

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL**

**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

**FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

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**PRESENTED BY:** Roy Dobson, Chair, Academic Programs Committee of Council

**DATE OF MEETING:** September 20, 2012

**SUBJECT:** **Items for Information:**  
**Veterinary Medicine academic calendar change**  
**English proficiency criteria clarification**

**COUNCIL ACTION:** **For information only**

**SUMMARY:**

The following items were approved by the Academic Programs Committee at its meeting of Sept. 5, 2012 and are reported to Council for information:

1. **Veterinary Medicine academic calendar change:** The Academic Calendar for first-year veterinary medicine students has been changed to accommodate the Vetavision show this fall. This show is held once every three years, and requires first-year students to miss 16 hours of teaching during the usual term period. Instead of ending on Friday, December 14, the last day of Quarter 2 will be Wednesday, December 19, 2012.

2. **English proficiency criteria clarification:** University admissions policy allows students to establish English proficiency who have attended an English-speaking high school for three years and completed English A30 and B30. In 2009, University Council approved an extension of this criteria so that students with more than two years at an English-speaking high school could also establish English proficiency if they had received at least 70 per cent in English A30 and B30. During subsequent text and website revisions, some of this information was inadvertently missed and there has also been difficulty in interpreting the meaning of “more than two years”. Following discussion with the Director of Admissions at its Sept. 5 meeting, the Academic Programs Committee agreed that for the 2013-14 academic year, which began in September, it will be sufficient proof of English proficiency for applicants to present the following qualifications:

- At least 3 years of full-time study including Grades 10, 11, and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents).
- At least 2.5 years of full-time study including Grades 11 and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents) with minimum final grades of 70%.
- At least 2 years of full-time study including Grades 11 and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents) with minimum final grades of 80%.

It is expected that updating of this policy will be discussed at APC and brought to Council for approval this year.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Email from Alison Pickrell, Director of Admissions
2. Email from Registrar regarding Veterinary Medicine change

From: [Pickrell, Alison](#)  
To: [Fornssler, Cathie](#)  
Cc: [Shepard, Lisa](#); [Gauthier, Karen](#)  
Subject: English proficiency item for APC  
Date: Friday, August 31, 2012 1:06:18 PM

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Cathie,

Here is the information for APC. I was not sure what to submit it on. Is there a template or form? I'd also like to provide them with a copy of what was approved. The link is

[http://www.usask.ca/university\\_secretary/council/committees/academic\\_programs/report\\_files/pdf/APCJanuary2009second.pdf](http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/council/committees/academic_programs/report_files/pdf/APCJanuary2009second.pdf)

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In January 2009, Council approved changes to the English proficiency requirements for undergraduate applications for admission, effective May 2009. (I will attach a copy). This APC item is to: (a) bring attention to an area of confusion for applicants and document how this has been handled in the undergraduate admissions office, and (b) advise APC that some changes to the English proficiency policy will be coming forward this academic year for consideration and approval for 2014-15 academic year admissions. Any concerns can be addressed with that revision.

The 2009 policy change that requires clarification is related to English proficiency for undergraduate applicants who have attended Canadian or U.S. high schools (or high schools where English is the language of instruction and examination). Initially students required 3 full-time years of consecutive attendance (Grade 10, 11 and 12) including successful completion of English Language Arts courses in each of the years, and completion of the grade 12 English courses required for admission. The policy was modified in 2009 to address concerns from Saskatoon high schools, where a large number of new Canadians who begin their studies in the province in the ESL stream, and transition into the English language stream in grades 11 and 12 (ELA 20 and 30 classes), were being required to provide proof of English proficiency even though their academic achievement and high school English grades were excellent. The policy change allows applicants who have more than two years of full time study (grade 11 and 12) and grades of 70% or higher in Grade 12 English Language Arts A 30 and B 30 to meet the English proficiency requirement.

The difficulties related to this change were twofold:

- When the information was updated on the website and in print materials, reference to the 3-year practice was mistakenly removed. A gap in practice arose where students who had 3 or more years of study at a Canadian or US high school were being required to provide proof of proficiency if their grade in grade 12 English were less than 70%.
- There was a great deal of confusion (internal and external) about the definition of "more than two years of full time study" resulting in a large number of calls from students and counsellors (primarily Saskatchewan) and some creative interpretation including the addition of a modification allowing 2 years of full time study (grade 11 and 12) and English grades of 80% or higher to provide proof of proficiency.

Enrolment Services has clarified and documented these processes that have arisen since 2009. They are in place for the 2013-14 admission cycle, which begin in September.

***For the 2013/14 academic year it is sufficient proof of English proficiency if applicants present:***

- ***At least 3 years of full-time study including Grades 10, 11, and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents).***
- ***At least 2.5 years of full-time study including Grades 11 and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents) with minimum final grades of 70%.***
- ***At least 2 years of full-time study including Grades 11 and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents) with minimum final grades of 80%.***

**From:** [Isinger, Russ](#)  
**To:** [Fornssler, Cathie](#)  
**Cc:** [Grah, Bruce](#); [Knowles, Sandy](#); [Doell, Jason](#); [Murza, Lynette](#)  
**Subject:** Change to the 2012-2013 academic calendar  
**Date:** Monday, July 16, 2012 8:02:44 AM

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Hi Cathie,

Bruce Grah, the Associate Dean from WCV, was in touch with Jason and I. They spotted an error in their first year calendar. My understanding from Bruce is that the year should end two days later due to the holding of Vetavision, which was not accounted for in the calendar. Vetavision is held every three years and was simply overlooked by the staff responsible for crafting the schedule.

I have cc'd this to Sandy Knowles in the college as Bruce says she can fill in the exact details as to what the calendar for first year vet med students should look like. To my mind, this is error correction. Could APC Executive deal with this, or would it have to wait until September for a full APC meeting?

Russ

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Academic Services is a unit of the Student and Enrolment  
Services Division (SESD)  
Academic Services consists of Student Information Systems, Student Central Support  
Services, Awards and Financial Aid, and Registrarial Services.

SESD's mission is student success.

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