

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
PROCEDURES FOR SENATE REVIEW
OF PROPOSALS FOR
NEW, MODIFIED, TERMINATED, OR ARTICULATED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS
As approved by SAPBC, November 24, 2003
Revised: June 2005

***April 2010:** This document is currently under revision. For updated information, please contact the Manager, University Secretariat-Senate at 494-3715, or senate@dal.ca.

Proposers of a new academic program, a modified academic program, a program termination, or an articulated program (as defined by *Policy on Quality Assurance*, MPHEC, May 2005) must provide the information required by Senate and the MPHEC in the format described in the appropriate guidelines. Separate forms are required to be completed if the proposal involves a new program, a program that is articulated between institutions, or if an existing program requires modification or termination. An electronic version of each form, along with its corresponding guide, can be obtained from the Senate office (ph: 494-3715; fax: 494-6668), or can be downloaded from the Senate web site at www.dal.ca/senate

The appropriate form-type must be completed for each proposal. **Proposals intended for implementation at the beginning of the Fall term must be completed and submitted to the Secretary of Senate no later than December 1st of the preceding year.**

This *Procedures for Senate Review* document outlines the procedures and process used by the Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee (SAPBC) to review proposals for a new, modified, terminated, or articulated program.

Definitions:

The defining features of a **program** are that it fulfils a unique set of goals or purposes and is distinguishable from other activities in the university.

An **academic program** is a distinct group of classes or other requirements, or both, which lead to eligibility for a degree or diploma. A class is a unit of instruction in a particular subject identified by name and number. The term “class” is used in place of “course.”

An **academic support program** provides assistance that can be used by students or staff in various academic programs and is not integral to any particular program.

An **administrative program** is a set of supporting activities for several units and provides an administrative service that is distinct from those provided elsewhere. Distinctions between administrative programs should be reflected in an administrative organizational chart.

An **articulated program** is a substantively new program articulating components of a post-secondary program delivered by one institution with components of the program delivered by another. The general aim of such programs is to expand the opportunities for graduates to acquire

both occupation-specific and general post-secondary education competencies. The objectives of articulated programs, from a public policy point of view, are to provide graduates with a more timely access to significant jobs or earnings and ensure that they have indeed acquired both occupation-specific and general post-secondary education competencies.

The institutions generally grant two different types (levels) of credentials. The institutions will generally be a community college and a university. However, other education providers (publicly or privately funded) could also be involved. An articulated program can have one or more exit points at varying levels:

- § When there is only one level, the program is delivered by two institutions but its completion leads to only one credential.
- § When there are two (or more) levels, the program is delivered by two (or more) institutions and its completion leads to two recognized credentials, generally at two different levels. One credential may be earned as a requirement to earn the other, or they may be earned concurrently or independently.

An articulated program is not limited to credit transfers, although it will likely include the provision of credit transfer agreements between institutions. An articulated program is more than the simple juxtaposition or addition of existing programs. Articulated programs may lead to credentials in applied arts, applied sciences, applied social sciences, technology, etc. or they could lead to more traditional designations (Arts, Science, etc.).

(Policy on Quality Assurance, MPHEC, May 2005)

A **centre** or **institute** is a unit developed to encourage and support research and study in a specific field (see Senate's *Guidelines for Centres and Institutes*).

A program is considered **modified** when the program name and/or credential do not change but 25 percent of the existing academic program content has been modified, including revisions that have a significant effect on one or several of the following:

- i) the program structure; e.g., duration, entrance requirements, focus, faculty/department;
- ii) the concentration type; e.g., minor, major, honours, joint majors, specializations, concentrations; if the institution already grants a credential of a higher level in the same area at the undergraduate level, MPHEC approval is not warranted;
- iii) the program form; e.g., integrated, sequential, change to co-op (mandatory or optional), interdisciplinary;
- iv) the target clientele;
- v) the program priority; e.g., continuation of a term/pilot program; or
- vi) the costs

(Policy on Quality Assurance, MPHEC, May 2005)

A **new program** includes any program not currently offered or accounted for under the existing (MPHEC approved) academic program and credential structures at the submitting institution. *(Policy on Quality Assurance, MPHEC, May 2005)*

A **non-credit class** or **program** is a class or distinct group of classes that cannot be used as a substitute for required components of an academic program. Non-credit programs are not subject to Senate approval.

A **research program** is a coherent set of activities designed to lead to an extension of knowledge in a particular field of study.

A program is considered **terminated** when the submitting institution intends to no longer admit students into a program and to permanently remove the program from its offerings and the corresponding program code for enrolment reporting purposes.

A **unit** is a Department, School, Faculty, College, Centre, or Institute.

Senate's Responsibility to Approve Proposals:

The Senate's primary responsibility relates to academic policies. Therefore, Senate reviews **all proposals** for new, modified, terminated, or articulated academic programs and proposals for other activities that will impinge on academic programs.

