

Trent University Policy on Procedure for Approval of New Graduate Programs

Approved by Trent University Senate - April 12, 2005

A. Procedures for Approving New Graduate Programs **B. Procedures in the Case of a New Field Submitted Separately from a Periodic Appraisal or as Part of a Periodic Appraisal**

A. Procedures for Approving New Graduate Programs

1. This document outlines a process for approval of new graduate programs. The document is intended to guide groups in the preparation and approval of proposals for submission to the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS). It is the intent that the procedures outlined below would lead to a preliminary decision as to whether to proceed to an OCGS submission within a period of approximately four months. Following submission to OCGS typically there is a period of six to nine months before an appraisal committee report is received. Once OCGS approval has been received and senate grants final approval for the commencement of a program, students may be admitted. However, final approval from the MTCU is required before students are eligible for government funding or Ontario Graduate Scholarships (see below for more details).
2. Consultation. Faculty groups, Departments or Programs that are proposing a new graduate program should consult widely to identify faculty members from other areas of the University who are potentially interested, or have expertise of value to the new program. Consultation should also occur with research institutes and groups at Trent that might logically have links or common interests with a new program.
3. Program Overview Document. Proponents of a new program should prepare a summary, concept document that outlines the general nature of the program and provides sufficient detail for the various committees to provide informed advice to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The following items need to be addressed:
 - 3.1 the title, description and objectives of the program (see Section 10.1.2 of OCGS By-laws);
 - 3.2 the fields to be included, if any with a short justification for the inclusion of these – please note that all Ph.D. programs and most M.A./M.Sc. programs will require fields; if further clarification is required, please consult with the Dean of Graduate Studies;
 - 3.3 a brief description of how this program would meet MTCU guidelines for funding approval including the societal need for the program, evidence for demand for the program, relationship to similar existing programs and its relationship to related undergraduate departments or programs, Trent's strategic research areas and Trent's Strategic Directions document;

- 3.4 the faculty members who will serve as **core** faculty (affiliations of core faculty who are members of existing graduate programs should be identified as well) and a summary of research support held by core faculty – the GSC reserves the right to request copies of CV’s of core faculty;
 - 3.5 a brief discussion of the program objectives in the context of interdisciplinary versus discipline-based programs and Trent’s historical development of umbrella programs;
 - 3.6 general details of the program structure, degree requirements and core courses, including titles and a brief course description, if possible;
 - 3.7 whether mounting the proposed program is dependent on hiring new faculty members, how many faculty members are required and whether the new staffing anticipated are currently part of the Dean of Arts and Science’s long term staffing plan;
 - 3.8 the ability to deliver the program in light of the existing demands on faculty member resources;
 - 3.9 the anticipated enrolment in the program for the first five years;
 - 3.10 funding needed to support students, and the anticipated levels of funding from external grants to faculty members;
 - 3.11 support staff needed, space requirements and laboratory and/or library expenses, both one-time and continuing.
4. University Consultation. The overview document will be reviewed initially by the Policy and Regulations Sub-Committee of the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) and on its recommendation by the GSC. If the Dean receives positive advice from that committee, the document then will be reviewed by Faculty Board, Senate and the senior administration. Following this review the Dean of Graduate Studies will either invite the proponents to develop a complete OCGS Standard Appraisal Brief or will provide written explanation of why the proposal is not being supported.
5. Review of the OCGS Appraisal Brief by GSC and Senate. The full set of material that is contained in Volume 1 of the OCGS submission will be reviewed by the GSC and then recommended to Senate. The following components of the OCGS submission will be of particular interest at this step:
- ✍ program objectives
 - ✍ description of the fields, if any
 - ✍ program regulations, including admission policies
 - ✍ course requirements
 - ✍ course descriptions
 - ✍ comprehensive or qualifying examination procedures (for Ph.D.)
 - ✍ provisions for part-time study, if any
6. OCGS appraisal. Following approval by Senate, the proposal will be sent by the Dean of Graduate Studies to OCGS for appraisal. Once it has been received by OCGS, the program is allowed to be advertised to prospective

students, provided that a disclaimer, “subject to approval by OCGS” appears as part of any advertising.

7. Senate and Board Approval. Following OCGS approval, Senate and the Board of Governors will be asked to formally approve the commencement of the program.
8. Ministry funding approval. When OCGS approval has been received, students can be admitted to and registered in the program. The proposal will go to the Ministry for funding approval, but since that can add another six months to the process, it is usually reasonable to begin admitting students prior to receiving that approval (this will depend on the decision under item 7). Note however that OGS awards cannot be held by students in programs that do not have funding approval.

B. Procedures in the Case of a New Field Submitted Separately from a Periodic Appraisal or Part of a Periodic Appraisal.

The OCGS Appraisal document should be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies in sufficient time for it to be reviewed by the GSC, and assuming a positive recommendation from that committee to be approved by Senate prior to submission to OCGS if the intent is for the field to be available for the next graduate admission cycle (typically the document would need to go to OCGS by December at the latest, for admissions the following September). It is the responsibility of graduate programs to adhere to a schedule that permits timely review of their documentation. Graduate students in existing fields in the program should be consulted for their views on how the introduction of the new field will affect the existing fields (OCGS will require this commentary in any event). In the case of new fields submitted separately from a Periodic Appraisal, once the documentation has been received by OCGS, the new field is allowed to be advertised to prospective students, provided that a disclaimer, “subject to approval by OCGS” appears as part of any advertising.

Programs Approved by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies

All graduate programs approved by the Trent Senate and OCGS are subject to the regular appraisal schedule of OCGS. Reviews are conducted on a seven year cycle and include visits by external consultants. Comments and results of the appraisal are reviewed by the Dean of Graduate Studies for implementation and where necessary the Committee on Graduate Studies.