

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL
REPORT NUMBER 145 OF THE COMMITTEE ON
ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS

April 7, 2010

To the Academic Board,
University of Toronto.

Your Committee reports that it met on Wednesday, April 7, 2010 at 4:10 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall, with the following present:

Professor Andrea Sass-Kortsak (Chair)
Professor Douglas McDougall
(Vice-Chair)
Professor Cheryl Regehr, Vice-Provost,
Academic Programs
Professor Brian Corman, Vice-Provost,
Graduate Education and Dean, School
of Graduate Studies
Professor Katherine Berg
Mr. William Crothers
Professor Alister Cumming
Professor Charles Deber
Mr. Sybil J. Derrible
Professor Miriam Diamond
Professor Robert Gibbs

Professor William Gough
Ms Lesley Ann Lavack
Professor Hy Van Luong
Professor John R. Miron
Professor Ito Peng
Ms Judith Poë
Ms Lynn Snowden
Professor Suzanne Stevenson

Professor R. Paul Young, Vice-President,
Research
Professor Peter Lewis, Associate
Vice-President, Research

Mr. Neil Dobbs, Secretary

Regrets:

Mr. Konstantin Anosov
Professor Gage Averill
Miss Netila Demneri
Ms Min Hee Margaret Kim

Professor Christina E. Kramer
Mr. Matthew Purser
Mr. John David Stewart
Miss Sabrina Kun Tang

In Attendance:

Professor Elizabeth M. Smyth, member, the Governing Council; Vice-Dean,
Programs, School of Graduate Studies
Professor Cristina Amon, Dean, Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering
Ms Helen Lasthiotakis, Director, Academic Programs and Policy, Office of the Vice-
President and Provost
Mr. Scott Moore, Quality Assessment Officer, Office of the Vice-President and Provost
Mr. Henry Mulhall, Assistant Secretary of the Governing Council
Ms Mae-Yu Tan, Assistant Secretary of the Governing Council

ALL ITEMS ARE REPORTED FOR INFORMATION.

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1. Report of the Previous Meeting

Report 144 (March 2, 2010) was approved.

2. Business Arising from the Report of the Previous Meeting

Item 5 – Reviews of Academic Programs and Units, July 2008 – December 2009: Annual Report

A member said that Report Number 144 (March 2, 2010) included an account of the Committee's consideration of the reviews of academic programs and units, July 2008 - December 2009. He noted that the Academic Board had received, as an Appendix to the Agenda Committee's report, a second brief document, entitled "Report of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs to the Agenda Committee on the Reviews of Academic Programs and Units, July 2008 – December 2009." The Chair said that the second document summarized the Committee's overall conclusions and the four situations where it anticipated further information at a later date. The member suggested that, because the briefer report had become a matter of record, it form a part of the Committee's official Report. It was AGREED that the briefer report be made Appendix "A" to the Committee's current report.

Professor Regehr noted that the Committee would, later in the meeting, be discussing its procedures for consideration of reviews, and the matter of reporting its conclusions could be one of the matters for discussion.

The Chair reported that at the meeting of the Academic Board on March 23rd, the Committee's work with respect to the reviews had received very high praise from a member of the Board, and it was clear that the view was widely shared. She congratulated members on a job well done. The compendium of reviews, along with the report of the Committee's consideration of them, would be on the agenda of the Governing Council on April 8, 2010.

3. Vice-President, Research: Annual Report, 2008-09

Professor Young said that the annual report contained two parts. The first part was entitled *By the Numbers*. It included information on the University's achievements in the area of research: international and national faculty honours received, overall research funding received, funding from the federal granting councils, number of Canada Research chairs, funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation, industry funding, invention disclosures, new spin-off companies, rankings based on publications and citations, and the University's standing in a key ranking of world universities. The second part of the report was externally directed. It dealt with ten major questions facing humanity and highlighted

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the contributions made by the University's faculty in addressing them. The objective was to emphasize the impact of the research carried out by the University's faculty. The previous Vice-President's report, which had highlighted the work of a number of individual researchers, had won numerous honours including a silver medal from a consortium of universities that included the best on the continent. It was planned to complete a similar report every two years. It was important that the report have a major impact, and each report was expected to have at least a two-year shelf life. The advantage of the current format was to separate out the numbers and the stories about the work of leading individual researchers, both of which were very important to describing the impact of research at the University. He hoped that the report did justice to that research.

A member said that she very much liked the report. Professor Young undertook to pass the comment along to the team responsible for its preparation.

The Chair noted that the report would also be presented to the Academic Board, which had an obvious interest in research matters, and to the Business Board, which was interested in the nexus of University research and the external community, particularly in terms of external revenue generation and technology transfer.

