer period of response.

This report is forwarded, together with the record of the Committee's discussion, to the Agenda Committee of the Academic Board, which determines whether there are any issues of general academic significance warranting discussion at the Board level. The same documentation is also sent to the Executive Committee and Governing Council for information.

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. **Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for information] (November 1, 2016)**
2. Agenda Committee of the Academic Board [for information] (November 14, 2016)
3. Academic Board [for information] (November 24, 2016)

4. Executive Committee of the Governing Council [for information] (December 5, 2016)
5. Governing Council [for information] (December 15, 2016)

### **PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

At its meeting on October 28, 2014, AP&P considered the January 2014 review of the Faculty of Information and its programs, along with the decanal response. At that time, AP&P requested a follow-up report in two years from the dean outlining developments with respect to the Faculty's management structure, strengthening communication among members of the Faculty, and time to completion rates of doctoral students.

At its meeting on October 27, 2015, AP&P considered the March 2015 review of UTM's Department of English & Drama and its undergraduate programs, along with the decanal response. Following discussion, AP&P indicated that it would be helpful to receive a follow-up report in one year from the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean regarding the actions taken to address the sexist incidents, and issues of gender equality and diversity that had been identified by the reviewers. At the same meeting, AP&P also discussed the March 2014 review of the Faculty of Arts & Science's undergraduate Human Biology programs, together with the decanal response. AP&P requested a follow-up report in one year from the Dean to address modifications to the Global Health and Environment and Health undergraduate programs, as well as improvements to facilities, and the faculty and staff complements.

### **HIGHLIGHTS:**

#### a) Faculty of Information and its programs (Faculty of Information)

The Faculty of Information has had a new management structure in place since July 2015. The Dean has taken a number of steps to improve communications between faculty members and the Dean's office, including dedicated bimonthly faculty meetings, "walk-around" visits to faculty offices, and quick responses to emails from faculty, staff, and other members of the community. In April 2016, a Committee on Doctoral Matters was established and tasked with the responsibility of adjudicating requests for program extensions and reviewing doctoral students' annual progress reports (APRs).

#### b) Department of English & Drama (University of Toronto Mississauga)

All teaching faculty in the department have received training from UTM's Equity and Diversity Officer (EDO). The incoming chair engaged in broad consultations regarding the department's challenges with equity and diversity. The new chair has undertaken a comprehensive restructuring of the Department designed to increase faculty involvement in department administration, including a new Committee on Equity and Diversity. The department is now offering more courses incorporating diverse themes and is searching for a new tenure stream faculty member with expertise in Global Anglophone Literatures.

#### c) Human Biology undergraduate programs (Faculty of Arts & Science)

The Environment and Health program has been entirely transferred to the School of the Environment. A major modification is planned to the program content of the Global Health program. New College has provided new office space for staff and faculty as the programs expand, and the programs will begin to use new, dedicated Human Biology Labs in Ramsay Wright in January 2017. FAS has more than doubled the administrative and technical staff complement that supports the programs, and is searching for a tenure stream position in Neuroscience with a start date of July 1, 2017.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Not applicable.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

For Information.

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**DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

- a) Faculty of Information and its programs (Faculty of Information) Follow-Up Letter from Dean Wendy Duff, September 29, 2016
- b) Department of English & Drama (University of Toronto Mississauga) Follow-Up Letter from Vice-Principal Academic and Dean Amrita Daniere, September 27, 2016
- c) Human Biology undergraduate programs (Faculty of Arts & Science) Follow-Up Letter from Dean David Cameron, October 3, 2016

## Faculty of Information (UofT's iSchool)

### Follow-up Report to the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process Cyclical Review

To: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P)

From: Wendy Duff, Dean and Professor

Date: Sept 29, 2016

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On October 28, 2014, the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs requested a two-year follow-up report to the *External Review of the Faculty of Information* that was conducted in January 2, 2014. The Committee requested that the report outline developments in respect to:

1. the Faculty's management structure,
2. strengthening communication among members of the Faculty,
3. and time to completion rates of doctoral students.

This report outlines the actions taken to address these three areas.

#### 1. Faculty's Management Structure

In 2014, Dean Seamus Ross created a "Governance & Organization Structure Work Group" to address the management structure. The membership of the work group included:

- Dean Don McLean – Faculty of Music (Chair)
- Prof Nadia Caidi
- Prof Chun Wei Choo
- Prof Costis Dallas
- Prof Lynne Howarth
- Prof Leslie Shade
- Prof Brian Cantwell Smith

The Work Group was asked to:

1. Review the existing committee and governance structures in the Faculty.
2. Consider re-establishing the "Associate Dean, Research" and "Associate Dean, Academic" roles.
3. Consider the future roles of the Program Directors; determine whether these roles will be required if the Associate Dean positions are reinstated; define the relationships between

the Associate Deans and Program Directors; determine the process of succession planning and workload requirements for these roles.

