

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR INPUT

PRESENTED BY: Roy Dobson
Chair, Academic Programs Committee

DATE OF MEETING: June 19, 2014

SUBJECT: **Proposed Recommendations on Program Evaluation and Approval Processes**

COUNCIL ACTION: For input only

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

The proposed recommendations on program evaluation and approval processes for the Academic Programs Committee (APC) were developed by a Planning Subcommittee of APC, which met four times over the past few months. The subcommittee was established January 8, 2014 for the purpose of reviewing criteria for program evaluation and approval used by APC. Members of the subcommittee were Sina Adl (Chair), Patti McDougall, Russ Isinger, Pauline Melis and Sandy Calver.

The concern of APC which motivated the work of the subcommittee was the university--wide reorientation towards program sustainability and a consideration of university signature areas in the program evaluation and approvals processes. APC sought to clarify the existing criteria used in program evaluations to ensure the approvals process was both efficient and transparent and provided clear direction to proponents on the criteria by which proposals would be evaluated. The hope is this in turn will result in proposals that clearly and directly address program evaluation criteria in a structured and systematic way.

In reviewing the criteria, the subcommittee referred to the [*Criteria for Evaluation of Program Proposals*](#). No new program evaluation criteria are proposed. The subcommittee's goal was to develop clear expectations of the need for programs to have a sustainable resource base informed by the TABBS model to ensure that projected program costs could be evaluated objectively by APC, and to ensure that proposals contain evaluation metrics.

APC recognizes that it is important that those who will be using the proposed forms find them useful and to be an improvement over the status quo. As such, APC invites comments on these forms from Council in order to improve their overall quality. Comments may be forwarded to Alex Beldan, committee secretary at alex.beldan@usask.ca by July 1st, 2014. Final versions of the forms will be developed over the summer months and presented to Council in September.

ATTACHMENTS:

Memo from APC Planning Subcommittee to APC

Memorandum

To: Roy Dobson, Chair, Academic Programs Committee

From: Sina Adl, Chair, APC Planning Subcommittee

Date: May 18th, 2014

Re: APC Planning Subcommittee Recommendations on Program Evaluation and Approval Processes

Dear Roy,

Attached is a report from the APC Planning Subcommittee on program evaluation and approval criteria, with recommendations for changes to the program evaluation procedure, the criteria used for evaluation, and to the APC worksheet for program evaluation. The APC Planning Subcommittee was established as an ad hoc committee of APC January 8th, 2014 for the purpose of reviewing criteria for program evaluation and approval used by APC. The committee was established as a result of discussion following a request from PPC for consultation regarding the TransformUS reports.

The central concern of APC which initiated the work of the subcommittee was a UofS-wide reorientation towards program sustainability and consideration of university signature areas, as embodied in the TransformUS reports. The goal of the review by the subcommittee was to make use of existing criteria to develop clear expectations informed by the TABBS model. The expectations developed by the subcommittee prioritize approval of programs with a sustainable resource base that further university signature areas and that are aligned with integrated planning processes. Developing the ability to assess programs in light of these expectations has involved a refining of existing program evaluation criteria to ensure that projected program costs can be evaluated by APC at an adequately abstract level, and to ensure that new program proponents are providing adequate metrics such that the success of approved programs can be evaluated in the future. Specifics are provided in the attached report.

On behalf of the APC Planning Subcommittee, I look forward to discussing the attached report with recommendations at the next meeting of APC.

Sina Adl

Report from APC Planning Subcommittee

1. APC Planning Subcommittee Terms of Reference:

Purpose: To review the criteria for program evaluation and approval used by APC, and the APC worksheet for program evaluation

Membership: Sina Adl, Patricia McDougall, Russ Isinger, Pauline Melis, Sandra Calver

Task and Reporting: The committee will meet as necessary to review the criteria and procedures used for evaluating and approving programs by APC. The committee will submit in its report recommendations for changes, where necessary, to: the procedure followed by APC; the criteria used for evaluation; and to the worksheet. In this task, the committee will take into consideration the university signature areas, the IP3, and the impact of program costs. In particular, the report should provide recommendations as to how APC can evaluate a proposed program's cost, and how to measure a program's success. The committee shall submit its written report to the chair of APC no later than 30th March 2014.

The committee's responsibilities and term ends with submission of the report.

NOTE: due to meeting time restrictions the committee requested and obtained an extension to May 30th.

2. Documents considered by the task force:

- PPC of Nov 18 2010 Agenda item 9.1, Template for Notice of Intent for New Programs
- Also of PPC November 2010, Notice of Intent for New Programs (purpose of)
- Budget Requirements for new Programs and Major Revisions
- APC Information Guide for Course and Program Deletions
- PPC January 25 2007 agenda item 12.1," Issues and Criteria when considering viable enrolment at the U of S"
- Criteria for Evaluation of Programs at the U of S, and the Committee Worksheet for Evaluation of Program Proposals
- A review of Program Approval Process across comparable Canadian universities

3. Committee meeting dates:

February 26, 2014
March 19, 2014
April 1, 2014
May 6, 2014

4. Report:

- We propose a fillable form based on the approved documents and criteria that exist, that specify in order the required information. This will help to make sure each item is addressed in a similar format between proposals considered. A draft of the form content is provided.
- The budget requirement is transferred into a TABBS format, which contains two forms, for units to articulate the feasibility and viability of the program expectations.

- The Dean's (or equivalent) signature on the proposal is required prior to submission of the proposal to PPC and APC.

5. Attached Forms:

- New program proposal and evaluation form
- Criteria for Evaluation of Program Proposals at the University of Saskatchewan, 2011 (*a summary of procedural and policy documents as reported to or approved by Council from 1996 to 2007*).
- Proposed Committee Worksheet for Evaluation of Program Proposals, including Revised Criteria for Evaluation of Program Proposals at the University of Saskatchewan
- Proposed Budgetary Assessment Worksheets

New program proposal & program evaluation form

Home Department & College

Proposed name of program

1. Academic justification:
 - a. Describe why the program would be a useful addition to the university, from an academic programming perspective.
 - b. Specify how the new program fits the university signature areas and integrated plan areas, and the college/school, and department plans.
 - c. Who are the targeted student groups for this program?
 - d. What are the strategic objectives for offering this new program?
 - e. What are the most similar competing programs in Saskatchewan, and in Canada? How is this program different?
2. Description of the program
 - a. What are the curricular objectives, and how are these accomplished?
 - b. Describe the modes of delivery, experiential learning opportunities, and general teaching philosophy relevant to the programming.
 - c. Provide an overview of the curriculum mapping.
 - d. Identify where the opportunities for synthesis, analysis, application, critical thinking, problem solving are, and other relevant identifiers.
 - e. Explain the comprehensive breadth of the program.
 - f. Referring to the university "Learning Charter", explain how the 5 learning outcomes are addressed.
 - g. Describe how students can enter this program from other programs (program transferability).
 - h. Are there opportunities for degree laddering?
 - i. If applicable, is accreditation or certification available, and if so how will the program meet professional standard criteria. Specify in the budget below any costs that may be associated.
 - j. What are the degree attributes and skills acquired by graduates of the program?
3. Consultation
 - a. Describe how the program relates to existing programs in the department, in the College or School, and with other Colleges. Establish where students from other programs may benefit from courses in this program.

- b. List units that were consulted formally, and provide a summary of how you have addressed the concerns that were raised. Attach the relevant communication in an appendix.
- c. List other pertinent consultations and evidence of support, if applicable (eg. professional associations, accreditation bodies, potential employers, etc.)

4. Budget

- a. How many instructors will participate in teaching, advising and other activities related to program delivery? (estimate the percentage time for each person). Table to fill here: faculty, sessional, ASPA; PT/FT, LTA
- b. What courses or programs are being eliminated in order to provide time to teach the additional courses?
- c. How is the teaching load of each unit and instructor affected by this proposal?
- d. Describe how the unit resources are reallocated to accommodate this proposal. (Unit administrative support, space issues, class room availability, studio/practice rooms laboratory/clinical or other instructional space requirements.
- e. What are there scholarships students be able to apply for, and how many? What other provisions are being provided for student financial aid and to promote accessibility of the program?
- f. What are the estimated costs of program delivery, based on the total time commitment estimates provided? (Use TABBS information, as provided by the College/School financial officer)
- g. What is the enrolment target for the program? How many years to reach this target?
- h. What are the total expected revenues at the target enrolment level?
- i. At what enrolment number will the program break even?
- j. Describe in which fiscal year and how this program proposal is budgeted.
- k. Describe how the program will be reviewed and modified over the next 3 years. Specify the criteria that will be used to evaluate whether the program is a success 3 years after full implementation.

END.



Criteria for Evaluation of Program Proposals
at the University of Saskatchewan

*Based on procedural and policy documents as reported to or approved by Council
from 1996 to 2007*

1. Overall Framework for Program Evaluation

Of primary importance to the University of Saskatchewan is that academic programs:

- be of **high quality**
- be in **demand** by students and the public
- **use resources efficiently**

In addition to the three primary characteristics related to quality, demand and resources, for some programs it is also important to consider:

- the **unique** features of a program, and
- the **relevance** of the program to Saskatchewan

We must also keep in mind other of the *University of Saskatchewan Objectives* including our commitment to fair and equitable **access** to our programs, to **equity**, to **environmental responsibility**, and to an **international perspective** in our endeavours.

The University is committed to developing programs which exhibit the three primary characteristics above, recognizing that our present program strengths lie with the programs which exhibit those characteristics. Programs should be assessed so as to direct change both in terms of programming and resource allocation; i.e., to determine how/why they do not meet criteria and whether changes to remedy the situation are feasible.

The unique features of a program and its relevance to the province should be viewed as characteristics of secondary importance, having first established the quality of, demand for, and costs associated with a program. Certain core disciplines/programs represented within any university are not expected to be unique. However, it is still possible that instructional methods or particular sub-specializations might be described as unique within the province or region. On the other hand, being 'unique' assumes greater importance where the cost of delivering a program is high or demand for the program is low. The importance or relevance of a program to the province may relate to building on economic or other strengths which already exist. On the other hand, a program may serve as a nucleus contributing expertise and services which would otherwise be unavailable to the community.

The Table which follows identifies essential components for each of the primary characteristics and general criteria associated with them. The components are not necessarily independent and therefore similar criteria may appear for different components; e.g., both curriculum and

learning environment have a criterion related to education equity. The relative importance of criteria for different types of programs can vary.

A Framework for Evaluation of Academic Programs		
Characteristics	Components	Criteria
High quality	Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum is designed to meet the objectives for the program (e.g. array and sequence of courses, modes of instruction and evaluation, development of skills, acquisition of knowledge, synthesis of information). • program provides students with the elements of a liberal education by encouraging the development of broadly informed, reflective and literate minds capable of independent and critical thinking. • program includes opportunities for synthesis, application and integration of knowledge within and between disciplines. • program is current, both in content and modes of instructional delivery, and reflects a responsiveness to changes in the discipline. • curriculum reflects the goals of education equity. • curriculum provides sufficient flexibility to individual students to choose courses according to their own interests within and outside their major discipline (e.g. electives). • program meets or exceeds accreditation and/or national standards (if they exist).
	Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • faculty responsible for/involved in program are well-qualified; i.e., have the appropriate academic and/or professional qualifications to support and develop the program. In the case of graduate programs, this includes active involvement in scholarly work. • faculty maintain and update the skills and knowledge appropriate to their discipline through involvement with academic, professional and/or scientific organizations. • faculty are nationally/internationally recognized for their scholarly and/or professional work; e.g., have obtained awards and/or local/national/international invitations to present their work to colleagues in their discipline. • scholarly work of faculty has made a significant contribution to the discipline. faculty are committed to developing their teaching skills. • faculty are successful in obtaining external research support.
	Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students are involved in evaluating instruction and perceive instruction is effective. • program incorporates a variety of modes of instruction, accommodates different learning styles and, where possible, allows flexibility in scheduling. • teaching within the program demonstrates responsiveness to new developments in the field, including incorporating practical experiences, where appropriate. • program integrates teaching and scholarship. • approaches to instruction and students reflect a commitment to the goals of education equity.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructional methods and philosophies are consistent with program objectives. • scholarly work of faculty enhances the learning environment.
	Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequate numbers of appropriately trained staff are available to support the program. • necessary facilities and equipment are provided. • appropriate library resources are available. • the organization and administration of the program and the academic unit(s) delivering the program are effective and supportive of the program.
	Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program achieves its educational objectives. • students are satisfied that the program has helped them achieve their personal and/or professional goals. • students completing graduate programs are 'successful' in that they find employment or pursue endeavours which utilize the advanced training in their field of study. • the academic load does not impose undue barriers to completion such that students can complete the program in the regular allotted time. • qualifications/education of students graduating from specific 'professional' programs are acceptable to licensing bodies and/or employers. • students are successful in national/international examinations or competitions. • employers or subsequent graduate supervisors are satisfied with the performance and academic preparation of students.
In demand	Student demand, Market demand and/or societal need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interest by students of the Province is sufficient to establish or to maintain a program and to allocate resources to it. • market demand (provincial, national) for graduates justifies the size of the program which is offered by the University. • the program attracts outstanding students from within and outside the Province, while still providing general access to other applicants. • high demand for junior 'service' courses is sufficient to maintain some programs within an academic area.
Uses resources efficiently		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program is delivered in a cost-effective manner, relative to other similar programs. • where student demand for a program is low, high demand for 'service' courses justifies maintenance of the area of study and the incremental cost of offering the program is low. • major areas of research, scholarly or artistic work are associated with opportunities for graduate education.
Unique Relevant to the province		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program is unique in content (e.g. specialization) and/or approach - nationally, regionally (Western Canada), provincially [in descending order of priority]. • program builds on and contributes to the cultural and economic strengths of Saskatchewan. • faculty and other personnel associated with the program provide services and expertise otherwise unavailable.

2. Agreement with the College of Graduate Studies and Research regarding procedures for review of graduate program proposals

With the goal of reducing duplication of effort, the Academic Programs Committee and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Research have agreed to follow this procedure:

- **College of Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR)** will conduct a comprehensive and thorough review of the nature of the program, particularly the curriculum, the program requirements, the program rationale, the faculty credentials associated with the program delivery and a judgment of the faculty's ability to deliver the program, the program content, the relationships with other units who may be involved in program delivery, the budgetary requirements for program delivery, and the general "fit" of the proposed program with other similar programs (in a provincial and national context) and with the requirements of the College. The process followed by the review, the nature of the discussions at college committees, interactions of the CGSR with the college or department making the proposal, committee and college observations and conclusions, and the general assessment should be documented in a comprehensive report which will be forwarded to the APC for its review. That report should include the following:

- a recommendation from the CGSR;
- a description of the process followed by the college in arriving at the recommendation;
- a description of the issues noted in the paragraph above;
- a description of the relationship of the proposal to recommendations arising from Systematic Program Review (if applicable); (where applicable, the acceptability of the response¹, particularly the action response for 'C-rated' programs, from the CGSR will be provided, including the feasibility of continued admissions);
- a description of any concerns/issues arising at the CGSR committees reviewing the program and the responses provided (if any);
- a statement by the Dean on the relationship of the proposed program to other programs offered by the sponsoring unit, the track record of the sponsoring unit, a descriptive account of where and how the program fits, supports and/or enhances the initiatives identified in the CGSR and sponsoring college plan, and a statement on the relative priority attached to the proposal within the overall structure of graduate programs offered by the University of Saskatchewan.

Academic Programs Committee will review the program proposal to determine its general "fit" with the University's *Strategic Directions, Foundational Documents, Integrated Plan*, Systematic Program Review recommendations, any other Council-approved policies that might arise from time to time, and on its relationship and fit with the College of Graduate Studies and Research plan as well as the sponsoring unit's plan. In particular, the APC will focus its discussions on the program rationale and its relationship to the University's and college's stated priorities. In other words, the APC will rely heavily on the CGSR to conduct a thorough review of the program from the viewpoint of objective assessment, not advocacy. The APC will act primarily as a "review and assessment" body; APC will, however, reserve the right to review a proposal thoroughly should continued questions arise from the initial CGSR review

This Summary is based on the following reference documents:

Framework – April, 1996; APC review guide -- March, 1997; Graduate program review guide – June, 2004; Planning review guide – January, 1999; Dissolution of Budget Committee, creation of Planning & Priorities Committee, changes to Academic Programs Committee terms of reference - May, 2007

Academic Programs Committee of Council

COMMITTEE WORKSHEET for Evaluation of Program Proposals

Program

Discussion Leaders:

Program Proposal Document -- please note any missing components:

1. ☐ Proposal Identification

2. ☐ Type of change

3. Rationale

- ☐ Program objectives ☐ Need for the program ☐ Demand ☐ Uniqueness ☐ Expertise of the sponsoring unit
☐ Relationship to college plans and to SPR or other review recommendations

4. Description of Program Characteristics

- ☐ Draft Calendar entry ☐ Consultation Form with Registrar

5. Resources

- ☐ Impact on resources used by existing programs ☐ Whether the program be handled within the existing resources of the department or college ☐ How any required new resources will be found
☐ Memo from Dean about resources
Consultation Forms if required for ☐ Library ☐ Information Technology ☐ Physical Requirements

6. Relationships and Impact of Implementation

- Impact ☐ on department activities ☐ on students ☐ on other departments or colleges;
Consultation process; ☐ Consultation memos

7. Budget

- ☐ Whether budget allocations within the department or the college will change
☐ Consultation with College Financial Analyst ☐ Budget Form if required
-

Program Justification

- Is the rationale and objectives for the program or the change in program clearly stated?
- Is the program unique in content and/or approach?
- Is the program relevant to the mission and objectives of the University?
- Is there evidence of demand for the program?
- Is the program appropriate to a university?

Nature of the Program

- Is the curriculum designed to meet the objectives of the program?
- Do the instructional methods and philosophies match the program objectives?
- Does the program encourage the development of broadly informed, reflective and literate minds capable of independent and critical thinking?
- Does the program include opportunities for synthesis, application, and integration of knowledge within and between disciplines?
- Is the program current, both in content and modes of instructional delivery, and responsive to changes in the discipline?
- Does the curriculum reflect the goals of education equity?
- Does the curriculum provide sufficient flexibility to individual students to choose courses according to their own interests within and outside their major discipline (e.g. electives)?
- Does the program meet or exceed accreditation and/or national standards (if they exist)?
- Is the proposed program comprehensive and cohesive?

Relationships

- How does the program relate to existing programs? Is there duplication? If so, is there justification for proceeding?
- Has there been consultation with other Colleges/departments/units or interested parties and is there evidence of their support? If there is a lack of support, is there justification to proceed?
- Has the transition between the new and previous programs been articulated and its impact on students been considered?
- Is the program within the domain of expertise and administrative purview of the sponsoring unit?
- What response to the proposal, if any, has been provided by professional associations or the community?