In general, the Senate is responsible for the approval of new, modified, terminated, and articulated academic programs, academic support programs, and centres or institutes. To allow the Senate to fulfill this responsibility, Deans or other university administrators shall refer to Senate all proposals for:

- \$ any new and/or articulated academic program;
- \$ new research or administrative programs that are likely to substantially impinge upon existing or prospective (approved) academic programs;
- \$ program modifications that require MPHEC approval (i.e., meet the definition on page 2) or that are likely to affect other parts of the university through such factors as increased or decreased demand for or availability of classes in other Faculties, a shift in need for financial resources, a reduction of university revenue, or a risk to the university's reputation flowing from an unusual academic approach;
- \$ program terminations.

Except for proposals for new, articulated, terminated, or modified programs (which **MUST** be submitted to the Senate for approval), the relevant Dean, Faculty Council, or university administrator is responsible for deciding which other proposals shall be referred to the Senate and shall keep the Secretary of Senate fully informed about **ALL** proposals for program modifications as they progress through Faculty Council or administrative approval processes, and **BEFORE** any contracts are signed with external agencies or other implementation action is taken.

The Senate reviews a proposal only after prior approval by the appropriate Faculty Council(s) or other body delegated to exercise this responsibility for the Faculty (Faculties) involved. It is the responsibility of the relevant Dean(s) to communicate his/her Faculty's approval of the proposal. If

more than one Faculty has administrative responsibility for the proposal, an indication of approval is required from each Dean.

In addition, the Secretary of Senate reviews the minutes of committees responsible for program approvals, and if these show approval of a proposal that apparently has implications beyond the Faculty but has not been referred to Senate, the Secretary will obtain additional information from appropriate sources and will refer the proposal to the Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee (SAPBC). If the SAPBC determines that a Senate review is appropriate, it will so inform the Dean or committee involved.

Process for Consideration of Proposals:

1. Copies of the appropriate proposal form (for new, modified, terminated, or articulated program) are available from the Senate office. To receive an electronic copy, please contact the Senate Office (494-3715) or download it from the Senate web site (www.dal.ca/senate). In addition, copies of this document, *Procedures for Senate Review of Proposals for New, Modified, Terminated, or Articulated Academic Programs*, are sent to all Chairs, Directors, Department Heads, and Deans annually.
2. If the program proposal is for a new, significantly modified, terminated, or articulated **health program**, the program **first must** be approved by the Atlantic Advisory Committee on Health Human Resources (AACHHR), an intergovernmental agency, prior to submission to Senate. The AACHHR reviews all proposed new health programs and modifications to health programs in which significant change is planned, as initiated by institutions. It also reviews new program proposals resulting from discussions with the institutions that address the health human resource needs of Maritime and/or Atlantic Canada.

More specifically, in an effort to promote the education and training of employable health professions, the AACHHR requires that the institutions submit for approval all health and health-related program proposals to which one or more of the following attributes apply:

- the program is aimed at training health practitioners
- provincial governments will become *de facto* employers of a significant portion of program graduates
- the delivery or management of health-related programs may be influenced by the availability of these graduates
- the proposed health or health-related education or training program is provided with provincial government support

Please refer to the *Guidelines for Completing New and Modified Health Program Proposals for AACHHR Review* and if applicable, complete and submit the form included with those Guidelines to the Vice-President Academic and Provost, who will formally submit the proposal to AACHHR.

3. When a proposal is submitted to the Senate Office, the Secretary of Senate determines whether sufficient information has been provided in the completed proposal form, and ensures that the following are appended:
 - 3.1 Library assessment report;
 - 3.2 Registrar's assessment report re: requirements for the credential (degree or diploma); the name of the degree or program; and the length and number of academic sessions and terms or schedule of academic dates;
 - 3.3 Space Report from Facilities Management;
 - 3.4 Report from Student Accounts;
 - 3.5 Report(s) from relevant service units (e.g., AV Services, Computer Services);
 - 3.6 Letter of approval from the Atlantic Advisory Committee on Health Human Resources (AACHHR) (if required);
 - 3.7 Letter(s) of recommendation from the relevant Faculty Council(s) or designated Faculty body;
 - 3.8 Letters confirming consultation with relevant Faculties providing classes; and
 - 3.9 Letters from other Atlantic universities with similar/related programs confirming consultation.

If the proposal is incomplete, the Secretary of Senate will return the proposal to the proposer(s) noting the missing elements.

4. If the proposal appears to be complete and the required documentation is included, the Secretary will send a copy of the proposal to:
 - 4.1 the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost for financial assessment. The SAPBC is responsible for reviewing the likely costs and income associated with a proposal and assessing whether the proposer's estimates seem justifiable given the nature of the proposal. Proposers are strongly recommended to consult with the Senate Office during the developmental stage of a proposed new or modified academic program.

The financial review will consider the completeness and reasonableness of the costs and income estimates contained in the proposal. The appropriate program proposal form indicates the cost and income areas to be considered. The Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost's review may include a comparison with other programs of a similar nature and will request opinions from other units that might be relevant. The Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost will also consider whether:

- \$ the income and expenses suggested appear over- or under-estimated; and
- \$ the potential financial impact on other programs has been identified.