4. Recommend compensation/consideration levels for Associate Deans and Program Director positions.
5. Evaluate how to improve decision-making and communications within the Faculty.
6. Review best practices as to how to support the PhD program going forward, including recruitment, admissions and progression to completion throughout the years of study.

The Work Group proposed a redesign of the organizational structure of the Faculty that clarifies administrative responsibilities and reporting structures. It was hoped that the new structure would significantly improve communications paths among faculty, program directors, and the senior leadership team.

The Work Group recommended continuation of three Program Directors roles, with a redistribution of current duties both 'upward' to the Associate Dean Academic and 'laterally' so that there are designated leads for various key initiatives: enhancement of the Faculty's undergraduate programming presence on all three campuses, roll out of the newly created co-op program, as well as the concurrent registration option (CRO), collaborative programs.

The proposed overall structure is as follows:

1. Dean
2. Associate Deans
  - a. Academic
  - b. Research
3. Program Directors (Lead on major programs)
  - a. Masters of Information (MI) Program
  - b. Masters of Museum Studies (MMSt) Program
  - c. PhD and Research Masters Programs
4. Program Directors (Lead on particular portfolios)
  - a. Undergraduate Programs
  - b. Co-op Program
  - c. Collaborative Programs
  - d. Concurrent Registration Option (CRO) Program

The model more broadly distributes administrative responsibilities in manageable portfolios and provides opportunities for professional development of junior faculty and built-in succession planning for senior administrative roles. The new structure has now been in place since July 2015; we plan to review the governance structure in January 2017 and address any concerns.

## **2. Enhancing communication among faculty members**

During the last two years a number of steps have been undertaken to improve communications among faculty members and the Dean's office. As noted above, it was hoped that the new governance structure would significantly improve communications paths among faculty, program directors, and the senior leadership team. We believe that the new positions of Associate Dean Research, Associate Dean Academic and the Program Directors have resulted in much better communication among the faculty, staff and the Dean's office. Furthermore, we have dedicated bimonthly faculty meetings to specific topics suggested by faculty members. These meetings offer faculty with an opportunity to provide input on strategic issues and directions. The Dean also instituted annual one-on-one meetings with all faculty members to discuss teaching and issues of concern to the faculty. The Dean's office circulates information about Promotion, Tenure Process on a regular basis and invites faculty to meet with the Dean or their mentor. The Dean has implemented a "walk-around" initiative and makes frequent visits to the faculty office areas on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> floors to stop in and engage in informal conversations each week. The Dean has also implemented a policy whereby she responds to email from faculty, staff, and other members of the community within 48 hours. The Faculty has also developed an instructor orientation session that is delivered before the start of each term (fall, winter, and summer) that is used to communicate best practices and policies to all new and returning instructors. We organized a semi-annual retreat for non-teaching staff. The aim of this full day event is to share information among different administrative areas (research, finance, HR, students services) as well as to offer staff with an opportunity to provide input to the Dean's office. The Faculty is in the process of creating a Digital Transformation Committee to conduct an information audit and make recommendations on technologies that can improve information sharing and communication.

## **3. Reducing time to completion rates**

The Faculty's efforts to reduce time to completion rates have focused on re-setting students' expectations with respect to program extensions with the aim of shifting from a culture in which such extensions were granted as a matter of course to one in which it is understood that extensions are granted only in exceptional circumstances and to which strict timelines and conditions are attached.

To accomplish this aim we have formalized our internal process for adjudicating requests for program (and time to candidacy) extensions, established clear criteria for adjudicating requests, and imposed strict timelines and conditions on students to ensure that the necessary work is completed within the time period of the extension.

In the past, the PhD Director approved/recommended requests for program extensions (as well as extensions to candidacy). In April 2016, a Committee on Doctoral Matters was established and tasked with responsibility for adjudicating all such requests; this committee operates as a

subcommittee of the Committee on Standing and its membership consists of the Dean, the Associate Dean Academic, the Associate Dean Research and the PhD Director.

The Committee reviews requests for extension and makes decision whether to approve or recommend extensions based on (1) its assessment of the justification given for non-completion (that is, whether the impediments to progress in the last year were serious, unexpected, and largely out of the student's control); and (2) its confidence in a student's capacity to meet the targets set out in the request.

Requests for extension must now be supported with a detailed schedule identifying clear deliverables and their associated dates to which the student will be held accountable. In certain circumstances, the Committee has granted an extension that is half the length requested and made any further extension conditional upon the successful completion of specific deliverables within the reduced time frame for the extension.

We believe that the formalization and rigour we have introduced into the internal process of adjudicating requests for extension is an important step in reducing time to completion rates. Though it is early days, we believe that the fact that all but one of the doctoral students who reached the end of their third year in the program at the end of August 2016 successfully achieved candidacy is a positive sign that the re-setting of students' expectations has begun to have an effect.

