

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION

PRESENTED BY: Fran Walley, chair, planning and priorities committee

DATE OF MEETING: December 19, 2013

SUBJECT: **Disestablishment of the Division of Environmental Engineering and related Council bylaw amendment**

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended:

That Council approve the disestablishment of the Division of Environmental Engineering, and

That Council's bylaws be amended to reflect the disestablishment.

PURPOSE:

The disestablishment of the Division of Environmental Engineering is taken in response to the new management structure adopted for the graduate-level degree programs housed within the division. This new structure will provide more effective administration and representation of these multidisciplinary graduate programs by a department head and graduate chair in the College of Engineering, as opposed to a division head.

As the division functions as a department, Council approval of the disestablishment is required. The definition of a division in the nomenclature report which applies is that of an administrative or organizational unit, much like a department, which reflects the unit's disciplinary or interdisciplinary approach towards program delivery and research and scholarly work.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

The College of Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR) is responsible for the Division of Environmental Engineering, with operational responsibility devolved to the College of Engineering. In 2011, an administrative review of the division was commissioned in response to perceived weaknesses in the governance, mandate and administrative structure of the division. In response to the review report, the CGSR, supported by the College of Engineering, elected to transfer the responsibility for the program from the chair of the division to one of the existing department heads in the College of Engineering. Graduate Council approved the new management structure at its meeting on October 8, 2013, and then voted to disestablish the division.

The program, and the environmental engineering graduate students currently enrolled in the program, continue to have a primary individual serving as the administrative head, and continue to be housed in the Engineering Building. Due to low enrolment and low admissions, new student admissions have been suspended pending the academic review of the program by the CGSR and the results of TransformUS. This has no effect upon current students, who continue to have every opportunity to complete and graduate from their program.

FURTHER ACTION

If Council approval is granted, the proposal will be presented to Senate, with the request that Senate confirm Council's decision.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposal to disestablish the Division of Environmental Engineering and covering correspondence



**UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN**
College of Graduate Studies and Research

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sandy Calver

FROM: Dr. Trever Crowe
Associate Dean, and Acting Chair of the Graduate Programs Committee, College
of Graduate Studies and Research

DATE: October 10, 2013

RE: Proposal for change of management for the Graduate Program in Environmental
Engineering

At its October 8th meeting, the Graduate Council of the College of Graduate Studies and Research approved an alternate management structure for the graduate programs in environmental engineering. The new structure does not incorporate the Division of Environmental Engineering, and therefore, members of Graduate Council also passed a second motion to disestablish the Division of Environmental Engineering. The College of Graduate Studies and Research requests the proposal to disestablish this division be reviewed for university-level approval. Please find attached documentation associated with the proposal.

Sincerely,

Trever Crowe,

ab for TC



**UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN**
College of Graduate Studies and Research

MEMORANDUM

TO: Graduate Executive Committee

FROM: Dr. Trever Crowe
Associate Dean, and Acting Chair of the Graduate Programs Committee, College of Graduate Studies and Research

DATE: August 30, 2013

RE: Proposal for change of management for the Graduate Program in Environmental Engineering

At its May 7 meeting the Graduate Programs Committee of the College of Graduate Studies and Research considered the proposal for a change of management of the Graduate Program in Environmental Engineering. At its May 7, 2013 meeting, the committee passed the following motions:

“To accept the proposed model for Environmental Engineering programs”. J. Soltan/ S. Whiting. All in favour. Carried.

“To disestablish the division of Environmental Engineering”. J. Soltan/ R. Cooley. All in favour. Carried.

Please find attached documentation associated with the proposal for a change of management for the Graduate Program in Environmental Engineering considered by the Graduate Programs Committee.

Sincerely,

Trever Crowe,
Acting Chair, Graduate Programs Committee, College of Graduate Studies and Research

ab for TC

Proposal to Disestablish the Division of Environmental Engineering

Name of the Unit being Disestablished

Division of Environmental Engineering

Overview

It is requested that University Council authorize the dissolution of the Division of Environmental Engineering, a department-like and 'type A' centre-like unit currently administered by the College of Engineering.

The dissolution will be preceded by the Dean of Engineering transferring administrative responsibility for the graduate program in Environmental Engineering to a department head in the College; namely, Ding-Yu Peng, Department Head, Chemical & Biological Engineering.

The program will be administered as an interdepartmental program within a departmentalized college. The department head will oversee program administration, while academically the program will be supported and championed by faculty from several departments. This mirrors the approach used to administer the undergraduate environmental engineering program: that program is administered by the Department Head, Civil & Geological Engineering and is provided academic leadership and is delivered by faculty from multiple departments.

The dissolution of the division follows a thorough review. The College commissioned a review of the Division in December 2011, which involved the faculty of the division through consultation and a self-study. The review concluded that the graduate program in Environmental Engineering remains viable, but the division is struggling with unclear governance, mandate and administrative structure. The lack of a champion for the program and an unclear connection to the university's administrative structure, including the College of Engineering Executive and the College of Graduate Studies and Research, was a challenge for the division.

To resolve these administrative challenges, the College is proposing to adopt the same approach that is working successfully (although not perfectly) to administer other graduate programs: a graduate chair supervised by a department head with a connection to CGSR and its faculty council.

Academic Rationale

No program changes are proposed. The review of the Division was limited to the governance and the administrative structure. Reviewing this graduate program remains a priority. Since the program was created, the University's suite of programming relating to environmental studies has changed considerably (for example, the School of Environment and Sustainability has been created). It is expected that the program will be reviewed in the coming years through the CGSR program review process and/or TransformUS and changes will be proposed to continue it as a viable program.

Consultation & Support

The proposed dissolution was discussed with the College Executive on September 11, 2012 and with the Division of Environmental Engineering on October 15, 2012. The college was informed of the intent to disband the division in an email from the Dean on October 19, 2012 and the item was discussed at Faculty Council on November 13, 2012. The College of Engineering Faculty Council endorsed the proposal on December 4, 2012.

The College of Graduate Studies and Research considered the proposal in December 2012 and requested further information.

Management

Academic Leadership

The faculty who deliver a program have a collective academic responsibility for the program content, supervision of students, and for providing general academic leadership. As with other graduate programs, a group of faculty work under the authority of the CGSR Faculty Council to exercise academic oversight and authority for the program and the students within the program. To facilitate this work, the Graduate Chair will convene and oversee a program committee, which will be comprised of the faculty who supervise students and/or support the program from several departments in the College of Engineering.

The dissolution of the division will not have any direct impact on the number of faculty who support and deliver the program. The program is supported by faculty from many engineering disciplines; currently Gordon Putz, Huiqing Guo, Ajay Dalai, Hui Wang, Moh Boulfiza, Jian Peng and Richard Evitts are supervising students in this program. Going forward, a list of faculty who support the Environmental Engineering graduate program, complete with their current supervisory activity level, will be maintained and reported to the deans of Engineering and CGSR and made publicly available. This will ensure there is greater clarity about the faculty complement that is supporting the graduate program.

The College will ensure there are adequate faculty in place to deliver the graduate program for as long as there are students enrolled in the program. The Associate Dean – Faculty Relations works collaboratively with college academic leaders through the assignment of duties process to ensure there are sufficient faculty resources to meet the needs of students enrolled in all programs delivered by the college.

Administrative Leadership

The College of Engineering understands the general approach to graduate programs administration to be as follows:

- The Dean of Engineering is accountable for the success of graduate programs delivered by the College of Engineering and for the success of the graduate students enrolled in these programs. This

responsibility is delegated from the Dean, College of Graduate Studies and Research, and is typically delegated to a department head for each program.

- The Department Head ensures that programs are effectively administered. Reporting to the Dean of Engineering, the head's responsibilities include:
 - appointing a graduate chair and supporting his or her success
 - assigning faculty to teach graduate courses
 - ensuring clerical/administrative support for the program and students is in place
 - ensuring facilities and resources are available
 - administering devolved scholarships
 - ensuring CGSR and other university policies are followed.
- The Graduate Chair is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the program. Reporting to the department head, the chair ensures the program is delivered and that students are supported. The details of these responsibilities are expanded on in greater detail in the CGSR policy manual.

The division structure has been challenging to administer as it doesn't confirm to the model articulated above. The Division Chair was intended to take the role of a department head but this has been difficult in practise. Without the ability to assign duties to faculty or connect into the college's financial, human resource and space management processes, division chairs have struggled to understand and exercise their accountabilities.

Before the division is dissolved, the Dean of Engineering will assign program management to an administrative lead within the College of Engineering. The letter of delegation is attached. Over time, the department head responsible for the program may change to reflect changing workloads, competencies, and other factors in the College.

This department head will oversee program administration including appointing a graduate chair effective July 1, 2013. This will mirror the model that is used to oversee other graduate programs in the College of Engineering. The Department Head responsible for Environmental Engineering will have the additional responsibility of working collaboratively with other department heads to ensure that faculty from across the college continue to support program delivery through teaching graduate classes and supervising students, and will be responsible for bringing challenges to the attention of other heads in the College.

The Division is currently managed by an Acting Chair. This term ends on June 30, 2013, and at that point the department head will take over the role of providing administrative oversight.

Resources and Budget

Dissolving the division will have no impact on the resources that support this graduate program. The College of Engineering remains committed to ensuring all graduate programs are fairly and adequately resourced within the financial parameters of the College. This includes providing operating funding and space to support students and assigning a graduate secretary with responsibility for supporting students and faculty affiliated with the program. The College will ensure all Engineering graduate programs are sufficiently and fairly supported with the available resources.

Systematic Assessment

An assessment of the division began in December 2011 and concluded in September 2012. The self-assessment and the final report are available on the College of Engineering website. The College will monitor the program administration and undertake further administrative reviews as necessary to ensure the College continues to function effectively and efficiently.

It is evident that the program should be reviewed: it has not been reviewed since the School of Environment and Sustainability was created and adjustments are likely required to ensure a coordinated approach to interdisciplinary environmental studies at the U of S. The environmental engineering graduate program was scheduled for review in 2012/13 but that review was subsequently postponed by the CGSR.