

York University Senate

Memorandum

To: Chairs of Faculty Councils

From: Les Jacobs, Chair, Academic Policy, Planning & Research Committee

Date: 12 April 2019

Subject: **Proposed Revisions to the Principles and Procedures Governing Non-Degree Activities**

The University Academic Plan (UAP) highlights the role of the *School of Continuing Studies*, which “helps to strengthen York’s commitment to access and lifelong learning.” The Plan identifies continuing education as a “further component of community engagement facilitating access to higher education at all points throughout the life cycle and diverse pathways for non-traditional students as well as for international students who need second language support.” And a UAP objective is to “expand the programs offered through our continuing studies and professional development units.

Last spring (2018) the Senate Academic Policy, Planning and Research (APPRC) and the Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy committees jointly reviewed the 2017 Annual Non-Degree Studies Report produced by the Vice-Provost Academic. APPRC also discussed queries conveyed to it about the non-degree – degree program relationship, non-degree curriculum approval structures, and the role of the *School of Continuing Studies*. Out of those conversations it was agreed that the Provost and Vice-Provost would bring forward an updated governance process and structure for non-degree studies for review and approval. The task is one of APPRC’s priorities for this year in conjunction with ASCP.

Since the fall of this academic year, the two Senate committees have been engaged in discussions of revisions to the *Principles and Procedures* document. The goal of the exercise is to update the governance framework for non-degree studies to reflect the transition to the *School of Continuing Studies* in 2014, bring needed clarity about the approval processes and enhance oversight of non-degree activities at the University. The review has been grounded in the principles for non-degree studies articulated by Senate in 1995, which emphasize that continuing education activities should be characterized by a high degree of coordination and consultation as well as non-competition. They drive toward a flexible approach to non-degree studies and maintaining nimbleness for the offering units. This should not be lost in the legitimate desire for transparency, definitional clarity, and effective coordination. Within this context, there is agreement that processes must be transparent and robust, and that degree and non-degree studies must be sharply delineated and actively monitored.

The review of the governing legislation this year has re-emerged earlier queries communicated with APPRC about the coordination of programming between related degree and non-degree programs, specifically pertaining to issues of overlap and academic quality. It was noted as well that several Faculties are embarking on the development / expansion of continuing education initiatives. Sharing with Faculty Councils the proposed revisions to the *Principles and Procedures* for the purpose of receiving input provides a good opportunity to have any questions resolved and process-clarity realized. How the review and / or discussion of the document are to occur is left to the Chair and executive committee of Councils to decide. We are pleased to advise that Alice Pitt, the Vice-Provost Academic and a co-author of the changes to the Procedures, is available to attend Council / committee meetings to discuss and answer questions about the document.

The Senate committees' expectation to complete the review exercise this academic year remains a goal, with proposed revisions to Senate planned in May or June. To that end, Faculties wishing to provide a response to this call for feedback are respectfully asked to do so by **May 10, 2019. Submissions may be sent to the APPRC Secretary, Cheryl Underhill at underhil@yorku.ca**

The draft revision of the *Principles and Procedures Governing Non-Degree Activities at York University* is attached.

cc: Kim Michasiw, Chair, Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy
Faculty Council Secretaries

Principles and Procedures Governing Non-Degree Activities at York University

Introduction

Non-degree activities advance the overarching priorities of academic quality, student success and community engagement that are reflected in York University's planning documents. The Advisory Committee on Non-Degree Studies is mandated to provide oversight to ensure that high quality courses and programs offered outside of the "for credit" approval structures enhance the University's reputation and provide real benefits in terms of student success, whether through an access lens, or as a professional development, or life-long learning opportunity.

1. Principles Governing Non-Degree Studies

- a) Non-degree studies will complement the academic mission of a Faculty or of the University and not compete with degree programs.
- b) Faculties, the School of Continuing Studies, and other offering units will be responsible for their own non-degree studies activities.
- c) Non-degree studies activities should be self-sufficient, preferably returning a profit to the Faculty or the University to assist in the funding of degree program activity.
- d) Faculties, the School of Continuing Studies, and other offering units will act co-operatively in non-degree studies activities and in relation to degree studies so that duplication and competition are avoided.
- e) The regulatory framework governing non-degree studies will be flexible and efficient, maintaining the principles indicated above and ensuring appropriate administrative, budgetary and academic oversight. ~~Certificates and Diplomas shall be bound by the existing Senate legislation, as expressed in the CCAS Curriculum Handbook¹.~~

Definitions and Parameters

The following activities are encompassed by the term "non-degree" and subject to this framework:

- All courses of instruction associated with the name of York University or its Faculties that are neither offered nor approved as degree credit for which a fee beyond incidental costs is paid.
- Non-degree activities may include courses, course modules and workshops.

The following are outside the scope of non-degree activities and are not subject to this framework:

- Symposia and colloquia organized by internal units or external entities
- Lecture series, workshops and professional development programs for undergraduate and/or graduate students
- Community outreach activities

¹ The last line of paragraph (e) was added by amendment at the Senate meeting in March 1995 when the Principles were approved. The understanding of the intent of the amendment is that new for-credit undergraduate certificates and graduate diplomas would continue to require Senate approval. The 2013 *York University Quality Assurance Procedures* – which supersede the CCAS Curriculum Handbook – confirm that new or revised Certificates and Diplomas proceed under the Senate governance process. As such, the line is being deleted in conjunction with the revisions to this document.

