



Senate Committee on Academic Development
Report to Senate - Meeting of February 28, 2008

Proposed Statement on the Basis of Admission for Advanced Study

Introduction

At its meeting on February 6, 2008, the Senate Committee on Academic Development considered the proposed statement on the Basis of Admission for Advanced Study which was prepared by Jo-Anne Brady, the University Registrar, following consultation with the Faculties and Schools. A copy of the proposed statement is attached to this report.

Analysis and Discussion

The following points should be highlighted:

- in 2004, a statement was approved by Senate to address the growth in the number and variety of applicants from a range of post-secondary institutions by stipulating that only a degree from an Associate of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) member institution would be accepted;
- in response to a resolution at Council of Ontario Universities, Queen's revised the guidelines to remove the AUCC reference as the principal criterion and to clarify the expected educational background and preparedness required for admission to advanced study.

Conclusions/Recommendation

Recommendation:

that Senate approve the proposed statement on the Basis of Admission for Advanced Study as set out in the attached document.

Respectfully submitted,



Patrick Deane

Chair, Senate Committee on Academic Development

Committee Members:

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Basis of Admission for Advanced Study

October 2007

Context

In January 2004, Queen's Senate approved the "Policy for Determining Canadian Universities' Status for Basis of Admission", stipulating that

"To satisfy the basis of admission requirement to any degree program at Queen's University, academic credentials obtained from a Canadian institution must be from an institution that is a member of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)".

The policy statement that was developed and approved was motivated by the growth in both the number and the variety of post-secondary opportunities available, not all of which appropriately prepare students for advanced university education. It was also developed in the context that there is no formally recognized accreditation body in Canada, and AUCC membership is often held up as a proxy for recognition.

The policy was intended to provide clarity and transparency for prospective students that demonstrated a consistent academic quality threshold for consideration for admission, based on the educational preparedness required to successfully complete an advanced degree.

The policy was not intended to either include or exclude applicants categorically on the basis of the source of their undergraduate credentials. In practice, students applying for admission to graduate programs have been considered on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions to the policy have been exercised by the School of Graduate Studies and professional Faculties and School, such as Law, Education, Medicine, and Business, in cases based on the unique strengths of the applicant (for example, exceptional marks, letters of reference, and/or work experience) or for applicants whose special attributes, perspectives, affiliation, qualities, or achievements bring greater diversity to the University population.

The following revised statement is proposed to clarify the nature of the educational background and preparedness expected of applicants to advanced degrees, while mitigating the risk that University policy may pose a barrier to qualified prospective students.

Proposed Policy Statement

Basis of Admission for Advanced Study

"To satisfy the basis of admission to any advanced-entry professional or graduate degree program at Queen's University, it is expected that previous academic credentials will be from an institution providing an academic environment and education that prepares students for potential success in advanced study at Queen's."

Basis of Admission for Advanced Study Interpretation Guidelines

Canada

Below are the Interpretation Guidelines it is expected that staff and faculty engaged in admission selection will use to guide the assessment of the basis of admission, with respect to Canadian institutions, as Canada does not have a national accreditation system or body.

The basis of admission for advanced study policy indicates that, to be considered for admission, applicants should present academic credentials obtained in Canada from an institution providing an academic environment and education that prepares students for potential success in advanced study at Queen's

Such institutions might reasonably be considered to reflect the following qualities and characteristics:

- 1) Authority from the provincial legislature to grant degrees
- 2) Administrative and governance appropriate for a university
 - a. *Academic staff and Senate (or other appropriately elected body) with authority to make decisions affecting academic programs*
 - b. *Independent board of governors, or appropriate equivalent*
 - c. *Senior administration, normally a President and Vice-Presidents*
- 3) Approved, clearly articulated mission statements and academic goals that include a commitment to teaching, research, and community service.
- 4) Teaching mission at a university level with the majority of programs at that level.
- 5) Offer a full program or programs of undergraduate degree and/or graduate degree studies.
 - a. *Academic staff with PhDs or other appropriate terminal degrees*
 - b. *Undergraduate programs taught by senior academic staff*
 - c. *Quality assurance mechanisms, with provision for periodic evaluation of academic staff*
 - d. *Access to library and other learning resources*
 - e. *The periodical monitoring of graduate outcomes*
 - f. *Academic counseling and other student services*
 - g. *Financial resources to meet its mission statement and goals*
- 6) Undergraduate degree programs, including professional degrees, are characterized by breadth and depth in the traditional areas of the liberal arts and/or sciences.
- 7) A proven record of scholarship, academic inquiry and research
 - a. *Expectation that faculty will be engaged in peer-adjudicated external reviews*
 - b. *An environment that focuses on intellectual inquiry*
- 8) An environment that respects the search for and communication of knowledge, respects academic freedom, encourages high standards of achievement, and values intellectual honesty, fairness, and integrity.

International

Academic credentials obtained outside of Canada would normally be expected to be from an accredited university-level institution pursuant to the national accreditation system within the issuing country.