Resources

- Are there sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified faculty and staff to support the program?
- Are the necessary resources and structures available to support the program (e.g. space, laboratories, library, computing, equipment and administrative structure)?
- Is another program being deleted by the sponsoring unit as part of the proposal? Are there other internal trade-offs?
- Budgetary areas: full costing of resource requirements (capital and start-up costs; permanent operating costs); sources of funding; enrolment (tuition revenue) - enrolment increases and decreases in courses in the sponsoring college/department, and in courses in the other colleges/departments

Overall

- Given the information supplied, the responsibility to balance academic and fiscal considerations, and the University's overall objectives, plans, and priorities, should this proposal be recommended to Council for approval?
- What are the College's plans for its future direction or development (in this area)? How does this proposal fit into college and university plans?
- How will this proposal foster excellence in teaching, research, scholarly and artistic work, public service and extension?
- How does the College propose to evaluate the effects of implementing this proposal?
- What is the likely impact of the proposed program on the sponsoring College /Department?
- What is the likely economic impact, if any, of this proposed program on the Province?
- What is the track record of the sponsoring college(s) in managing their academic and fiscal affairs (as evidenced by recent systematic program reviews and graduate program reviews)?
- Should the Committee request a post-approval program review?

Any Other Issues?

“fit” of the proposed program with other similar programs (in a provincial and national context) and with the requirements of the College. The process followed by the review, the nature of the discussions at college committees, interactions of the CGSR with the college or department making the proposal, committee and college observations and conclusions, and the general assessment should be documented in a comprehensive report which will be forwarded to the APC for its review. That report should include the following:

- a recommendation from the CGSR;
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- a description of any concerns/issues arising at the CGSR committees reviewing the program and the responses provided (if any);
- a statement by the Dean on the relationship of the proposed program to other programs offered by the sponsoring unit, the track record of the sponsoring unit, a descriptive account of where and how the program fits, supports and/or enhances the initiatives identified in the CGSR and sponsoring college plan, and a statement on the relative priority attached to the proposal within the overall structure of graduate programs offered by the University of Saskatchewan.

Academic Programs Committee will review the program proposal to determine its general “fit” with the University’s *Strategic Directions, Foundational Documents, Integrated Plan*, Systematic Program Review recommendations, any other Council-approved policies that might arise from time to time, and on its relationship and fit with the College of Graduate Studies and Research plan as well as the sponsoring unit’s plan. In particular, the APC will focus its discussions on the program rationale and its relationship to the University’s and college’s stated priorities. In other words, the APC will rely heavily on the CGSR to conduct a thorough review of the program from the viewpoint of objective assessment, not advocacy. The APC will act primarily as a “review and assessment” body; APC will, however, reserve the right to review a proposal thoroughly should continued questions arise from the initial CGSR review

Worksheet is based on the following reference documents: Framework – April, 1996; APC review guide -- March, 1997; Graduate program review guide – June, 2004; Planning review guide – January, 1999; Dissolution of Budget Committee, creation of Planning & Priorities Committee, changes to Academic Programs Committee terms of reference

Cumulative projected impact on TABBS Mode: using TABBS model reference figures plus projected incremental impact, excluding potential new

	TABBS Model Reference Figures (2011-12)	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
Operating Grant					
Total Instruction (FTE) for Program Delivery					\$ -
Research					\$ -
Targeted Funding					
Directed Funding					
Tuition					
Undergraduate - Enrolment					
Undergraduate - Instruction					\$ -
Graduate - Enrolment					\$ -
Graduate - Instruction					\$ -
Graduate - Supervision					\$ -
Total Revenues *		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Allocated Expenses					
Research Support					\$ -
Student Support (classrooms, SESD, university managed scholarships)					\$ -
Graduate Support (research grants and contracts)					\$ -
Graduate Support (scholarships from college)					
Graduate Support (general support from university)					
Faculty/Staff Support (FSD, instruction, provost)					\$ -
General Occupancy					\$ -
Utilities					\$ -
Caretaking					\$ -
Leases					
Health Sciences					
General Support from College or School					\$ -
Total Expenses		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TABBS Model Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Projected Direct Operating Expenses **					\$ -
Net Projected Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -