

## **GRADUATE PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS – GUIDELINES**

### **1. Scope of Guidelines**

These guidelines cover the preparation and submission to Academic Council of proposals to change academic policies or curriculum respecting existing graduate programs. Proposals for new programs are covered in Policy and Procedures for Approval of New Programs.

### **2. Authority to Determine Academic Policy and Curriculum**

Under the Ryerson Act authority to determine academic policy and curriculum rests with Academic Council. This means that, although in practice decisions on curriculum and policy matters may be made within graduate programs, such decisions have not been properly authorized until approved by Academic Council. Academic Council therefore must receive information on all curriculum and policy decisions taken by graduate programs. Normally, Academic Council will sanction minor decisions by receiving them for information. Major curriculum or policy matters require separate decisions by Academic Council, normally after review and advice by the Programs and Planning Committee on behalf of the Council for the School of Graduate Studies.

A responsibility to determine when formal review and decision by Academic Council is required rests with the Vice President, Academic. Early in the academic planning process, program directors should clarify through the Dean of Graduate Studies whether a planned policy or curriculum proposal requires formal review and approval by Council. Section 3. below covers preparation and submission of academic proposals requiring review. Section 4. covers preparation and submission of Academic proposals to be presented to Academic Council for information.

### **3. Curriculum and Policy Proposals for review by the School of Graduate Studies Council**

The role of the Council of the School of Graduates Studies is to make recommendations to Academic Council on the quality, coherence and suitability of curricular changes proposed by graduate programs. The SGS Council receives its recommendations from the Programs and Planning Committee (see Appendix A).

### **4. What goes to the Programs and Planning Committee?**

Most routine curriculum changes do not need to go to the Programs and Planning Committee. Changes involving individual courses, course substitutions and isolated alterations in course hours, all normally proceed, with the approval of all affected parties, directly to Academic Council for ratification.

Prior review by the Programs and Planning Committee will normally be required when curriculum changes are more substantial, involving for example, new courses added to the program, changes to degree designation, program objectives, or extensive course changes.

### **5. Format**

It will be helpful to the Programs and Planning Committee and Academic Council if programs would follow certain conventions in submitting their proposals:

For admissions or promotion policy changes: a copy of the proposed policy and of the existing policy, drawing attention to the changes and the rationale.

For changes to program objectives: a copy of the existing statement of objectives together with the proposed changes and including a statement of the rationale for them.

For changes in curriculum structure or content: a rationale for the proposed changes and sufficient information, for example, a comparison of the existing courses and amended programs, for members to determine the appropriateness of the change.

**6. Timing**

The agenda deadline for Council is two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date. This means that such changes must be in the office of the Vice President, Academic at least two full weeks prior to the Council meeting at which they will be presented.

**7. Curriculum and Policy Proposals Presented to Academic Council for Information**

Such proposals should be presented in a form which permits individual Academic Council members to review them efficiently and effectively.

**8. Reporting Policy Changes**

Normally policy proposals respecting admission, promotion and graduation will be treated as major, requiring review and recommendation by the appropriate School of Graduate Studies Council committee before consideration by Academic Council. This should be clarified with the Vice President, Academic, through the Dean, Graduate Studies as soon as the proposal is finalized and prior to consideration in the program Council. Other policy proposals, involving, for example, grading practices peculiar to a particular program, or regulations governing academic field work, should be reported in memorandum format, outlining the policy and the rationale therefore, and indicating approval of the Dean and the Vice President, Academic. These approvals may be obtained by routing the memorandum reporting the change through the Dean and Vice President, Academic to the Secretary of Academic Council.

**9. Reporting Curriculum Changes on a Course Change Form**

Minor curriculum changes should be reported, where feasible, on a Graduate Course form.

**10. Reporting Curriculum Changes in a Memorandum**

Where it becomes evident that the Course Change Form format is unsuitable, memo format may be used. In this instance, proposed curriculum should be compared with existing curriculum, and the rationale, approval, and date of implementation of the proposed changes are to be shown. Approvals of the program affected by the proposed changes are to be recorded together with the approval of the Dean, Graduate Studies and the Vice President, Academic. Course numbers and names; hours by lecture, laboratory and studio for each course and in total; should be included.

## **APPENDIX A - GRADUATE PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS APPROVAL PROCESS**

### **Course Additions/Deletions**

Any course may be initiated by a program committee or faculty member with the knowledge of the relevant Departmental Chair. Information regarding course changes will be circulated by the Chair to the relevant Departmental Council for information.