If the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost feels that there are unresolved issues, additional information may be sought. The report of the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost will normally be presented to the SAPBC within four weeks of receipt of the proposal (depending on the cooperation of the proposers or relevant Dean).

NOTE: Guidelines on Financial Requirements for Proposal of New/Modified/Articulated Programs

- Self-funding. The incremental costs of new programs must be financed from reasonably anticipated ERBA revenue (or tuition revenue, if ERBA exempt) and/or external funding and/or internal re-allocation by the proposing unit. No central allocation of university resources or proposal to the provincial government for additional operating grants can be proposed. (However, where the provincial government has already made a commitment to fund a new program, a new program may be proposed and must be accompanied by documentary proof of that governmental commitment.)
- Tuition Fees. The proponents of new programs must consult with Financial Services and, in particular, the Controller about the proposed tuition fee structure before submitting a program proposal.
- Student Assistance. Proposals for thesis-based graduate programs must demonstrate the availability of student assistance during their full-time attendance for all students at the doctoral level, and for at least one half of the anticipated enrolment of students at the master's level, at minimum levels set annually by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Library Requirements. The proposing unit must finance the additional library needs identified in the library review through a base budget transfer to the library for on-going costs and funding for retrospective one-time purchases.
- Capital Requirements. Minor space alterations may be funded through an A & R request, and equipment purchases may be financed through a Faculty's non-space allocations. However, where the proposed program can be delivered only if such A & R funding is available, then the implementation of the program shall be conditional upon the acquisition of such funding. Major capital expenditures will not be undertaken in response to the proposal of a new program, unless the funding is in hand.

4.2 the Senate Library Committee (SLC) if the proposer(s) dispute(s) the report from the Library System.

Within three weeks of receipt of the proposal, the SLC will meet with the proposer(s) and appropriate members of the Library System in order to clarify the issues involved. Its conclusions will be reported to the Secretary of Senate and the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost, and the Senate Office will distribute the report to all those involved in the proposal development and approval process (program proponents, library officials, SAPBC).

5. The SAPBC shall consider completed proposals, including reports or comments from the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost, the Registrar, and (if required) the SLC. The SAPBC shall also verify that the Dean, Director, Chair, or head responsible for any unit likely to be affected has received a copy of the proposal and has been asked to comment on the academic impact of the proposal on their program.

5.1 Proposals submitted to the SAPBC may be referred to an SAPBC sub-committee, which shall:

- \$ assess the quality of the proposed program in relation to all relevant academic issues;
- \$ review the proposal in the context of the existing academic plans and other reports provided by the Faculty(ies) involved;
- \$ consider any relevant recommendations contained in reviews conducted in relation to the unit(s) involved; and
- \$ assure itself that the proposal has identified any other academic programs in the university likely to be influenced by the proposal. Influence might include a potential increase or decrease in student numbers due to similarity in target populations; or the possibility of interdisciplinary activity between the proposed and other programs. Such impacts are likely to have been identified by the source Faculty or Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost or both.

SAPBC will not normally create a sub-committee to review proposals for graduate programs, since these matters are usually reviewed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies before it recommends a new program or program modification to Senate.

If a sub-committee considers the proposal, it will develop a report noting its assessment of the academic quality of the proposal and the impact the proposal is likely to have on the quality of other academic programs at Dalhousie. This report will normally be presented to the SAPBC within four weeks following the sub-committee's receipt of the proposal. The SAPBC will normally make a recommendation to the Senate within three weeks of receipt of the sub-committee's report.

When a proposal is placed on the agenda of the SAPBC, the relevant Dean(s) and proposer(s) will be invited to attend the portion of the meeting addressing the proposal during which questions about the proposal will be addressed. After these guests leave, there shall be a motion expressing a recommendation for Senate. Members of SAPBC shall refrain from voting on matters pertaining to program proposals from the Faculty in which they hold their principal appointment.

6. After the SAPBC has agreed on its recommendation, the proposal will normally be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting. A summary of the proposal and excerpts from relevant SAPBC minutes will be distributed to members of the Senate prior to the meeting. Other supporting material may be circulated at the discretion of the Secretary to Senate. The proposer(s) will be invited to attend the Senate meeting at which their proposal will be considered.
7. Senate's decision on the proposal is communicated to the Secretary of the Board of Governors. If Board action is required; i.e., if Senate approved the proposal, the Vice-President Academic and Provost or the Chair of Senate will introduce and explain the Senate's proposed action at the relevant Board Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) meeting.

8. Upon Board (AAC) approval, the proposal is forwarded to the office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost who will submit the proposal (if so required) to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Committee (MPHEC) for approval. The new program will not normally be initiated until approved by the MPHEC.

Review/Approval Process for New, Modified, Terminated, or Articulated Academic Programs:

