

Collegial Governance Proposals for the Markham Centre Campus

1. Background and Scope

This proposed academic governance model has been developed by the Office of the Provost for discussion with the York community. It builds on an earlier [Draft Options Paper](#) which formed the basis for University consultations in 2017-18 and has been updated to reflect the vision for the Markham Centre Campus (MCC) as evolved since that time. The overarching vision for the new campus, as approved by the province in July 2020, is captured concisely on the [MCC website](#):

“MCC will be urban, connected and integrated with local and global communities. Academic programs and research will revolve around core themes of technology and entrepreneurship, as applied in different contexts and professional fields. Students will acquire knowledge and skills to contribute to a rapidly changing economy and society through innovative programs and research opportunities where they interact directly with employers and community partners. Located in one of the fastest growing and most diverse regions of Ontario and Canada, this Campus of York University will specialize in flexible learning formats to serve a diverse population of students, including young adults, as well as mature and mid-career learners, newcomers to Canada and workers impacted by technological change. MCC will support York’s efforts to enhance research excellence and the application of our work through an expanding innovation hub.”

Governance is a broad topic touching almost all aspects of how the University functions. The proposals set out here focus on collegial governance, defined as governance of academic matters through Senate and its Committees, through academic units including Faculties, Departments, Divisions and Schools, and through academic administrative offices including the Deans/Principal.

Other important aspects of governance are beyond the scope of these proposals and will need to be addressed elsewhere, including the nature and role of student organizations at MCC, the organizational and reporting structure for administrative staff, and governance of external community partnerships.

2. Starting Points

It is worth stating (or restating) a number of fundamental assumptions that underpin these proposals.

- a) MCC is fully a part of York University including its collegial governance and other operating frameworks.

The York University Act applies to the entire institution and, as with any other activity of the University, MCC is overseen by Senate and the Board of Governors. The University’s normal

governance policies, processes and norms will extend to MCC. This includes the University Academic Plan, Strategic Research Plan and other pan-University planning documents, as well as our Strategic Mandate Agreement with the Province. Further, all collective agreements between York University and its bargaining units will be respected in regard to employees located at the Markham campus.

The purpose of this paper is to propose how the University's existing collegial governance system should evolve to accommodate the creation of a new campus and to help it thrive). Any specific changes to the status quo will be brought through normal approval processes.

b) MCC will not be a separate Faculty at the outset.

Several existing Faculties will offer academic and research programming at MCC when it opens in September 2023. Programming leading to degrees will initially be offered by AMPD, Lassonde, LA&PS and Science, with scope for other Faculties to participate in offering courses or modules within the broader shared curriculum. The primary advantage of this model is to maximize pan-University coordination and ensure clear differentiation of MCC activities. Academic programs will be in defined new areas not currently covered at our existing campuses, or in areas where demand is sufficiently high to call for additional capacity at MCC. Research clusters will be identified that build upon University research strengths and opportunities and that take advantage of the specific disciplinary mix at MCC, without duplicating existing Organized Research Units.

Reconstituting MCC as a Faculty of its own is certainly possible down the road as the campus develops. This is our model at Glendon, and it has been the trajectory of some other multi-campus universities in North America (eg University of Toronto). Others have continued with an integrated structure in which Faculties or Colleges span more than one campus (eg. Simon Fraser University; Arizona State University). The proposals set out here are intended to launch MCC without separate Faculty status, while leaving future possibilities open.

c) MCC will have its own dedicated academic leadership.

An academic administrator will be appointed to serve as Deputy Provost Markham (DPM). Though not a separate Faculty, MCC will need overarching academic leadership to implement and further develop the vision for the campus, to nurture and build the campus as a scholarly community, and to represent MCC within York University and externally in York Region. The role, authority and responsibilities of the DPM are discussed further below, along with academic leadership at the level of units and programs.

d) The collegial governance model for MCC must strike a balance between integration and autonomy.

MCC poses a new and unique set of circumstances for academic governance at York University. To build a research intensive campus with a distinctive identity and an excellent, seamless

student experience, MCC colleagues must have agency to work collectively across disciplines to advance the campus vision. At the same time, faculty members based at MCC, who will belong to different Faculties and Faculty Councils that are centred at the Keele campus, must become full members of those communities. Departments may be spread across two campuses in some cases; in other cases, a Faculty may create a new department for MCC. MCC colleagues will likewise need to be integrated into the larger University including the work of Senate and its committees. The proposals below aim to strike an appropriate balance at a high level, building in mechanisms for ongoing collegial discussion of how continually to fine tune this balance between autonomy and integration in operationalizing the new campus.

3. Academic Governance of MCC Programs

A basic tenet of the proposed governance model is that all academic credit programs offered at MCC should have the benefit of academic leadership that is based at MCC.¹ Being “based at MCC” refers to having one’s office, any research space, and all or the bulk of one’s teaching and service at MCC. Having locally-based program leadership is considered imperative so that planning and administration of MCC programs is responsive to the needs and experiences of students, faculty and staff at MCC. Local leadership will also help to build community at MCC and to ensure that every program has a representative voice in developing the campus as a whole. A further responsibility of local academic leadership will be to foster connections between MCC and the broader University.

The form of local program leadership may vary depending on the nature and size of the program in question. All of the Faculties that will initially offer programs at MCC are departmentalized, and the question of program leadership is therefore linked to the issue of departmental affiliation of programs². It is proposed that all academic credit programs offered at MCC should be clearly affiliated either with an existing unit of the offering Faculty or a new unit established by the Faculty to house an MCC program or programs.

Each of these alternatives is considered below.

- a) *Existing Unit*: In some cases, the planning for MCC programs is being led by existing units that have significant unmet demand for programs they currently offer at Keele. The additional capacity at MCC will enable them to bring in new cohorts of students and to add streams or specializations that are complementary yet closely related to their existing programs. In this case the existing unit might simply expand to offer programming at both campuses. If so, it is proposed that the unit would need to have faculty members and academic leadership based at each of the Keele and Markham campuses.

¹ For current purposes a “program” is defined to include a one-year foundation or capstone program that forms only part of a degree program.

² This paper uses “department” generically to include units within a Faculty whether they are called a Department, School, Division, etc.

The group of colleagues based at MCC may be smaller, but it will need to have sufficient capacity and autonomy to run the MCC program day to day; to engage in local planning including teaching and service assignments for MCC-based faculty; to discuss how best to meet pedagogical, curricular and student support needs at MCC; to build research culture including graduate student participation where appropriate; and to participate in campus-level, cross-disciplinary academic planning and research collaboration at MCC. Given the scope of these governance needs, Faculties should consider creating a role such as MCC Co-Chair or Associate Chair for any units that will offer their programs across both campuses. As an alternative, a Faculty may choose to assign an Associate Dean to MCC, to have their office at MCC, and to provide overall academic leadership for the Faculty's research, teaching and service activities at MCC. Depending on the size and complexity of programs being offered, additional roles such as program director, associate director, or coordinator may be needed. No doubt other alternatives can be imagined, provided they address the need for meaningful academic leadership to be based at MCC for every Faculty offering programs at the campus.

- b) *New Unit*: Some Faculties are designing programs for MCC which are more novel and distinct from their existing programs and not clearly affiliated with any one existing unit. In such cases it is recommended that the Faculty establish a new Department and Chair to be based at MCC. Again, the goal is to ensure meaningful academic leadership based at MCC to enable effective local planning and delivery of programs, an excellent student experience, and the building of research and collegial culture. Ideally the new Department would be established prior to opening MCC in September 2023, so that newly hired faculty members can be appointed to that unit from the outset. However, if the establishment of a new Department is considered premature while programs are still being planned or are in their infancy, programs should be clearly affiliated in the meantime with an existing unit.

It is true that precedents exist for launching new programs without departmental affiliation, with teaching provided by faculty members from various units until a new Department or School can be created to house the program (eg BA Digital Media, BA Global Health). This can be a viable temporary option, but experience suggests that it can be challenging to coordinate teaching, hiring, and curriculum across different units. Launching a new program at MCC will be a unique challenge in its own right, and the success of the faculty charged with doing so will best be enabled by having a common unit of appointment with local academic leadership. If this is not provided through a new, MCC based Department and Chair, one of the Keele based units should be expanded, either temporarily or permanently, to offer programs at both campuses (see *Existing Unit* above).

In addition to collegial development of academic programs and research culture, the question of unit affiliation has implications for the career progress of tenure stream faculty. Processes for Markham-based faculty to progress through the ranks will need to be thought through carefully. Absent a change in the Senate tenure and promotion document, the "three" collegial committee levels would remain the same: department, Faculty and Senate. The creation of new departments at MCC would necessitate establishing a departmental committee (if the department is sufficiently large) and developing unit standards. Where MCC programs are part

of existing departments, the departments may need to consider changes to the composition of their committee (and possibly unit standards) to reflect the expertise of colleagues based at MCC. Otherwise, the existing department committees and unit standards would be used. Any pre-tenure faculty members who relocate from Keele to Markham would be entitled to apply for tenure based on the terms and standards that applied at the time of their initial appointment.

To summarize, this section has proposed a model for academic governance of programs offered at MCC by those Faculties that will be extending their operations to the new campus and also identified some of the implications for related units and faculty members. It has focused on enabling the new campus to thrive as an academic community in its own right by ensuring local governance has sufficient autonomy and capacity to create an excellent, productive environment for students, faculty and staff. At the same time, it will be important for the governance model to facilitate connection and integration of MCC programs and colleagues with their home Faculties and with Senate and its Committees.

4. Integrating MCC into Faculty and Senate Governance

Faculties that will be extending their operations to MCC need to consider how best to adapt their own collegial governance processes, including the make-up of Faculty Council and its committees, to include an effective voice for those based at MCC. Beyond formal structures of representation, it will be important to foster dialogue and interaction among colleagues who are based at different campuses but belong to the same Faculty or unit. This is one area where the University should benefit from our newfound experience with virtual meetings during the pandemic. Going forward it will be important to equip all of our campuses with state-of-the-art video conferencing technology, while also facilitating in person meetings through means such as:

- Shuttle or bus services and/or parking arrangements that facilitate inter-campus travel
- Alternating meeting locations between campuses

The composition of Senate and its committees should also be revisited in light of the new campus. Senate membership is governed by statutory rules that are reviewed every two years (with the next review being scheduled for 2021). York's Senate remains one of the largest in Canada. Although Senate itself has expressed its desire to restrain growth, new Faculties and other developments have resulted in a number of Senators that exceeds the ceiling of 150 contemplated in past membership reforms. The upper limit is currently 167 [confirm – still accurate?]. Senate and its committees include Librarians and Archivists, College Heads, and individuals designated by collective bargaining units. Smaller Faculties are guaranteed at least 4 elected faculty members. Glendon has a larger allocation than the proportionality formula would produce because of its special nature. By convention (but implemented by statute) Vice-Provosts are members of Senate.

In the short term it is proposed that the composition of Senate be amended to add one seat for the Deputy Provost Markham. In addition, the composition should be revisited to provide for elected representation of Markham based faculty and students. This could be achieved either by

increasing the total number of seats, or by requiring those Faculties with faculty and students at Markham to allocate some number of their existing Senate seats to MCC representatives. Senate Committee membership will also need to be reviewed to consider how best to incorporate representation of the Markham campus. Determining the precise form will require greater clarity about the academic unit and program array, the appointment status of faculty members, and the size of the dedicated complement and student body. It is proposed that the Provost work with Senate Executive and the Senate Secretariat, in the course of their regular review of the composition of Senate, to bring forward additional proposals related to the Markham campus.

Any change to the statute regulating Senate membership would be effected by motions put by Senate Executive in two stages: a notice of motion, when Senate is provided with as much detail as possible and discussion is permitted, followed at a subsequent meeting where consideration is activated by a motion, and debate results in a vote.

5. The Role of the Deputy Provost Markham and MCC Campus Governance

As MCC will not be a separate Faculty, no one Dean will have responsibility for the campus. Rather, a Deputy Provost Markham (DPM) will be appointed as the lead academic administrator at MCC with oversight of campus affairs. The DPM will report directly to the Provost & Vice-President Academic, with a second “dotted” reporting line to the President and will sit as a member of the Presidents and Vice-President’s Group (PVP). They will also work closely with the Vice-President Research & Innovation who will have lead responsibility to support the development of research strengths and culture at MCC. The DPM will play a key role in representing MCC externally and in forging mutually beneficial relationships with community stakeholders in Markham and York Region. Like all other academic administrators, the DPM will be appointed as a tenure stream faculty member within a unit appropriate to their disciplinary background and expertise.

The DPM will take a leadership role in implementing the vision for MCC and further developing that vision as the campus grows. They will have authority delegated by Deans to resolve local issues as needed to support the smooth delivery of academic programs and student services.

The DPM will work closely with MCC-based faculty (including academic administrators), students and staff to operationalize and build MCC. Without a Faculty in the legal sense, there will be no Faculty Council. Yet MCC colleagues will need to create pan-campus assemblies or fora in order to know their community and build consensus about how the needs and aspirations of the campus should be advanced locally and represented within the wider University. In particular, the DPM should convene an academic coordinating group to work on the continued development of curricula, pedagogy and learning opportunities at MCC. This coordinating group should have representation from all Faculties with significant presence at Markham, with a mandate to:

- develop recommendations for continued curriculum development that will realize synergies and opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning within programs and by way of ‘outside the major’ offerings;

- create a seamless experience for students;
- respond to student demand for additional offerings; and
- develop MCC in a manner that is consistent with its distinctive identity and that complements program offerings at other campuses.

The fruits of this coordinated planning effort would need to be brought through appropriate Faculty Council and Senate processes to confirm specific curricular changes and new offerings or any other decisions touching on Senate policy. Proposals relating to MCC could be brought forward by Faculty representatives on MCC's academic coordinating group. Alternatively, Faculty Councils may wish to consider adding the DPM as a member, so they can participate directly in decision making that impacts MCC (if they are not already a member by virtue of being appointed in the Faculty).

As discussed above it is proposed that the DPM serve as a member of Senate (see section 4).

6. Next Steps

The Provost is seeking [feedback](#) on these proposals from APPRC and Senate, and they will be posted for comment by any member of the York community until June 30, 2021. Once feedback has been incorporated, an implementation plan will then be posted to guide next steps that require action by Deans offices, Faculty Councils, Senate or others.