Admissibility of Students:

- Students need not be admitted or admissible to a degree program to enroll in non-degree studies.
- Non-degree studies courses and programs may establish admission requirements

"Offering Units": Normally, and subject to the necessary authorization, non-degree studies may be established by any of the following, either separately, in combination or in collaboration with entities external to York University:

- Faculties
- The School of Continuing Studies
- Organized Research Units established by Senate charter
- Non-academic units

2. Advisory Committee on Non-Degree Studies

Composition

The members of the Advisory Committee on Non-Degree Studies are determined by the Provost & Vice-President Academic and will include:

- A Dean/Principal (or designate) from each Faculty offering non-degree studies activities or preparing to begin offering activities
- The Assistant Vice-President (AVP) of Continuing Studies
- The Vice-President Research and Innovation (or designate)
- The Chair of the Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy or a member designated by that Committee
- The Vice-Provost Academic who will chair

Terms of Reference

The Advisory Committee ensures compliance with Senate policy, promotes consultation and liaison, and provides advice on matters relating to non-degree studies at York. In doing so it carries out the following specific responsibilities:

- Receives approval processes, guidelines and other relevant regulations
- Reviews the directory of non-degree activities
- Reviews the annual report to Senate on non-degree activities transmitted by the Vice-Provost Academic

The Advisory Committee maintains the principles set out in this document and recommends revisions to the document as needed. It meets once annually at a minimum.

3. Principles/Procedures for Approval Processes

The University must respond quickly to non-degree opportunities in an evolving educational and labour market landscape in order to remain current and competitive. It is acknowledged that the expertise for program development and the responsibility for approving programs reside with the Offering Units. The Provost retains oversight and is charged by Senate with ensuring that programs are of high quality, enhance York's standing and profile, and maintain rigorous standards within the legislative framework.

Offering Units will have in place processes for approving new programs, assuring quality, closing programs, and making decisions about the frequency of offerings.

Processes for the review and approval of non-degree activities will be approved by the Dean/Principal and the relevant Faculty Council, or in the case of Organized Research Units, by the Vice-President Research & Innovation, and in the case of the School of Continuing Studies and any shared service or other non-academic offering units, the Provost & Vice-President Academic.

Approved process documents will be submitted to the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic for review and retention by the Advisory Committee on Non-Degree Studies. All changes in process must be submitted to the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic.

New activities will be subject to approval processes by Offering Units that take into account the following:

- Identification of participants in approval process
- Identification of audience
- Purpose of the course, program or workshop
- Process undertaken prior to program development (consultation with partners, accrediting bodies, etc., market need and demand analysis)
- Qualifications of the program development team
- Qualifications of instructor/s
- Consultation process followed to demonstrate adherence to principles identified above, including consultation with other relevant Faculties / degree-offering units
- Program description, delivery mode, delivery location, number of hours of instruction, program structure, expected enrolment
- Criteria and procedures for assessing quality
- Terms for initial offering on pilot basis
- Advertising and marketing information

Administration

The Office of the Provost & Vice-President Academic will maintain an up-to-date directory of all non-degree units offering programs, courses, and activities at York University and will report to Senate through its Academic Policy, Planning & Research (APPRC) and Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy (ASCP) committees on all non-degree activities.

Deans of Faculties, the Principal of Glendon, the Assistant Vice-President of Continuing Studies, the Vice-President Research and Innovation and heads of non-academic units offering non-degree studies activities will provide the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost with all the necessary information to update the directory and compile the annual report.

4. Records and Record Retention

All Offering Units will have in place a process for keeping participation records for reporting purposes (see below) and for program evaluation. Permanent student records must be maintained as per the Common Records Schedule of York University.

<https://crs.apps06.yorku.ca/record/147>

5. Financial and Operational Viability

Responsibility for the budgetary and administrative aspects of non-degree activities rests with the Provost & Vice-President Academic and the heads of Offering Units. The

Provost & Vice-President Academic's regular budget planning discussions include reference to the role and financial position of non-degree activities within the overall financial state of the Faculty or unit in order to ensure that these activities are financially sound and support the academic enterprise. Consideration will be given to general operating and logistical matters (e.g. space, staff, information technology requirements).

6. Compliance with University Policies

Non-degree studies activities are expected to comply with standard York and/or provincially legislated policies regarding employee relations, financial operations, human rights and accommodations for persons with disabilities, conflict of interest, etc.

All current University academic and non-academic policies are posted online at <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/>

In particular, Non-degree Studies instructors will be in compliance with the University's policies (non-academic), for example, *Conflict of Interest for Faculty and Librarians* (<http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/conflicts-of-interest-policy-and-guidelines-for-faculty-and-librarians/>); *Conflict of Interest for Employees* (<http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/conflict-of-interest-policy-and-guidelines-for-employees/>).

In cases where an individual with administrative authority in relation to non-degree programs (or anyone considered not to be at arm's length from that individual) might receive additional compensation (e.g. acting as a consultant, providing instruction, etc.), the process of awarding such contracts must be carried out by an appropriate arm's length process and, where necessary, an additional reporting line to the Dean/Principal/AVP should be added.

Normally, draft contracts and agreements with external partners/agencies will be reviewed by the University Counsel prior to signing. This process should not delay the approval of a non-degree studies activity.

Offering Units providing non-degree activities will have a process for resolving complaints or disputes that arise between students and instructors or between students and staff, for dealing with breaches of academic integrity and for accommodating students with disabilities.

7. Limitation on Activity

From time to time, the Provost & Vice-President Academic may declare a limitation on activity in a particular area to protect degree programs under development. Such limitation will be reviewed with the Advisory Committee on Non-Degree Studies on a regular basis.