

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA | OKANAGAN



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To: Okanagan Senate

From: Policies and Procedures Committee

Subject: Process for Review of Academic Organization of Faculties and Units at UBC Okanagan (information)

Context for Review

UBC Okanagan is now into its third year of operation. Conceived as complementary to, yet different from UBC Vancouver, UBC Okanagan's mission emphasizes an interdisciplinary academy, excellence in teaching and research, a focus on the learner, and promotion of local and global communities. After the initial two-year formative period, the Committee suggests that it is timely during this period of rapid growth to review the current academic organizational structure to assess effectiveness toward the achievement of the goals set out in the UBC Okanagan academic plan. Any review postponed to the four or five year mark would likely be problematic as it would attenuate around 2011 when, due to campus growth and progress, consideration of changes to structures will be harder to implement.

It is important to note that this proposal is to review the units which house programs, rather than to review the programs themselves. As a result of such a review, UBC Okanagan might affirm the preliminary organizational structure selected during the transition period and/or identify areas for modification and improvement so that this campus continues to grow and meet its potential.

Some questions already identified that support the need for review:

1. Should there be one Bachelor of Arts degree? Each Faculty is normally responsible for its own degrees, yet we have some common requirements for Bachelors of Arts offered by two different faculties.
2. What is the optimal relationship between graduate studies and the Faculties?¹

¹ The Committee is aware that another task force has been charged with answering this and related questions, but feels that this issue is worthy of note here too.

3. What is the optimal academic organizational structure among and within Faculties to ensure that programs thrive? Is it possible, for example, for one unit within a Faculty to support five to seven different programs?

Mechanism for Review

The Committee has invited the Associate Vice-President, Academic & Research to strike and chair a task force to conduct a review of the academic organization of the Faculties of Arts & Sciences, Creative & Critical Studies, Health & Social Development, and Education².

Task Force Composition

In consultation with the Associate Vice-President, Academic & Research, and in reflection of the relative size and complexity of each faculty, the composition of the 11-member task force will be as follows:

- Associate Vice-President, Academic & Research (Chair)
- Faculty of Arts & Sciences (3 faculty representatives)
- Faculty of Creative & Critical Studies (2 faculty representatives)
- Faculty of Health & Social Development (2 faculty representatives)
- Faculty of Education (1 faculty representative)
- 1 undergraduate student
- 1 graduate student

Members will be invited to serve by the Associate Vice-President, Academic & Research, following appropriate consultation. The Assistant Registrar, Senate & Curriculum Services (or delegate) will serve as process advisor to the task force.

Reporting Process and Timeline

The task force is invited to deliver a report to the Policies & Procedures Committee by March 31, 2008. The task force may wish to consult the Academic Council and others as appropriate. Depending on the recommendations of the task force, other Committees of Senate may need to be consulted or grant approvals. Following the appropriate consultations and/or approvals at the Senate Committee level, a report is expected to be presented to the Senate for approval no later than the May 2008 meeting.

Issues for Consideration

1. The relative size of each Faculty;
2. The disciplines within each Faculty;
3. The name of each Faculty;
4. The academic unit structure, if applicable, within each Faculty;
5. Can any identified issues be properly addressed within the current structure?

² The Faculties of Applied Science and Management, due to their relatively “formative” status as Faculties at this time, will not be included in the review.