



General Faculties Council
ACADEMIC PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
Minutes for Approval

Meeting #118
April 6, 2020, 4:00 p.m.

via Zoom Platform

Voting Members

Dru Marshall, Co-Chair
Tara Beattie, Academic Co-Chair
Elena Braverman
Nicole Culos-Reed
Dawn Johnston
Andy Knight
Mohammed Mansouri
Jessica Revington
Jackie Sieppert
Barry Wylant

Non-Voting Members

Violet Baron
Paul Rogers
Florentine Strzelczyk
Melanie Zimmer

Secretary

Susan Belcher

Scribe

Jaclyn Carter

Guests

Angelique Saweczko, Registrar – present for Items 4+5
Robin Yates, Dean and Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) – present for Items 6+7

Observers

Tasha Hodzic, Office of the Secretariat
Christine Johns, Senior Director (Academic & International Strategies)

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the April 6, 2020 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee special meeting be approved.

Carried

2. Remarks of the Co-Chair and Academic Co-Chair

The Co-Chair included the following in her remarks:

- COVID-19 updates from the University will continue two or three times a week for the foreseeable future
- The Academic Crisis Management Team (ACMT) is currently quite large, with the intent to break the ACMT into subgroups for further contingency planning, at which time those interested in participating will have an opportunity to join

In response to questions, the Co-Chair explained that:

- No decisions have been made regarding the method of course delivery for the Fall 2020 term
- The ACMT is working behind the scenes to ensure that international students are able to enroll at the University in the Fall 2020 term despite ongoing travel restrictions
- Decisions regarding spring and summer course delivery, grading and availability are in progress, and the University is doing its best to accommodate the additional students who may want to take classes over the spring and summer because they are not able to work

3. Approval of the March 30, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee meeting held on March 30, 2020 be approved.

Carried

4. Approval of COVID-19 Temporary Academic Regulation Guidelines

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Angelique Saweczko presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent provided an overview of the proposed temporary guidelines, which address anticipated longer term effects of the shift to a CR/F designation for Winter 2020 courses, including impacts on students' academic records, progress, graduation, and awards and honours. It was explained that these guidelines were developed in consultation with associate deans and academic advisors and that they afford Faculties the flexibility to apply them in ways that best serve their students.
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - The Academic Turnaround Program (ATP) will be extended for those students who would have otherwise been required to withdraw, in an effort to ensure that students get the extra support they need
 - Some of these guidelines will be communicated centrally, and the Registrar will also work closely with academic units to ensure all students understand how these guidelines may affect them
 - The Registrar is considering options to help alleviate any unintended consequences

- associated with the changes to assessments this term, particularly as they relate to transcripts and admissions at other universities. It was noted that Canadian and American Registrars are working together to ensure that students are not disadvantaged in the future.
- Students who obtain a CR in a prerequisite course in the Winter 2020 term will be allowed to continue to the subsequent course, and possible remediation is being looked at for those students who need it
 - The ACMT has worked with accreditation bodies to ensure that students who meet the minimum standards receive accreditation. It was noted that some of the more complex decisions regarding certain accreditation requirements are still in progress.
 - Students in their last year of studies who defer course work or final exams have until June 12 to complete course requirements, and this will not affect their convocation as the June convocation has been delayed until November
- The Committee discussed:
 - Undergraduate and graduate students' positive feedback on the decision to make the CR/F assessment optional and the overall flexibility that the University has offered to students during a difficult time
 - The time the Registrar's Office needs to complete graduation checks and other data entry for student record processing, which is currently anticipated to be one week from the submission of students' final grades. The proponent explained that graduating students are prioritized first, that extra staff have been trained to support the work load, and that IT has been working behind the scenes to accommodate mass uploads into the system. It was noted that Undergraduate Medical Education graduates will also be prioritized so that medical students may begin residency as quickly as possible to help with the influx of COVID-19 cases.
 - The Committee suggested that some clarifying language be added explaining who must pay a fee to register in the ATP and suggested corrections for some typographical errors in the document

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposed COVID-19 Temporary Academic Regulation Guidelines, as set out in the document provided to the Committee, effective immediately and applicable to the academic terms indicated in the document, with the requested amendments.

