



General Faculties Council
ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE
APPROVED MINUTES

January 22, 2024, 2:30 - 4:00 pm

AD 167 (Governors Boardroom)

Voting Members

Wendy Benoit (Co-Chair)
Amy Burns (Academic Co-Chair)
Getachew Assefa
Cari Gulbrandsen
Samantha Thrift
Leanne Wu
Amy Dambrowitz
Sandra Amin*

University Secretary

Courtney McVie

Meeting Secretary

Michelle Speta

Scribe

Holly Lywin

Non-Voting Members

Christine Johns

Regrets

Qiao Sun

Guests

Nancy Chibry, Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs), Faculty of Science – present for Item 5
David Eaton*, Professor (Department of Earth, Energy, and Environment), Faculty of Science – present for Item 5
Joanne Fung, Program Innovation Proposal Specialist, Faculty of Science – present for Item 5
Sara Hastings-Simon, Associate Professor (Department of Earth, Energy, and Environment), Faculty of Science – present for Item 5
Bill Rosehart, Dean, Schulich School of Engineering – present for Item 4
Meera Singh, Senior Associate Dean (Academic), Schulich School of Engineering – present for Item 4
Bronwen Wheatley, Assistant Professor, Teaching (Department of Chemistry), Faculty of Science – present for Item 5

Resource Personnel

Jaclyn Carter*, Educational Development Consultant, Taylor Institute
Kelly Hoglund, Program Innovation Partner, Program Innovation Hub
Elizabeth Pando, Program Innovation Partner, Program Innovation Hub
Jessica Revington, Program Proposal Assistant, Program Innovation Hub
Karen Quinn, Analyst, Planning & Reviews, Provost Office

**Attended virtually*

The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. Traditional Acknowledgement and Approval of the Agenda

Amy Dambrowitz, Registrar, provided the Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda for the January 22, 2024 Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved.

Carried

2. Remarks of the Co-Chairs

The Co-Chair welcomed Wendy Benoit to her first Committee meeting as the Interim Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, and the new Co-Chair of this Committee. The Co-Chair also shared that the proposal for the creation of the Embedded Certificate in Geographic Information Science, recommended by the APS in November, has been approved by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC).

3. Approval of the November 6, 2023, Minutes

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes from the November 6, 2023 Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved.

Carried

4. Recommendation for the Addition of a Practical Experience Requirement (PER) to the Graduation Requirements for Engineering Majors

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Bill Rosehart, Dean, Schulich School of Engineering, and Meera Singh, Senior Associate Dean (Academic), Schulich School of Engineering, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the proposal to add a required Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) component to all four-year Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Engineering degree programs
- The Practical Experience Requirement (PER) would be a graduation requirement for students in all Majors (except the two-year Energy Engineering polytechnic transfer program), which mandates the completion of a minimum of 500 hours of practical work experience during the course of the student's academic program
- The PER is intended to enhance students' career readiness, and would align the SSE's BSc degree requirements with that of Engineering programs at several other U15 institutions, including the University of Toronto
- In response to questions, it was explained that:
 - The majority of SSE BSc students already engage in engineering-related work experience during the course of their degree programs, and the minority that does not is disadvantaged when transitioning into the workforce. Introduction of the PER will formalize what most students are already doing, and allow the SSE to provide all students with resources that are currently limited to those in the Engineering Internship Program, as well as a structured process that commences in the first year of studies.
 - Students can complete their PER either in Canada or internationally. The PER can be completed anytime during a student's academic program, although it should be completed before the final term of studies. It is anticipated that most students will complete their PER during the spring/summer term between their second and third, or third and fourth year of study. As such, most international students who complete their PER in Canada can do so under their study permits.

- Students enrolling in spring and summer courses are typically in their first or second year of study. To enhance flexibility for students who may be completing their PER at the same time, the SSE may consider offering both synchronous and asynchronous formats. However, implementing this approach could pose challenges, particularly for technically intensive subjects.
- There are three online modules and a career reflection exercise that students must complete as part of the PER. Staff in the Engineering Career Centre (ECC) will monitor and track student completion. Completion of the PER will be noted on student transcripts. There is no for-credit course associated with the PER, and therefore students will not incur additional tuition costs.
- Students facing extenuating circumstances will receive case-by-case support. Accommodations may include a reduction in the number of required hours, or work placements within the SSE (e.g., in the MakerSpace, or in research labs). For students in extenuating circumstances, the SSE is investigating additional bursaries to offset any financial disadvantages.
- Students are guided in pursuing placement opportunities by the Engineering Career Centre (ECC). Additionally, the SSE reviews job profiles to ensure hours will be recognized by the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA). If students have a unique employer, APEGA can do a review to ensure requirements would be met.
- The SSE plans to support student safety and wellbeing in the workplace by developing a new onboarding module for students and has committed to expanding staff support in the ECC by 1.0 to 2.0 FTE
- The Committee discussed concerns pertaining to impact on student workload, particularly for those students who need to take spring or summer courses, as well as the potential for the PER to: i) limit students from exploring non-traditional or transdisciplinary experiences; ii) create additional barriers for students who may have difficulties securing internship placements that provide relevant experience for reasonable compensation; and iii) discourage students from leaving placements where they may be exposed to unsafe conditions, harassment, etc.
- The question was raised of whether a more effective approach to promoting WIL would be increasing awareness through education on the importance of work experience for career readiness, rather than implementing a mandatory WIL component. It was noted that during consultation on the PER proposal, 12% of student respondents indicated they did not support the change.
- The Committee requested the following amendments to the proposal:
 - Provide a comprehensive plan regarding student workplace safety protocols and a clear pathway for students to seek support
 - Address spring/summer workload impacts on student wellbeing to ensure there is downtime and they can maximize their off-campus experience
 - Clarify and add further details to outline the administrative processes to confirm PER completion, as well as evaluation of job placements
 - Work with International Student Services to confirm no negative impact to postgraduation work permits for international students who complete their PER outside of Canada
 - An editorial correction to clarify that a notation on student transcripts is only applied upon completion of the PER; there is no transcript notation for incomplete PER
 - Work with the Registrar's Office to ensure that exceptions to the PER align with forthcoming updates to Section G of the University Calendar regarding excused absences

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the addition of a Practical Experience Requirement (PER) to the graduation requirements for regular (four-year) Engineering majors, effective September 2025, and as set out in the documents provided to the Committee with the requested amendments.

Carried**5. Recommendation for the Creation of the Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Energy Science and the Minor in Energy Science, Faculty of Science**

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Bronwen Wheatley, Assistant Professor, Teaching (Department of Chemistry), Faculty of Science; David Eaton, Professor (Department of Earth, Energy, and Environment), Faculty of Science; and Sara Hastings-Simon, Associate Professor (Department of Earth, Energy, and Environment), Faculty of Science, presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the proposal to create a Bachelor of Science (BSc) and a Minor in Energy Science (ESCI) within the Department of Earth, Energy, and Environment. Both programs share the overarching goal of meeting the University's goal for more interdisciplinary programs as well as the growing industry demand for graduates equipped with a comprehensive understanding of energy systems and transdisciplinary skill sets.
- The BSc in ESCI would be the first of its kind in Canada, with a focus on energy production, storage, transformation, distribution, and end-use. The curriculum integrates foundational science courses with interdisciplinary and ESCI-specific courses, emphasizing sustainability and socioeconomic principles with Indigenous perspectives. Stakeholder consultations and ESCI labour market analysis noted the program's responsiveness to industry needs.
- Complementary to the BSc, the proposed Minor in ESCI introduces students to fundamental ESCI principles and applications, and would replace the existing Concentration in Energy Science that is currently available to students in the BSc in Natural Sciences
- The Committee discussed the enrolment plan that was submitted with the proposal, noting that the program could be exposed to financial risk as it accounts for minimal attrition and a relatively high number of international students
- In response to questions, it was learned that:
 - Two new Limited Term Appointment (LTA) academic staff will be hired to teach ESCI courses. Existing and recently hired transdisciplinary academic staff in the Department of Earth, Energy, and Environment (EEE) and the School of Public Policy (SPP) would also be engaged in the program.
 - Teaching Assistants (TAs) would be primarily drawn from EEE, but could also come from various other graduate programs across campus given the transdisciplinary nature of the program
 - The program has been designed for in-person delivery, with plans for the new science building in mind
 - The curriculum has relatively few 500-level courses to maximize students' flexibility to choose courses across different topics

- The Committee requested the following amendments:
 - a more conservative student enrolment plan that considers the impacts of a higher degree of attrition and fewer international students
 - the addition of more specific TA numbers and steps that will be taken to address any limits encountered with TA availability
 - typographical corrections to clarify indicated academic staff appointments, course numbers, minor formatting issues, and punctuation
- Committee members commended the proponents for their work, noting the strength of the proposal and its capacity to create positive opportunities for students

Moved/Seconded

That the Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of a Bachelor of Science in Energy Science, effective July 1, 2025, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee with the requested amendments.

Carried**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of a Minor in Energy Science, effective July 1, 2025 and contingent upon approval from the Ministry of Advanced Education to deliver a Bachelor of Science in Energy Science, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee.

Carried**6. Program Approvals Status Report**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only. Questions can be directed to the Program Innovation Hub.

7. Adjournment**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Program Subcommittee adjourn the January 22, 2024 meeting.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Courtney McVie
Secretary