

Academic Standards Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee of Senate Special Sub-Committee on New Faculty Curriculum

Record of Consultation

Date	Tuesday, July 16, 2019
Attendees	Jane Goodyer Dean Lassonde Alex Mills, Associate Dean, Science
Sub-Committee Members	Kim Michasiw, Chair of ASCP, Chair Liette Gilbert, Co-Coordinator (FES) Alice Hovorka, Dean FES Philip Kelly, Chair Geography Alice Pitt, Vice-Provost Academic Tarmo Remmel, Co-Coordinator (Geography) Robert Everett, Secretary

Focus of the Consultation

A wide-ranging discussion focused on potential curriculum synergies; specific programs in development (especially Environmental Science); emerging holistic approaches and methodologies that are orienting scholarship; curriculum reviews at Lassonde and Science that may impact on the new Faculty; and the desirability of enhancing student mobility and exposure to different ways of thinking about challenges and solutions.

Current State of Consultations

Although there were some initial concerns about ideas floated in the draft proposal of April, colleagues in Lassonde and Science have shown good will toward the new Faculty. It is widely recognized that York has the depth and breadth of expertise to be a global leader in environmental scholarship. There is an appetite among colleagues to participate in curriculum innovations. Territoriality should not be an issue; but it is imperative to develop programs that are distinctive and attractive. Consultation must be ongoing and predicated on ensuring that programs are well aligned even if not offered in concert.

Curriculum Reviews and Reforms

Weak enrolments have resulted in reviews of the programs in Earth and Atmospheric Science (EATS) and Environmental Biology. Colleagues in EATS are working toward finalizing their recommendations by the early autumn. Reflections on Environmental Biology have begun with focused deliberations now underway.

Principles

The following were among the principles cited as the new Faculty takes shape and other programs are revised:

- York has strengths across a wide spectrum of environmental studies – science, engineering, policy, law, communications – and students should have opportunities to pursue a variety of interests
- at the same time, it would be beneficial to have a defining focus (for Queen's it is water, for Guelph food); at York might it be *populations*?
- many students have both a science and liberal arts bent, and universities that have developed programs have seen positive results; there are many ways of catering to this, including major/minors along with certificates and diplomas, especially if they impart credentials; a consensus has formed around straight forward Honours degree programs that create the space to take more courses outside of the major
- York should aim for international prowess, and see global urbanization as a major focal point
- student mobility should be a priority, and it is essential to learn from students by tapping into their experiences
- curriculum planners should be aware of new, holistic approaches informing research and pedagogy, including Systems Analysis/Assessment, Systems Thinking and (Sustainability) Transition Studies
- students have expressed interest in gaining the tools necessary to make positive changes while preparing for careers, and this must be kept in mind

Outcomes and Further Steps

In the weeks ahead the specific curriculum proposals will be refined to add in evidence-based need and demand analysis. The curriculum working group will circle back to those who have discussed partnerships (e.g. a joint program with Urban Studies has been mooted). There will be assistance from the Provost's Office and Teaching Commons in drafting formal proposal briefs. It will be essential to map out the legislative process for each proposal, for some will be wholly new and require approval right up to the Quality Council stage while others are major modifications.

It was agreed that there needs to be an ongoing dialogue to explore new opportunities for collaboration and avoid harm. The Sub-Committee is planning a second round of consultations in September and will invite Lassonde and Science to return to the table at that time. This record of consultation will be shared with the FES-Geography curriculum working group and forwarded to Dean Goodyer and Associate Dean Mills.