Carried**5. Approval of Temporary Changes to Undergraduate Admission Regulations**

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Angelique Saweczko presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent provided an overview of the proposed changes, which aim to ensure a fair admissions process in light of many changes to high school curricula delivery around the world
- In response to questions, it was explained that:

- The University will consider reported grades without the diploma exam for the Winter 2020 term only, as COVID-19 did not affect diploma examinations or final grades in the Fall of 2019
- Some of this information will be posted as Frequently Asked Questions on the Registrar's website, and information will also be sent out to applicants, guidance counselors and Faculty advising offices
- The Committee discussed:
 - The potential effects on admissions for the 2020-2021 academic year. The proponent explained that acceptances and offer letters are currently on schedule, and that the Registrar's Office will make adjustments to its admissions decisions if there is a sudden drop in or cancellation of acceptances.
 - How University students applying to transfer into another program will be affected by the CR/F designation. The proponent explained that the Registrar's Office will be checking to ensure that courses in progress have been completed, but the grades in these courses will not affect the decision to offer admission. It was noted that, under normal circumstances, letters of offer are rescinded if a student's average drops below a certain threshold, but that the Registrar's Office will not be doing this for 2020-2021 admissions.
- The Committee suggested that the document clarify that the admissions average referenced in the document refers to the student's average, and not the average set by University Faculties

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposed temporary changes to the Undergraduate Admission Regulations, as set out in the document provided to the Committee, effective for the Spring 2020, Summer 2020, Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 terms.

Carried**6. Approval of Additional English Language Proficiency Tests for Admission to Graduate Programs**

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Robin Yates presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent outlined the proposal, noting that the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) will encourage students to take the TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition Test whenever possible
- In response to a question, it was explained that the Faculty of Nursing and the Werklund School of Education do not accept the Duolingo English Test for admission to their programs due to their high accreditation standards; however, it is not anticipated that this will be a significant problem, as English is the first language for most applicants to these programs
- The Committee discussed:
 - How the proficiency levels set by FGS compare to those at other Canadian universities
 - The components of the Duolingo English Test, which includes a ten minute interview section that is reviewed by a human rather than a computer

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the revisions to the Regulation in section A.1 *Qualifications* of the Graduate chapter of the University Calendar to include the addition of the Duolingo English Test and TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition Test to the list of acceptable English Language Proficiency tests for admission to graduate programs for the Spring 2020, Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Winter 2021, Spring 2021 and Summer 2021 academic terms, as presented to the Committee.

Carried**7. Other Business****Temporary Changes to the Admission Requirements for Graduate Programs for COVID-19-Affected Terms**

Documentation for this item was tabled at the meeting. Robin Yates presented this item.

Highlights:

- The proponent outlined the proposed changes to the FGS admission criteria, which include accepting the CR designation for prerequisites for admission to graduate programs, and calculating admissions averages using three methods, in order to ensure that students applying to graduate school are not disadvantaged by COVID-19
- The Committee discussed:
 - The fierce competition for high quality international and domestic graduate students, and how these changes may give the University a competitive advantage as students know they will be admitted fairly
 - The ways in which a student's GPA will be calculated, with the proponent noting that the highest GPA resulting from the three calculations will be used for admissions purposes
 - How this information will be communicated to graduate program administrators and what supports will be available to them as they conduct these calculations
 - How "COVID-19-affected term" is defined, as some countries like Australia and the United Kingdom follow a different schedule than North America, and some countries have opted to delay timetables or cancel terms in response to COVID-19

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the proposed temporary changes to the admission criteria for graduate programs for the Spring 2020, Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Winter 2021, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021 terms, as presented to the Committee.

Carried

8. Adjournment

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee adjourn the April 6, 2020 meeting

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Susan Belcher
University Secretary