The Chair said that the Committee's Terms of Reference also charged it to review an annual report from the Connaught Committee. Professor Young said that in 2007-08, the Committee had invested \$3.7-million in its support of research at the University. For 2008-09, serious financial issues had faced the Connaught Fund, along with virtually all other endowment funds. At an emergency meeting in December 2009 and at several meetings thereafter, the Committee had reached the conclusion that many of the Connaught programs had to be "put on hold." The Committee had then developed a new suite of programs in order to provide maximum impact with the limited spending available. The highest priority was given to funding for graduate students, and all amounts left in the expendable accounts were used to fund the existing cohort of graduate students. In addition, a new program was established for graduate-student support. The Committee did not wish to make any announcement of the new programs until it was certain that there would be funding available for them. Professor Young said that he would prepare a brief written report on the Connaught Fund for a later meeting of the Committee.

Professor Corman said that the new program was intended to provide significant support for international graduate students, who were not eligible for many other sources of support. That support would be comparable to the funding provided for domestic students. The first ten new graduate scholarships had been offered, with several of them already accepted. Professor Corman hoped that by the middle of the

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month the first ten holders of the new Connaught International Graduate Student Scholarships would have confirmed their plan to pursue their doctoral degrees at this University. The program had been very well received; the only concern was that more such scholarships were not currently available.

Professor Young said that in addition to the document currently before the Committee, his group prepared an annual report on the University's share of funding from each of the federal research granting councils. That annual report showed the success of each of the University's Faculties in winning research funding from each of the three granting councils and the relationship of the University's funding to that achieved by the other Canadian universities. That report, currently in draft form, had been sent to the Research Advisory Board. Professor Regehr said that she had asked that the information in that report be made available to each division in connection with their self-studies in preparation for quality-assurance reviews.

4. Approval and Review of Academic Programs: University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process

Professor Regehr suggested that the Committee consider the Quality Assurance process in two parts. First, the Committee could consider the process as a whole. Second, it could consider its own role in that process. Following that discussion, and following further consultation with the academic divisions, within the University's governance, and with the Quality Council Secretariat, Professor Regehr would bring to the Committee for approval a revised Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs. She would also bring for information a revised document on the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process. Bringing the latter document only for information would provide flexibility for adjustments to the process as any practical need for change became apparent. The proposals were the outcome of the work of the Quality Assurance Working Group, which consisted of the Deans of the Multi-Department Faculties as well as the Dean of one of the non-departmentalized Faculties. Professor Corman and herself were co-Chairs. The Working Group had received extensive assistance from Ms Helen Lasthiotakis, the Director, Academic Programs and Policy, in the Office of the Vice-President and Provost.

Professor Regehr recalled that in 1974 the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (O.C.G.S.) had been formed. It had considered for approval all proposals for new graduate programs, and it had conducted a process for the cyclical review of existing graduate programs every seven years. The O.C.G.S. required that the Dean of Graduate Studies at each University work with it to ensure the quality of graduate programs. There had been no process for the review of undergraduate programs until 2000. At that time a very different process had been initiated. Each University had been made responsible for the review of its own undergraduate programs, and the newly formed Undergraduate

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Program Review Audit Committee (UPRAC) conducted a cyclical audit every seven years to test each University's compliance with its own standards. Then, in 2006-07, the Council of Ontario Universities (C.O.U.) had commissioned a review of the O.C.G.S. process by a Quality Task Force. That Task Force worked for two years and proposed a Quality Assurance Framework that had been accepted in the fall of 2009 by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV). That Framework had not yet been given final approval by the C.O.U. Because of the importance of the Provincial Framework, there remained some final adjustments to be made to it, but Professor Regehr anticipated that the document now before the Committee would be very close to the final document. The University's own proposed Quality Assurance Process was based on the Provincial Framework, and both documents had been provided to the Committee to show the connections. About one third of the University document had been taken directly from the Province-wide Framework.

Professor Regehr outlined the major elements of the proposed University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process.

- **Principles.** First, there should be two separate processes for approval of new programs: administrative approval and governance approval. Second, the processes for approval and review of graduate programs should be the same as those for undergraduate programs. There were currently some differences which should be eliminated. Third, the processes for approval should be efficient. The current process for governance approval at various levels was slowed by some inefficiencies, and the draft of the University's Quality Assurance Process foresaw some modifications. Fourth, consultation and communication were very important. It would be important to ramp up those processes as the governance processes were streamlined. That was especially true in cases where program proposals could have an impact on another division(s). Those processes should take place before proposals were submitted for governance approval. Fifth, a core set of evaluation criteria should be standardized across divisions. Professor Regehr and her colleagues were therefore working with various central units and Deans to arrive at standardized measures. Finally, the new processes and definitions would need to be monitored and revised as necessary.
- **Elements of the quality assurance process.** The quality assurance process included protocols for new program approvals, for major modifications to approved programs and for cyclical reviews of approved programs.
- **Program approval process: Governance.** The current approval process for undergraduate and graduate programs differed in some respects. For all new degree programs, proposals were developed in the divisions, which then