The Committee on Doctoral Matters is also responsible for reviewing the doctoral students' annual progress reports (APRs) and is using that process as a means of monitoring and evaluating students' progress as they move through the program and identifying students who are falling behind in order to implement in a timely manner measures that need to be taken by students, supervisors, and supervisory committees to get students back on track.



September 27, 2016

Professor Sioban Nelson  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
Simcoe Hall  
University of Toronto

Dear Sioban,

I am writing to provide a follow-up report to the March 2015 external review of the Department of English and Drama at UTM and the administrative response of September 10, 2015. This report thus focuses specifically on sexism in the classroom and, more broadly, issues of equity and diversity, which were identified by the reviewers.

As explained in our administrative response, the Chair anticipated inviting UTM's Equity and Diversity Officer (EDO) to the Department's first Fall Faculty meeting to deliver a presentation and to advise on how to ensure the classroom functions as a safe space. We are pleased to note that in November 2015, Professor Alexandra Gillespie (then Undergraduate Director; 2015-16) with the support of Professor Holger Syme (then Department Chair), arranged for such a presentation to be delivered. Nythalah Baker (UTM's then EDO) provided a 90-minute information session for all teaching faculty in the department. Her presentation and the discussion that followed covered important topics, including strategies for establishing and maintaining a safe classroom working space as well as detailing the resources available for faculty and students in crisis.

Prior to and since taking on the role of Chair in July of this year, Professor Gillespie met and/or communicated with members of the University community, to alert them to the challenges with equity and diversity facing English and Drama, and to obtain their advice and guidance. They have included Kelly Hannah Moffat, Amrita Daniere, Mayo Moran, Liz Smythe, Locke Rowe, Sioban Nelson, Connie Guberman, Bonnie Goldberg, David Cameron, and at UTFA, Heather Diggle. These consultations have and will continue to shape English and Drama's evolving policies and practices on equity and diversity.

Since becoming the new Department Chair, Professor Gillespie has undertaken a comprehensive restructuring of UTM English and Drama, done in consultation with the previous Department Chair, as well as faculty and staff. This restructuring is designed to increase faculty involvement in departmental administration; and facilitate consensus-based decision making. Among the new committees Professor Gillespie has established as part of this restructuring is one for Equity and Diversity, on which she and tenure





stream faculty members Stanka Radovic, Mari Ruti, Larry Switzky all serve. All members of this committee conduct research and/or are involved in activism around gender and transgender discrimination, economic inequality, the North-South divide, race, ethnicity and intersectionality, indigeneity, and sexual diversity. The committee has met and established a work-plan for 2016-17, which includes online resources for faculty and students; and carefully facilitated town halls for faculty and students to discuss issues of equity and diversity, including the University's new initiatives in sexual violence prevention.

In consultation with the new English and Drama Curriculum Committee, Professor Gillespie has also designed a number of new courses for the 2017-18 academic year - ahead of a more thorough curriculum reform - that address issues of equity and diversity. These include a 100 level course on Contemporary World Literatures; 200 level courses on Queer Writing; Feminist Approaches to Literature; Toronto's Multicultural Literatures; Indigenous Literatures; and Literature and Globalization; and 300 level courses on Women Writers before Austen; and Global Literatures in English.

With the agreement of the Dean and Provost, this year the UTM Department of English and Drama is searching for new tenure stream faculty member with expertise in Global Anglophone Literatures - including African Literatures, Indigenous Literatures, Asian and/or Pacific Literatures, Arab Anglophone Literatures as well as race, ethnicity, and new media. We anticipate that this hire will further improve the diversity of our course offerings and of our faculty.

Professor Gillespie acted as a facilitator at the September 2016 WISELI workshops on implicit bias and hiring for excellence and diversity organized by the Provost's Office. The job advertisement for the department's new hire in Global Anglophone Literatures was written and is being placed following WISELI's guidelines. Professor Gillespie has asked for and received permission to assemble a diverse committee for the search by increasing the number of members from six to seven, and by reaching out to faculty who work in Global Anglophone literary studies across the three campuses. The committee includes faculty from UTSC and UTSG as well as UTM; four women; four faculty members of colour, one of whom is an Indigenous Canadian; and a LGBTQ+ faculty member. Professor Gillespie also intends to implement the recommendations of WISELI in all hiring for English and Drama, including hiring of full time and casual staff, CUPE Unit 1-5 sessional faculty, and tenure stream and teaching stream faculty.

Through active conversations between my Office and the Department, it is clear that the Department of English and Drama takes the need for improvement in these areas extremely seriously and has taken a number of steps in the last twelve months to address the reviewers concerns.



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**  
MISSISSAUGA

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amrita Danieri".

Amrita Danieri

Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean