FOR APPROVAL

TO: Arts & Science Council

SPONSOR: Pamela Klassen, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate & International

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DATE: April 12, 2017 for April 19, 2017

AGENDA ITEM: 7

ITEM OF BUSINESS:
Approval of Revised Policy Concerning Second Undergraduate Degrees for Arts & Science Graduates

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:
Arts & Science Council approves major changes in academic regulations as forwarded from its standing committees, in this case the Committee on Admissions, in advance of moving to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs who may approve proposals pertaining to academic regulations (Committee on Academic Policy and Programs Terms of Reference, 4.3).

GOVERNANCE PATH:
1. Committee on Admissions – March 22, 2017 (approval)
2. Arts & Science Council – April 19, 2017 (approval)
3. Committee on Academic Policies and Programs – May 9, 2017 (approval)

HIGHLIGHTS:
Currently, if a student who holds an undergraduate degree from the Faculty of Arts & Science, they may apply to start a second undergraduate degree, but the rules dictate the new degree must be differently named, i.e., if a student already holds a Bachelor of Arts or Honours Bachelor of Arts, they must pursue only a Honours Bachelor of Science. This policy revision seeks to remove this restriction, allowing a student to pursue a second degree with the same moniker.

The rationale is two-fold. Current degrees hinge on completed programs of study, of which there is enormous variety, and a student could easily pursue and complete two quite distinct degrees under “arts” or “science”. This revision would also be fairer to the Faculty’s own graduates, because students with undergraduate degrees from other universities may apply to the Faculty for a second undergraduate degree with no such restriction. The admission process only assures that there is no overlap in fields of study.
This policy does not affect the overarching rule that no second-degree student may be admitted to the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) degree.

CONSULTATION:

This proposal is the result of a review of the Faculty’s policies and practices regarding petitions; the application for a second undergraduate degree was resolved through the mechanism of petitions. This proposed policy change was shared along with all the recommendations arising from that review, shared broadly across the Faculty, including with College Registrars, College Principals, Associate Chairs Undergraduate and the Committees on Standing and of Teaching and Learning. In every instance, there has been unanimous surprise the policy exists and support for its revision.

In addition, the University Registrar has voiced his approval for the change and for the Faculty to proceed with the change, and the Registrars of the University of Toronto, Scarborough and the University of Toronto, Mississauga have been kept in the loop regarding this change, but there is no indication they will proceed with any similar policy change.

In addition, the Office of Convocation has been informed and indicated no reservations regarding the change, and there appear to be no serious implications to the Repository of Student Information (ROSI) or the Degree Verification online platform.

IMPLEMENTATION NOTES:

In proposing this revision of policy, the Faculty of Arts & Science will collaborate with College Registrarial staff around best practices in student advising as it pertains to applying for a second undergraduate degree. Students do already consider second undergraduate degrees without appreciating the viability and benefits of other options, including advancing to graduate study. The revision of this policy gives an opportunity to establish guidelines in such advising.

MOTION:

THAT the proposed revision of policy concerning second undergraduate Arts & Science degrees for Arts & Science graduates be approved for September, 2017.