



# Joint Report on Disestablishment Processes of Council

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# Overview

Two committees of Council have direct roles to play in the deletion of academic programs and the disestablishment of academic entities:

- 1) Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC)
- 2) Academic Programs Committee (APC)

All program terminations come to Council via a recommendation by APC, and require Council approval to be effected.

The Board of Governors is the final authority for the disestablishment of academic entities, and aside from financial exigency, only does so when authorized by Council, which in turn requires a recommendation from PPC.



# Planning and Priorities Committee

PPC's terms of reference includes the following:

- Seeking advice from other Council committees to facilitate university-wide academic planning.
- Recommending to Council on the establishment, disestablishment or amalgamation of any college, school, department or any unit responsible for the administration of an academic program, with the advice of the Academic Programs Committee.

PPC is broadly responsible for recommending academic priorities to Council, and in that general capacity recommends the disestablishment of academic units.



# Academic Programs Committee

APC's terms of reference include the following:

- Recommending to Council on new programs, major program revisions and program deletions, including their budgetary implications
- Approving minor program changes, including additions of new courses and revisions to or deletions of existing courses and reporting them to Council.
- Undertaking the academic and budgetary review of proposals for the establishment, disestablishment or amalgamation of any college, school, department or any unit responsible for the administration of an academic program and forwarding recommendations to the Planning and Priorities Committee



# How Program Termination is Initiated

As approved by Council in 2008, academic program termination can be initiated by the following parties, through the submission of a report form for program termination to APC:

- The college that administers the program
- The Provost or President
- The Academic Programs Committee

Department and program mergers, and program replacements, may involve program termination. Whether a merger or replacement involves a program termination procedure will be determined by APC when it reviews the proposal in consultation with PPC.



# Characteristics of Programs Considered for Termination

Programs recommended for termination are typically characterized by one or more of the following:

- Continually low student enrolment
- Remains inactive for longer than five years
- Significant program weakness in one or more of teaching, research and scholarly work or other activities specific to the program
- Persistent lack of necessary resources (staff, faculty or finances) or inefficient use of available resources



# Program Termination Assessment Criteria

In assessing program termination proposals, APC uses the following criteria:

- The academic value of the program
- Quality assessment of the program under formal review
- The impact of termination on students
- The impact of termination on faculty and staff
- The impact of termination on ongoing research projects
- Finance and resource impacts
- The impact of termination on other programs and academic units
- Any external impact from the termination
- Any impact of the termination on extension and public service, education equity, interdisciplinarity, and the university mission and goals



# Academic Unit Disestablishment

If Council approves of the disestablishment of an academic unit, confirmation is sought from Senate,\* and the Board of Governors is authorized by Council to disestablish the unit.

Under situations of financial exigency, however, the Board can initiate and approve academic unit disestablishment. Under such circumstances, the Board is required to consult with Council.

\* If Senate does not confirm the decision, the decision cannot be implemented for at least a year





# Academic Unit Amalgamation

- Academic unit amalgamation is approved by Council when such amalgamation results in no new resource allocation.
- An amalgamation that requires the allocation of significant new resources requires Board approval.



# Role of Faculty Council and Other Bodies in Disestablishment and Amalgamation

- Authority to disestablish or amalgamate an academic unit is retained by Council. Consequently, faculty council approval is not required.
- However, the level of support at the college level, the departmental level, and the degree to which minority views exist are important criteria by which PPC assesses a proposed disestablishment or amalgamation.
- Therefore, the results of a faculty council vote and arguments presented for and against a proposal will be of interest to PPC.
- In addition, PPC may consult with other Council or college committees and with proponents and/or detractors of the decision, where deemed appropriate by PPC.



# Academic Unit Disestablishment Guidelines

Historically, academic unit disestablishment has been rare, and thus has been handled on a case-by-case basis.

In the coming months, PPC will develop guidelines for the disestablishment or amalgamation of departments and academic divisions. However, given the rarity with which college/school disestablishment occurs, guidelines will not be developed at the college/school level; rather, these will continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis.



# Questions?

Questions may also be directed to the Office of the University Secretary at [university.secretary@usask.ca](mailto:university.secretary@usask.ca)