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undertook preliminary discussions with the Provost's Office. For undergraduate programs, proposals were then taken to the Faculty Council for approval. The documentation was then forwarded to the Provost's Office, which carried the proposal to both the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs and (with respect to resource implications) to the Planning and Budget Committee. With their approval, the proposal for a new undergraduate program then proceeded to the Academic Board, whence to the Governing Council for approval. The proposal was finally submitted for funding approval to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and, where necessary, to the professional accrediting body.

For graduate programs, there were additional steps. After a proposal was developed in the division, it was discussed with both the School of Graduate Studies and the Provost's Office. The proposal was then posted on the web for fourteen days with an invitation for comments. It was then submitted for approval by both the division's Council and by the Graduate Education Council. Proposals were then submitted to the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. Following that step, the proposals followed the same path as proposals for undergraduate programs: documentation to the Provost's Office, submission to the two committees of the Academic Board and to the Board itself, submission to the Governing Council and forwarding of the proposal to the Ministry and (for professional programs) to any appropriate accrediting body.

The draft of the University's Quality Assurance Process proposed changes to the governance approval process. First, it was proposed to eliminate the provision for posting proposals for new graduate programs on the web as a means of consultation. Professor Corman reported that the web postings had not proven to be a good means of consultation, with an average of only six or seven comments being forwarded for each proposal, with no comments at all concerning some proposals. Professor Regehr said that was not a sufficiently good result to merit holding up the approval process. Removal of the web posting would require the implementation of a sound consultation process at the divisional level before a proposal came to the divisional council. Second, it was proposed that proposals no longer require the approval by the Graduate Education Council. Rather, they would proceed directly from the division's Council to the Provost's Office and to the University governance process. That would again require a strong consultation effort before the matter came to the divisional Council; the Graduate Educational Council would no longer be available as a site for discussion. Third, the Working Group on Quality Assurance had consulted with the Task Force on Governance, which might well propose ways to simplify the University governance approval process.

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Following approval by University governance, all proposals for new programs would be forwarded to the Quality Council. For graduate programs, the requirement for Quality Council approval would replace that for approval by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. New undergraduate programs would also require approval by the Quality Council. Proposals could then proceed to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for approval of funding and also to any professional bodies for approval for purposes of professional accreditation.

- **Program approval process: Administrative review.** Administrative review would be coordinated by the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs. The Vice-Provost was charged to ensure referral for thorough review by all appropriate officers, including: the Planning and Budget section of the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Operations; the Vice-Provost, Graduate Education and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies; the Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life; and (where appropriate with respect to any government-relations or community-relations implications) the Vice-President, University Relations. Such administrative review currently occurred. It was now being described in greater detail in the University's Quality Assurance Process.
- **Program approval process: Consultations.** In the documentation in support of proposals for new programs, divisions will be expected to demonstrate that they have undertaken all appropriate consultations. Within the divisions, it will be expected that there will have been consultation with appropriate faculty and students. Consultation with any cognate programs would also be expected. If the proposed program would have any impact on other divisions, for example as the result of overlap in program offerings, it would again be expected that there have been full consultation. Where formal consultative mechanisms currently existed, it would be expected that they have considered the matter. Such mechanisms included the Council of Graduate Deans, the Tri-Campus Deans in Arts and Science, and the Council of Health Sciences. Finally, consultation would be expected to have taken place with any external constituencies involved, such as the professional bodies that grant accreditation to programs.
- **Approval process for major modifications.** Major modifications in programs, but ones that would not represent a change in the character of the program, would be approved by divisional councils. They would be reported annually to the Quality Council.
- **Enhanced divisional processes.** One outcome of the proposed changes would be greater autonomy for the divisions. That would make it essential that there be appropriate structures in place at the divisional level, for example Curriculum

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Committees to ensure appropriate consultation concerning, and approval of, proposals for new programs. As a result, there would be need for an overall review of divisional constitutions.

- **Program reviews** would be commissioned by the officer at one level up from the academic unit offering the program to be reviewed. For programs offered by Departments of multi-departmental Faculties, the Dean of the Faculty would commission the review. For Faculties without an internal departmental structure, the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs would commission the review. Where it made sense to do so, reviews could be bundled together, e.g. reviews of both undergraduate and graduate programs. It would be a requirement that programs be reviewed at least every eight years. The Office of the Vice-President and Provost had completed a list of all programs based on information submitted by the Deans, and it was developing an electronic database to indicate the times for the review of each. When reviews were completed, they would be submitted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, who would request an administrative response. The review and the administrative response would then be presented to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs.
- **Reviews causing concern.** The Working Group recommended that in any case where the Committee was concerned about matters arising in a review and where those concerns remained after consideration of the administrative response, the Committee and the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs could request that a follow-up report to be provided in one year's time. In cases where a review brought to light significant problems or deficiencies, it was proposed that the Dean or the Vice-Provost be empowered to require that admission to the program cease until there was evidence that the concerns had been addressed.

Professor Regehr said that the process she had outlined represented the view of the Working Group as at this time. It was continuing its broad consultations, including the discussion now underway. The Task Force on Governance was also considering possible changes to the relevant University governance processes. She invited members' views on the general process, on the proposed Policy for Assessment and Review of Academic Programs and Units, and on the broader University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process.

Among the matters that arose in questions and discussion were the following.

- (a) New program proposals: Criteria for evaluation.** A member referred to the criteria for the evaluation of new programs as outlined on pages 10 – 11 of the University's Quality

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Assurance Process. Did this process dovetail with the current process and did it take into account the need to tie proposals to the degree-level expectations? The member suggested that it might be helpful to the divisions to have a standard form for the preparation of proposals. Professor Regehr replied that the section was taken directly from the Provincial Quality Assurance Framework, in which connection to the degree-level expectations was very important. Professor Regehr hoped that the criteria covered all of the items required for evaluation of proposals for new programs. If any appropriate criteria were not present, they should most certainly be added.

(b) New program proposals: Approval process for graduate programs. A member observed that at present the external review of proposals for new graduate programs took place at the very end of the process. The proposed process would have an external review in the middle of the process and before the proposal had been considered for approval at the divisional level. The member asked about the effect of that revision on divisional governance consideration of proposals. If proposals were forwarded for approval after an external review, might the divisional governance body confine itself to ensuring that the process to that time had been appropriate? Might it be reluctant to seek to add value to the discussion of the substance of the program? Professor Regehr replied that until this time the only external review of proposals for new graduate programs was that undertaken for the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (O.C.G.S.). Its review was a “threshold review.” It decided that a proposed program either met an appropriate standard for approval or did not do so. The comments of the external reviewers did not lead to any changes in the program, which would already have been approved by the University. The purpose of the new procedure was to enable the external reviewers to provide substantive feedback that could lead to change in the proposed program. Their review would not be a threshold review but one that would add value in the development of the proposal.

Professor Corman added that the proposed process would also enable the University to make a clear distinction between the administrative review of a program proposal and the subsequent governance review. The external review would be completed before the proposal was submitted to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs and the Academic Board, and they would be able, in the light of the external review, to assure themselves that everything was in order.

Ms Lasthiotakis noted that the Provincial Quality Assurance Guidelines required that all institutions sponsor external reviews as proposed in the University of Toronto process before approval by divisional and University governance. In that way, the governing bodies would have before them both the external review and the administrative response. That should make the institution’s decision a more informed one and the Quality Councils’ later review a smoother one.

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The Chair noted another advantage of the proposed process with respect to proposals for graduate programs. Given the completion of the external review early in the process and given that the external review would be arranged by the University itself, the process would be much faster. Until this time, the University had to wait for a year after internal approval for a decision by the O.C.G.S. That Council had to arrange the scheduling of an external review and its consideration by the Council at the end of the process. The Quality Council had undertaken to act quickly, normally within 45 days of the institution's submission, which would include a completed external review.

(c) New program proposals: Role of the Quality Council. A member noted that there remained an important external element in the review and approval of new programs: the approval of the Quality Council. Was the Council expected to make a second independent judgement of the quality of proposed programs, even after the external review and governance approval? Or would its function be a more limited one of ensuring that the University had appropriately completed all stages of considering the proposal? If the Quality Council were to decline to approve a proposal, would the University have any recourse?

Professor Regehr replied that the Quality Council would indeed continue the function of external arbitrator with respect to new program proposals – a role previously played for graduate programs by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities did not wish to make academic judgements itself about the appropriateness of new program. If programs were approved by the Quality Council, the Ministry would then receive the proposal for funding. The manner in which the Quality Council would make its determinations had not yet been established, and it would be important that the University be highly engaged in ensuring that its criteria were appropriate ones.

(d) New program proposals: Internal process for consideration of financial implications. A member noted the possibility that program proposals would no longer go to the Planning and Budget Committee, which currently reviewed their budgetary implications. It did appear appropriate to reduce the length of the governance path, which currently involved the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, the Planning and Budget Committee, the Academic Board and the Governing Council. However, the launching of a new program did have financial implications. In recent years, the Academic Board had been advised invariably that there were no financial implications of new programs for the University-wide budget. Perhaps it was the case that the cost would always be dealt with in the Faculty or Department; that might well represent the answer to the question of the review of financial implications. The member was, however, concerned that if the only review of budget implications occurred very early in the process, it would be difficult to know how governance could

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make a judgement on proposals for new programs or on the implications of major changes.

Professor Regehr replied that in any proposal for a new program, the Faculty or Department held detailed discussions with the Planning and Budget Group within the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Operations. Among the matters considered were: (i) for graduate programs, the allocation of limited Provincial basic-income-unit funding to the program; (ii) for new undergraduate programs, the tuition-fee model, and (iii) the steps required for Ministry approval of funding. No proposal would be permitted to come forward for approval until all of those matters had been cleared up. In earlier years, the Planning and Budget Committee had considered the implications of new programs on the University-wide budget, but with the new budget model any implications occurred within the division's budget. Therefore, in recent years, the Planning and Budget Committee simply received assurance that the appropriate budgetary review had taken place within the division, and it concurred with the recommendation of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs on that basis of that assurance.

(e) Cyclical reviews: Scheduling of reviews of similar programs offered in more than one division. A member noted that similar undergraduate programs were offered on all three campuses. In addition, there were tri-campus graduate programs. Was it planned, in order to save resources and encourage efficiencies, to have similar programs across the three campuses reviewed at the same time by the same team of reviewers? Professor Regehr replied that the general model was for the divisions to make the decisions concerning the scheduling of reviews, subject only to the eight-year time limit. There had, however, been a great deal of discussion of the matter by the tri-campus deans. While Professor Regehr would welcome an outcome that promoted efficiencies, she thought that it was still appropriate that the divisions determine the schedule and determine when it would make sense to combine the reviews of related programs.

(f) Cyclical reviews: Existing graduate programs. A member asked about changes that would take place to the process of reviews of existing graduate programs and units, especially in the light of the discontinuation of reviews by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. Professor Regehr noted that the O.C.G.S. reviews were not presented to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs; they were deemed to be confidential. The Committee currently considered only external reviews that had been commissioned by the University. The Committee would henceforward receive reviews of both undergraduate and graduate programs. The Committee would continue its current process, with any changes that might arise from the current discussion. The process would be designed to ensure that the reviewers were academics at arm's length from the programs they were reviewing. The commissioning officers would implement a process to develop a list of

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names from which to select arm's-length reviewers. The objective would continue to be to bring in academics who would provide honest and valuable reviews of what the University was doing. The member said that his primary concern was that the internalization of reviews of graduate programs not lead to a process aimed at the generation of reviews with the outcomes desired by those responsible for the programs. Professor Regehr noted that the reviews received by the Committee at its previous meeting demonstrated the willingness of reviewers to bring to light both the strengths and difficulties of the University's programs.

The Chair noted that in the Faculty of Medicine it was intended that reviews of undergraduate and graduate programs and units would take place together, at the end of the Chair's term. The external reviewers would consider at the same time all programs within the unit as well as the unit itself.

(g) Cyclical reviews: academic units or only programs. A member observed that there appeared to be some confusion in the documentation about whether the cyclical reviews include academic units as well as programs. The title of the proposed revised policy was changed to omit reference to academic units, but there were references to reviews of units, especially those that offered programs, in several places in the proposed revised policy. The member recalled that the Committee had recently received a review of the Terrance Donnelly Centre for Cellular and Biomolecular Research which was a research unit and did not, according to the Dean of Medicine, offer degree programs.

Professor Regehr replied that the administration was struggling with that very question, and she would welcome discussion of it. Until this time, the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs had received reviews of all academic units as well as programs. But should the Committee, charged with responsibility for academic programs, continue to consider reviews of academic units? If units offered programs, it would make sense for the Committee to see the reviews of those units. In other cases, the matter was less certain. For example, Colleges offered programs, but those programs were considered separately from the reviews of the Colleges. A second example was research units.

The Chair observed that the review of units was not included in the Provincial Quality Assurance Framework. Any consideration of units should not therefore proceed to the Quality Council.

A member said that in the past, many reviews of units had given little attention to the programs offered by those units. She urged that reviews of units continue to be submitted to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs and that they be combined with careful reviews of the programs they offered. It was not possible to separate the consideration of a unit from the consideration of the quality of programs it offered and the

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resources devoted to those programs: faculty and staff, technology, etc. The Committee should consider units and their programs together. Professor Regehr said that it was the intention of the administration that there would be combined consideration of units and their programs.

Discussion developed concerning reviews of units that did not offer programs, e.g. research units. A member thought that it would be inappropriate for such reviews to come forward to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. Two other members took the view that the Committee should consider reviews of research units that did not offer programs. Research units contributed to the education of the University's students; if they did not do so, something was amiss. Consideration of reviews of such units at the level of the Committee was important to give them status as university-level reviews. Their consideration by the Committee did not imply that reports on the consideration of the reviews had to be forwarded to the Quality Council.

Discussion also developed concerning reviews of extra-departmental units. It was generally agreed that if reviews of academic units were to come forward to the Committee, those units should include EDU:As and EDU:Bs, which by definition offered programs. Two members noted that there were several cases of inconsistency in extra-departmental units in terms of (i) their offering programs or not doing so, or (ii) their appointing faculty or relying entirely on cross-appointments. Ms Lasthiotakis noted that there were some older EDU:As and EDU:Bs that did not offer programs, for example the Canadian Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics. The anomalies occurred in units that were formed before the 2007 approval of the current policy.

A member urged that any extra-departmental unit with significant resources should be reviewed and its review should be considered by the Committee.

Ms Lasthiotakis noted that EDU:Cs and EDU:Ds were generally regarded as divisional responsibilities. They did not offer programs or appoint faculty. Their formation did not require the approval of the Governing Council. They were often funded by research grants or received limited additional funding from their divisions.

Professor Regehr asked whether it was the consensus of the Committee that the Policy should remain one for the Approval of Reviews of Academic Programs and Units, rather than only for Programs. It was generally AGREED that reviews of units should continue within the Committee's responsibility.

In response to a question, Professor Regehr said that at the present time the divisions that commissioned reviews were responsible for the cost of the reviews. Where reviews were commissioned by the Provost, that Office paid the expenses. The member commented that cost might be one reason for limiting the units required to undergo formal reviews.

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(h) Cyclical reviews: Preliminary examination of review reports. A member recalled that the Committee had noticed errors in one or more reviews on its agenda at its March meeting. Section 4.7.6 of the University's draft Quality Assurance Process stated that "before accepting the [review] report as final, the Commissioning Officer will bring to the attention of the reviewers any clear factual errors that can be corrected in the report." The member was concerned that in a large, multi-department faculty, such as Arts and Science, the Commissioning Officer (the Dean) could not be expected to have sufficiently detailed knowledge about the operation of any particular program to correct many factual errors. The member urged that some surer means be found to discover and eliminate factual errors.

Professor Regehr replied that the point was an important one. She noted that the Provost's Office would be preparing a manual with more detailed procedures. In the situation cited by the member, it would be usual that the Dean would consult with the Chair to determine the factual correctness of statements in the review. Such consultation could be prescribed in the planned manual. Professor Regehr was in fact seeking to reduce the procedures specified in the University's Quality Assurance Process in order to retain flexibility to make improvements as the need became apparent and in order to reduce the number of detailed procedures in the document that would both be subject both to approval by the Quality Council and then to assessment by its auditors.

(i) Cyclical reviews: Publication of summaries of review reports. A member referred to figure 2, the flow-chart overview of the protocol of cyclical program reviews, and to item 4.8.3 of the text. That item stated that an executive summary of the final assessment report, containing "an institutional synthesis of the external evaluation and internal responses and assessments" would be published on the program's web site. The member commented that this procedure would be an unfortunate one when a new Chair was appointed and sought to turn around a troubled program or unit. The Chair would have to work in the light of publicity about the difficulties.

Professor Regehr replied that the publication of the executive summary was required by the Provincial Quality Assurance Framework. University leaders had been advised that they could and should exercise judgement in the preparation of summaries for publication.

(j) General role of the Quality Council. In response to members' questions, Professor Regehr said that for new programs, the Quality Council would consider proposals for approval. It was intended to hold new programs across all universities to an appropriate standard. With respect to the cyclical reviews of existing programs, the Quality Council would every seven years audit the University's process to ensure that it was conforming to its approved policy.

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(k) Program closures. In response to a question, the Chair, Professor Regehr and Ms Lasthiotakis said that program closures would proceed in a manner similar to the current process. Divisions would propose closures, with their proposals coming to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. Because it would be important for the University's governing bodies to recognize that the University not only initiated new programs but also closed old ones, proposals endorsed by the Committee would be forwarded by the Committee to the Academic Board. In the Provincial Framework, program closures would be included in the annual report to the Quality Council.

(l) Suspension of admission to programs. A member referred to the proposed provision that, in the event of concern about a program, the Dean or the Vice-Provost, Academic would have the authority to suspend admission to that program for a year. Would a decision to suspend admission, or not to do so, be reported to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs for its consideration? Professor Regehr undertook to consider further the matter of the governance process. In some cases, the Committee might have received a cyclical review and might therefore be advised, as a part of the administrative response, of a decision to suspend admission. In other cases, however, the Dean or Vice-Provost might determine a need to act well in advance of a review's coming to the Committee.

A member noted that in such a case, the revenue of the unit offering the program would be reduced. How would the impact of the revenue reduction be handled? Professor Regehr stressed that such action would likely be very rare, and it would also likely be expected. Problems so serious as to require the suspension of admission to a program would be known within the division, and members of the division would have made the reviewers aware of them. Nonetheless, it would be necessary for the University and the division to consider the question of the financial consequences of the decision.

(m) Transitional arrangements for graduate programs reviewed by O.C.G.S. and classed as "Good Quality with Report." In response to a question, Professor Corman said that the Quality Council would take over responsibility in cases of graduate programs that had been reviewed by the O.C.G.S. and had been given a rating of good quality but with the need for a further report. The Quality Council could, if it wished, require the further report specified by the O.C.G.S. Professor Regehr stressed that for new reviews, it would be the University's responsibility to require any follow-up report in cases of concern. The Quality Council would in such cases limit its role to auditing to ensure that the University had adhered to its own follow-up procedure.

In the course of discussion, members made suggestions concerning the drafting of specific aspects of the Policy and the Quality Assurance Process document.

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4. Approval and Review of Academic Programs: University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (Cont'd)

- A member observed that the draft of the University's Quality Assurance Process, item 1.1, "Overview," stated that there were two "primary indicators of academic excellence." The first of those was stated to be "the quality of the scholarship of the professoriate and students." The member urged the use of the term "faculty" rather than "professoriate" to take in all members of the faculty, including those in the teaching stream.
- A member referred to the diagram providing an overview of the protocol for cyclical program reviews and suggested that the responsibility for commissioning reviews be made clearer.
- A member referred to the definition of a "program" contained in the proposed Policy. The Policy defined a program as "an identified set and sequence of courses within an area of study . . ." To ensure the durability of the proposed Policy, the member suggested a broader definition to take into account the likelihood of the future inclusion of innovative ways of teaching in programs. The Policy might define a program as "an identified set and sequence of courses or other educational activities within an area of study . . ."

5. Program Reviews: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs Role

The Chair invited members' views on the role of the Committee in the consideration of program reviews. Among the questions that could be considered were the following: (a) the matter that had already been discussed, i.e. which reviews should be considered by the Committee? (b) how frequently should the reviews be considered by the Committee? (c) how soon should the Committee receive reviews? (recent experience included fairly new reviews and those that were older); (d) what was the Committee's task in considering the reports, i.e. what should the Committee be looking for in the review reports and the administrative responses? (e) should the senior assessor arrange, in appropriate cases, for follow-up reports to be brought forward to the Committee?

Among the matters discussed were the following.

(a) Timing of consideration of reviews. A member said that it was essential for the Committee to have the administrative response as part of its consideration of reviews. However, waiting a full year to consider a review would represent inordinate delay. Another member observed that it had proven very helpful to consider a number of reviews at the same time; it had enabled the Committee to get a good overview. The process used for the current year had worked very well, except that the Committee probably had too many reviews to consider at once. She suggested two meetings to deal with the reviews. The Chair said that it appeared to be the general view of the Committee that it should consider reviews along with their administrative responses twice annually. The reviews and their responses would therefore usually be no later than six months old.

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A member suggested that the academic head of a division have the option to bring a review forward at an early date. She recalled an instance in March when the Dean of a division had expressed pleasure at having done so because the presentation of the review to the Committee at an early date had given greater legitimacy to his wish to act quickly. The Chair observed that such a provision might be appropriate so long as any review still came forward with an administrative response.

(b) Reliance on summaries of the reviews. A member expressed some concern about the Committee's reliance on summaries of the reviews. The summaries tended to be relatively uniform in their approach and, almost by definition, tamer. Because the summary became the public record, there was a risk that the reviews would not pick up the full thrust of the original review. While the lead readers were asked to advise the full Committee whether the "summary accurately reflected the review report," the matter was not the best subject for substantive discussion of the review. Another member agreed that focusing on the adequacy of the summary was not the best possible basis for Committee discussion.

Another member observed that a reader of the summary would be able to determine fairly readily from the summary whether a program was in difficulty. The current process appeared to her to be necessary and workable.

Another member said that the key issue was whether any substantive issue(s) in the review were not presented in the summary or were not expressed strongly enough to communicate the reviewers' concerns. She suggested that the lead readers no longer be asked a general question about the accuracy of the summary but be asked very specifically to advise the Committee whether there were any issues raised in the review that were not included in the summary or were not stated with sufficient stress. The Chair concurred with the suggestion and undertook to have the question revised for the next meeting to consider reviews.

(c) Continuity and consideration of previous reviews. A member observed that the external review committees were usually provided with copies of earlier reviews. The summaries provided to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs also contained the highlights of those earlier reviews. The member suggested that it might be wise, additionally, to make the previous reviews a more important part of the overall process, perhaps by providing them also to the lead readers. That would enable the benchmarking of progress of the program or unit, and it would provide a clearer picture of the unit's progress.

(d) Accountability for action based on the reviews. A member asked about the Committee's role in ensuring that action was taken in response to reviews. She cited a review considered by the Committee in March; that review had made recommendations for action on matters that had arisen in the unit's previous review and remained

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unresolved. Did the Committee have a role in holding the heads of divisions accountable to act? The Chair recalled that in that case, the Committee had asked for a report back. Professor Regehr agreed that there was need for clarity about the Committee's role in such cases. She suggested that the University's Quality Assurance Process could state clearly the Committee's authority to request a report back where it deemed it appropriate to ensure that action would be taken.

A member endorsed that idea. In many cases, the report back could be to the next meeting that considered reviews. In particular instances, the Committee might deem it appropriate to request an earlier report back as "business arising" from a previous meeting.

Another member observed that while the requirement of a follow-up report would clearly be useful, it might not be sufficient to ensure action. Deans faced other pressures that could deter their taking action. The Committee's authority should be to request that the Provost's Office ensured follow-up and that it report back to the Committee. The Chair said that all reports did in any event come forward through the Vice-Provost as senior assessor to the Committee.

A member urged that any request for a follow-up be made only to the Vice-Provost and not be thought of as a requirement for the head of the academic division. The Committee was a legislative body and not a management committee. Its membership changed significantly each year, meaning that it would not have a clear memory of the previous review or of the circumstances leading to the request for follow-up. A member agreed that the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs did not itself have sufficient knowledge of programs and units to respond. That role had to be played by the University's senior officers.

A member agreed that the Committee's role was not to oversee actions taken in response to reviews but rather to ensure that the responsible senior officers were made accountable to ensure that appropriate action was taken.

Professor Regehr said that she would understand any request for a follow-up report to be addressed to the Vice-Provost, who would in the normal course of events obtain information from the relevant Dean.

A member agreed, but she commented that the Committee should not underestimate its own power to assist a Dean in taking action. That power arose from the fact of the public consideration of the review by the Committee and its comments on it.

Ms Lasthiotakis observed that actions taken in response to recommendations in reviews often came forward in the normal course of events. The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs might, for example, receive a recommendation to change or close a

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5. Program Reviews: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs Role (Cont'd)

program. In some instances, including one review considered in March, the action might flow through the Planning and Budget Committee, for example a recommendation to divide an existing department and to establish a new one. In some cases, action would follow quickly. In other cases, it might necessarily take longer. Therefore, one option for reporting might well be inclusion in the oral reports provided at each meeting by the Vice-Provost as Senior Assessor.

Professor Regehr thanked members for their valuable, candid comments. She would bring to the next meeting a proposal for a revised Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Review of Academic Units.

6. Reports of the Administrative Assessors

University of Toronto at Scarborough: Department of Humanities

Professor Regehr recalled that the Committee had at its previous meeting considered the review of the Department of Humanities at U.T.S.C. Arising from that review, a proposal would be on the agenda of the April 12, 2010 meeting of the Planning and Budget Committee to establish a new Department of English and a new Department of Philosophy.

7. Next Meeting

The Chair reminded members that the final regular meeting for the current academic year was scheduled for **Tuesday, May 11, 2010**. At that meeting the Committee was scheduled to consider the final draft proposal for the revised Policy on Approval and Review of Academic Programs and to receive for information the revised University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process document. The Committee would also receive the annual report on new, amended and withdrawn student awards.

8. Other Business

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council: Process for Review of Grant Applications

A member noted that the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) had revised its system for reviewing applications. She asked whether the University would be tracking the success rate of applicants for research grants in comparison to those of earlier years and those of other institutions.

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8. Other Business (Cont'd)

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council: Process for Review of Grant Applications (Cont'd)

Professor Young replied that NSERC had begun to implement changes for applications in 2008-09, and applicants from the University of Toronto had enjoyed a very high level of success. The University had received the results of applications made by its own faculty in 2009-10, and those applicants appeared to have done very well again. However, national data would not likely be available until some time into the summer. The comparative information would be made available as soon as possible after the necessary data were received.

The member was pleased that the information would be available to assist the University's applicants to make any adjustments that might appear appropriate.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Secretary

Chair

May 4, 2010

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