



# UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto  
Governing Council

## **Committee on Academic Policy and Programs Guidelines for Divisional Submissions**

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## Committee on Academic Policy and Programs Guidelines for Divisional Submissions

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs approves or recommends to the Academic Board of the Governing Council for consideration the following:

- amendments to divisional academic policies or practices, or amendments to University-wide policy in academic matters;
- the academic content and requirements of all new degree programs;
- all major changes within existing academic programs<sup>1</sup> or in academic regulations;
- diploma and post-secondary certificate programs;
- the establishment, amendment or rescission of University-wide policy with respect to grading practices and examinations;
- policy on academic services (such as the Library, information and computing services);
- policy on research;
- policy on earned degrees, diplomas and certificates;
- policy on admissions and awards;
- joint programs with external institutions.

In order to carry out its mandate, the Committee receives for its approval proposals from the academic divisions of the University which have been approved by the relevant divisional councils. Proposals may be received for information, approved by the Committee, or recommended to the Academic Board for approval, depending on the nature of the proposal. If the Committee does not wish to approve or recommend for approval, it may reject a proposal or refer it back to the originating body. The determination as to the level of approval required is made by the Chair on the advice of the agenda planning group, based on documentation provided by the division.

### I. Academic Program Proposals

- a. Major academic program proposals require consideration by the Academic Board, and include but are not limited to those which:
  - establish a new degree program, or change an existing degree, diploma or post-secondary certificate programs with resulting resource implications; or
  - establish a significant new academic directions for a Faculty; or
  - are anticipated to have significant impact on relationships amongst divisions or with the public.
- b. Minor academic program proposals which may be considered by the Committee include but are not limited to the following:
  - changes to the curriculum within an established degree program that can be accomplished with existing resources and are not major as defined above. Examples include:
    - specialist, major and minor programs in arts and science
    - changes in professional degree requirements
    - the addition or deletion of a program stream within an established degree program;

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<sup>1</sup> Here "programs" includes the curriculum within a particular degree. Examples are: specialist, major and minor programs in Arts and Science, and changes in curriculum within a professional degree, such as revisions to degree requirements

- establishment of diploma and post-secondary certificate programs
- c. Other minor academic program changes are delegated to the appropriate divisional councils. Such changes might include:
  - minor calendar changes, such as the addition or deletion of a course, approved by the divisional council, without significant implications for the nature of the program or the needs of students; changes in the semester in which a course is offered; minor adjustments in the course hours, without significant implications for the objectives of the program; changes in titles and in course descriptions that reflect normal updating; purely stylistic changes in calendar material; etc.]
  - collaborative graduate programs and direct-entry PhD programs, which require approval by the Council of the School of Graduate Studies and are forwarded to the Committee for information

## II. Other Proposals

### a. Divisional Grading Practices

Requests for major changes in divisional grading practices will be considered by the Committee. Minor changes may be approved by divisional councils as long as they are in accord with University policy. They will then be reported to the Vice-President and Provost for information. (In order to ensure that changes under the University Grading Practices Policy can be accommodated, the divisions should consult, in advance to presenting their recommendations, with the Office of the Vice-President and Provost and with the University Registrar.)

### b. Graduate Programs

Changes related to graduate programs and regulations (including all degree offerings in the Faculties of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, Forestry, Information Studies, Management and Social Work) are normally reported through the School of Graduate Studies.

### c. Admissions

Divisions should ensure that in bringing forward changes to admission policies or practices that consideration be given to the impact on other divisions.

## III. Procedures

### a. Submission Development

Major academic program proposals and proposed changes to grading practices policies may be submitted at any time, although changes in academic programs and academic regulations to take effect for the fall should be forwarded no later than the end of the previous February<sup>2</sup>. Divisions are encouraged to consult with the Provost's Office early on in the process of proposal development, and if there is any doubt about whether proposed changes are major and, therefore, require submission for approval. Programs may not be advertised until approved by the appropriate level of governance; accordingly divisions should take into account calendar and other advertising deadlines in determining the timetable for program development and submission.

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<sup>2</sup> If the proposal requires the approval of the Governing Council, the governance cycle takes 6 weeks from the time the proposal has been forwarded to the Committee for consideration by the Office of the Vice-President and Provost through to consideration by the full Council.

Proposals are submitted to the Committee through the Provost's Office, which recommends items to the Committee through the Senior Assessor to the Committee. Copies should also be provided to the Committee Secretary, with attachments, and to the appropriate Assistant Vice-Provost (without attachments).

## b. Submission Format

To assist divisions in the preparation of submissions, the Committee has identified below the areas which should be addressed when bringing major academic program proposals forward for approval.

In general, divisional representatives preparing the submission should think of the committee members' position: from the material submitted will they be able to ascertain sufficiently the implications of and justifications for the proposal?

All program proposals should be accompanied by an *executive summary* prepared by the division which:

- identifies important initiatives in the proposal and gives the rationale for the proposal, including its fit with the division's academic plan;
- explains the pedagogical and other academic issues underlying the proposed changes and the benefits expected as a result of their implementation;
- identifies projected student demand;
- describes their expected impact on the nature and quality of the division's program of study and any impact that such major proposals may have on other divisions;
- provides evidence of consultation with other affected divisions;
- includes an indication of the expected resource implications, including such areas as staffing, space, libraries and computing facilities, enrolment/admissions, revenue/costs, financial aid, or indicates clearly if there are no or only minimal resource implications, for purposes of review by the Planning and Budget Committee;
- explains the appropriateness of the name and designation (e.g. certificate, diploma, non-degree, new degree, stream within an established degree program, combined, collaborative, co-operative, etc.) in accordance with "truth in advertising," to ensure that users recognize the name and know what it means;
- includes program description and requirements, course titles/numbers, and lists faculty members involved, where known;
- is provided in paper copy, with signatures (for filing) and electronically (for distribution)
- is accompanied by a cover letter from the division head to the Senior Assessor of the Committee which states
  - when the proposal was approved at the divisional level,
  - what the planned implementation date is.

Divisions should include more detailed descriptions as appendices to the executive summary. For example, if a major proposal involves a new academic program or substantial changes to an existing one, then the Committee should receive calendar descriptions, in order to give consideration to the proposal. Normally, the detailed information will be considered only by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. The executive summary will be the document forwarded to the Academic Board, if the Committee cannot, under its terms of reference, approve a proposal itself.

### **c. Presentation to the Committee**

The Senior Assessor brings the recommendation forward for the Committee's approval. Divisional representatives familiar with the details of the proposal will be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee and to answer questions that may arise.

Where required, the Committee will forward its recommendations concerning admissions and academic program proposals and other relevant calendar amendments to the Academic Board for its consideration.

### **d. Annual Reporting**

Divisional Councils should submit an annual report to the Vice-President and Provost, for information, listing minor academic program and calendar changes made during the year. The Provost's Office will review the Report and advise the division if, in its opinion, these items have been dealt with in accord with these Guidelines and relevant policies.

For further information, please consult the Terms of Reference of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs at <http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/bac/details/ap/aptor.pdf>

October 10, 2002