REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO MISSISSAUGA ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE of Erindale College Council meeting held on Wednesday, March 30, 2011 at 2:10 p.m. in the Council Chambers, William G. Davis Building.


Regrets: D. Saini, P. Desrochers, L. Florence, T. Bowen

In attendance: M. Berger, J. Lau, L. Gaspini

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (February 16, 2011)

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2. Reports of Committees and Officers

a) Committee on Standing – annual report: Ms. Diane Crocker, Registrar & Director of Enrolment Management

The 2009-10 annual report of the Committee on Standing is attached hereto as Appendix A.

Ms. Crocker summarized the activities that take place before petitions reach the Committee on Standing (COS). She reported that all matters are first reviewed by the Office of the Registrar and in most cases a decision is made at that level. If the Office of the Registrar is unable to make a decision due to the complexity of the issue, or if the student is not satisfied with the decision the case is advanced to the COS. She then reviewed the various petitions that come through the Office of the Registrar and the COS. She noted that the Office of the Registrar also advises students of the petition process and how to navigate the process if they wish to appeal the decision. She provided statistics on the various petitions and outcomes that were put forth in 2009-10.

She noted that deferred exams are a large portion of the petitions heard. Many are granted because it was for legitimate illness that exams were missed and about 80% are written in the following weeks. Ms. Crocker reported on the significant increase in late withdrawals (LWD) and the impact the change in policy has had in drastically reducing the number of withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) cases that are reviewed by the COS. She added the all petition processes are now online.

There were no questions.

b) Academic Appeals Board – annual report: Professor Gordon Anderson, Chair, AAB

The Academic Appeals Board 2009-10 annual report is attached hereto as Appendix B.

Professor Anderson gave a brief overview of appeal process. He noted that the Academic Appeals Board (AAB) handles the appeals of students whose petitions were refused by the COS. He noted that this is the first opportunity the student has to defend their position. He explained that if the appeal is refused by the AAB, the student's next step is to appeal to Governing Council and that the AAB must attend that meeting and defend its decision.
Professor Anderson then summarized the annual report and statistics from September 1, 2009 until August 31, 2010. He noted that the activity this past year has been much lighter than the previous year and this is due to the policy change that Ms. Crocker mentioned.

There were no questions.

c) Academic Discipline – annual report: Lucy Gaspini, Academic Affairs Officer, Office of the Dean and Professor Angela Lange, Vice-Dean Graduate

The 2009-10 annual report of Academic Discipline is attached hereto as Appendix C.

Ms. Gaspini summarized the procedures under the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. She noted that the process is long and time consuming.

Ms. Gaspini reported that for 2009-10, there were 402 academic offences. She noted that offences occur in all four years of the undergraduate program. She commended the instructors and teaching assistants with their diligence. The academic offences were broken down by year as follows:

- First year: 139
- Second year: 97
- Third year: 81
- Fourth year: 85

She provided data on the offences by offence type and noted that unauthorized aids for assistance and plagiarism are the highest number of offences. She reported on the cases over the years and that the numbers still continue to rise however she noted that enrolment has also risen and cautioned that the numbers do not necessarily indicate an increase in dishonesty.

The Chair opened the floor to questions.

In response to a member’s question concerning the possibility that one student could be responsible for several offences Ms. Gaspini advised that while that does happen it is not that common.

d) Graduate Curriculum Subcommittee – Proposed Masters of Science in Sustainability and Management program: Professor Amrita Daniere

The proposed Masters of Science in Sustainability and Management program proposal is attached hereto as Appendix D.

Professor Daniere provided a short summary of a new graduate program. The proposal is for a new professional program that will work to combine education and environmental issues. Environmental issues refer to sustainability in regards to attention to the social, economic and environmental concerns associated with a particular concern or topic. The way that management is used within the program is in terms of running a good business, not necessarily a business that does well, but a business that does good. She believes that this two-year program is ideally suited to UTM. She noted that there are several very successful graduate programs already, mostly in management and biotechnology and that there is also a very strong and growing undergraduate environmental program.
The design of the curriculum is well underway and has already been able to get a commitment from the Dean and the Principal to hire new faculty as well as obtaining buy in from the two departments (Geography and Environment and Management) most closely involved.

It was duly moved and seconded,
THAT the Academic Affairs Committee approve the Masters of Science in Sustainability and Management program and recommend it to Brindale College Council for approval. (A. Daicere/ U. Krull)

The Chair opened the floor to discussion.

At a member's request, Professor Daicere provided a more detailed outline of the program. She explained that in the first year students will take integrating courses that teach them both environmental science and ecosystem science as well as introducing them to principles of management. The management courses will include accounting, strategy, functioning of institutions, policy and law, environmental ethics. During the summer they will complete an internship within an organization involved in the type of work they are interested in. There is already interest from companies to provide internships and a list of identified companies is included in the proposal. In the second year the students take several electives in both science and management courses and also completed a capstone project together that is called the "Sustainable Enterprise" where students work as a group on solving or creating a sustainable company. They will also complete a research paper in the second year.

A member asked what the proposed timing is for the program. Professor Daicere advised that it is hoped that the first students will be enrolled in September 2012. The plan is to start small and build up to the full program size of 30 students per year for a total of 60 students, over the course of three to four years.

This program has been a number of years in the making and is the first graduate program to undergo the new quality assurance framework. Under that framework the proposal has already undergone an external review that was very favourable. The Chair noted he was impressed with the due diligence that has been undertaken.

Ms. Mary Ann Mavrinac advised that the library is very supportive of the new program and appreciates what the new quality assurance process has allowed. She noted that it gave the library an opportunity to do an in-depth look at their supporting resources to ensure that the library can support the program.

A member asked if there are comparable programs at other institutions. Professor Daicere advised that there are quite a few comparable programs and these are also included in the proposal. She elaborated on the one that is most directly comparable in Ontario at the University of Waterloo. That program was introduced in September 2010 and is a part time, online program that takes three years to complete. She believes it is more geared to professionals in the workplace where the UTM program will be geared to a younger student market. She added that she feels UTM is entering this field at a good point.

A member asked what the company support has been and whether it is foreseen that internships can be obtained for all program participants. Professor Daicere advised that the
The internship portion of the program is being partnered with the UTSC internship office because they have an established corporate base and are extremely successful.

In response to a member’s inquiry as to why the program is not within the Management Department, Professor Daniere advised that the proposed program does not fall within the parameters of a traditional management program, especially with respect to the significant science portion of the curriculum. This program will bridge the perspective between science and management, and typically MBA programs do not do that. It fits a very distinctive niche not of particular interest to the business program.

She advised that the program has been met with excellent response from students, faculty and business.

Ms. Crocker noted that this is a great program to influence undergraduate recruitment. She advised that many high school students look at the graduate programs that are offered when choosing where to do their undergraduate work knowing the graduate program the undergraduate studies will flow into.

A member remarked that he felt there should be a psychological component in the program as well and Professor Daniere advised that they have just been successful in recruiting a psychologist to the list of faculty that will be involved in the program.

Professor Krall made an observation on the fundamental question put forwards which is “Why are we doing this?”. He feels we are doing something important not just passing paperwork. If the history of the masters programs is examined, the Masters in Biotech is the first homegrown program. The same philosophy held when that program was put together. The question was not whether we are responding politically but are we in a position to actually create the next generation of leaders in a particular industry area that will change the way business works and how society is a receptor to the positive outcomes of that change. That is the distinction between programs like this from typical programs such as an MBA where the focus is how to create product, make money and move industry ahead. This is much broader in focus in the sense of asking from a science perspective, what’s going on, how can I control it, one of the outcomes is perhaps the business can flourish but another very important outcome is how society’s quality of life and how we as a community flourish. These notions are the underpinning of the MBiotech, and they motivated the companies that supported it. None of the companies received research benefit or products, they received a different type of person in terms of how they thought, how they could run as leaders in these companies to drive them to success. As we see industry changing there is much more pressure, both government, political and community pressure to work cleanly, improve the quality of life but minimize the footprint. He is supportive of this program because he can see the development of that leadership potential to produce individuals that understand society and understand the science and can think about how that can actually applied to drive forward more than the bottom line.

A member asked how the quality of the internship placements can be maintained at a high level and cautioned what can happen if the management of the graduates glutting the market is not controlled. Professor Daniere believes that the type of skills will continue to grow in demand in the future and that the skills the student obtain can be applied in a diverse range of settings.

A member asked why UTSC has such an effective internship and UTM does not. It was pointed out that UTSC has a very large number of undergraduate co-op programs and have
been administering them for several years. As well UTSC has an environmental science program with a large database of companies this program can draw on. Ms. Crocker added that it was a U of T decision to run the undergraduate internships at UTSC. She noted that the administration of the internships is a very complex process and it would not be wise to run it at all three campuses. It was added that while the internship component will be administered at UTSC, the people from the UTSC internship office that administer this program will come to UTM a couple of days a week to run the program and the long term goal is to hire someone away from the UTSC office when the program is established.

There being no more questions, the motion was put to a vote. The motion carried.

3. New Business:

There was no new business.

The Chair announced that the next meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee would be in the fall of 2011.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.