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| Item          | 8.10                    |
| Approved by   | UOIT Board of Governors |
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## PROGRAM QUALITY ASSURANCE

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### 1. PREAMBLE

UOIT is committed to ensuring the highest quality of learning experience for students while maintaining the highest integrity of its academic programs. To do this, the university has in place policies and procedures that are consistent with the Ontario Quality Assurance Framework, and promote quality assurance in the ongoing review and improvement of curriculum and courses, the periodic review of program offerings, and the development of new programs. UOIT's quality assurance processes are designed to ensure that all academic programs at the university:

- Align with UOIT's mission, values and strategic plans
- Remain coherent, rigorous and relevant
- Make the best use of resources available to them
- Are subject to continuous quality improvement based on empirical evidence and collegial judgment
- Draw upon and enhance existing strengths at the university

The establishment and oversight of both the policy and procedural aspects relating to the approval of new programs, program revisions and program review are the responsibility of the UOIT Academic Council.

### 2. CHANGES TO EXISTING DEGREE PROGRAMS

Deans and Faculties must plan for the ongoing refinement and improvement of current programs and for making major and minor modifications to them when it is considered appropriate to do so. These changes may be prompted by feedback from students, faculty and staff participating in the program, by matters arising through the course of its delivery, or as a result of a full examination of the curriculum through accreditation or the cyclical program review process.

In the planning for these changes, proposers must take into consideration the impact the changes may have on the human, instructional, physical and financial resources and provide a plan to address them. In addition, as even minor changes can have implications for students in other courses and programs, there must be open consultation with those who may be affected by the changes, as well as with those who are key to its implementation, including the Provost, the Registrar's office or the Office of Graduate Studies, and the Library.

All modifications to existing degree programs shall be subject to approval by the unit's Faculty Council and subsequent review and approval by the appropriate Academic Council standing committee (CPRC or GSC) and approval by Academic Council where appropriate, in accordance with prescribed procedures and documentation requirements. In addition, major modifications to programs shall also be subject to review by the provincial Quality Council.

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Approved by Academic Council, June 2010 (supersedes former policies on the approval of new undergraduate programs and program reviews and policies on new programs and program appraisals for graduate programs)

### **3. REVIEW OF DEGREE PROGRAMS**

Deans and Faculties must plan for the review of academic programs, including the preparation of a self study that presents the details of the program requirements along with an analysis of the indicators of quality that will facilitate an assessment of those components against UOIT's Program Quality Review Criteria.

The Provost, in consultation with the Deans, shall maintain a university-wide schedule to ensure that each academic program is subject to review once every eight years. To the extent possible, the schedule of reviews should take into account other review processes, including professional accreditation appraisals. Where this process occurs in parallel with other reviews, the Dean shall ensure that the objectives of all review processes are met through the course of the review.

For the purposes of this policy, a degree program is defined as a complete set and sequence of courses, combination of courses and/or other units of study, research and practice prescribed by the university to fulfill the requirements for a particular degree. Where a program involves faculty and courses from more than one unit, the deans involved must confirm to the Provost the unit which shall hold the locus of responsibility for the review. In addition, for those programs that are offered in more than one mode, at different locations, or having complementary components (e.g., bridging options, experiential education options, etc.), the distinct versions of the program shall be identified and reviewed.

In the planning for the review, the process must provide for input from members of the academic community associated with the program, including faculty, staff, students and graduates. Where appropriate, comment from the broader community, such as representatives from industry, the professions or employers may also be sought.

Programs reviews are subject to quality review by reviewers external and at arm's length to the program under review, in accordance with prescribed procedures and documentation requirements. Upon completion of the external review, a plan for improvement shall be prepared by the unit and presented to the unit's Faculty Council. The review process and outcomes shall then be assessed by the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council (CPRC or GSC). In those cases where the program review includes both undergraduate and graduate components, separate reports will be submitted to the CPRC and GSC concerning the components relevant to the mandate of each committee. The outcomes of the review shall be then reported to Academic Council, the Board of Governors and the provincial Quality Council under the quality assurance framework.

### **3. NEW DEGREE PROGRAMS**

Deans and Faculties must plan for ongoing development of new program initiatives, including the design and delivery of the curriculum, the refinement of program requirements, the determination of learning outcomes consistent with the provincial degree level expectations, and the assessment of student achievement of the learning outcomes.

In the planning for any new degree program, the Dean, in consultation with the Provost, must also determine the human, instructional and physical resources needed to implement the program and ensure its ongoing operation. The financial and human resource impact of the new degree program on existing programs must also be examined, and consideration must be given to possible collaborations with other units and the possibility of obtaining additional funds from internal or external sources.

In addition, there must be broad consultation with members of the academic community, including faculty, staff and students who may be affected by the initiative, and with those who are key to its implementation, including the Provost, the Registrar or the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Chief Librarian.

New degree program proposals are subject to quality review by external appraisers under the provincial quality assurance framework, and in accordance with prescribed procedures and documentation

requirements. Upon the completion of the external appraisal, the proposal shall be approved by the Faculty Council of the sponsoring unit, and subsequently by the appropriate Academic Council standing committee (CPRC or GSC), and by Academic Council. Proposals leading to the establishment of new degree programs must also be approved by the UOIT Board of Governors. In addition, new degree programs are subject to review by the provincial Quality Council under the quality assurance framework and may also require review by the Ministry for funding purposes.

All new academic programs will be subject to periodic review subsequent to their implementation, with the first review occurring within eight years of the start of the program, in accordance with UOIT's procedures for program reviews.

## **6. NEW NON-DEGREE PROGRAMS**

Deans and Faculties may plan for the development of new certificates and other non-degree program initiatives focused on professional development, in accordance with the UOIT Framework on Non-Degree Programs (see supplementary guidelines and protocols).

In the planning for any new non-degree program initiative, the Dean, in consultation with the Provost, must also determine the human, instructional and physical resources needed to implement the program and ensure its ongoing operation. The financial impact of the new program on existing programs must also be examined, and consideration must be given to possible collaborations other units and the possibility of obtaining additional funds from internal or external sources.

All new certificates and other non-degree programs must be put forward by the Faculty Council of the sponsoring unit, in accordance with prescribed procedures and documentation requirements (see below). Proposals shall be subject to review by the Non-Degree Program Oversight Committee and upon approval are reported to Academic Council following review by the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council (CPRC/GSC). All certificates and other non-degree programs will be subject to periodic review as determined by the Non-Degree Program Oversight Committee.

See also:

- Quality assurance handbook
- Cooperative education framework
- Non-degree program framework (diplomas, certificates, etc)
- Course numbering guidelines
- Flexible teaching
- Academic Council handbook