



General Faculties Council
Academic Program Subcommittee
Approved Minutes

Monday, November 25, 2024, 2:00 p.m.
Meeting #77

A167/Zoom

Voting Members

Wendy Benoit, Co-Chair
Getachew Assefa, Academic Co-Chair
Donna Slater*
Leanne Wu
Jessie Dinh
Amy Dambrowitz

Non-Voting Members

Denis Onen

Resource Personnel & Observers

Elizabeth Pando Burciaga, Program Innovation Partner

Meeting Secretary

Michelle Speta

Scribe

Vanessa Kozielec

Regrets

Cari Gulbrandsen
Qiao Sun
Samantha Thrift
Christine Johns

Guests

Nicole Sandblom, Director, Natural Sciences Program, Faculty of Science
– present for Item 3
Mark Bauer, Associate Dean, Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement, Faculty of Science
– present for Item 3
Joanne Fung, Program Proposal Specialist, Faculty of Science
– present for Item 3

**Attended virtually*

Secretary's Note: In accordance with the General Faculties Council (GFC) Bylaws Section 8.2, the motion box and "Carried" denotation serves as the entry in the minutes that the Chair of the meeting declared the motion carried.

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Meeting Opening

1.1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the November 25, 2024 Academic Program Subcommittee be approved.

Carried

1.2.Traditional Land Acknowledgement

Donna Slater, Professor, Cumming School of Medicine, provided the Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

1.3. Remarks of the Co-Chair

The Co-Chair welcomed Getachew Assefa to his first meeting as Academic Co-Chair of the Academic Program Subcommittee (APS) and remarked on the APS' role in program innovation at the University.

2. Approval of the October 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Program Subcommittee approve the October 21, 2024 meeting minutes.

Carried

3. Approval of the Suspension of the Concentration in Energy Science within the Bachelor of Science (BSc) and BSc (Honours) in Natural Sciences

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda. Nicole Sandblom, Director, Natural Sciences Program, Mark Bauer, Associate Dean, Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement, and Joanne Fung, Program Proposal Specialist, all from the Faculty of Science, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters explained that the suspension of the Concentration in Energy Science within the Bachelor of Science (BSc) and BSc (Honours) in Natural Sciences is being proposed because the Faculty is offering the new BSc in Energy Science and Minor in Energy Science starting in Fall 2025.
- The presenters explained that the Energy Science concentration was added to the BSc in Natural Sciences in 2007. The increasing labour market and student demand demonstrated a need for a dedicated Energy Science program, and the launch of the new Major and Minor make the concentration obsolete.
- It was noted that students currently in the Natural Sciences program who are considering transferring to the Concentration in Energy Science are still able to do so, up until Fall 2025. Starting in Fall 2025, Natural Sciences students interested in energy science can pursue the Minor in Energy Science.
- In response to questions, it was explained that there are currently less than 30 students enrolled in the Concentration in Energy Science, out of a total of approximately 700 in the Natural Sciences program. The suspension does not impact current students. The proposal for termination of the concentration will only proceed once there are no more students enrolled.
- The Committee's discussion included:
 - The importance of continuing to give careful thought to program names given the potential for confusion between similarly named programs in different Faculties.
 - This Committee's focus when reviewing proposals is primarily on the academic rationale, rather than on the business rationale.

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Program Subcommittee approve the suspension of the Concentration in Energy Science within the Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Natural Sciences, effective Fall 2025, as set out in the documents provided.

Carried**4. Program Approvals Status Report**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only.

- The Co-Chair drew Committee members' attention to the Program Approvals Status Report, noting that there are several upcoming Arts program suspensions that the APS will be reviewing in the new year.
- The Co-Chair provided an overview of the differences between admissions being paused and formal program suspensions and terminations, explaining that:
 - Programs can pause admissions for up to two years without requesting a formal suspension. During this time, the program remains fully active, but new applications for admission are not accepted.
 - Formal suspensions must be approved by APS. Ministry approval is required for suspensions lasting longer than one year if they apply to program-level offerings (e.g., Majors). However, suspensions of Minors, Specializations, or Concentrations do not require Ministry approval.
 - Suspensions do not affect students already enrolled in the program.
 - Terminations are the final step in closing a program, and require approval from APPC, as well as Ministry approval if it is a program-level termination. A program can only be terminated if no students are currently enrolled.
- The Committee's discussion included:
 - Suspension and termination proposals have been decoupled to ensure clear oversight of terminations, which can occur years after a suspension is first approved. Decoupling the approval of the two processes also streamlines the procedure for programs that 1) may opt to reactivate following a suspension or 2) are suspending to allow work to occur to update a program.
 - Admission pauses allow programs to remain responsive to application trends and ensure accurate advising and admissions practices. Suspensions reflect longer-term decisions and help manage expectations for prospective students and faculty.
 - In some cases, admissions may be paused to prevent students from applying for a program when a proposal for suspension is going through governance. Undergraduate admissions open each year on August 15th for international students and on October 1st for domestic students, but the governance process may not be completed for a suspension until much later in the academic year.

5. Other Business

There was no other business.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 2:52 p.m.

Michelle Speta
Associate Secretary