FOR FINAL APPROVAL

TO: Arts & Science Council
SPONSOR: Sandy Welsh, Vice-Dean, Graduate Education and Program Reviews
CONTACT INFO: vdgraduate.artsci@utoronto.ca
DATE: March 2, 2015 for March 9, 2015
AGENDA ITEM: 4

ITEM OF BUSINESS: Major modification – New program requirements option for the M.A. in Economics (Doctoral Stream) Department of Economics

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:
The Arts & Council has delegated authority to approve modifications to existing degree programs that are defined in the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) as major modifications such as new program requirement option within an existing graduate program.

PREVIOUS ACTION:
The new program requirements for the M.A. doctoral stream program were approved by the Department in December 2014 and by the Arts & Science Graduate Curriculum Committee on February 12, 2015.

GOVERNANCE PATH:
Graduate Curriculum Committee – February 12, 2015
Arts & Science Council – March 9, 2015 – final approval
Reported for information to the appropriate body of Governing Council

HIGHLIGHTS:
The Department of Economics proposes to introduce a second option with broader course requirements within the existing Master of Arts (doctoral stream) program. The new option will provide students whose undergraduate preparation does not fully meet the demands of the required courses of the theory based PhD sequences to complete the program. Students will be prescribed a set of PhD focused courses of equal rigour as the PhD theory sequence courses, but without the emphasis on a mathematical background.

The Department of Economics’ decision to introduce this new option primarily reflects the shift in economics research, which now places more emphasis on empirical analysis over theory. The addition of this option will address the change in practice in the discipline, while still allowing students who wish to pursue theory as a focus at the PhD level the ability to do so. A significant portion of students requesting admission to the M.A. doctoral stream program enter the program with less training in theory economics due to the shift in academic research which can be seen in post-secondary institutions, other than the University of Toronto. These students do well in their research, but the restrictions placed by the mathematically rigorous PhD theory sequence courses negatively impact the rate of success. The proposed new option will allow these students to continue and complete the program.
As described in the attached proposal, the proposed new option within the MA doctoral stream will provide an additional option to students based on the level of their preparation for the program, each with specific admission requirements.

No additional faculty resources will be required and students will continue to receive the same guidance from the Department of Economics graduate office to ensure they are following the proper option.

**RECOMMENDATION:**
The Arts & Science Council approves:

THAT the proposed new program requirement option to the Master of Arts in Economics (doctoral stream) as described in the attached proposal dated December 2014, be approved effective for the academic year 2015-16.