



## Meeting Book - September 11, 2026 Meeting of the Academic Senate

### Senate Agenda

---

1. Higher Education Strategy Associates (HESA) will provide a brief presentation on their work to date.

---

2. Acknowledgement of the Traditional Territory

*As we begin this Nipissing University Senate meeting, I would like to acknowledge that we are in the territory of the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850 and that the land on which we gather is the Nipissing First Nation Traditional Territory and the traditional territory of the Anishinabek. We respect and are grateful to hold this event on these lands with all our relations.*

---

3. Approval of the Agenda

*That the agenda of the September 11, 2026, Senate meeting be approved.*

---

**Motion 1**

4. Adoption of Minutes

*That the minutes of the June 12, 2026, Senate meeting be approved.*

---

**Motion 2**

i. June 12, 2026 DRAFT Senate Minutes and Reports

---

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

*The Speaker of the Senate will address the Senate Governance Review and Survey.*

---

6. Reading and Disposing of Communications

---

7. Reports from Other Bodies

i. President

*oral report*

ii. Provost & Vice-President Academic

a. Provost's Senate Report Sept 2026 CR

iii. Vice-President Finance and Administration

*oral report*

iv. Board of Governors

*no report*

v. Alumni Advisory Board

a. 26-06 - NUAAB Report to Senate

vi. Council of Ontario Universities (Academic Colleague)

*no report*

vii. Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance

*no report*

viii. Nipissing University Student Union (NUSU)

a. NUSU Academic Senate Report\_ June 2026

ix. Other

---

8. Question Period

---

9. Reports of Standing Committees and Faculty Councils

i. Senate Executive Committee

**Motion 3 and 4**

*Motion 3: That Senate receive the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated July 6, 2026.*

*Motion 4: That Senate receive the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated August 27, 2026.*

a. Senate Exec Report (Electronic) July 6, 2026

b. Senate Exec Report Aug 2026 & rev mtg dates

ii. Academic Curriculum Committee

**Motion 5 and 6**

*Motion 5: That Senate receive the Report of the Academic Curriculum Committee dated August 10, 2026.*

*Motion 6: That Senate approve the modification to the admission requirements for Concurrent Education.*

a. ACC Report & Sup Doc 10Aug26

iii. Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC)

**Motion 7 - 10**

*Motion 7: That Senate receive the Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated August 21, 2026.*

*Motion 8: That Senate approve that the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics be renamed to the Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics.*

*Motion 9: That Senate approve that the Minor in Economics be reinstated by the Provost.*

*Motion 10: That Senate approve the minor revisions to the NU-IQAP Cyclical Program Review Process.*

a. AQAPC Report & Sup Doc 21Aug26

iv. By-laws and Elections Committee

**Motion 11**

*Motion 11: That Senate receive the Report of the By-laws and Elections Committee dated July 9, 2026.*

a. Bylaws Report July 9, 2026 rev13Aug26

v. Senate Budget Advisory Committee

**Motion 12**

*Motion 12: That Senate receive the Annual Report of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee dated August 14, 2026.*

a. Annual Report SBAC 2025-26

---

10. Other Business

---

## 11. Amendments of By-Laws

---

## 12. Elections

- *Elect two (2) faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Senate Budget Advisory Committee for three (3) year terms effective now to June 30, 2029.*
  - *Elect two (2) faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance for three (3) year terms effective now to June 30, 2029.*
  - *Elect one (1) faculty Senate representative to serve on the Board of Governors for a three-year term effective now to June 30, 2029.*
- 

## 13. New Business

---

## 14. Announcements

---

## 15. Adjournment

**Nipissing University**  
**Minutes of the Academic Senate Meeting**  
**June 12, 2026**  
**10:30 a.m.**  
**Room F210 & Zoom Videoconference**

**Members Present:**

C. Richardson (Vice-Chair), R. Hacquard, B. Law, N. Colborne, G. Raymer, D. Iafrate, N. Black

R. Davis, R. Gendron, A. Hatef, K. Lucas, M. Owens, G. Phillips (Deputy Speaker), T. Smith, S. Srigley, T. Stewart, L. Thielen-Wilson, H. Zhu

J. Allison, C. Anyinam, C. Greco, T. Horton, D. Jarvis, A. Kociolek, A. Leblond, P. Maher, P. Millar, C. Ricci, A. Schinkel-Ivy, M. Sullivan, I. Tavares, J. Thornborrow

F. Couchie, L. Lloyd

**Absent With Regrets:**

K. Wamsley, H. Earl, S. Kariuki, G. McCann, P. Nosko, K. Srigley, H. Texiera, R. Vernescu, C. Irwin, O. Pokorny, R. Kasperavicius, R. Hehn, A. Adler, S. Cairns, R. Hoffman, A. Nkurunziza, V. Williams, J. Martin, N. Botham, O. Remillard, D. Lamirande, H. Konadu

The Deputy Senate Speaker offered a Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

**Adoption of the Agenda of the Senate Meeting of:** June 12, 2026

Motion 1: Moved by N. Black, seconded by D. Iafrate that the agenda of the Senate meeting of June 12, 2026, be adopted as amended. Motion 17 was revised to reflect the correct titles of the Director, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, and the Director of Teaching and Learning in the Amendment of By-laws.  
CARRIED

**Adoption of the Minutes of the Senate Meeting of:** May 22, 2026

Motion 2: Moved by A. Schinkel-Ivy, seconded by T. Horton that the minutes of the Senate meeting of May 22, 2026, be adopted.  
CARRIED

**Reading and Disposing of Communications**

A communication from members of the Arts and Science Faculty Council expressing concern regarding a proposal by the Dean of Arts and Science to suspend admissions to the Philosophy program was read out. The communication is appended to the minutes.

**Reports From Other Bodies**

The Provost provided an update on Bill 166 regarding textbooks and learning resources, noting the Ministry directive that each syllabus must contain a statement about the cost of textbooks/learning resources. This requirement presents an opportunity to communicate costs of required and recommended resources to students.

The Provost delivered a comprehensive Academic and Operational Plan (APOP) First Annual (Draft) Report Summary, outlining progress to date, identifying key challenges, and providing an opportunity for Senate to consider future directions, including a potential reset.

Members were invited to ask questions and provide feedback. The Provost expressed appreciation to Emma Sumilas, Manager of Academic Projects and Planning, for coordinating the report, as well as to all those who contributed to its development. The APOP Summary is appended to the minutes.

The Vice-President Finance and Administration expressed appreciation to all those involved with convocation and the Annual Gala, noting that the Gala was a successful well-attended event.

A report from the Alumni Advisory Board was provided. The report is appended to the minutes.

A report from the Council of Ontario Universities Academic Colleague was provided. The report is appended to the minutes.

The Deputy Speaker expressed appreciation to Senator Carlo Ricci, Academic Colleague to the Council of Ontario Universities, for his excellent and informative reports to Senate, as well as for his contributions to COU meetings.

A report from the Nipissing University Student Union (NUSU) was provided. The report is appended to the minutes.

**Question Period**

The following question was forwarded for inclusion in the Senate Minutes:

It was noted that “Admission to the Economics program was suspended without going through any of the processes required for the suspension of admission to any program. Specifically, there was no motion brought to Senate. Regardless, students are currently not being admitted to the Economics Major. Unlike an Honours Specialization or Major, students are not admitted to a Minor. Instead, students declare their intention to earn the Minor when they graduate. So, is the Minor in Economics still available to students who meet the requirements? This question is being asked because some students are being told that they cannot earn a Minor in Economics.”

Senator Colborne noted that the original suspension of admissions to Economics occurred without following the current formal process, including approval by Senate. At the time, the Dean consulted with the program, a recommendation was made and approved by the Provost, and the Registrar’s Office was instructed to cease admissions to all Economics program elements, including the Minor.

Concerns were expressed that, unlike a Major or Honours Specialization, students are not admitted to a Minor but instead declare it at graduation. Questions were raised because some students have been advised they cannot obtain an Economics Minor despite completing the required coursework.

The Registrar indicated that students admitted in 2023 may request to have an Economics Minor awarded. Senator Colborne further clarified that students admitted during 2023-24 may request the Minor, but it is not available to students admitted after 2025. Because the original suspension did not go through Senate, Senate approval is not required to reinstate the Minor. If a proposal to reinstate the Minor were brought forward, it would likely receive favourable consideration. Any request to reopen the Minor would originate from the Dean and would be considered by the Provost.

The Registrar noted that the Economics Minor is not currently included in the academic calendar and, therefore, cannot be awarded. The Provost added that the Economics suspension was broader than in other programs because all Economics pathways and courses were closed, placing authority for the suspension within the Provost's purview.

The discussion concluded with the understanding that while admission to the Economics program was suspended, Senate has not withdrawn approval of the Minor or its requirements. A request could be made to the Dean to reinstate the Economics minor, making it available to students admitted to the university since the suspension.

The Registrar advised that if the Minor were reinstated and reintroduced to the calendar for 2026, current students and those who began their studies in 2025 would be eligible to receive the Minor.

Senator Couchie, Board of Governors Senate Representative, congratulated the university community on the success of the past week's activities and celebrations. She noted that it was inspiring to see students and their families celebrating this important milestone and remarked that the positive atmosphere reflected very well on Nipissing University. Senator Couchie shared that she heard numerous compliments from visitors regarding the beauty of the campus, its location, and the overall experience. She also expressed her appreciation for the Gala event, describing it as a wonderful and well-executed celebration.

In response to a question regarding the timeline for adding the Directors of Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives (OII) as members of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC), it was reported that work to add the Directors began at the committee's first meeting of 2025-26. The process has taken longer than expected because the Nipissing University Act requires any increase in non-faculty voting members on Senate to be matched by an increase in faculty representation. Consequently, Senate and its Standing Committees must review and adjust their membership and voting structures to remain compliant with the Act. Once the appropriate membership balance is established, the Directors of OII and CTL can be added as ex officio voting members.

Concerns were expressed that the Academic Curriculum Committee (ACC) currently lacks Indigenous representation, noting that this is particularly important given the university's ongoing commitments to Indigenization and reconciliation. The value of ensuring Indigenous voices and perspectives are included in curriculum discussions was emphasized. It was noted that the issue had been raised in AQAPC and discussed by the Director of OII. While recognizing that efforts are underway to address the matter, the importance of continuing this work was noted.

With respect to the proposed Indigenous Academic Advisory Council, a question was asked about the anticipated timeline for its establishment. The Provost advised that discussions have taken place between the Directors of OII and CTL and that further discussions regarding the Council's terms of reference are planned.

It was noted that the Senate Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC) continues to seek Senate representation. Senators were encouraged to consider serving on the committee, and the importance of active participation in the budget process was emphasized. The value of strong communication between Senate and the Board of Governors to ensure financial considerations, priorities, and challenges facing the university are effectively understood and addressed was highlighted.

In response to a question regarding the status and timeline of the planned Ad Hoc Committee on Outdoor Teaching (APOP Action 10), the Provost advised that no update was available at this time. She indicated that the next steps would involve discussions with the Facility Services Department to develop procedures governing the use of the Outdoor Classroom, particularly with respect to safety considerations associated with the fireplace. It was noted that the proposed Ad Hoc Committee's current focus is primarily on safety and operational matters rather than outdoor teaching practices.

It was suggested that faculty members be included on the Ad Hoc Committee on Outdoor Teaching to ensure that teaching, curriculum, and academic perspectives are represented in the committee's work.

Concerns were raised regarding the recommendation in the Senate Executive Committee report to refer the proposal concerning the inclusion of the Director of Teaching and Learning (TLC) as a committee member back to the TLC. It was noted that the matter had already been discussed extensively within the TLC and that a rationale had previously been provided to the Governance Review Committee.

The Provost advised that the proposal has been considered by AQAPC and must be evaluated within the broader Governance Review. Because the Nipissing University Act requires faculty representation to increase whenever ex officio non-faculty voting members are added, changes to committee membership structures and terms of reference across the governance system must be considered. The Provost also noted that Senate committees have grown substantially in size, making membership adjustments potentially necessary. If Senate approves adding the Directors of OIL and CTL as ex officio members, Faculty Senate elections would need to be held before the September Senate meeting to elect additional faculty Senators to maintain the required balance of representation.

In response to a question regarding the status of the Provost and VP Academic search, the Provost advised that no update is available at this time. It was noted that information will be communicated to the university community by email as soon as it becomes available.

## **Reports of Standing Committees and Faculty or University Councils**

### **Senate Executive Committee**

Motion 3: Moved by R. Gendron, seconded by J. Allison that the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated June 4, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

### **Academic Appeals and Petitions Committee**

Motion 4: Moved by A. Schinkel-Ivy, seconded by A. Leblond that the Annual Report of the Academic Appeals and Petitions Committee dated May 26, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

**Academic Awards Committee**

- Motion 5: Moved by M. Owens, seconded by S. Srigley that the Annual Report of the Academic Awards Committee dated May 26, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

**Academic Curriculum Committee**

- Motion 6: Moved by A. Kociolek, seconded by N. Colborne that the Annual Report of the Academic Curriculum Committee dated May 26, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

**Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC)**

- Motion 7: Moved by M. Owens, seconded by N. Colborne that the Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated May 29, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

**Graduate Studies Committee**

- Motion 8: Moved by B. Law, seconded by N. Black that the Report of the Graduate Studies Committee dated April 24, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED
- Motion 9: Moved by B. Law, seconded by D. Iafrate that the Annual Report of the Graduate Studies Committee dated May 29, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

**Honorary Degrees Committee**

- Motion 10: Moved by D. Iafrate, seconded by M. Owens that the Annual Report of the Honorary Degrees Committee dated May 15, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

**Senate Budget Advisory Committee**

- Motion 11: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by M. Owens that the Report of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee dated May 12, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

**Senate Research Committee**

- Motion 12: Moved by B. Law, seconded by N. Black that the Annual Report of the Senate Research Committee dated May 29, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

**Teaching and Learning Committee**

- Motion 13: Moved by S. Srigley, seconded by T. Stewart that the Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated April 27, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED
- Motion 14: Moved by N. Black, seconded by T. Smith that the Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated May 28, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

Motion 15: Moved by F. Couchie, seconded by P. Maher that the Annual Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated May 28, 2026, be received.  
CARRIED

Senator Raymer, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC), provided clarification regarding the May TLC Report to Senate, specifically concerning the reported Student Course Evaluation Survey (SCES) response rates. He advised that an error had been identified in Explorance's reporting methodology, resulting in incorrect response-rate information being presented to Senate. The actual response rates are significantly higher, at approximately 25%. The corrected response-rate data for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years will be brought forward to Senate through the next Teaching and Learning Committee Report.

### **Amendment of By-laws**

Motion 16: Moved by J. Allison, seconded by T. Stewart that Senate approve that Article 1.1(y) of the Senate By-laws be amended as outlined below:

#### **1.1 General Definitions**

- (y) "non-voting" means a committee member appointed for their expertise in relation to the Committee's Terms of Reference. They are permitted to speak but are not permitted to vote or make motions.

CARRIED

Motion 17: Moved by M. Owens, seconded by K. Lucas that Senate approve that Article 2.1(vii) & (ix) of the Senate By-laws be amended as outlined below:

#### **2.1 *Ex Officio* Senators**

- (a) The following shall be *ex officio* voting members of Senate:

- (i) the President;
- (ii) the Provost Vice President Academic;
- (iii) The Vice President responsible for Finance and Administration
- (iv) The Associate Vice-President Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies;
- (v) the Deans;
- (vi) the Registrar;
- (vii) the Executive Director, Library Services;
- (viii) the Director, Office of Indigenous Initiatives; and
- (ix) the Director of Teaching and Learning.

CARRIED

*The Senate Executive Committee requested that the following motion be removed from the Senate Agenda and referred back to the Teaching and Learning Committee for further discussion, specifically, if the Director of Teaching and Learning becomes the Chair and an ex-officio voting member, the TLC faculty membership will need to increase by two faculty members, who may be either Faculty Senators or non-Senators.*

~~That Senate approve that Article 9.12(a)(ii) & (b)(i) of the Senate By laws be amended as outlined below:~~

#### ~~9.12 Teaching and Learning Committee~~

- ~~(a) *Ex Officio* and Student Members:~~

- ~~(i) the Dean of Education and Professional Studies;~~
- ~~(ii) the Director of Teaching and Learning (Chair)~~
- ~~(iii) the Executive Director of Library Services, or designate;~~
- ~~(iv) two (2) undergraduate student representatives; one elected from each Faculty;~~

- ~~(v) one (1) graduate student representative.~~
- ~~(b) Members Elected by Faculty Council:~~
  - ~~(i) four (4) Faculty Senators, with at least one (1) from each Faculty;~~
  - ~~(ii) two (2) non-Senator Faculty; one elected from each Faculty.~~

*The Senate Executive Committee requested that the following motion be removed from the Senate agenda and referred back to the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC) for further discussion. Specifically, if the Director, Office of Indigenous Initiatives, and the Director of Teaching and Learning are to become ex officio voting members of the Committee, the AQAPC faculty membership will need to increase by four faculty members, who may be either Faculty Senators or non-Senators.*

~~That Senate approve that Article 9.4.1(b)(vii) & (viii) of the Senate By-laws be amended as outlined below:~~

#### ~~9.4 Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC)~~

- ~~(a) Ex Officio and Student Members:~~
  - ~~(i) the PVPA, or designate (Chair);~~
  - ~~(ii) the AVPRIGS or designate;~~
  - ~~(iii) all Deans, or designates;~~
  - ~~(iv) the Registrar, or designate;~~
  - ~~(v) the Director of Institutional Research and Planning;~~
  - ~~(vi) the Executive Director, Library Services;~~
  - ~~(vii) the Director, Office of Indigenous Initiatives~~
  - ~~(viii) the Director of Teaching and Learning~~
  - ~~(ix) the Manager of Quality Assurance and Program Innovation (non-voting)~~
  - ~~(x) one (1) representative chosen by and from the Board of Governors;~~
  - ~~(xi) one (1) student Senator from the NUSU Executive or designate;~~
  - ~~(xii) one (1) undergraduate student representative;~~
  - ~~(xiii) one (1) graduate student representative.~~

### **Elections**

- Elect three (3) faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Senate Budget Advisory Committee for three (3) year terms effective now to June 30, 2029.  
**ACCLAIMED:** Senator Kristin Lucas

*As only one nomination was received, elections for two Faculty Senators to serve on the Senate Budget Advisory Committee will be included in the next Senate agenda.*

A suggestion was put forward to expand the membership of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee to include non-Senators. This matter will be brought forward for further discussion at the next Governance Review meeting.

### **New Business**

The Deans and the Associate VP Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies read out the 2026 graduands by faculty and degree and extended their congratulations to this year's graduates and expressed sincere appreciation to the faculty and staff whose dedication, mentorship, and support are central to the University's mission and student success. They reflected on the exceptional convocation ceremonies, noting the pride and joy evident among graduates and faculty alike. Special recognition was given to faculty members celebrating both their first and final convocations, acknowledging their important contributions and commitment.

**Announcements**

The Provost extended warm wishes to the University community in recognition of Pride Month and acknowledged the upcoming National Indigenous Peoples Day, highlighting the importance of inclusion, diversity, and reconciliation.

The Deputy Speaker expressed appreciation to all members for their service and contributions throughout the year and wished everyone a happy, restful, and well-deserved summer break.

**Adjournment**

Senate was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

.....  
C. Richardson (Vice-Chair)

.....  
S. Landriault (Secretary to the Senate)

June 10, 2026

Dear Senators,

On May 29, 2026, the Faculty of Arts and Science held a meeting of its Faculty Council. At this meeting, an extensive discussion was held on the Dean of Arts and Science's proposal to suspend admissions to the Philosophy program. This proposal was overwhelmingly opposed by the members of Faculty Council. Furthermore, Council unanimously passed two motions in support of preserving the Philosophy program.

These motions reflect not only Council members' vehement opposition to the Dean's proposed suspension of admissions to Philosophy but also the conviction that the Philosophy program is fundamental to the idea of what a university is and should be in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and that Philosophy and its offerings play a vital role in preparing our students for and helping them understand the many challenges our communities and our society are facing and will face in the years to come.

Suspending its admissions would sound the death knell of the Philosophy program and we, the undersigned members of the Arts and Science Faculty Council ask all senators to support the preservation of Philosophy as part of the core academic mission of Nipissing University.

Collegially yours,

Andrew Ackerman, Kristen Beck, Joseph Boivin, David Borman, Rob Breton, Natalya Brown, Darren Campbell, Lanyan Chen, Reade Davis, Jeff Dech, Carly Dokis, Rhiannon Don, Hilary Earl, Robin Gendron, Alex Karashev, Stephen Kariuki, Nathan Kozuskanich, Laurie Kruk, Manuel Litalien, Gillian McCann, Lindsey McMaster, Dana Murphy, Jamie Murton, Rosemary Nagy, Derek Neal, Sean O'Hagan, Margaret Owens, Tony Parkes, Laura Peturson, Jonathan Pitt, Katrina Srigley, Susan Srigley, Tyson Stewart, David Tabachnick, Leslie Thielen-Wilson, Brian Thorn, Murat Tuncali, Tzvetalin Vassilev, Richard Wenghoffer, Andrew Weeks, Sarah Winters



## **Nipissing University Alumni Advisory Board report to Academic Senate June 2026**

### **Welcome, Class of 2026!**

NUAAB warmly welcomes all graduating students to the Nipissing University alumni community. We hope your celebrations during convocation week are wonderful, and we look forward to engaging with you in the years ahead as members of the Laker alumni family.

### **NUAAB Representative to Senate**

NUAAB is pleased to share that Riley McEntee (BA Hons '24) is the new alumni representative to Academic Senate and will formally begin his term in September. We also extend sincere thanks to Ryan Hehn (BA '12) for his three years of service in this role and for his thoughtful engagement at Senate.

### **NUAAB Executive**

NUAAB is pleased to share that Laurel Muldoon (BA Hons '15, MEd '19) was recently elected to a second two-year term as President. We thank her for her ongoing engagement and leadership. We also welcome Joe Burt (BEd '14) as Vice President of NUAAB and thank him for his continued dedication as a champion for Nipissing University. NUAAB extends sincere appreciation to Melissa MacNabb (BA '99) for her many years of service as Vice President and for her engagement in all of the NUAAB's endeavours.

### **North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament**

Nipissing Alumni is proud to serve as the title sponsor for the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament on July 9<sup>th</sup>. The event provides a valuable opportunity for NUAAB and the alumni team to engage with local businesses, share what is happening at the University, and connect with Nipissing alumni in the community.

### **An Evening at Nipissing University**

NUAAB is proud to be a silver sponsor of An Evening at Nipissing University. The members are looking forward to engaging in an event focused on supporting Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries for Nipissing students and celebrating the importance of student success.

### **Save the Date – Homecoming 2026**

NUAAB is looking forward to welcoming alumni and the broader campus community back to campus for Homecoming 2026 on September 18 and 19. This annual celebration is an opportunity to reconnect with the Laker community, celebrate shared pride in Nipissing University, and take part in a weekend of engaging events and activities. Please save the date!

## **Report to Academic Senate 13 May 2026 COU Meeting**

### **Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Academic Colleagues Meeting**

**Date:** May 13, 2026

**Format:** Zoom Videoconference

**Submitted by:** Carlo Ricci Academic Colleague Representative

Discussions at this meeting were conducted under Chatham House principles; therefore, this report summarizes key themes and insights without attributing comments to specific individuals or institutions.

### **Meeting Overview**

The Council of Ontario Universities Academic Colleagues met virtually on May 13, 2026. Agenda items included governance matters, ongoing discussions concerning artificial intelligence in higher education, provincial policy developments, and information sharing among member institutions.

### **Key Discussion Themes**

#### **Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education**

A significant portion of the meeting focused on the continued role of artificial intelligence (AI) within Ontario's postsecondary sector. The discussion built upon conversations initiated during the April 2026 meetings.

Participants considered the possibility of developing a sector-wide position paper or internal guidance document through COU processes. Discussion emphasized the importance of clarifying:

- what AI technologies are and are not;
- how AI systems function in academic and administrative contexts; and
- the implications of AI for teaching, learning, assessment, governance, and institutional policy.

There was broad recognition that universities continue to face challenges related to academic integrity, ethical use, student learning outcomes, and institutional preparedness in relation to rapidly evolving AI tools.

Reference was also made to an AI task force report (29 May 2026), which may further inform sector discussions and policy considerations.

#### **Provincial Policy and Legislative Developments**

Members briefly discussed Ontario's *Putting Students First Act (Bill 101)* and its potential implications for the postsecondary sector. Conversation focused primarily on monitoring emerging policy directions and considering possible impacts on institutional operations, accountability, and governance structures.

## **COU Updates and Information Sharing**

The meeting included updates from COU leadership regarding ongoing sector initiatives and areas of advocacy. Participants also engaged in information sharing related to institutional experiences, emerging priorities, and areas of common concern across Ontario universities.

## **Future Meetings**

Upcoming Academic Colleagues meetings are scheduled for:

- August 25, 2026
- August 26, 2026

## **NUSU Academic Senate Report: June 2026**

### **Planning for the 2026–2027 Academic Year**

NUSU has been actively preparing for the upcoming 2026–2027 academic year through the development of events, campaigns, and new student-focused initiatives. Planning efforts are currently underway across several areas to ensure an engaging and supportive experience for students throughout the upcoming year.

### **Campus & Community Collaborations**

NUSU remains committed to collaboration and partnership opportunities across campus and within the broader community. We continue to welcome opportunities to work alongside departments, faculty, staff, and community organizations on initiatives that enhance the student experience.

### **Pride BBQ & Drag Show**

NUSU will be hosting a Pride BBQ and Drag Show on June 30 running from 4:00–7:30. We invite all to attend and celebrate Pride Month with us. Donations collected during the event will be directed toward morebinders, AIDS Committee, and OutLoud. We look forward to seeing members of the community come together for this celebration.

### **Sustainability & Green Initiatives**

NUSU is continuing to expand its sustainability and environmental initiatives on campus. One upcoming initiative, called “OAK,” will focus on preserving and jarring produce for use within a food pantry program. As part of this initiative, NUSU is currently organizing a mason jar drive and encourages community members to donate jars to the NUSU front desk.

In addition, NUSU is excited to be reintroducing bees to campus in the coming weeks. Discussions are also underway regarding the expansion of our gardens and development of accessible pathways leading to the garden and bee areas to ensure these spaces remain welcoming and inclusive for all students.

### **Looking Ahead**

Overall, NUSU has many initiatives currently in progress as preparations continue for the upcoming academic year. We look forward to continuing to support students through programming, advocacy, sustainability efforts, and campus engagement opportunities.

**Interim Provost's Senate Report  
September 11, 2026**

**Quality Council Approval Update:**

On June 15, 2026, the University submitted a required one-year Follow-up Report to the Quality Council's 2024-25 Audit. This report outlines steps and actions that respond to seven recommendations and one cause for concern. After careful review of the report, the Audit Team considers the actions taken by the University to have largely addressed the key issues outlined in the Audit, and a recommendation was made to the Quality Council that no further follow-up is required at this time. The Council agreed and provided a letter of approval on August 25th. The next cyclical audit follows an eight-year cycle and will provide an opportunity to confirm the impact of the positive steps taken by the University.

This fall and winter the University has seven programs undergoing external IQAP Reviews:

- Fine Arts and Visual Arts (FAVA)
- BA Geography/BA Environmental Geography/BSc Environment and Physical Geography
- MES Master of Environmental Studies and MEd Master of Environmental Science
- MSc Mathematics
- BA and MA Sociology
- Physical and Health Education
- Criminal Justice

We thank the programs who are working hard to submit their Self-Studies for these scheduled reviews.

**Grant Recipients:**

Congratulations to the recipients of SSHRC and NSERC grants!

| <b>Principal Investigator</b> | <b>Award</b>                      | <b>Duration (years)</b> | <b>Total Value</b>    |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Breton, Rob A.                | SSHRC-Aid to Scholarly Journals   | 3                       | \$ 58,318.00          |
| Clausen, Kurt W.              | SSHRC-Aid to Scholarly Journals   | 3                       | \$ 108,000.00         |
| Greer, Kirsten A.             | SSHRC-Insight Grant               | 6                       | \$ 488,950.00         |
| Stewart, Tyson                | SSHRC-Insight Grant               | 6                       | \$ 56,410.00          |
| Nagy, Rosemary                | SSHRC-Partnership Engage Grant    | 1                       | \$ 49,381.00          |
| Leblond, Alyssa               | SSHRC-Insight Development Grant   | 2                       | \$ 93,632.00          |
| Zhu, Haibin                   | NSERC-Discovery Grant             | 5                       | \$ 215,000.00         |
| Hatef, Ali                    | NSERC-Discovery Grant             | 5                       | \$ 200,000.00         |
| Arnocky, Steven               | NSERC-Discovery Grant             | 5                       | \$ 183,790.00         |
| Karashev, Alexandre           | NSERC-Discovery Development Grant | 2                       | \$ 44,000.00          |
|                               |                                   |                         | <b>\$1,497,481.00</b> |

## Future Students Website

The new Future Students website is now live, offering a more streamlined and user-friendly experience for prospective students. The site features an enhanced program search tool with advanced filtering options, making it easier for users to explore and identify programs that align with their interests and goals. It also includes labour market information and admissions and application requirements tailored to different student types. Visit: <https://future.nipissingu.ca/>

## Main Nipissing University Website

Work also continues on a comprehensive redesign of the main Nipissing University website. Over the past several months, the project has focused on refreshing the site's look and feel, improving navigation and search functionality, and modernizing the back-end infrastructure to enhance functionality, content management, and security. New policy pages and enhanced faculty profiles are also notable features of the new site. The redesigned site will provide an improved user experience for a wide range of audiences and remains on track for launch by the end of September, with a tentative target date of September 14.

## Enrolment Update

| <b>FW26</b> | <b>Domestic - headcount</b> | <b>International - headcount</b> |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| New         | 1,950                       | 17                               |
| Returning   | 4,517                       | 57                               |

| <b>FW25</b> | <b>Domestic - headcount</b> | <b>International - headcount</b> |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| New         | 1,968                       | 15                               |
| Returning   | 3,975                       | 155                              |

Thanks to everyone for a great start to the new academic year!



## **Nipissing University Alumni Advisory Board report to Academic Senate June 2026**

### **Welcome, Class of 2026!**

NUAAB warmly welcomes all graduating students to the Nipissing University alumni community. We hope your celebrations during convocation week are wonderful, and we look forward to engaging with you in the years ahead as members of the Laker alumni family.

### **NUAAB Representative to Senate**

NUAAB is pleased to share that Riley McEntee (BA Hons '24) is the new alumni representative to Academic Senate and will formally begin his term in September. We also extend sincere thanks to Ryan Hehn (BA '12) for his three years of service in this role and for his thoughtful engagement at Senate.

### **NUAAB Executive**

NUAAB is pleased to share that Laurel Muldoon (BA Hons '15, MEd '19) was recently elected to a second two-year term as President. We thank her for her ongoing engagement and leadership. We also welcome Joe Burt (BEd '14) as Vice President of NUAAB and thank him for his continued dedication as a champion for Nipissing University. NUAAB extends sincere appreciation to Melissa MacNabb (BA '99) for her many years of service as Vice President and for her engagement in all of the NUAAB's endeavours.

### **North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament**

Nipissing Alumni is proud to serve as the title sponsor for the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament on July 9<sup>th</sup>. The event provides a valuable opportunity for NUAAB and the alumni team to engage with local businesses, share what is happening at the University, and connect with Nipissing alumni in the community.

### **An Evening at Nipissing University**

NUAAB is proud to be a silver sponsor of An Evening at Nipissing University. The members are looking forward to engaging in an event focused on supporting Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries for Nipissing students and celebrating the importance of student success.

### **Save the Date – Homecoming 2026**

NUAAB is looking forward to welcoming alumni and the broader campus community back to campus for Homecoming 2026 on September 18 and 19. This annual celebration is an opportunity to reconnect with the Laker community, celebrate shared pride in Nipissing University, and take part in a weekend of engaging events and activities. Please save the date!

## **NUSU Academic Senate Report: June 2026**

### **Planning for the 2026–2027 Academic Year**

NUSU has been actively preparing for the upcoming 2026–2027 academic year through the development of events, campaigns, and new student-focused initiatives. Planning efforts are currently underway across several areas to ensure an engaging and supportive experience for students throughout the upcoming year.

### **Campus & Community Collaborations**

NUSU remains committed to collaboration and partnership opportunities across campus and within the broader community. We continue to welcome opportunities to work alongside departments, faculty, staff, and community organizations on initiatives that enhance the student experience.

### **Pride BBQ & Drag Show**

NUSU will be hosting a Pride BBQ and Drag Show on June 30 running from 4:00–7:30. We invite all to attend and celebrate Pride Month with us. Donations collected during the event will be directed toward morebinders, AIDS Committee, and OutLoud. We look forward to seeing members of the community come together for this celebration.

### **Sustainability & Green Initiatives**

NUSU is continuing to expand its sustainability and environmental initiatives on campus. One upcoming initiative, called “OAK,” will focus on preserving and jarring produce for use within a food pantry program. As part of this initiative, NUSU is currently organizing a mason jar drive and encourages community members to donate jars to the NUSU front desk.

In addition, NUSU is excited to be reintroducing bees to campus in the coming weeks. Discussions are also underway regarding the expansion of our gardens and development of accessible pathways leading to the garden and bee areas to ensure these spaces remain welcoming and inclusive for all students.

### **Looking Ahead**

Overall, NUSU has many initiatives currently in progress as preparations continue for the upcoming academic year. We look forward to continuing to support students through programming, advocacy, sustainability efforts, and campus engagement opportunities.

**NIPISSING UNIVERSITY**  
**REPORT OF THE SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

(Electronic Meeting)

July 6, 2026

There was an electronic meeting of the Senate Executive Committee on July 6, 2026.

The following members participated:

K. Wamsley (Chair), C. Richardson, B. Law, N. Colborne, Graydon Raymer, D. Iafrate, G. Phillips, K. Srigley, K. Lucas, J. Allison, J. Martin

S. Landriault (Recording Secretary, non-voting)

The purpose of the meeting was to consider and approve the conferral of a degree upon a student under exceptional circumstances.

The following motions were approved:

Motion 1:        Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by C. Richardson that the Senate Executive Committee, acting on behalf of Senate, consider the granting of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree to Cassidy Hutchison.  
CARRIED

Motion 2:        Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by C. Richardson that the Senate Executive Committee, acting on behalf of Senate, approve the conferral of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree to Cassidy Hutchison.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin B. Wamsley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Kevin Wamsley  
Chair, Senate Executive Committee

MOTION 1:        That Senate receive the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated July 6, 2026.

## **NIPISSING UNIVERSITY**

### **REPORT OF THE SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

August 27, 2026

A meeting of the Senate Executive Committee took place in person and by Teams conference on August 27, 2026.

The following members participated:

C. Richardson (Vice-Chair), B. Law, N. Colborne, G. Raymer, D. Iafrate, K. Srigley, G. Phillips, J. Allison, K. Lucas, J. Martin, A. Blaszczyk (University Secretary, non-voting), S. Landriault (Secretary to the Senate, non-voting)

Regrets: K. Wamsley

The meeting was convened to set the agenda for the September 11, 2026, Senate meeting.

Reports from the Senate Executive Committee, Academic Curriculum Committee, Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee, By-laws and Elections Committee, and the Senate Budget Advisory Committee were received and included in the Senate agenda.

The following elections will be included in the Senate agenda:

- Elect two (2) faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Senate Budget Advisory Committee for three (3) year terms effective now to June 30, 2029.
- Elect two (2) faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance for three (3) year terms effective now to June 30, 2029.
- Elect one (1) faculty Senate representative to serve on the Board of Governors for a three (3) year term effective now to June 30, 2029.

Members discussed a suggestion received following the June Senate meeting. Concerns were raised that online votes and requests to speak from virtual participants can be overlooked, and it was suggested that an administrative assistant be assigned to monitor virtual participation and relay information to the Speaker.

Members noted that equitable participation is a common challenge in hybrid meetings as in-room discussion can be more visible than online participation. The University Secretary and the Executive Assistants to the President and the VPFA assist in monitoring online participation, and Senators are encouraged, when possible, to indicate in advance their intention to speak, enabling the Speaker and Senate Secretary to be aware of upcoming questions or announcements. The meeting platform's participant and chat features also support the identification of questions and requests from virtual attendees.

Members further noted that the Speaker calls separately for votes in favour and votes opposed to help ensure that all votes, including those cast virtually, are recognized. It was suggested that procedures for online voting and participation in a hybrid format be reviewed at the beginning of the September Senate meeting.

A thorough discussion was held regarding a request from the NUSU, VP Campus Relations, concerning a motion for academic amnesty for students participating in actions against the Ontario government's changes to OSAP and tuition policies and, Bill 33. Members reviewed the request and discussed the implications of academic amnesty, the role of Senate in addressing such matters, and the potential impact on students and academic processes. The following motion was received:

Whereas the Nipissing University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities recognizes students' rights to teach and learn under proper conditions and that freedom of thought, expression, and inquiry are protected.

Whereas freedom of assembly is protected under section 2(c) and freedom of expression is protected under section 2(b) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Whereas students should not have to choose between their current academic standing and ability to access education in the future.

Whereas the *Hands Off Our Education* movement is a provincial action concerned with the issues of Bill 33, adjustments to the Ontario Student Assistance Program, and the unfreeze of tuition

Be it resolved that Nipissing University Senate respect the rights, outlined in the "Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities," "that those who wish to teach and those who wish to learn can do so under proper conditions" and "that freedom of thought, expression and inquiry are protected" by extending academic amnesty to any registered Nipissing University student who conscientiously chooses to participate in protest under the *Hands Off Our Education* provincial movement and they shall not be punished for their participation.

Be it further resolved that this amnesty should be extended to all registered Nipissing University students who miss one or more classes, examinations, tests, assignment deadlines, laboratory exercises, or other compulsory academic events because of their status as a conscientious participant.

Be it resolved that the Nipissing University Senate recommends to the Nipissing University Board of Governors that measures of academic amnesty passed by the Senate be supported by the Board of Governors' own measures.

Members discussed concerns regarding the request for academic amnesty and noted the potential implications of an advance blanket approval, particularly for students who may miss examinations, clinical placements, or other mandatory academic requirements. It was acknowledged that students have the right to participate in advocacy activities and were encouraged to communicate with their instructors in advance to seek flexibility where appropriate.

Members questioned whether similar measures had been adopted at other institutions and expressed the view that it is not the role of Senate to endorse student activism. Concerns were also raised about approving a motion without clear parameters and about the challenges of ensuring a consistent approach across instructors. Members noted that faculty are bound by academic and contractual obligations and that attendance and academic requirements are governed by existing policies, including the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities framework.

Members were not in favour of moving the motion forward to Senate. Alternative methods to bring student concerns to Senate's attention and provide opportunities for students to share their perspectives were discussed.

The Secretary to the Senate requested that the date of the May 14, 2027 Academic Senate meeting be changed to May 28, 2027 to allow sufficient time for the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee meeting to meet. Members supported the proposed change, and the revised date will be included in the Senate agenda.

The Speaker provided an update on the Senate Governance Review, noting that the University Secretary is developing terms of reference and preparing a recommendation to the Senate Governance Review Committee regarding the consolidation of Senate Standing Committees. A meeting is expected to be scheduled for late September or early October. The Speaker also advised that the Senate Effectiveness Survey will be distributed to Senators following the first Senate meeting of the academic year.

The Senate Executive Committee approved the September 11, 2026 Senate agenda.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Carole Richardson  
Vice-Chair, Senate Executive Committee

Motion 1: That Senate receive the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated August 27, 2026.

## 2026-2027 Academic Senate Year

| <b>COMMITTEE MATERIALS/REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED BY:</b> | <b>SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING DATES:</b> | <b>SENATE MEETING DATES:</b>      |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Thursday, August 20, 2026                             | Thursday, August 27, 2026                        | <b>Friday, September 11, 2026</b> |
| Thursday, October 1, 2026                             | Thursday, October 8, 2026                        | <b>Friday, October 23, 2026</b>   |
| Thursday, November 5, 2026                            | Thursday, November 12, 2026                      | <b>Friday, November 27, 2026</b>  |
| Monday, December 21, 2026                             | Thursday, January 7, 2027                        | <b>Friday, January 15, 2027</b>   |
| Thursday, January 21, 2027                            | Thursday, January 28, 2027                       | <b>Friday, February 12, 2027</b>  |
| Thursday, February 18, 2027                           | Thursday, February 25, 2027                      | <b>Friday, March 12, 2027</b>     |
| Thursday, April 1, 2027                               | Thursday, April 8, 2027                          | <b>Friday, April 23, 2027</b>     |
| Thursday, May 6, 2027                                 | Thursday, May 13, 2027                           | <b>*Friday, May 28, 2027</b>      |

\*All Senate meetings are scheduled to begin at 2:30 p.m., except the meeting on May 28 (10:30 a.m.), and will be held in the Fedeli Theatre (F210) and via Zoom at the link below for members unable to attend in person.

Senate Meeting Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88092461985?pwd=U0lreXJHWEk2NkphTzR6MFdmL1ZZUT09>

Meeting ID: 880 9246 1985

Passcode: 194317

All Senate Executive Committee meetings are scheduled to begin at 3:00 p.m. and will be held in the President's Boardroom (F303) and via Teams for members unable to attend in person. Meeting details will be shared via an Outlook calendar invitation.

**Report of the  
Academic Curriculum Committee (ACC)**

**August 10, 2026**

**Members Present:**

Carole Richardson  
Graydon Raymer  
Debra Iafrate  
Blaine Hatt  
Roxana Vernescu

Nathan Colborne  
Nancy Black  
Kurt Clausen  
Toivo Koivukoski  
Hilda Konadu

Barbi Law  
Trevor Holmes  
Robin Gibson  
Prasad Ravi  
Logan Lloyd

**Regrets:** Aaron Kociolek, Dakota Lamirande

**Guests:** Beth Holden

**Recording Secretary:** Jane Hughes

The Academic Curriculum Committee reviewed proposed modifications to the admission requirements, as well as course learning outcomes and related templates. The outcomes of this review are reflected in the following recommendations to Senate.

Respectfully submitted,

*electronically approved by*

Carole Richardson, PhD  
Provost and Vice President, Academic (Interim)

Motion 1: That Senate receive the Report of the ACC, dated August 10, 2026.

Substantive

Motion 2: That Senate approve the modification to the admission requirements for Concurrent Education.

**Concurrent Education Admission Requirements** (*Proposal #NIP-2627-00102*)

**Discussion: Course Learning Outcomes and Templates**

The Committee discussed the need for clearer and more consistent guidance on course learning outcomes, while maintaining flexibility across programs and disciplines. Members also noted the need for consistent access to course outline templates and approved learning outcomes. Carole Richardson will review the existing resources and consider how they might be refined, centralized, and communicated more widely and consistently.

---

**Academic Curriculum Committee**  
**Concurrent Education**  
**Admission Requirement Policy Modification**

**Motion:** That the Academic Curriculum Committee recommend to Senate that the modification to the admission requirements for Concurrent Education be approved.

**Current Admission Requirements for Concurrent Education**

**Direct Entry from Secondary School**

Applicants will be required to have an admission average of 70% calculated on the best six combination of 4U/ 4M courses or equivalent including the required prerequisites for the undergraduate program applied to with Concurrent Education. In addition to regular admission requirements applicants will be asked to present ENG4U (or equivalent) with a minimum final grade of 70% and a 3U/M math (or equivalent) with a minimum final grade of 60%.

**Upper-Year Admission**

Admissions consideration for Concurrent Education (Upper-Year Admission) requires the completion of a minimum of 18 credits of undergraduate study at Nipissing University, and no more than 72 university credits (including transfer/advanced standing credits). A minimum 70% overall average on all university courses completed is required in order to be considered. Completion of a 3U or 3M Mathematics (or equivalent) with a minimum grade of 60% or a university or college level Mathematics (not Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) Program courses or Statistics) with a minimum grade of 60% is also required.

**Early Childhood Education (ECE) Diploma Graduates**

Admissions consideration for Concurrent Education (Early Childhood Education (ECE Graduates)) requires the successful completion of an ECE diploma with a minimum overall GPA 70% and be eligible for admission consideration to Nipissing University's Bachelor of Arts (BA) Honours Specialization degree program based on their ECE diploma. Applicants must present a minimum of 70% in one semester of English or Communications at the college level (not Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) Program courses) or ENG4U from high school with a minimum grade of 70%. A minimum 60% in one semester of Mathematics (not Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) Program courses or Statistics) at the college level or a 3U or 3M Mathematics from high school with a minimum grade of 60% is also required.

**College Transfer Admission**

Admissions consideration for Concurrent Education (College Transfer) requires the successful completion of a minimum of one full year at the college level with a minimum overall GPA of 70%. Applicants must present a minimum of 70% in one semester of English or Communications at the college level (not Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) Program courses) or ENG4U from high school with a minimum grade of 70%. A minimum 60% in one semester of Mathematics (not Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) Program courses or Statistics) at the college level or a 3U or 3M Mathematics from high school with a minimum grade of 60% is also required.

## **University Transfer Admission**

Admissions consideration for Concurrent Education (University Transfer) requires the completion of a minimum of 18 credits of undergraduate study, and no more than 72 university credits (including transfer/advanced standing credits). A minimum 70% overall average on all university courses completed is required to be considered. Completion of a 3U or 3M Mathematics (or equivalent) with a minimum grade of 60% or a university or college level Mathematics (not Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) Program courses or Statistics) with a minimum grade of 60% is also required.

## **Proposed Admission Requirements for Concurrent Education**

### **Direct Entry from Secondary School**

Applicants will be required to have an admission average of 70% calculated on the best six combination of 4U/ 4M courses or equivalent including the required prerequisites for the undergraduate program applied to with Concurrent Education.

### **Upper-Year Admission**

Admissions consideration for Concurrent Education (Upper-Year Admission) requires the completion of a minimum of 18 credits of undergraduate study at Nipissing University, and no more than 60 university credits (including transfer credits). A minimum 70% overall average on all university courses completed is required for admission consideration.

### **College Transfer Admission**

Admissions consideration for Concurrent Education (College Transfer) requires the successful completion of a minimum of one full year at the college level with a minimum overall GPA of 70%.

## **University Transfer Admission**

Admissions consideration for Concurrent Education (University Transfer) requires the completion of a minimum of 18 credits of undergraduate study, and no more than 60 university credits (including transfer credits). A minimum 70% overall average on all university courses completed is required for admission consideration.

## **Rationale**

The proposed changes to the Concurrent Education admission requirements support a more equitable, transparent, and consistent admissions framework while maintaining academic standards for entry into Concurrent Education. They are intended to improve consistency, remove unnecessary barriers to qualified applicants, and align admissions practices with current sector standards while maintaining the academic integrity of the program.

The proposed changes will:

- Improve consistency across teacher education pathways by aligning Concurrent Education admission requirements with those of the Consecutive Education program. Students in both pathways complete the same Education curriculum and are ultimately held to the same academic and professional standards. However, only Concurrent Education requires minimum grades in specific English and Mathematics courses. The existence of additional subject-specific admission requirements for Concurrent Education creates an inconsistency that is difficult to justify when students in both routes are expected to succeed in the same Education courses and program outcomes.
- Align Nipissing with current provincial admission practices. A review of teacher education admission requirements indicates that Nipissing is currently the only Ontario university requiring a minimum grade in English for Concurrent Education applicants and one of only two institutions requiring a minimum grade in a Mathematics course. These unique requirements often create confusion among prospective students, parents, and guidance counsellors. Removing these requirements will simplify the admissions process and provide clearer guidance to applicants.
- Recognize limitations of minimum course grades as a measure of readiness. With the increasing concerns surrounding grade inflation in secondary schools and the growth of the private high school sector raise questions about the effectiveness of minimum course grades as a reliable measure of an applicant's actual proficiency in English or Mathematics. While these minimum thresholds may appear to assess subject-specific readiness, differences in grading practices across schools and educational settings make it increasingly difficult to ensure that such grades represent a consistent and equitable standard across all applicants.
- Allow for the reduction of unnecessary alternate offers. Over the past two admission cycles, approximately 78% of alternate offers issued to Concurrent Education applicants were the result of applicants not meeting the English and/or Mathematics minimum grade requirements. This suggests that the current requirements are a significant contributing factor to applicant redirection and may be preventing otherwise qualified students from selecting Nipissing and/or pursuing their preferred pathway. Removing these requirements will reduce unnecessary alternate offers while continuing to ensure that admitted students meet established overall admission standards.
- Streamline policies by incorporating Early Childhood Education (ECE) diploma graduates into the College Transfer admission category, as the admission requirements for both groups are currently identical.
- Align admission policy with the structure and sequencing of the Concurrent Education program. Reducing the maximum number of credits a student can have for both upper year and university transfer admission consideration ensures that students have adequate time to prepare all requirements necessary to enter their first practicum in the spring of their third year.

**Report of the**  
**ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
**Academic Year 2026-2027**

August 21, 2026

The first meeting of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee of 2026-2027 was held on Friday, August 21, 2026, in person and via Teams conference.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

|                           |             |              |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Carole Richardson (Chair) | Nancy Black | Steve Hansen |
| Barbie Law                | Beth Holden |              |
| Nathan Colborne           | Haibin Zhu  |              |

Regrets: Graydon Raymer, Debra Iafrate, Andrew Weeks, Greg Rickwood, Logan Lloyd, Dakota Lamirande

Resource Support (non-voting): Robin Gibson

Recording Secretary: S. Landriault

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm. The Chair opened with a Land Acknowledgement recognizing Nipissing First Nation Traditional Territory and the Anishinabek Nation.

**Business Arising from the Minutes**

**AQAPC Membership and Terms of Reference**

The Provost reported that efforts to add the Directors of Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives (OII) to the ex officio membership of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC) began in November 2025 and received support from the AQAPC and the By-laws and Elections Committee.

The process has taken longer than expected due to requirements under the Nipissing University Act, which mandate increased faculty representation if non-faculty voting members are added to Senate. AQAPC members expressed concern about expanding an already large committee that struggles to achieve quorum and noted existing faculty Senator vacancies.

A review of the AQAPC membership identified opportunities to streamline representation. Members agreed that:

- The Director of Institutional Planning and Analysis should be removed from ex officio membership and continue as a non-voting resource support member.
- The representative chosen by and from the Board of Governors should be removed due to longstanding vacancy and recruitment challenges.
- The undergraduate and graduate student representative positions should be removed, while retaining the NUSU Executive representative, given consistently low participation over multiple years.

Members endorsed adding the Directors of CTL and OII as ex officio voting members of the AQAPC.

Recommendation: The AQAPC recommends that the By-laws and Elections Committee revise Senate By-law 9.4 (AQAPC Terms of Reference) to remove the Director of Institutional Planning and Analysis, the Board of Governors representative, and the undergraduate and graduate student representatives from the AQAPC ex officio membership and add the Directors of CTL and OII. The recording secretary will forward the recommendation to the By-laws and Elections Committee.

**Request to Rename the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics**

The Dean of Arts and Science advised that no structural changes are being proposed. The proposed department name change is intended to reflect the Department's offering of a Minor in Physics and to align with the naming conventions used across other academic departments.

Motion 3: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by N. Black that the AQAPC approve the proposal to rename the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics to the Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics.  
CARRIED

### **Request to Reinstate Admission to the Minor in Economics**

The Committee was advised that the Economics program was suspended in February 2024 during a period when the process for suspending admissions was still being finalized. As the Provost's directive to suspend admissions did not differentiate among the Economics credentials, all offerings, including the Minor in Economics, were included in the suspension. Following a discussion at the June 12, 2026, Senate meeting, the sole faculty member in Economics requested that the Minor in Economics be reinstated. No curriculum changes have been proposed or approved for Economics programs, including the Minor, and no changes to staffing or resources have been made or requested. Existing staffing resources, consisting of one tenured Economics faculty member supplemented by occasional part-time contract instructors, are considered sufficient to support the Minor.

The AQAPC recommended to the Provost that the Minor in Economics be reinstated, while acknowledging that the final decision rests with the Provost. Members discussed the appropriate process for reinstatement, noting that the original suspension was initiated by the Provost through direction to the Registrar and did not proceed through AQAPC, Senate, or the Board of Governors. The Provost confirmed her support for reinstating the Minor in Economics and advised that the Major would remain suspended.

The Dean of Arts and Science noted that reinstatement of the Minor could establish a precedent for future requests. Members agreed that, while the decision remains within the Provost's authority, consultation with Senate is important.

Following discussion, members agreed to add a second motion recommending that Senate support the reinstatement of the Minor in Economics. AQAPC approved forwarding this recommendation to Senate for consideration, after which Senate's decision will be communicated to the Provost.

Motion 4: Moved by S. Hansen, seconded by N. Colborne that the AQAPC recommend to the Provost that the Minor in Economics be reinstated.  
CARRIED

Motion 5: Moved by S. Hansen, seconded by N. Colborne that the AQAPC recommend to Senate that the Minor in Economics be reinstated.  
CARRIED

### **Nipissing University Institutional Quality Assurance Protocol (NU-IQAP) Proposed Minor Revisions to the Steps in the Cyclical Program Review Process**

Minor housekeeping revisions to the NU-IQAP Cyclical Program Review Process (pages 13 and 18) were proposed. The Provost noted that the NU-IQAP is a living document and recommended that, on an annual basis, consideration be given to whether any updates or revisions are required. The proposed revisions will be forwarded to the Quality Council for information.

Motion 6: Moved by N. Black, seconded by B. Holden that the AQAPC adopt the minor revisions to the NU-IQAP Cyclical Program Review Process.  
CARRIED

### **Assignment of Reviewers for the Following IQAP Self-Studies**

The following AQAPC members volunteered to review the IQAP Self-Studies listed below:

- Fine Arts and Visual Arts (FAVA) – Nancy Black (*email request*)
- Criminal Justice – Haibin Zhu

The Self-Studies as well as the Quality Assurance Framework Compliance Checklists will be forwarded to the reviewers.

### **AQAPC Self-Study Quality Assurance Framework Compliance Checklists**

The Fine Arts and Visual Arts (FAVA) AQAPC Self-Study was reviewed and the Compliance Checklist completed by Nancy Black.

Motion 7: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by B. Holden that the AQAPC approve the Fine Arts and Visual Arts (FAVA) AQAPC Self-Study Quality Assurance Framework Compliance Checklist.  
CARRIED

The BA Geography/BA Environmental Geography/BSc Environment and Physical Geography AQAPC Self-Study was reviewed and the Compliance Checklist completed by Nancy Black.

Motion 8: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by B. Holden that the AQAPC approve the BA Geography/BA Environmental Geography/BSc Environment and Physical Geography AQAPC Self-Study Quality Assurance Framework Compliance Checklist.  
CARRIED

### **Election of an AQAPC Vice-Chair**

The Chair requested nominations for one faculty Senator to serve as Vice-Chair of the AQAPC. As no nominations were received, the election will be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

### **New Business/Question Period**

In response to a request for a procedural manual outlining the development of processes, recommendations, and motions, the Governance Review Committee will undertake a review of this matter. In addition, work is underway to establish standardized wording and formatting for draft Senate motions brought forward for consideration.

The next AQAPC meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 25, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Carole Richardson, PhD  
Chair, Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee

Motion 1: That Senate receive the Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated August 21, 2026.

Motion 2: That Senate approve that the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics be renamed to the Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics.

Motion 3: That Senate approve that the Minor in Economics be reinstated by the Provost.

Motion 4: That Senate approve the minor revisions to the NU-IQAP Cyclical Program Review Process.

# Proposal for Administrative Restructuring

---

## Proposal:

**Program** (if applicable): N/A

**Current Academic Unit Name/Host Faculty:** *Department of Computer Science and Mathematics*

**Proposed Academic Unit Name/Host Faculty:** *Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics*

**Proposal Contact:** *Dr. Alexandre Karassev, Chair of the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics, alexandk@nipissingu.ca*

**Motion:** To rename the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics to the Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics

## Structure

*No structure changes are proposed*

## Rationale:

*The proposed new name of the department will reflect the fact that the Department offers a minor program in Physics, as well as the fact that currently offered Physics courses are highly popular among students. The new name would be also in agreement with naming convention used for other departments (e.g. Biology and Chemistry). No effect on resource distributions and no impact for students is expected. The proposal was approved at the meeting of the Department on June 9, 2026.*

## **PROGRAM ASSESSMENT FOR REINSTATEMENT OF ADMISSION**

**Program:** Economics

**Faculty / Unit:** Department of Political Science, Philosophy, and Economics

**Degree / Credential:** Minor

**Date of Original Suspension:** February 2024

**Period of Suspension:** indefinite

**Assessment Submitted By:** Nathan Colborne, Dean of Arts & Science

**Date Submitted:** June 18, 2026

### **1. Summary Recommendation**

- ☐ Reinstatement of admission is recommended
- ☐ Reinstatement of admission is recommended with conditions
- ☐ Continuation of suspension is recommended
- ☒ Other (specify) Reinstatement of admission to the Minor in Economics

### **2. Basis for Review of Suspension**

The Economics program was suspended in February of 2024 when the process for the suspension of admission was still in flux. As the Provost's instructions to the Registrar to suspend admission to the program did not distinguish between the degrees offered in Economics, all credentials, including the Minor, were suspended. Following the June 12, 2026 Senate, the current faculty member in the Economics program requested the lifting of the suspension of admission to the Minor in Economics.

No curriculum changes have been approved or submitted regarding Economics, including the Minor. No changes to staffing or resources have been made or requested.

The requirements for a Minor in Economics as approved by Senate are the completion of 12 credits of Economics in addition to ECON 1006 and ECON 1007. Currently, ECON 1006, ECON 1007, ECON 2017, ECON 3127, and ECON 3226 are integrated into programs in the School of Business so must be offered regularly. This leaves only three additional credits that would need to be offered regularly to allow students to complete a Minor in Economics. As Minors are not guaranteed to students, obligations would be minimal and current staffing (one tenured faculty member in Economics supplemented by occasional part-time contracts) would be adequate to continue to offer the Minor.

A Minor in Economics adds value to degrees in Business, Political Science, and Geography in particular as well as any other degree with the flexibility to include Minors offered by Nipissing University. In the last 15 years, 5 students have received a Minor in Economics.

### **3. Risk Assessment**

Risks are minimal as 15 of 18 credits required for a Minor in Economics must be offered regularly, Minors are not guaranteed, and current staff complement is adequate to offer the Minor. If staffing in Economics or requirements in Business programs change, the sustainability of the Minor in Economics will need to be reassessed.

**4. Conditions or Commitments (if applicable)**

N/A

**5. Dean's Endorsement****Dean's Assessment:**

The reinstatement of the Economics Minor is feasible with current staffing levels, adds value to Nipissing University's undergraduate programs, and carries minimal risk. I endorse the reinstatement.

**Dean's Recommendation:**

- ☒ Support reinstatement
- ☐ Support reinstatement with conditions
- ☐ Do not support reinstatement at this time

**Dean Signature:****Date:****6. Submission and Review Pathway**

This Program Assessment is submitted to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic for review and academic consultation through Senate or its designated standing committee. The final determination regarding reinstatement, continuation of suspension, or submission of a proposal for program closure or redundancy rests with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, following consultation.



**Nipissing University  
Institutional Quality Assurance Protocol (NU-IQAP)**

**Governing  
Cyclical Program Reviews, New Programs  
and  
Major Modifications (Program Renewal and Significant Change)**

Recommended to Senate  
by the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee

Submitted to the Quality Council of the Council of Ontario Universities  
November 27, 2018  
Re-ratified April 26, 2019

Revised and submitted to Quality Council of the Council of Ontario Universities  
November 3, 2022  
Re-ratified May 5, 2023  
Minor Revisions recommended to Senate  
by AQAPC and approved May 9, 2025

## Purpose of Policy

Nipissing's Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP) governs the development of new programs and the review and revision of existing programs.

Quality assurance is a shared responsibility between the [Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance](#) (the Quality Council) and Ontario's universities. This collaboration ensures a culture of continuous improvement and supports a vision of a student-centred education. Quality assurance processes result in an educational system that is open, accountable, and transparent. Bringing Ontario's universities quality assurance practices into line with the latest international quality assurance standards facilitates greater international acceptance of an institute's degrees and improves graduate access to university programs and employment worldwide.

The Quality Council is the provincial body responsible for assuring the quality of degree programs/graduate diploma programs and the integrity of the universities' quality assurance processes as set by the [Quality Assurance Framework \(QAF\)](#). Every publicly assisted Ontario university that grants degrees and diplomas is responsible for ensuring the quality of its programs and for developing a policy that meets the requirements of this Framework.

Based on the [Quality Assurance Framework](#), Nipissing University has created a holistic and integrated approach to quality assurance that is built on the Guiding Principles that inform every aspect of quality assurance and provide broad terms of best practices. The most relevant Principles (4 of the 15) have been included here, as they best reflect the quality assurance processes at the university level, and support Nipissing's approach to continuous improvement.

- **Principle 1 – Experience of the Student**

The best interest of students is at the core of quality assurance activities. Quality assurance is ultimately about the centrality of the student experience in Ontario. It is about student achievement in programs that lead to a degree or diploma about ensuring the value of the university degree in Ontario, and of ensuring that our highly qualified graduates continue to be strong and innovative contributors to the well-being of Ontario's economy and society.

- **Principle 9 – Transparency**

The Quality Council operates in accordance with publicly communicated principles, policies, and procedures. Both the Quality Council's assessment process and the internal quality assurance process of individual institutions is open, transparent, and accountable, except as limited by constraints of laws and regulations for the protection of individuals.

- **Principle 13 – Continuous Monitoring and Quality Improvement**

Quality is not static, and continuous improvement should be a driver of quality assurance and be measurable. An important goal for quality assurance is to reach beyond merely demonstrating quality at a moment in time and to demonstrate ongoing and continuous quality improvement. The Quality Council is committed to sharing effective best practices in quality assurance to assist institutions in their quality improvement work.

- **Principle 14 – Expert Independent Peer Review**

Whether for new programs or cyclical review of existing programs, expert independent peer review is foundational to quality assurance.

The full set of Principles guide and inform all aspects of quality assurance while each Protocol includes a set of specific and detailed procedures that aligns with the Principles and best practices to ensure the ongoing improvement and enhancement of program offerings, specifically:

- To ensure that educational experiences of students are engaging and rigorous
- To actively monitor and review curriculum, to identify opportunities and develop plans for change, as necessary, to improve the student experience
- To meet evolving standards and measures of quality in the program and in response to the ongoing evolution of the discipline
- To focus on the continuous improvement of those facets of education that most directly impact academic experiences of students
- To ensure the continuing quality and relevance of programs to stakeholders, including the university, students, the public and the government

The IQAP and its associated Procedures establish the requirements and criteria for each of the Protocols and are in compliance with the [Quality Assurance Framework \(QAF\)](#) as developed by the [Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents \(OCAV\)](#) and have been adopted by the [Council of Ontario Universities \(COU\)](#).

Protocols governed by the IQAP include:

- [Cyclical Program Review – Section 1](#)
- [New Program Protocol - Section 2](#)
- [Expedited Approval Protocol - Section 3](#)
- [Major Modification Protocol \(Program Renewal and Significant Change\) – Section 4](#)
- [Audit Protocol – Section 5](#)

**Acronyms you may encounter in the document:**

|       |                                                   |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------|
| ACC   | Academic Curriculum Committee                     |
| AQAPC | Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee |
| ARCC  | Academic Regulations and Curriculum Committee     |
| COU   | Council of Ontario Universities                   |
| DLEs  | University Degree Level Expectations              |
| FAR   | Final Assessment Report                           |
| GDLEs | Graduate Degree Level Expectations                |
| GSC   | Graduate Studies Council                          |
| IQAP  | Institutional Quality Assurance Policy            |
| IP    | Implementation Plan                               |
| IRC   | Internal Review Committee                         |
| OCAV  | Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents       |
| OIPA  | Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis     |
| QAF   | Quality Assurance Framework                       |
| UDLEs | Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations           |

## **Table of Contents**

**Click on each content and it will take you to that section within the document!**

[Scope and Purpose of Protocols](#)

[Responsibilities and Supports](#)

[Section 1 – Cyclical Program Review Protocol](#)

[Section 2 – New Program Approval Protocol](#)

[Section 3 – Expedited Approval Protocol](#)

[Section 4 – Major Modification Protocol \(Program Renewal and Significant Change\)](#)

[Section 5 – Audit Protocol](#)

[Appendix A - Evaluation Criteria for Cyclical Program Review](#)

[Appendix B - Evaluation Criteria for New Program Approvals](#)

[Appendix C - Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations \(UDLEs\)](#)

[Appendix D – Graduate Degree Level Expectations \(GDLEs\)](#)

[Appendix E – Definitions](#)

## **Scope and Purpose of Protocols**

### **Cyclical Program Review Protocol (CPR)**

The purpose of this protocol is to assess the quality of existing academic programs and identify ongoing improvements, resulting in Final Assessment Report (FAR) and an Implementation Plan (IP) that will become the basis of a continuous improvement process through the monitoring of key performance indicators. Cyclical program review is a self-regulatory process subject to periodic audit by the Quality Council.

- All existing undergraduate degree programs, graduate degree programs, and for-credit graduate diploma programs will be subject to a periodic Cyclical Program Review conducted at a minimum once every eight years. The Office of the Provost may request a review prior to the eighth year.
- Programs that have been closed or for which admission has been suspended are out of the scope of this review.
- Cyclical Program Review is a self-regulatory process subject to periodic audit by the Quality Council with the express purpose of assessing the quality of existing academic programs and identifying ongoing improvements.

### **New Program Protocol**

The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that new academic programs are developed using internationally accepted practices and are based on the Degree Level Expectations that identify expectations of performance by graduates at a specified level of learning, e.g., Bachelor, Master and Doctoral.

- This protocol applies to new undergraduate and new graduate programs whether offered by one institution or jointly with another institution.
- New degree programs require approval by the Quality Council.

### **Expedited Approval Protocol**

The purpose of this protocol is to enable universities to secure approvals more efficiently for changes that are considered less wide-ranging than new programs and do not require an external review.

- The scope of this protocol will apply to new for-credit graduate diplomas (Types 2 and 3), major modifications that may require Quality Council approval, as well as the creation of a new standalone degree from an existing field in a graduate program.
- Final approval for this protocol rests with the Quality Council Appraisal Committee

### **Major Modification Protocol**

The purpose of this protocol is to allow for timely program renewal of existing programs on an ongoing and continuous basis. Academic units are encouraged to actively evaluate and identify revisions and modifications to curriculum and experiences that can be implemented at the University level. Major modifications will be reported annually to Quality Council.

- The scope of this protocol will include significant changes made to existing programs that are considered less than a new program and greater than a minor modification.
- The Provost will be the final arbiter in determining if a major modification should be considered a new program.

### **Audit Protocol**

The purpose of the Audit, to be conducted by the Quality Council once every eight (8) years, is to ensure transparency and accountability in the development and review of academic programs, and to assure stakeholders (students, citizens, and the government) of the international standards of Nipissing's quality assurance processes.

- This protocol will monitor the extent to which the University has improved/enhanced its quality assurance processes and practices, created an ethos of continuous improvement, and developed a

culture that supports program-level learning outcomes and student-centered learning.

- The Audit will include an evaluation of past and current practices, a review of institutional changes made in policy, procedures, and practices in response to recommendations from the previous audit, confirmation that university's practices comply with its ratified IQAP and a review of the university's approach to continuous improvement of programs.

## **Responsibilities and Supports**

### **Provost and Vice President, Academic (Provost)**

The Provost and Vice President, Academic (from here on in referred to as Provost) is the administrative authority responsible for the University's quality assurance policy and procedures and serves as Nipissing's authoritative contact with the Quality Council. The Provost is the arbiter in deciding whether a proposal constitutes a new program or a major modification. The Office of the Provost supports the day-to-day workings of the processes governed by the IQAP.

### **Deans**

The Deans are responsible for the following:

- **For Cyclical Review** – ensures that Chairs/Directors or academic units, scheduled to undergo cyclical program review, understand their roles and responsibilities; sign off on the Self-Study and Appendices; consult with the Office of Provost on the ranking of external reviewers; provide a Decanal Response to the External Reviewers' Report and Departmental Response; consult on the Implementation Plan; and, ensure academic units are considering and acting on the recommendations requiring action. The Dean will be responsible for ensuring that the academic unit submits the follow-up Monitoring Report in accordance with the deadline provided in the Final Assessment Report
- **For New Programs** – provide guidance and support for the development of new program proposals; ensure broad consultation (with interested parties including faculty, academic units and decanal councils); approval of budgets and proposed resources, review and sign-off on the Program Proposal and Appendices; consult with the Office of the Provost on the ranking of external reviewers; and completion and submission of Monitoring Reports.

### **Academic Units**

Academic Unit refers to a department or a school. Reference to a 'Chair of a department' in this policy is taken to include a Chair or Director of an undergraduate or graduate program, department or a school. Academic units will be responsible for the following:

- **For Cyclical Review** – Academic Units will be responsible for: writing the Self-Study and Appendices for degree programs/diplomas under their responsibility for cyclical program; nominating external reviewers, participating in the site visit; responding to the External Reviewers' Report; implementing and reporting on recommendations identified for action in the Implementation Plan of the Final Assessment Report; and providing a Monitoring Report.
- **For New Programs** – Academic units are often the proponents of new academic programming and are significantly involved in the development and consultation processes for new program proposals.

### **Provost's Council (PC)**

PC is the senior administrative committee that reviews and approves initial proposals for, major modifications and new programs.

### **Registrar's Office (RO)**

The Registrar's Office provides the first stage of consultation to ensure major and minor modifications and new degree programs follow the university degree structures.

## **Senate**

Senate is responsible for:

- approving the Institutional Quality Assurance Policy and any subsequent revisions,
- approving new degree programs, new graduate diplomas, major modifications to existing programs.

Senate receives:

- information on Final Assessment Reports on Cyclical Program Reviews,
- notification that the cyclical review process is completed,
- notification that Monitoring Reports for new programs have been reviewed and accepted by AQAPC.

## **Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC)**

AQAPC, a committee of Senate, is responsible for long-range academic planning, including quality assurance, in accordance with the overall academic objectives of the University and or making recommendations to Senate as necessary and appropriate. AQAPC reviews and recommends for approval to Senate all new degree programs and graduate diplomas. AQAPC – (1) initial review of program proposals prior to external review; (2) final review and approval of program documentation following external review and makes recommendations to Senate; and (3) review of Monitoring Reports. AQAPC is also responsible for recommending to Senate the termination of an existing degree program.

## **Provision of Support**

### **Teaching Hub (TH)**

The Teaching Hub provides workshops and consultations to academic units to assist in the articulation of program objectives, program-level learning outcomes and mapping of curricula against degree level expectations.

### **Registrar's Office**

The Registrar's Office provides support to academic units to ensure adherence to program and degree structures.

### **Deans**

The Deans are responsible for the following:

- **For Cyclical Review** – provides guidance and support to academic units undergoing a cyclical review; consults with academic units on recommendations identified for action and ensures that recommendations are being carried out prior to submission of the Implementation Plan.
- **For New Programs** – provides guidance and support for the development of new programs.

### **Finance Office**

At the request of the Academic Unit, the Dean(s) or Provost, the Associate Vice President Finance will review and consult on budgets for new program proposals.

### **Library**

The Library will provide a Statement of Support for new degree programs and for degree programs undergoing cyclical review. The Office of the Provost will provide the University Librarian with a list of programs coming up for cyclical review.

### **Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis (OIPA)**

- **For Cyclical Review:** OIPA collects, aggregates, and distributes institutional data to assist undergraduate academic units in writing their Self-Studies, including but not limited to enrolment, retention and graduation data as well facilitating current student and alumni surveys. This ensures data being used for

the Self-Studies are both accurate and consistent across university degree programs. Programs are responsible for providing an analysis of the data. OIPA will aim to provide data by the beginning of May of the spring that academic units are preparing their Self-Studies. The Office of the Provost will notify OIPA of upcoming reviews.

- **For New Programs:** At the request of the Academic Unit for new programs, OIPA will review and consult on budgets for new program proposals.

### **Research Office**

At the request of the Office of the Provost or the Academic Unit, the Office of Graduate Studies and Research will provide information on faculty and related research funding.

### **School of Graduate Studies**

- **For Cyclical Review of Graduate Programs:** the School of Graduate Studies will provide relevant graduate data, including but not limited to enrolment and retention, for graduate programs coming up for cyclical program review. This ensures data being used for the Self-Studies are both accurate and consistent across university degree programs. Programs will be responsible for providing an analysis of the data. The Office of the Provost will notify the School of upcoming reviews.

### **Templates**

The Office of the Provost develops and posts templates that, where appropriate, clearly reflect the Evaluation Criteria outlined in the QAF. Available templates will include the following:

- **For Cyclical Reviews:** Self-Study, Nomination of External Reviewers, External Reviewers' Report, Monitoring Reports
- **For New Degree Programs:** Program Proposal, Nomination of External Reviewers, External Reviewers' Report, Monitoring Reports

### **Workshop**

Each fall, the Office of the Provost holds a workshop for academic units who will undergo a cyclical review in the following year. Normally chairs/directors will attend the workshop. Deans may also attend. The workshop provides an overview of the cyclical review process and guidance in completing the self-study and appendices.

## **Section 1 – Cyclical Program Review Protocol**

### **1.1 Prelude**

Periodic cyclical reviews will be conducted of all undergraduate and graduate degree programs, as well as for-credit graduate diploma programs. Undergraduate and related graduate degree programs will be reviewed concurrently, as determined by the unit, but will appear separately on the schedule of reviews. Programs that have been closed or have had admissions suspended will not be part of the cyclical review process.

The Review will look closely at the key performance indicators including:

- performance by graduates at specified levels of learning (DLEs);
- clearly identified program objectives,
- articulation of program-level learning outcomes
- student achievement of the learning outcomes.

Specifically, the cyclical review process will look at the program's approach to and plans for continuous improvement of the program to ensure that educational experiences offered to students are engaging and rigorous, and that plans for monitoring the program are sufficient to ensure continuous improvement.

Continuous improvement factors significantly in the Cyclical Program Review Protocol, therefore, those facets of education that most directly impact the academic experiences of students will be considered.

- The Self-Study and External Reviewers' Reports will provide internal and external perspectives on the program's objectives, program-level learning outcomes and graduate outcomes.
- Degree level expectations, combined with the expert judgment of external disciplinary scholars, will provide the benchmarks for assessing a program's standards and quality.
- The internal response to the external report will identify changes required to maintain the quality of the academic programs and will be identified through the Final Assessment Report (FAR) and associated Implementation Plan (IP).

Broad Outcomes of the Cyclical Program Review will include recommendations:

- to ensure the continuous improvement of the program
- to provide information to help make decisions for improvements or enhancements
- to provide benchmarks for assessing program's standards and quality
- to ensure that curriculum remains relevant, current and effective
- to provide assurance of quality to students, partners and government

The key outcomes in this process will be the Final Assessment Report (FAR) and the Implementation Plan (IP), both of which will become the basis of a continuous improvement process through the monitoring of key performance indicators.

The FAR provides an institutional synthesis of the external evaluation of the program and strategies for continuous improvement, and:

- identifies significant strengths of the program;
- identifies opportunities for further program improvement and enhancement with a view towards continuous improvement;
- lists all recommendations of the external reviewers, separate internal responses and assessments
- includes any additional recommendations requiring action
- identifies who is responsible for approving the recommendations

The IP:

- sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that are selected for implementation
- identifies who is responsible for acting on the recommendations
- provides specific timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of the recommendation

## 1.2 Schedule of Reviews

The Office of the Provost establishes and maintains a Schedule of Review dates that consists of the university's full complement of undergraduate and graduate degree programs, as well as graduate diplomas. Each program must be reviewed every eight years. The Office of the Provost may request a review prior to the eighth year. New programs will be subject to an interim monitoring process after the program's first enrolment (approximately in year 4) with the first cyclical review scheduled no more than 8 years from the first enrolment.

A master list of Nipissing's review schedule will be posted to the website of the Office of the Provost. The list includes all independent offerings for each program. The plan identifies the academic unit responsible for each degree program, year of next review and year of previous review, if applicable.

**Note:** The Schedule of Reviews indicates the year in which the site visit will take place and academic units are expected to begin preparing review documentation in the academic year prior to the site visit.

**Undergraduate and related graduate programs.** Undergraduate and related graduate degree programs will be reviewed concurrently, as determined by the unit, and approved by the Provost and Dean, but will appear separately on the schedule of reviews.

**Multiple Locations and/or Modes of Delivery.** In cases where a degree program is delivered in more than one location with different faculty and resources or is offered through more than one mode of delivery, each distinct offering will occur on the master list of degree programs, though reviews of related degree programs will normally occur concurrently.

**Joint Programs with Other Institutions.** The University will work with other Quality Assurance offices to identify the date for review where a program is offered in partnership with another university and/or college, and with institutions federated and affiliated with the university.

## 1.3 Principal Components and Timelines

The Cyclical Program Review takes place over a three-to-five-year period and centres around five components.

### a) Principal Components

- **Self-Study** – a critical self-appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses and a plan for continuous improvement for the degree program from the perspective of members of the academic unit responsible for delivery of the degree program
- **External Reviewers' Report** – external evaluation of program quality by disciplinary/interdisciplinary experts including recommendations for the improvement of the degree program
- **Internal Responses by both the Program and Dean(s)** – provides internal perspective in response to External Reviewers' Report
- **Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan** – institutional evaluation by AQAPC based on the review of the Self-Study, the External Reviewers' Report, and the Responses by the academic unit(s) and the Dean(s); will include a Summary and an Implementation Plan.
- **Monitoring Report** – follow-up reporting on the principal findings of the review and the implementation

of the recommendations. The academic unit will provide detailed reporting on each recommendation identified as requiring action.

**b) Timeline:**

- Year 1– Preparation of Self-Study and Appendices (in academic year prior to site visit)
- Year 2– Site Visit (takes place in academic year indicated on Schedule of Reviews) and External Reviewers' Report submission
- Year 2– Program and Decanal Responses (prepared in response to External Reviewers' Report)
- Year 2– Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan
- Years 3-5 – Monitoring Report (academic unit will follow up on recommendations identified for action in Implementation Plan)

## **1.4 Relationship with Accreditation Processes**

In the case of programs which must also receive review by a professional accreditation body (e.g. Business, Nursing, Social Work, etc.), some review documents may be substituted for or added to those prescribed by this policy if all information required by the policy is contained and appended. The Provost will make a determination of the suitability of accreditation documents for the purposes of program review. In these cases, adaptations may be made for certain components of the program review process, but only when these elements are fully consistent with the requirements established in this Protocol.

A Record of Substitution or Addition (for elements of the CPR that are substituted or augmented with elements from an accreditation review, together with a description of the grounds on which such substitution/augmentation decisions were made), including rationales for each, must be kept and is subject to audit.

## **1.5 Joint Degree Programs**

In cases where a Nipissing degree program is offered jointly or in partnership with another institution, the Office of the Provost will work with the partner institution's counterpart office to ensure that the requirements of both institutions' quality assurance policies and procedures will be met in a way that avoids duplication and streamlines the process as much as possible. In cases where Nipissing's processes are different from the partner institution, all efforts will be made to comply with the QAF.

Specifically:

- There will be a single Self-Study that will explain how input was received from faculty, staff and students at each partner institution.
- Each partner institution will be involved in nominating, selecting and ranking of external reviewers.
- Each partner institution may include an internal representative that will participate in the site visit with the external reviewers.
- Site visits will include all partner universities and, at least where partners are institutions in Ontario, will include all sites.
- There will be a single Response to the External Reviewers' Report, prepared jointly by members of the academic units of each partner institution. There will be a single Decanal Response prepared jointly by the Deans of each partner institution.
- There will be a single Final Assessment Report (FAR) and an Implementation Plan (IP).
- The FAR will be subject to the governance processes at each partner institution and will require approval by both institutions.
- Partner institutions will agree on an appropriate monitoring process for the Implementation Plan.
- The FAR and the Implementation Plan will be posted on the websites of affiliated institutions.

## 1.6 Steps in the Cyclical Program Review Process

Site visits will be conducted in the fall or the winter. [The timing of the visit will determine the deadline for completing review documentation. A schedule will be provided by the Provost's Office with a notification of Cyclical Program Review, one year prior to the site visit.](#)

| Date of Site Visit | External Reviewer Nomination                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Completion of Self-Study & Appendices                                                                          |                                                                                           |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    | To Dean & Office of Provost                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | To Dean                                                                                                        | To Office of Provost                                                                      |
| Fall (Sept – Dec)  | March 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | August 1                                                                                                       | September 1                                                                               |
| Winter (Jan – Mar) | May 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | October 1                                                                                                      | November 1                                                                                |
| Steps              | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Documentation Required for Auditing Purposes                                                                   | Responsibility                                                                            |
| Step 1             | Notification of Cyclical Program Review                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notification Letter</li> </ul>                                          | Provost's Office                                                                          |
| Step 2             | Workshop/Orientation Session                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agenda</li> <li>Presentation</li> </ul>                                 | Provost's Office                                                                          |
| Step 3             | Preparation and Collection of Data for Self-Study & Appendices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an Internal Review Committee (IRC)</li> <li>Review/revision of Program Objectives, Program-Level Learning Outcomes, Curriculum Mapping</li> <li>Conduct surveys of current students and alumni</li> <li>Collect and compile Course Syllabuses and Curriculum Vitae</li> <li>Receive Data from OIPA/Grad Office/Research Office and Library Statement of Support</li> <li>Analyse Data</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                | Academic Unit                                                                             |
| Step 4             | Nomination, Ranking and Selection of External Reviewers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nomination and Ranking</li> <li>Letters of Invitation</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nomination Form</li> <li>Letter of Invitation</li> </ul>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic Unit</li> <li>Provost's Office</li> </ul> |
| Step 5             | Role and Selection of Internal Representative (optional)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No Documentation</li> </ul>                                             | Provost's Office                                                                          |
| Step 6             | Writing and Completion of Self-Study using Template                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-Study and Appendices</li> </ul>                                    | Academic Unit                                                                             |
| Step 7             | Dean Sign-Off on Self-Study and Appendices                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signature on Self-Study (included with Step 6 documentation)</li> </ul> | Dean                                                                                      |
| Step 8             | AQAPC Reviews Self-Study and Appendices                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance Checklist</li> </ul>                                         | Provost's Office                                                                          |

|         |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                          |                    |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Step 9  | Site (Virtual) Visit and Instructions                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site (Virtual) Visit Schedule</li> <li>• Reviewer Instructions</li> </ul>       | Provost's Office   |
| Step 10 | External Reviewers' Report                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External Reviewers' Report</li> </ul>                                           | External Reviewers |
| Step 11 | Program Response to External Reviewers' Report                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program Response</li> </ul>                                                     | Academic Unit      |
| Step 12 | Decanal Response to External Reviewers' Report                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decanal Response</li> </ul>                                                     | Dean               |
| Step 13 | Development of Final Assessment Report and the Implementation Plan to be shared with the Dean and the unit prior to distribution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAR</li> <li>• IP</li> </ul>                                                    | Provost            |
| Step 14 | FAR Approval and Distribution                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAR with Provost's Signature</li> <li>• QC Letter of Review</li> </ul>          | Provost's Office   |
| Step 15 | Monitoring Report by Academic Units<br>(Completed 2 years after site visit)                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring Report</li> </ul>                                                    | Academic Unit      |
| Step 16 | Dean Signs Off Monitoring Report                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signature on Monitoring Report (included with Step 15 documentation)</li> </ul> | Dean               |
| Step 17 | AQAPC Reviews Monitoring Report                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AQAPC Minutes</li> </ul>                                                        | Provost's Office   |
| Step 18 | Notification that the Review is Complete                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of Completion</li> </ul>                                                 | Provost's Office   |

### Step 1 – Notification of Cyclical Program Review

In the academic year prior to site visit, the Office of Provost notifies the academic units of degree programs that will be reviewed in the following year. This notification will specifically indicate distinct offerings for each program.

### Step 2 – Workshop/Orientation Session

The Provost's Office organizes workshop(s) for academic units to review cyclical review process and required steps to complete self-study and appendices.

### Step 3 – Preparation & Collection of Data for Self-Study & Appendices

Establish an Internal Review Committee (IRC) to prepare the self-study document. The role of the IRC is to prepare the self-study document based on broad consultation with faculty, students and staff and to respond to the external reviewer report based on input from the academic unit. The IRC will select its Chair. The composition of the IRC will consist of a minimum of one faculty member from the program under review, a faculty member from another program who is at arm's length from the program under review, and one upper-year student and one student from first or second year who are majoring in the program under review.

In the academic year prior to the site visit, the academic unit will:

- Develop/review/revise Program Objectives, Program-Level Learning Outcomes, Curriculum Mapping

- Conduct surveys of current students and alumni
- Collect and compile Course Syllabi and Curriculum Vitae
- Receive data from OIPA, Grad Studies, Office of Research
- Receive Library Statement of Support
- Begin/complete analysis of data

A number of supports are available to assist academic units in the preparation and completion of cyclical review documentation. See [Provision of Support](#)

#### Step 4 – Nomination, Ranking and Selection of External Reviewers

- For Fall site visits (September to December) – Nomination Form due March 1<sup>st</sup>
- For Winter site visits (January to March) – Nomination Form due May 1st

**Number of Reviewers Required**

| Degree Program                        | External Reviewers |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Undergraduate                         | 2 reviewers        |
| Graduate                              | 2 reviewers        |
| Concurrent Undergraduate and Graduate | 2-3 reviewers      |

##### a) Qualifications of External Reviewers

- Be Associate or Full Professors
- Have suitable disciplinary expertise, qualifications, and experience in developing, assessing and/or managing degree programs
- Have combined professional experience to cover the majority areas of study and/or fields of expertise
- At least one of the reviewers will have expertise in teaching and learning – content and program delivery, assessment/evaluation, curriculum mapping, and learning outcomes
- In the case of graduate degree programs, have experience with graduate teaching and supervision
- Be at arm's length.

##### b) Arm's Length Requirement

An arm's length peer reviewer is an external disciplinary expert who has not been a supervisor, collaborator, departmental colleague (past or present) or co-author of faculty members in the previous six years, and who does not have personal connections with members of the academic unit or:

- Be a close friend or relative of a member of the Academic Unit or of someone with whom the Academic Unit has consulted
- Have been a supervisor within the past six years of a member of any academic unit involved in the development of the proposal for the program being reviewed
- Have been a student within the past six years in any academic unit involved in the development of the proposal for the program being reviewed, or
- Have received an undergraduate or a graduate degree from Nipissing in the past six years.

##### c) Process

The Office of the Provost will notify academic units of the deadline for submission of Nominations of External Reviewers. Members of the academic unit are not to contact possible external reviewers for any reason. The academic unit will complete the Nomination of External Reviewers' template that includes the names and required information of no fewer than six qualified persons who they are nominating to serve as external reviewers, all of whom are to be at arm's length.

- If there are **two or more distinct areas of study** within the degree program(s) to be reviewed, all efforts will be made to ensure a balance of external reviewers with the required expertise. Areas of expertise should be clearly identified for each nominated external reviewer.
- In the case of a **concurrent review of an undergraduate degree program(s) and a related graduate degree program(s)**, nominated external reviewers should be qualified by discipline and experience to review both program levels.
- In the case of **joint programs**, the list of External Reviewers will be developed jointly with the partner institution(s).

The completed **Nomination of External Reviewers' form** will be sent to the Dean(s). On behalf of the Academic Unit, the Dean(s) will submit the Nominations of External Reviewers to the Office of the Provost.

#### **d) Ranking of External Reviewers**

The Office of the Provost will develop a ranked list of nominated external reviewers. In the case of degree programs to be offered jointly with another institution, the Office of the Provost will develop a ranked list of External Reviewer(s) in consultation with the partner institution.

#### **e) Invitation to External Reviewers**

The Office of the Provost will contact the proposed reviewers in ranked order.

### **Step 5 – Role and Selection of Internal Representative (optional)**

The inclusion of an internal representative will be optional and whether to have an internal will be determined by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the Dean(s).

#### **a) Role of Internal Representative (Optional)**

Using his/her knowledge of institutional practices and culture, the internal faculty representative facilitates the work of the External Reviewers during the site visit. The internal representative accompanies the external reviewers throughout the site visit and attends meetings with the Dean(s), Chair(s) and/or Director(s), faculty, students, and staff. The internal representative does not participate in the writing of the External Reviewer Report, except to answer questions, as appropriate.

#### **b) Process**

The Dean(s) under whose authority the degree program(s) is being delivered will provide a list of potential faculty members from within the appropriate division. Based on previous experience and past practice, the University has determined that the internal should be from within the same decanal division and not from the academic unit whose program is being reviewed.

#### **c) Joint Program**

The selection of an internal faculty member requires joint input and may include one internal member from each partner institution, or preference may be given to an internal member from another academic unit offering a joint program, preferably with the same partner institution.

An additional member, appropriately qualified and experienced, may be assigned from industry or the professions at the discretion of the Provost, in consultation with the Dean.

### **Step 6 – Writing and Completion of Self-Study Using Template**

The academic unit(s) responsible for a program(s) under review will prepare a Self-Study using the Self-Study

template and data collected in Step 3. The template is designed to incorporate all Evaluation Criteria as outlined in [Appendix A](#).

#### **a) Writing of Self-Study – Participation and Involvement**

The Self-Study will describe extent of participation of faculty, staff and students. Indicate how the Self-Study was written, including how the views of faculty, staff, and students were obtained. All faculty in the program(s) being reviewed should be involved in the writing and/or review of the Self-Study and Appendices; this includes partnering institutions; academic units that share responsibility for the program, and faculty from all degree programs where multiple degree programs are being reviewed. The Self-Study document may include the views of others deemed to be relevant, including staff, students, graduates of the degree program(s), representatives of industry, related professions, and practical training programs, and employers, as appropriate. In the case of professional programs, the views of employers and professional associations should be solicited through surveys and be incorporated into the review. The views of staff and students will be considered in the process of writing the self-study.

#### **b) Components of Self-Study**

The Self-Study will:

- Be broad-based, reflective, forward-looking
- Address how continuous improvement has been incorporated into processes and practices to improve/enhance student experience and program quality
- Be a critical analysis of each degree program being reviewed; an assessment of program strengths; and opportunities to improve and enhance the program
- For the first Cyclical Review of a new program, include steps taken to address any issues/items flagged in the Monitoring Report for follow-up and items identified for follow-up by the Quality Council during the approval process
- Describe how concerns and recommendations raised in previous reviews have since been addressed, specifically those marked for follow-up in the FAR, the Implementation Plan and subsequent Monitoring Reports.
- Address each of the required Evaluation Criteria as outlined in [Appendix A](#)
- Include program-related data and measures of performance, including applicable provincial, national and professional standards (where available)
- Identify any unique curriculum or program innovations, creative components or significant high impact practices.
- Describe areas that the program's faculty, staff and /or students have identified as requiring improvement, or as holding promise for enhancement and/or opportunities for curricular change
- Assess the adequacy of all relevant services and supports that directly contribute to the academic quality of each program under review

#### **c) University Priorities**

Academic units may reflect on University priorities, commenting on the following initiatives and how each is integrated into or reflected in the offering of the program: through program objectives, program-level learning outcomes, curriculum, program delivery, instruction and/or student recruitment:

- Indigenization
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Anti-Racism

#### **d) Multiple Programs Being Reviewed**

In cases where multiple programs are being reviewed, academic units will discuss with the Office of the Provost

whether one or more self-studies should be developed. In cases where multiple programs are being presented in one self-study, the self-study will:

- Review and clearly identify and discuss each distinctive offering (e.g., mode of delivery) of the program throughout the self-study template
- Explicitly address quality of each program and learning environment of students in each program
- Identify the program objectives, program-level learning outcomes, and complete curriculum mapping for each degree program.

### Step 7 – Dean Sign-Off on Self-Study and Appendices

The Self-Study and Appendices will be submitted to the Dean(s) for review. Where the head of an academic unit whose program(s) is being reviewed is a Dean, the Self-Study and Appendices will be submitted directly to the Office of the Provost.

The Dean(s) will provide feedback and facilitate improvements. When the Dean(s) is satisfied that the documentation is complete and accurate, they will sign off on the document and submit it to the Office of the Provost for distribution to AQAPC.

### Step 8 – AQAPC Reviews Self-Study and Appendices

The AQAPC is responsible for ensuring the self-study and appendices address all the evaluation criteria for the program review. ~~Two members~~Members, outside of the academic unit~~s~~ being reviewed, will review the Self-Study and Appendices, and complete the compliance checklist provided by the Office of the Provost. The applicable Dean(s) typically attend the AQAPC meeting. AQAPC will either approve the documentation or advise the unit of revisions to be considered. The academic unit will be given the opportunity to make revisions prior to distribution to the External Reviewers. Once revisions are completed, the documentation is ready to be distributed to the External Reviewers.

### Step 9 – Site Visit and Instructions

Once the Self-Study has been approved by AQAPC, it is ready for external review.

#### a) On-Site or Virtual Site Visit

- External review of a new doctoral program will incorporate an on-site visit.
- External review of a new undergraduate program proposal will normally be conducted on-site, except when the Provost (or delegate) may propose that the review be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit, or equivalent method if the external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable;
- External review of a new master's program proposal will normally be conducted on-site, but certain new master's program's (e.g., professional master's programs) may be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit, or equivalent method if both the Provost (or delegate) and external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable. An on-site visit is required for all other proposed master's programs.

#### b) Site Visit Schedule

The Office of the Provost will oversee the arrangements for the in-person or virtual site visit. An in-person site

visit will normally be scheduled for two to three consecutive days. A virtual site visit may be scheduled over a longer period of time. The Office of the Provost will assist with travel and accommodation arrangements.

The Office of the Provost will draft the schedule for the site visit in consultation with the academic unit. External reviewers will typically meet with the Provost, relevant Dean(s), Chair(s)/Directors(s), faculty, and students. An in-person site visit may include a tour of facilities and the library. The Office of the Provost has final approval of the schedule.

### **c) Documentation to Share with External Reviewers**

The Office of the Provost will provide External Reviewers and the internal representative (optional) with review documentation.

Documentation will include:

- Nipissing's Institutional Program Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP) – that will include Evaluation Criteria and Degree Level Expectations
- Self-Study and Appendices (course syllabuses, faculty CVs, data, student surveys, library statement of support)
- Template for External Reviewers' Report. The template includes all Evaluation Criteria set by the Quality Council (see [Appendix A](#))
- Site Visit Schedule

### **d) Pre-Meeting** (For both in-person and virtual site visits)

A pre-meeting of the external reviewers and the internal representative (optional) will be scheduled to provide guidance and direction. The Office of the Provost will review the instructions with the external reviewers, explain their roles and obligations, and respond to any questions related to documentation, process, and the final report.

Reviewers will be asked to recognize the University's autonomy to determine priorities for funding, space, and faculty allocation and respect the confidentiality of all aspects of the review process. The external reviewer(s) will also be invited to contact the Office of the Provost should any questions arise during the review process.

## **Step 10 – External Reviewers' Report**

**Timing:** One month following site visit

The External Reviewers will submit one joint report, using the Template provided, to the Office of the Provost. The preference is for one report with a distinct set of recommendations for each program under review. There may be situations, as determined by the Office of the Provost, where separate reports may be submitted.

a) **Preliminary Feedback.** The External Reviewers will provide preliminary oral feedback to the Provost (or designate) before the conclusion of the site visit.

b) **Substance of Report.** The Report will:

- Address the substance (clarity and completeness) of the Self-Study.
- Address all required Evaluation Criteria as specified in [Appendix A](#).
- Address the quality of each academic program and the learning environment of the students for each distinct program being reviewed in the Self-Study.
- Describe the program's strengths. Identify and commend distinctive attributes of each discrete program (i.e., multiple campuses, online), identify any notable strong and creative and/or clearly

innovative aspects. Provide evidence of any significant innovation or creativity in the content and/or delivery of the program relative to other such programs.

- Describe areas for improvement and opportunities for enhancement – include at least three (3) recommendations for specific steps that will lead to the continuous improvement of the program, distinguishing between those the program can act upon and those that require external action.
- Respect the confidentiality required for all aspects of the review process.
- Recognize the university's autonomy to determine priorities for funding, space and faculty allocation. Recommendations related to resources, specifically faculty and space requirements must be directly linked to issues of program quality and/or sustainability.

- c) **Special Instructions.** In addition, External Reviewers may be asked to respond to any additional questions from the Provost/Dean(s) in their final report. Such instruction may include a request to respond to:
- Issues of special concern identified for the degree program(s) under review, for example, appropriateness of the curriculum, breadth of the curriculum, enrolment levels, recruitment, quality of the permanent or limited-term faculty, adequacy of staffing, space or equipment, program-specific library resources, etc.; and/or
  - Concerns and/or recommendations raised in previous external reviews
  - For initial reviews, issues identified in the 'Notes' from the Quality Council's approval letter
- d) **Submission of Report.** The Report(s) should be submitted electronically to the Provost no later than one month from the date of the site visit or desk audit. The Report should be complete and comprehensive (see Step 10b), and specifically include a minimum of three distinct recommendations for specific steps that will lead to the continuous improvement of each distinct program under review.

Upon receipt of the External Reviewers' Report, the Report will be reviewed by the Office of the Provost to ensure that it provides a comprehensive assessment of the degree program(s). If the Report is not satisfactory, the Office of the Provost, in consultation with the Dean(s) will identify any gaps and request additional information from the External Reviewers.

e) **Distribution of Report**

Once the Report is deemed satisfactory, the Office of the Provost will distribute the External Reviewers' Report to the Chair/Director of the academic unit. The External Reviewers' Report is considered a confidential document and will be distributed to the Chair/Director. Where appropriate, any confidential and/or sensitive information will be redacted prior to distribution. Confidential/sensitive information will be discussed with the Dean, and any action taken will be determined in consultation with the Office of the Provost.

### Step 11 – Program Response to External Reviewers' Report

**Timing:** One month from date of request from Office of Provost

The Office of the Provost will ask the Chair/Director to provide a Response from their academic unit to the External Reviewers' Report and specifically to the Report's recommendations. The Chair/Director will consult with members of the academic unit in finalizing a Response. The Response will be submitted to their Dean within one month of the request.

### Step 12 – Decanal Response to External Reviewers' Report and Program Response

**Timing:** One month from receiving response from academic unit

After receipt of the Response by the academic unit, the Dean(s) will provide a written Response within one month, responding to the plans/recommendations proposed in the External Reviewers' Report, and the Program's Response. The Dean will respond to each of the recommendations identified in the External Reviewers' Report, specifically addressing:

- Any changes in curriculum, program organization, policy or governance necessary to meet the recommendations.
- Any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided to support the implementation of those recommendations requiring resources; and
- A proposed timeline for the implementation of any recommendations.

***Exception to Decanal Response:*** In cases where the Dean is the Divisional Head (e.g., Nursing, Education), a joint response will be prepared by the faculty and the Dean.

### Step 13 –Development of Final Assessment Report (FAR) & the Implementation Plan (IP)

**Timing:** Normally, six (6) months following site visit

The Office of the Provost will review the Self Study, External Reviewers' Report, Academic Unit and Decanal Responses and will develop and finalize the FAR and share it with the Dean and the unit prior to distribution. An Executive Summary of the Final Assessment Report will become the public document; therefore, it will not include any confidential or personal information.

The **Final Assessment Report / Executive Summary** will include the following:

- A clear and accountable synthesis of the outcome of the cyclical review and the plans to improve the program.
- A timeline for the key elements of the program's review process:
  - a. The timing of when the review was launched;
  - b. The date the self-study was submitted/approved;
  - c. The site visit dates;
  - d. When the external reviewers' report was received;
  - e. When the program's response was received; and
  - f. When the Dean's response was received.
- A summary of the groups and individuals (by role) met with during the (in person or virtual) site visit.
- A summary of the outcome(s) of the review, including:
  - a. That the Senate (or equivalent) QA Committee has approved the FAR and IP
  - b. When a monitoring report(s) is due
  - c. When the next Cyclical Review of the program is scheduled to take place, with an expected timing for the associated site visit (e.g., Fall of 2027)
- A summary of the program's strengths and opportunities for further improvement and enhancement.
- A summary of the number of recommendations received, potentially by theme.

The **Implementation Plan** will:

- Identify those recommendations needed to maintain the quality of the programs, and promotes the ongoing and continuous improvement of the program; this process will require looking at key performance indicators of the program
- Set out and prioritize the recommendations that are selected for implementation and/or action
- Identify appropriate timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of the recommendations

- Identify and explain the circumstances related to any recommendations that will not be implemented
- Identify who will be responsible for the timely implementation and monitoring of the recommendations (e.g., Dean(s), University Librarian, Chair of a department, Director of a graduate degree program)
- If applicable, identify the source(s) of any additional resources required to implement the recommendations (e.g., Provost, Dean)

Confidential information will be excluded from the FAR and will be documented separately; documentation will be shared with and handled in consultation with the appropriate Dean(s) and the Provost.

#### Step 14 – FAR Approval and Distribution

The Provost will approve the Final Assessment Report and the Office of the Provost will be responsible for the timely distribution of the Final Assessment Report to the following:

- Relevant Dean(s)
- Academic Unit (chairs/directors) to take responsibility and act on as appropriate (with confidential information removed)
- AQAPC for information
- Senate (for information, with confidential information removed)
- Quality Council for information
- Board of Governors for information
- An Executive Summary and Implementation Plan becomes the public document and is posted to the University's website. The Executive Summary will not contain any confidential and/or personnel information. Academic units are not required to post the FAR or Executive Summary on their own websites.

#### Step 15 – Monitoring Report

**Timing:** Normally, two (2) years following approval of Final Assessment Report; a shorter or longer time may be recommended based on complexity of recommendations marked for action.

The Chair/Director will be responsible for executing the identified recommendations in consultation with the Dean(s). The Dean(s) will be responsible for ensuring that the academic unit implements the recommendations and submits the follow-up Monitoring Report in a timely manner. The Office of the Provost will remind academic units and Deans of upcoming deadlines.

#### Step 16 – Dean signs off Monitoring Report

The Dean will review Monitoring Report and sign off and forward to the Office of the Provost.

#### Step 17 – AQAPC reviews Monitoring Report

AQAPC reviews the Monitoring Report to ensure that the program has satisfactorily addressed the recommendations identified for action in the Implementation Plan. AQAPC may request additional information, and in some cases may require a follow-up report from the academic unit.

## Step 18 – Notification that Review is Complete

Once AQAPC accepts the Monitoring Report, the cyclical review for that degree program is completed, and is reported to: Chairs/Directors of reviewed degree programs, Dean(s) under whose authority the degree program(s) being reviewed is offered; and Senate (for information).

### 1.7 Publication of Documentation

#### a) Documents Subject to ‘Public Access’

The following documents will be posted publicly on the university’s website:

- Schedule of Reviews
- Final Assessment Reports (with Exec Summary and Implementation Plan)
- Monitoring Reports

#### b) Documents Not Subject to ‘Public Access’

Given the highly sensitive nature of the documentation used in the cyclical program review process, in which academic units and external reviewers are asked to be critical in their evaluations, the documents produced will be deemed confidential. Institutional failure to protect the confidentiality of the documents could seriously impair frank appraisal, discourage free flow of analytical information, and compromise the efficacy of the review process.

The following documents will be deemed to be confidential and therefore not subject to ‘public access’:

- Information made available in preparation for the Self-Study
- Specialized instructions to the External Reviewers
- Self-Study and Appendices
- External Reviewers’ Reports
- Internal Responses of the Academic Unit and Dean(s); a summary of the academic and decanal responses will be included in the Final Assessment Report, absent confidential information.

#### c) External Reporting

The Office of the Provost will submit an annual report to the Quality Council listing the past years completed FAR’s, IP’s and monitoring reports providing an attestation that all IQAP-required CPR processes have been followed. The report will include a link to Nipissing’s quality assurance web postings.

## **Section 2 – New Program Approval Protocol**

### **2.1 Prelude**

The development of new undergraduate and graduate programs will ensure that educational experiences are both engaging and rigorous. New programs will meet the degree level expectations, which are the academic standards of Ontario universities that identify expectations of performance by graduates at a specified level of learning, e.g., Honours, Master, and Doctoral.

The process will look closely at the key performance indicators including degree level expectations, program objectives, program-level learning outcomes, student achievement of learning outcomes, as well as the instructional and physical resources needed to achieve the program-level learning outcomes.

The program proposal will include a plan for the continuous improvement of the program, and the interim monitoring report will review and evaluate the program's success in realizing its objectives.

The monitoring of a new program is an essential element of continuous improvement, not only in the development of the program but also for the monitoring and continuous improvement of the program once the new program is running.

### **2.2 Approval Requirements and Timelines**

New degree programs and graduate diplomas must be approved by Nipissing University's Senate and by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council). The Office of the Provost manages the approval process for new program development and will direct and facilitate the process through the approval stages.

**a) Approval by Senate** – Following the internal procedures laid out below, the Chair of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning (AQAPC) will submit a new program proposal to Senate for approval.

**b) Approval by the Quality Council** – The Office of the Provost will send Senate-approved proposals to the Quality Council for approval. Decisions on a proposed new degree program are normally received within 45 days of submission. When the Appraisal Committee of the Quality Council requires additional information, decisions will normally be made within a further 30 days of the Committee receiving a satisfactory response to its request. The Appraisal Committee will make a decision on Graduate Diplomas whereas new programs require the approval of Quality Council.

### **2.3 Intention to Offer New Programs and Offers of Admission**

**Intention to Offer New Program** – Subject to approval by the Provost, the University may publicly announce its intention to offer a new undergraduate or graduate degree program in advance of having received approval by the Quality Council. When such announcements are made in advance of Quality Council approval, they must contain the following statement: 'Prospective students are advised that the program is subject to formal approval' as per QAF 2.7 Public announcement of new programs.

**Offers of Admission** – Students cannot be admitted to a new degree program until notification of approval of the degree program has been received from the Quality Council.

## **2.4 Joint Degree Programs**

In cases where a proposed new degree program will be offered jointly or in partnership with another institution, the Office of the Provost will work with the partner institution's counterpart office to streamline the process to meet requirements of both institutions' quality assurance policies and procedures and avoid duplication. In cases where Nipissing's processes are different from the partner institution, all efforts will be made to comply with the QAF.

Specifically:

- Representatives from each institution will be members of the Academic Unit.
- Each institution will be involved in the consultation and development of the Program Proposal.
- Each partner institution will be involved in nominating, selecting and ranking of external reviewers.
- Site visits will include all partner institutions, at least where partners are institutions in Ontario.
- There will be a coordinated single internal response by the Academic Unit to the External Reviewers' Report.

| 2.5 Steps | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Documentation Required for Auditing Purposes                                                                                                          | Responsibility                                      |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Step 1    | In-Principal Approval by Provost/Provost Council                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | • Letter of Intent                                                                                                                                    | • Provost's Office                                  |
| Step 2    | Development of Full Program Proposal and Appendices using Template <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation – faculty, academic units, Decanal Councils</li> <li>• Budget – in consultation with Dean(s) and Finance Office</li> <li>• Program Objectives, Program Level Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Mapping</li> <li>• New Course Development Frameworks at a high-level structure</li> <li>• Current Syllabuses Collection</li> <li>• CVs – Collection of Faculty CVs</li> <li>• Library – Statement of Support</li> </ul> | Program Proposal and Appendices                                                                                                                       | Academic Unit                                       |
| Step 3    | Dean Sign-Off on Program Proposal and Appendices                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Dean Signature on Proposal                                                                                                                            | Dean                                                |
| Step 4    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nomination, Ranking and Selection of External Reviewers</li> <li>• Nomination and Ranking</li> <li>• Letters of Invitation</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Nomination Form<br>Ranking confirmation<br>Letter of Invitation                                                                                       | Academic Unit<br>Provost Office<br>Provost's Office |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                     |
| Step 5    | AQAPC Initial Review – of Program Proposal and Appendices                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | AQAPC Minutes/Report                                                                                                                                  | Provost's Office                                    |
| Step 6    | Site Visit and Instructions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Site Visit Schedule<br>Reviewer Instructions                                                                                                          | Provost's Office                                    |
| Step 7    | External Reviewers' Report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | External Reviewers Report Template                                                                                                                    | External Reviewers                                  |
| Step 8    | Academic Unit's Response to External Reviewers' Report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Academic Unit's Response                                                                                                                              | Academic Unit                                       |
| Step 9    | Dean's Response to External Reviewers' Report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Dean's Response                                                                                                                                       | Dean                                                |
| Step 10   | AQAPC Final Review – of Program Proposal, External Reviewers' Report, Academic Unit's Response, Dean's Response; AQAPC recommends program to Senate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | AQAPC Minutes/Report                                                                                                                                  | Provost's Office                                    |
| Step 11   | Senate for Approval                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Senate Minutes                                                                                                                                        | Senate                                              |
| Step 12   | Submission and Approval by Quality Council and Ministry of Colleges and Universities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Quality Council Approval Letter<br>Ministry Approval Letter                                                                                           | Provost's Office                                    |
| Step 13   | Follow-up and Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Program Description to Website</li> <li>• Verbal Update to Senate</li> <li>• Report to Board of Governors (BoG)</li> <li>• Add to Schedule of Reviews</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link to program description</li> <li>• BoG Annual Report</li> <li>• Year of First Cyclical Review</li> </ul> | Provost's Office                                    |
| Step 14   | Implementation Window and Monitoring Report to AQAPC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Monitoring Report                                                                                                                                     | Provost's Office                                    |

## Step 1 – Initial Letter of Intent (LOI) Approval

The initial idea for a new degree program may come from several different sources, including groups of faculty members one or more academic units, administration, and collaborations with other institutions. The initial idea for a new degree program will be discussed with the Dean(s) under whose authority the degree program would be delivered.

The Dean, in consultation with the proponents of the new degree program, will develop a Letter of Intent for the new degree program (template available upon request). The Dean(s) will take the Letter of Intent to the Provost Council for discussion and in-principle approval. Should the Provost grant in-principle approval, the Dean(s) will direct the Academic Unit to move forward with developing a Full Program Proposal. If the Provost does not think that the proposal merits further development, it will direct feedback to the proponents through the Dean(s). An amended Initial Proposal may be reconsidered by the Provost at a later date.

## Step 2 – Development of Full Program Proposal and Appendices

A number of supports are available to assist academic units in the preparation of the new program proposal and appendices. See **Provision of Support**.

### a) Template and Evaluation Criteria

The Academic Unit will prepare, and complete in full, a proposal for a new degree program for approval, using the Program Proposal Template that:

- Includes required Evaluation Criteria as specified in [\*Appendix B \(as defined in QAF\)\*](#)
- Indicates if the program is a 'professional' or 'cost-recovery' program
- Highlights unique curriculum or program innovations, creative components, or significant high impact practices.

### b) University Priorities

Academic units may reflect on University priorities, commenting on the following initiatives and how each is integrated into or reflected in the offering of the program: through program objectives, program-level learning outcomes, curriculum, program delivery, instruction and/or student recruitment:

- Indigenization
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Anti-Racism

### c) Consultation

The Academic Unit is encouraged to begin early consultations and continue consulting throughout the entire process of the new degree program development to allow for feedback and comment. Recommended consultation should include affected/interested parties, including:

- Members of academic units who may be affected by the proposed degree program or who have expertise relevant to the proposal
- Faculty Councils - Deans will announce at their faculty councils that a proposal for a new degree program is being developed; Chairs/Directors will convey this information to their academic units as appropriate
- Where applicable, include input and perspectives of potential employers and professional associations
- Where possible, consultation should include students.

### d) Proposed Budget

The Academic Unit will work closely with their Dean to develop a proposed budget for the new program. The

budget is for internal use only; it will be submitted to AQAPC and Senate. The proposed budget is an estimate of proposed resources; actual resources will be dependent upon a number of factors including enrolment. Proposed budgets should be shared with OIPA and the Associate Vice-President, Finance in the Finance Office for review and comment.

**e) Program Objectives, Program-Level Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Mapping**

The Teaching Hub is available to assist with the development of program objectives, program-level learning outcomes, course-level learning outcomes and curriculum mapping.

**f) New Course Development and Course Syllabi Collection**

New course frameworks should be developed at a high-level structure and appendices should include a collection of current course syllabuses.

**g) Curriculum Vitae**

CVs for faculty involved with the degree program should be collected and compiled into an Appendix.

**h) Library Statement of Support**

The Academic Unit should request from the University Librarian a report showing the extent to which the library resources can support the new degree program.

**i) Office of Research**

Graduate programs should include information on research funding and grants. Academic Unit should request this information from the Office of Research.

**Step 3 – Dean Sign-Off on Program Proposal and Appendices**

The Dean will review the Program Proposal and Appendices and recommend revisions as appropriate. The Dean will review the document for accuracy and clarity and will be responsible for ensuring resources are acceptable and reasonable as presented in the proposed budget. Once the Dean(s) has signed off on the completed Program Proposal, the proposal will be forwarded to the Office of the Provost for distribution to AQAPC.

**Step 4 – Nomination, Ranking and Selection of External Reviewers**

| Number of Reviewers Required     |                                                                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Degree Program                   | External Reviewers                                                       |
| Undergraduate                    | 2 reviewers                                                              |
| Graduate                         | 2 reviewers                                                              |
| Joint Undergraduate and Graduate | 2 external reviewers, plus internal reviewers, one from each institution |

**a) Qualifications of External Reviewers – will normally:**

- Be Associate or Full Professors
- Have suitable disciplinary expertise, qualifications and experience in developing, assessing and/or managing degree programs
- Have combined professional experience to cover the majority areas of study and/or fields of expertise.
- At least one of the reviewers will have expertise in teaching and learning – content and program delivery, assessment/evaluation, curriculum mapping, and learning outcomes
- In the case of graduate degree programs, have experience with graduate teaching and supervision
- Be at arm's length.

### **b) Arm's Length Requirement**

An arm's length peer reviewer is an external disciplinary expert who has not been a supervisor, collaborator, departmental colleague (past or present) or co-author of faculty members in the previous six years, and who does not have personal connections with members of the academic unit or:

- Be a close friend or relative of a member of the Academic Unit or of someone with whom the Academic Unit has consulted
- Have been a supervisor within the past six years of a member of any academic unit involved in the development of the proposal for a new degree program
- Have been a student within the past six years in any academic unit involved in the development of the proposal for a new degree program, or
- Have received an undergraduate or a graduate degree from Nipissing in the past six years.

### **c) Process**

The Nomination of External Reviewers should be submitted to the Office of the Provost as soon as the Dean(s) has signed off on the Program Proposal. This enables the Office of the Provost time to confirm the availability of the external reviewer(s). Members of the Academic Unit are not to contact possible external reviewers for any reason.

The Academic Unit will complete the Nomination of External Reviewers' template that includes the names and required information of at least six qualified persons who they are nominating to serve as external reviewers of the proposed degree program, all of whom are to be at arm's length.

- If there are two or more distinct areas of study within the proposed degree program, all efforts will be made to ensure a balance of external reviewers with the required expertise. Areas of expertise should be clearly identified for each nominated external reviewer.
- In the case of joint programs, the list of External Reviewers will be developed jointly with the partner institution(s).

The completed Nomination of External Reviewers' form will be sent to the Dean(s). On behalf of the Academic Unit, the Dean(s) will submit the Nominations of External Reviewers to the Office of the Provost.

### **d) Ranking and Selection**

The Office of the Provost, in consultation with the Dean(s), will develop a ranked list of nominated external reviewers. In the case of a degree program to be offered jointly with another institution, the Office of the Provost will develop a ranked list of External Reviewer(s) in consultation with the partner institution. The Office of the Provost will contact the proposed reviewers in ranked order.

## **Step 5 –AQAPC Initial Review**

The Dean will forward the Program Proposal to the Office of the Provost, who will submit it to AQAPC for review. The documentation will include the Program Proposal and Appendices, including the budget. AQAPC will review the documentation and may approve the Program Proposal as submitted or ask for revisions prior to the Office of the Provost forwarding the Program Proposal for external assessment.

## **Step 6 – Site Visit and Instructions**

Once the Program Proposal for a new degree program has been approved by AQAPC, it is ready for external review.

**a) Site Visits: In-person, Virtually or Desk Review**

- External review of a new doctoral program will incorporate an on-site visit.
- External review of a new undergraduate program proposal will normally be conducted on-site, except when the Provost (or delegate) may propose that the review be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit, or equivalent method if the external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable;
- External review of a new master's program proposal will normally be conducted on-site, but certain new master's program's (e.g., professional master's programs) may be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit, or equivalent method if both the Provost (or delegate) and external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable. An on-site visit is required for all other proposed master's programs.

**b) Site Visit Schedule**

The Office of the Provost will oversee the arrangements for the in-person or virtual site visit. An in-person visit will normally be scheduled for one to two days, whereas a virtual site visit may be scheduled over a longer period. The Office of the Provost will assist with travel and accommodation arrangements. The Office of the Provost will be responsible for drafting the schedule for the site visit. External reviewers will typically meet with the Provost, relevant Dean(s), Chair(s)/Directors(s) and faculty. An in-person site visit may include a tour of facilities and the library. The Office of the Provost has final approval of the schedule.

**c) Documentation to Share with Reviewers**

The Office of the Provost will provide external reviewers with review documentation normally no less than two weeks prior to the site visit.

Documentation will include:

- Nipissing University's IQAP Policy and Procedures, including Evaluation Criteria and Degree Level Expectations
- Program Proposal and Appendices, including Library Statement of Support, Course Syllabuses and Faculty CVs
- Template for the External Reviewers' Report. The template includes all Evaluation Criteria set by the Quality Council (see [Appendix B](#))
- Site Visit Schedule.

**d) Pre-Meeting – For both in-person and virtual site visits**

A pre-meeting of the external reviewers will be scheduled to provide guidance and direction. The Office of the Provost will review the instructions with the external reviewers, explain their roles and obligations, and respond to any questions related to documentation, process, and the final report.

**e)** Reviewers will be asked to recognize the University's autonomy to determine priorities for funding, space, and faculty allocation and respect the confidentiality of all aspects of the review process. The external reviewer(s) will also be invited to contact the Office of the Provost should any questions arise during the review process.

**Step 7 – External Reviewers' Report**

**Timing:** One month following site visit

External reviewers will submit one joint report using the External Reviewers' Report Template provided by the Office of the Provost.

**a) Substance of Report.** The Report will:

- Address the substance (clarity and completeness) of the New Program Proposal
- Address all required Evaluation Criteria as specified in [Appendix B](#)
- Address the quality and learning environment of the program
- Describe the program's strengths. Identify, commend and provide evidence of any distinctive attributes of the program, identify any notable strong and creative and/or clearly innovative aspects, including significant innovation or creativity in the content and/or delivery of the program relative to other such programs.
- Describe areas for improvement and opportunities for enhancement.
- Include a Summary and a clearly defined list of recommendations that are clear, concise and actionable to improve and/or enhance the quality of the program
- Respect the confidentiality required for all aspects of the review process.

Recognize the university's autonomy to determine priorities for funding, space and faculty allocation. Recommendations related to resources, specifically faculty requirements must be directly linked to issues of program quality and/or sustainability.

**b) Submission of Report**

The final report will be submitted electronically to the Office of the Provost no later than one month from the date of the visit (on-site, virtually or desk).

Upon receipt of the External Reviewers' Report, the Report will be reviewed by the Office of the Provost to ensure that it provides a comprehensive assessment of the new program. If the Report is not satisfactory, the Provost, in consultation with the Dean(s) identify any gaps and request additional information from the External Reviewers.

**c) Distribution of Report**

Once the Report is deemed satisfactory, the Office of the Provost will distribute the External Reviewers' Report to the Academic Unit Chair/Director. Where appropriate, any confidential and/or sensitive information will be redacted prior to distribution.

**d) Honorarium**

Upon satisfactory completion of the External Reviewers report, each reviewer will receive an Honorarium for their work. The Office of the Provost will administer the Honorarium.

## Step 8 – Academic Unit's Response

The Academic Unit will prepare a response to the External Reviewers' Report that will address each of the recommendations; the response may include further explanation or details in response to the comments or recommendations.

- If minor revisions are required, it is expected that these will be detailed in the Academic Unit's Response
- For substantial revisions, the Academic Unit will revise the Program Proposal using track changes. A

detailed summary of these revisions will be included as part of the Academic Unit Response or in an appended document with the formal response. The Academic Unit will submit their response to the Dean(s).

### Step 9 – Dean’s Response

The Dean(s) will provide a response to the External Reviewers’ Report, that is separate from that of the Academic Unit, to each of the recommendations. In cases where a Dean is the Working Chair for a new Program Proposal, members of the Academic Unit will prepare a response independently from the Dean; the Dean will provide a separate response.

**Exception to Decanal Response:** *In cases where the Dean is the Divisional Head (e.g., Nursing, Education), a joint response will be prepared by the Academic Unit and the Dean.*

### Step 10 –Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee’s Final Review

AQAPC will review the final Program Proposal, the External Reviewers’ Report, the Academic Unit’s Response and Dean’s Response. Relevant Dean(s) will be invited to attend AQAPC. AQAPC will assess whether the new degree program meets Nipissing’s quality assurance standards, and will make one of the following determinations:

- Recommends to Senate for approval
- Requests modifications
- Recommends that the proposal not be pursued further

Should AQAPC request modifications or recommend that the proposal not be pursued further, the Dean or the Office of the Provost will convey the committee’s views to the Academic Unit.

### Step 11 – Senate for Approval and Faculty Council for Information

The Final Program Proposal and related documentation (with confidential and/or sensitive information removed) will be shared with Faculty Council for information and Senate for approval.

Documentation will include:

- Program Proposal,
- Budget,
- Executive Summary of the External Reviewers’ Report,
- Academic Unit’s Response,
- Dean’s Response.

The Dean and/or a member of the Academic Unit will be called upon to speak to the proposal and/or to answer questions.

If Senate does not approve the recommendation from AQAPC, the Provost, in consultation with the Dean, will determine the next step, which may include modification of the proposal or discontinuation of the initiative.

### Step 12 – Submission and Approval by Quality Council

Once Senate has approved a proposal for a new degree program, the Office of the Provost will submit the program to the Quality Assurance Secretariat. The submission to the Quality Council will be a single, clearly bookmarked PDF file arranged in the order required by the Quality Assurance Appraisal Committee (see the

Quality Assurance Submission Checklist).

**a) Documentation to Quality Council will include:**

- Quality Assurance Submission Checklist
- Program Proposal
- Appendices (excluding CVs and Budget)
- External Reviewers' Report
- Academic Unit's Response
- Dean's Response
- Letter of Support from the Provost.

The submission will also include:

- A Checklist (with a summary of key changes as required)
- Date approved by Senate
- Bios for external reviewers specifically indicating qualifications in the following areas: sufficient expertise in content and program delivery; connections to industry (where appropriate); and expertise in teaching and learning.

**b) Quality Council Decision**

The Quality Council Appraisal Committee will review the proposal and may request clarification and/or additional information. Once satisfied, they will make a recommendation to Quality Council, who in turn will review the proposal and make one of the following recommendations:

- i) Approved to Commence
- ii) Approved to Commence with Report – The University will be required to report on specified issues with a pre-determined deadline, e.g., one to three years from program commencement
- iii) Deferred for up to one year during which time the university may address identified issues and report back
- iv) Not Approved
- v) Such other action as the Quality Council considers reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances.

The Quality Assurance Secretariat will convey the decision of the Quality Council to the university. Requests for clarification and follow-up will be handled by the Office of Provost, and internally by the Dean(s) with the Chair/Director of the Academic Unit.

If approved by the Quality Council, the Office of the Provost will submit the approved proposal to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities for approval and program funding.

**c) Public Announcement of new programs**

The Provost may publicly announce its intention to offer a new undergraduate or graduate program in advance of receiving approval by the Quality Council with the following statement: *"Prospective students are advised that the program is still subject to formal approval."*

**d) Appeals and Resubmissions**

Should the Quality Council not grant approval to commence, the Provost, in consultation with the Dean(s), will reassess the proposal considering the Quality Council's comments and will determine whether to amend and resubmit the brief, appeal the decision, or discontinue the proposal. When the recommendation is ii), iii) or iv), the University has 30 days to request a meeting with and/or reconsideration by the Appraisal Committee.

Should the decision be made to amend and resubmit, the Dean(s) will work with the Academic Unit to develop a

revised proposal. The Provost can approve minor changes made to the original proposal; major changes will be reviewed and/or approved through Senate Committees (ACC for changes to degree requirements or new courses, AQAPC for approval of the revised Full Proposal). When AQAPC deems that the revised Full Proposal for the new degree program addresses the issues highlighted by the Quality Council, it will be resubmitted to the Quality Assurance Secretariate for approval.

### **Step 13 – Follow Up and Reporting**

#### **a) Description of Program**

Will be posted on the Office of the Provost's website once the program is approved by the Quality Council.

#### **b) Senate**

Senate will be verbally informed of decisions of the Quality Council.

#### **c) Reports to Board of Governors**

The Provost will keep the Board of Governors regularly apprised of new degree program proposals, normally in an annual report.

### **Step 14 – Implementation Window and Monitoring of a New Degree Program**

#### **a) Implementation Window**

After a new degree program is approved to commence by the Quality Council and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, the degree program must begin within 36 months of the date of approval; otherwise, the approval from the Quality Council will lapse.

#### **b) Monitoring Report**

The purpose of the monitoring report is to ensure that the degree program has been successfully initiated and to identify early, and work to address, any unforeseen implementation issues. There is an element of continuous improvement that ensures a program that is recently launched is closely monitored to identify challenges and issues with the program and address them in a timely manner.

- The Dean, in consultation with the Chair, Director or Program Coordinator, will provide a monitoring report to the Office of the Provost for distribution to the AQAPC on a new degree program, normally after the degree program has been operating for five years. In cases where enrolment is low in the first few years, the date for submitting a Monitoring Report may be delayed. The Monitoring Report will take place after the program's launch and prior to the program's first cyclical review.
- The Monitoring Report will address any issues identified in the 'Notes' provided by the Quality Assurance's Appraisal Committee and will include an evaluation of the program's success in realizing its objectives, requirements and outcomes, as originally proposed and approved, as well as any changes that have occurred in the interim.
- AQAPC will review the Report prepared by the Dean, in consultation with the Chair, Director or Program Coordinator, and determine if it is sufficient or if additional information is required. Senate will be notified that AQAPC has accepted the Monitoring Report.
- The ongoing monitoring process of the new program will continue to consider issues identified in the report, and the Office of the Provost will ensure that any concerns from the Monitoring Report are included in the first Cyclical Review.

## **2.6 Process**

### **Graduate Diploma Note**

The approval process for proposing a new graduate diploma will follow an abbreviated process of the new program approval as diplomas are not subject to external assessment. Steps 1, 2, 3 and 5 will be required as will Steps 12 through 15.

## **2.7 Publication of Documentation**

The following documentation will be published to the website:

- Description of New Program – once approved by Quality Council`

## **2.8 First Cyclical Program Review**

The first cyclical review for any new degree program must be conducted no more than eight years after the date of the degree program's initial enrolment. The degree program will be added to the Cyclical Schedule of Reviews.

Issues identified in the Monitoring Report and any 'Notes' from Quality Council's approval letter will be addressed in the first Cyclical Review.

## **Section 3 – Expedited Approval Protocol**

### **3.1 Prelude**

This protocol is designed to ensure that decisions can be made quickly and efficiently to launch new graduate diploma programs or program changes in a timely manner, e.g., to meet upcoming term application deadlines, support innovation., etc.

The protocol for Expedited Approvals applies to:

- New Graduate Diploma – Types 2 and 3
- Expedited Major Modifications – as determined by the Provost
- Creation of new standalone degree from an existing field in a graduate program

Expedited proposals are granted in a shorter time with less required documentation and do not require an external review. Proposals sent to the Appraisal Committee for Expedited Approval require Senate approval and will follow the processes set out in Section 2.6 Graduate Diploma Note for new Graduate Diplomas and Section 4 – for Major Modifications. Expedited proposals will be submitted to Quality Council for approval following Senate approval.

### **3.2 Graduate Diplomas – Types 2 and 3**

The approval process for proposing a new graduate diploma will follow an abbreviated process of the New Program Approval Protocol and will not be subject to external assessment. Steps 1, 2, 3 & 5 and Steps 12 through 15 will be required, as per the required Evaluation Criteria (QAF 2.1.2).

In cases where a Graduate Diploma is not associated with a parent graduate program, it is recommended (not required) that an external Desk Review be conducted.

Once approved by Senate, the program will be submitted to Quality Council's Appraisal Committee for decision:

- i. Approved to Commence
- ii. Approved to Commence with Report
- iii. Not Approved.

### **3.3 Expedited Major Modifications**

The Provost will determine if a Major Modification to an existing program should be sent to the Quality Council's Appraisal Committee for expedited approval rather than reported to Quality Council in the Annual Report on Major Modifications. In such cases, these will be referred to as 'expedited major modifications'.

### **3.4 Creation of new standalone degree from an existing field in a graduate program**

A program may choose to create a standalone degree from a long-standing field provided it has undergone at least two Cyclical Program Reviews and has had at least two graduating cohorts.

The internal approval process will follow that of Graduate Diplomas (2 and 3), an abbreviated process of the New Program Approval Protocol, Steps 1, 2, 3 and 5 and Steps 12 through 15, as per the required Evaluation Criteria (QAF 2.1.2). Once approved by AQAPC, the recommendation will move forward to Senate for approval, followed by submission to Quality Council's Appraisal Committee for approval.

### **3.5 Final Decision of Appraisal Committee**

The Appraisal Committee will make one of the following decisions:

- iv. Approved to Commence
- v. Approved to Commence with Report
- vi. Not Approved.

## **Section 4 – Major Modification Protocol** **(Program Renewal and Significant Change)**

### **4.1 Prelude**

The Major Modification Protocol encourages and reinforces the ongoing and continuous improvement of programs and associated curriculum. Academic units are encouraged to have a plan in place to actively monitor key performance indicators (i.e., program structure, requirements, objectives, learning outcomes, assessment and student achievement) that will help them identify modifications to the program that will improve and enhance the quality of the program. The University values the importance of this self-reflection and self-assessment to ensure the delivery of high-quality programming and student learning and experiences.

Major Modifications may be made to:

- Implement the outcomes of cyclical program review;
- Reflect the ongoing evolution of the discipline;
- Accommodate new developments in a particular field;
- Facilitate improvements in teaching and learning strategies;
- Respond to the changing needs of students, society and industry; and/or
- Respond to improvements in technology.

The distinction between major modifications and new programs can, at times, be difficult to determine. The Quality Council has the final authority to decide if a major modification constitutes a new program. In such a case, the submission must follow the Protocol for New Programs.

### **4.2 Definition and Examples of Major Modifications**

Major modifications result in substantial changes to an existing program requirement, learning outcomes, faculty complement, or delivery mode, usually creating significant new choices or experiences for students, but not as considerable as to qualify as a new program. The Provost, in consultation with the Deans and the Office of the Registrar, will determine what constitutes a significant modification, and hence qualifies as a major modification, or is a minor modification or a new program.

Major modifications typically include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- a) Requirements that differ significantly from those existing at the time of the previous cyclical program review, for example:**
  - course requirements comprising more than one third of the entire program
  - a merger of two programs
  - The introduction or deletion of an undergraduate thesis or capstone project
  - The introduction or deletion of a work experience, co-op option, internship or practicum, or portfolio
- b) Change to at least one third of the program-level learning outcomes.**
- c) Significant changes to the program's delivery, including:**
  - 50% or more of the program's faculty;
  - Loss of or addition to the essential physical resources, where these changes impair or enhance the delivery of the approved program.
  - the existing mode(s) of delivery (e.g., different campus and/or changes to online/hybrid delivery impacting 30% or more of program, introduction or deletion of full- or part-time program options). For more detail on mode of delivery changes, please see 4.3.

- d) Change in program name and/or degree nomenclature, when this results in a change in learning outcomes; and/or
- e) Addition of a single new field to an existing graduate program.

#### 4.3 Considerations for Changes to Mode of Delivery

When changing the mode of delivery of a program to online for all or a significant portion of a program that was previously delivered in-person, consideration of the following criteria is strongly encouraged as part of the approval process for the proposed major modification:

- a) Maintenance of and/or changes to the program objectives and program-level learning outcomes.
- b) Adequacy of the technological platform and tools.
- c) Sufficiency of support services and training for teaching staff.
- d) Sufficiency and type of support for students in the new learning environment; and
- e) Access.

#### 4.4 Program Closure

Program closures will not be considered a Major Modification. These closures will be recommended by Faculty Executive to AQAPC and Senate for approval.

#### 4.5 Submission Process for Major Modifications

An academic unit intending to propose a major modification to an existing program will submit a Letter of Intent to the Dean using the appropriate template. The Dean will present the LOI to the Provost for in-principle approval. If granted in-principle approval, the academic unit be notified to complete the full Proposal for Major Modification template and submit it to Academic Regulations and Curriculum Committee (ARCC) (if an undergraduate program) or Graduate Studies Council (GSC) (if a graduate program). Upon approval, the proposal will next move to Faculty Executive, then ACC (if an undergraduate program), and then Senate. If the Provost determines the Major Modification may require substantial changes to resources/infrastructure, the proposal will also need to be heard at AQAPC following ACC (for undergraduate programs) or GSC (for graduate programs).

The proposal for a **major modification** to a program will include:

- A detailed description of the change to the program along with rationale for those changes
- Discussion of the modification's relationship to the University's Strategic Plan and the approved Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA).
- Consideration of the changes in regard to the previous cyclical program review, where appropriate
- Details of existing and new resources (human, physical and budgetary) required to modify the program.
- Proposed program requirements if the curriculum will change along with this modification
- An indication of how the change aligns with the relevant program objectives and program-level learning outcome(s); or changes to the objectives and learning outcomes
- Details of the appropriateness of the proposed mode(s) of delivery to facilitate students' successful completion of the program-level learning outcomes
- An assessment of how students will be impacted as well as a statement as to how the modification will improve the student experience

- Evidence of consultation with all affected academic units; consultation will include input from current students and recent graduates
- Evidence that the Dean has been consulted.

#### **4.6 Annual Reporting**

The Registrar's Office will maintain a list of major modifications approved by Senate that will be reported by the Office of the Provost in the Annual Report to the Quality Council. The Annual Report will reflect the period from July to June and will include a summary of major program modifications, including program closures approved through the internal approval process. Note that major modifications are not normally subject to the institution's Cyclical Audit.

#### **4.7 Other Program Changes**

Changes to an existing Emphasis, Option, or Minor Program; the creation of a new micro-credential(s); undergraduate certificate(s); and laddering, stacking or similar options, or comparable elements that do not rise to the level of a Major Modification will follow an internal approval process as follows:

- Academic Unit
- ARCC (for undergraduate studies) or GSC (for graduate studies)
- Faculty Executive
- ACC (for undergraduate studies)
- Senate

## **Section 5 – Audit Protocol**

### **5.1 Prelude**

Cyclical Audit provides the necessary accountability to post-secondary education's principal stakeholders, students, government, employers, and the public, by assessing the degree to which a university's internally defined quality assurance processes, procedures, and practices align with and satisfy the internationally agreed upon standards, as set out in the Quality Assurance Framework.

The University will be subject to a Cyclical Audit at least once every eight years. The scope of this protocol will include an evaluation of past and current practices; review of institutional changes made in policy, procedures, and practices in response to recommendations from the previous audit; confirmation that university's practices comply with its ratified IQAP; and review of the university's approach to continuous improvement.

Specifically, the Audit will:

- Evaluate past and current practices
- Review institutional changes made in policy, procedures and practices in response to the recommendations from the previous audit
- Confirm that university's practices comply with its IQAP as ratified by the Quality Council and note any misalignments of its IQAP with the QAF
- Review the university's approach to continuous improvement.

### **5.2 Outcomes of Audit Report**

The Audit Report describes the extent to which the institution is compliant with its quality assurance policies and achieves best practice. Based on the findings in its Report, the Audit Committee will make recommendations about future oversight by Quality Council and/or one or more of its Committees, and may include any of the following:

- Direct specific attention of issue(s) to auditors in the subsequent audit
- Schedule a larger selection of programs for the university's next audit
- Require a Focused Audit. A Focused Audit may be required in cases where at least one Cause for Concern has been identified. The Audit will focus on specific areas of concern and follow similar steps to the Cyclical Audit. A Focused Audit does not replace the Cyclical Audit.
- Adjust the degree of oversight and any associated requirements for more or less oversight.

### **5.3 Key Elements and Process for Cyclical Audit**

#### **a) Pre-Audit Orientation Briefing**

The University will participate in a pre-audit orientation/briefing with the Quality Council Secretariat and an Audit Team member approximately one year prior to the scheduled Cyclical Audit. The purpose of this briefing will be to outline the expectations of the cyclical audit.

#### **b) Selection of Sample Programs for Audit**

The Audit Team will select a sample of programs for audit that represent the New Program Approval Protocol and the Cyclical Program Review Protocol as described in the Quality Assurance Framework. New programs approved and existing programs that have undergone cyclical review since the previous Cyclical Audit will be eligible for selection in the University's next Cyclical Audit. The audit process cannot reverse the approval of a program to commence.

A small sample of new programs or cyclical program reviews in progress may be selected, and in these cases, documentation will not be required. In these cases, auditors will meet with program representatives to gain a better understanding of current quality assurance practices in the institution.

Programs created or modified through the Protocols for Expedited Approvals and Major Modifications are not normally subject to the institution's Cyclical Audit.

**c) Institutional Self-Study**

The university will prepare a self-study that presents and assesses its quality assurance processes, including challenges and opportunities, within its own institutional context. The self-study will include the process undertaken to prepare the self-study, flag any issues from the previous audit, and most importantly, reflect on current policies and practices that demonstrate the university's focus on continuous improvement. The self-study will be submitted to the Quality Assurance Secretariat in advance of the desk audit and will form the foundation of the Cyclical Audit.

**d) Process and Documentation**

In its preparation, the Provost, Deans, and relevant committees will be consulted and requested to provide input. The Office of the Provost will be responsible for the preparation of the self-study and for submission of Audit documentation to the Quality Council Secretariat, including:

- Relevant documents and other information related to the programs selected for audit, as requested by the Audit Team
- Record of any revisions of the university's IQAP, as ratified by the Quality Council
- Annual Report of any minor revisions of the University's IQAP that did not require Quality Council re-ratification.

**e) Desk Audit and Site Visit**

The Audit Team will review documentation prior to a two-to-three-day site visit. During the site visit, the Audit Team will meet with the university's senior academic leadership, quality assurance staff, and representatives from programs selected for audit. The purpose of the visit will be to gain a sufficiently complete and accurate understanding of the university's application of its IQAP, and to specifically address any information gaps that may arise during the desk audit and to assess the degree to which the institutions' quality assurance practices contribute to continuous improvement of its programs.

**f) Audit Report and Summary**

The Audit Report includes an assessment of the overall performance of the university and includes recommendations to the Quality Council, based on their assessment. The Audit Report will focus on compliancy with the University's IQAP; misalignment of the IQAP with the Quality Assurance Framework; identifying and recording notable effective policies or practices; and the university's approach to ensuring continuous improvement in quality assurance through the implementation of the outcomes of cyclical program reviews and the monitoring of new programs. The Report will include findings in the form of:

- Recommendations that will require an institutional response
- Causes for Concern that are potential structural and /or systemic weaknesses
- Suggestions to strengthen quality assurance practices

**g) Focused Audit**

When an Audit Report identifies at least one Cause for Concern, the University will participate in a Focused Audit as recommended by the Audit Committee. This Audit will require closer scrutiny and further support to

address the specific area(s) of concern.

**h) Follow-up Response by University and Auditors' Report on the University's Response**

- Follow-up. The University may be required to respond to the Audit Report, within the recommended timeframe for submission, by detailing the steps taken to address the recommendation and/or any Causes for Concern.
- Associated Auditors' Report. The Audit Team will report on the institution's sufficiency of response. Once satisfied, the Audit Committee will submit a recommendation to the Quality Council to accept the university's follow-up response and associated auditors' report.

**5.4 Publication of Documentation**

The following documentation will be publicly posted to the University's website, absent any confidential information:

- Audit Report (excluding addendum)
- Follow-Up Response Report (to Audit Report)
- Auditors' Response Report
- Focused Audit Report

## **Appendix A**

### **Evaluation Criteria for Cyclical Program Review**

Existing undergraduate and graduate programs will be evaluated against the following criteria as set out in the Quality Assurance Framework (5.1.3.1)

#### **1. Objectives**

- a) Consistency of the program's objectives with the institution's mission and academic plans.

#### **2. Program Requirements**

- a) Appropriateness of the program's structure and the requirements to meet its objectives and the program-level learning outcomes.
- b) Appropriateness of the program's structure, requirements and program-level learning outcomes in meeting the institution's own undergraduate or graduate Degree Level Expectations
- c) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the mode(s) of delivery to facilitate students' successful completion of the program-level learning outcomes
- d) Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study

#### **3. Program Requirements for Graduate Programs Only**

- a) Clear rationale for program length that ensures that students can complete the program-level learning outcomes and requirements within the time required
- b) Evidence that each graduate student in the program is required to take a minimum of two-thirds of the course requirements from among graduate level courses
- c) For research-focused graduate programs, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.

#### **4. Assessment of Teaching and Assessment**

- a) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the methods for assessing student achievement of the program-level learning objectives and degree level expectations.
- b) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the plans to monitor and assess:
  - i. The overall quality of the program
  - ii. Whether the program continues to achieve in practice its objectives
  - iii. Whether its students are achieving the program-level learning outcomes
  - iv. How the resulting information will be documented and subsequently used to inform continuous program improvement

#### **5. Admission Requirements**

- a) Appropriateness of the program's admission requirements given the program's objectives and program-level learning outcomes
- b) Sufficient explanation of alternative requirements, if applicable, for admission into graduate, second-entry or undergraduate program, e.g., minimum grade point average, additional languages or portfolios, and how the program recognizes prior work or learning experience

#### **6. Resources**

Given the program's class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

- a) Participation of a sufficient number of qualified core faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in and achieve the goals of the program and foster the appropriate academic environment
- b) If applicable, discussion/explanation of the role and approximate percentage of adjunct and part-time faculty/limited term appointments used in the delivery of the program and the associated plans to ensure the sustainability of the program and quality of the student experience
- c) If required, provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities

- d) Adequacy of the administrative unit's utilization of existing human, physical and financial resources
- e) Evidence that there are adequate resources to sustain the quality of scholarship and research activities produced by students, including library support, information technology support, and laboratory access.

#### **7. Resources for Graduate Programs Only**

Given the program's class sizes and cohorts, as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

- a) Evidence that faculty have the recent research or professional/clinical expertise needed to foster an appropriate intellectual climate, sustain the program, and promote innovation
- b) Where appropriate to the program, evidence that financial assistance for students is sufficient to ensure adequate quality and numbers of students
- c) Evidence of how supervisory loads are distributed, in light of qualifications and appointment status of the faculty

#### **8. Quality and Other Indicators**

- a) Evidence of the quality of the faculty (e.g., qualifications, funding, honours, awards, research, innovation and scholarly record, appropriateness of collective faculty expertise to contribute substantively to the program and commitment to student mentoring)
- b) Any other evidence that the program and faculty ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience
- c) For students: grade-level for admission, scholarly output, success rates in provincial and national scholarships, competitions, awards and commitment to professional and transferable skills, and times-to-completion and retention rates.

## **Appendix B**

### **Evaluation Criteria for New Program Approvals**

New undergraduate and graduate programs will be evaluated against the following criteria as set out in the Quality Assurance Framework (2.1.2)

#### **1. Program Objectives**

- a) Clarity of the program's objectives
- b) Appropriateness of degree nomenclature given the program's objectives
- c) Consistency of the program's objectives with the institution's mission and academic plans

#### **2. Program Requirements**

- a) Appropriateness of the program's structure and the requirements to meet its objectives and program-level learning outcomes
- b) Appropriateness of the program's structure, requirements and program-level learning outcomes in meeting the institution's undergraduate or graduate Degree Level Expectations
- c) Appropriateness of the proposed mode(s) of delivery to facilitate students' successful completion of the program-level learning outcomes
- d) Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study

#### **3. Program Requirements for Graduate Programs Only**

- a) Clear rationale for program length that ensures that students can complete the program-level learning outcomes and requirements within the proposed time
- b) Evidence that each graduate student in the program is required to take a minimum of two-thirds of the course requirements from among graduate-level courses
- c) For research-focused graduate programs, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion

#### **4. Assessment of Teaching and Learning**

- a) Appropriateness of the methods for assessing student achievement of the program-level learning outcomes and degree level expectations
- b) Appropriateness of the plans to monitor and assess:
  - i. The overall quality of the program
  - ii. Whether the program is achieving in practice its proposed objectives
  - iii. Whether its students are achieving the program-level learning outcomes
  - iv. How the resulting information will be documented and subsequently used to inform continuous program improvement

#### **5. Admission Requirements**

- a) Appropriateness of the program's admission requirements given the program's objectives and program-level learning outcomes
- b) Sufficient explanation of alternative requirements, if applicable, for admission into a graduate, second-entry or undergraduate program, e.g., minimum grade point average, additional languages or portfolios, and how the program recognizes prior work or learning experience

#### **6. Resources**

Given the program's planned/anticipated class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

- a) Participation of a sufficient number and quality of core faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in and achieve the goals of the program and foster the appropriate academic environment
- b) If applicable, discussion/explanation of the role and approximate percentage of adjunct and part-time

faculty/limited term appointments used in the delivery of the program and the associated plans to ensure the sustainability of the program and quality of the student experience

- c) If required, provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities
- d) Adequacy of the administrative unit's planned utilization of existing human, physical and financial resources including implications for the impact on other existing programs at the university
- e) Evidence that there are adequate resources to sustain the quality of scholarship and research activities produced by students, including library support, information technology support, and laboratory access
- f) If necessary, additional institutional resource commitments to support the program in step with its ongoing implementation

#### **7. Resources for Graduate Programs Only**

Given the program's planned/anticipated class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

- a) Evidence that faculty have the recent research or professional/clinic expertise needed to sustain the program, promote innovation, and foster an appropriate intellectual climate
- b) Where appropriate to the program, evidence that financial assistance for students will be sufficient to ensure adequate quality and number of students
- c) Evidence of how supervisory loads will be distributed, in light of qualifications and appointment status of the faculty

#### **8. Quality and Other Indicators**

- a) Evidence of the quality of the faculty (e.g., qualifications, funding, honours, awards, research, innovation and scholarly record; appropriateness of collective faculty expertise to contribute substantively to the program and commitment to student mentoring)
- b) Any other evidence that the program and faculty will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience

## Appendix C

### Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UDLEs)

Formulated by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents (OCAV) and affirmed by Nipissing University Senate February 15, 2011

| Expectations                      | General Bachelor's Degree                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Honours Bachelor's Degree                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge | <p>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following</p> <p>a) a general knowledge and understanding of many key concepts, methodologies, theoretical approaches and assumptions in a discipline;</p> <p>b) a broad understanding of some of the major fields in a discipline, including, where appropriate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and how the fields may intersect with fields in related disciplines;</p> <p>c) an ability to gather, review, evaluate and interpret information relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline;</p> <p>d) some detailed knowledge in an area of the discipline;</p> <p>e) critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline; and</p> <p>f) the ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline.</p> | <p>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following</p> <p>a) a developed knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts, methodologies, current advances, theoretical approaches and assumptions in a discipline overall, as well as in a specialized area of a discipline;</p> <p>b) a developed understanding of many of the major fields in a discipline, including, where appropriate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and how the fields may intersect with fields in related disciplines;</p> <p>c) a developed ability to: gather, review, evaluate and interpret information; and compare the merits of alternate hypotheses or creative options, relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline;</p> <p>d) a developed, detailed knowledge of and experience in research in an area of the discipline;</p> <p>e) developed critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline; and</p> <p>f) the ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline.</p> |
| 2. Knowledge of Methodologies     | <p>... an understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques; and</li> <li>• devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>... an understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques;</li> <li>• devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods; and</li> <li>• describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 3. Application of Knowledge       | <p>a) the ability to review, present, and interpret quantitative and qualitative information to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop lines of argument; and</li> <li>• make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>a) the ability to review, present and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative information to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop lines of argument;</li> <li>• make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| <b>Expectations</b>                   | <b>General Bachelor's Degree</b><br>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Honours Bachelor's Degree</b><br>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                       | <p>methods of the subject(s) of study;<br/>b) the ability to use a basic range of established techniques to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analyze information;</li> <li>• evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study; and</li> <li>• propose solutions; and</li> </ul> <p>c) the ability to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.</p>                                                                                                                        | <p>the subject(s) of study;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the discipline; and</li> <li>• where appropriate use this knowledge in the creative process;</li> </ul> <p>b) the ability to use a range of established techniques to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• initiate and undertake critical evaluation of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and information;</li> <li>• propose solutions;</li> <li>• frame appropriate questions for the purpose of solving a problem;</li> <li>• solve a problem or create a new work; and</li> <li>• c) the ability to make critical use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.</li> </ul> |
| 4. Communication Skills               | ... the ability to communicate accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | ... the ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 5. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge   | ... an understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and how this might influence their analyses and interpretations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | ... an understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analyses and interpretations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 6. Autonomy and Professional Capacity | <p>a) qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement and other activities requiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making; and</li> <li>• working effectively with others;</li> </ul> <p>b) the ability to identify and address their own learning needs in changing circumstances and to select an appropriate program of further study; and</p> <p>c) behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.</p> | <p>a) qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement and other activities requiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts;</li> <li>• working effectively with others; decision-making in complex contexts;</li> </ul> <p>b) the ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline and to select an appropriate program of further study; and c) behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.</p>                                                                                                               |

**Appendix D**  
**Graduate Degree Level Expectations (GDLEs)**

Formulated by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents (OCAV) and affirmed by Nipissing University Senate February 15, 2011

| Expectations                         | Master's Degree                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Doctoral Degree                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge    | This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following<br><br>A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following<br><br>A thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 2. Research and Scholarship          | A conceptual understanding and methodological competence that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enables a working comprehension of how established techniques of research and inquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;</li> <li>• Enables a critical evaluation of current research and advanced research and scholarship in the discipline or area of professional competence; and</li> <li>• Enables a treatment of complex issues and judgments based on established principles and techniques; and,</li> </ul> On the basis of that competence, has shown at least one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development and support of a sustained argument in written form; or</li> <li>• Originality in the application of knowledge.</li> </ul> | a) The ability to conceptualize, design, and implement research for the generation of new knowledge, applications, or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the research design or methodology in the light of unforeseen problems;<br>b) The ability to make informed judgments on complex issues in specialist fields, sometimes requiring new methods; and<br>c) The ability to produce original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, and to merit publication. |
| 3. Level of Application of Knowledge | Competence in the research process by applying an existing body of knowledge in the critical analysis of a new question or of a specific problem or issue in a new setting.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | The capacity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake pure and/or applied research at an advanced level; and</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of academic or professional skills, techniques, tools, practices, ideas, theories, approaches, and/or materials.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 4. Professional Capacity/ Autonomy   | a) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exercise of initiative and of personal responsibility and accountability;</li> <li>• Decision-making in complex situations; and</li> </ul> b) The intellectual independence required for continuing professional development;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | a) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex situations;<br>b) The intellectual independence to be academically and professionally engaged and current;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| <b>Expectations</b>                 | <b>Master's Degree</b><br><br>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Doctoral Degree</b><br><br>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                     | c) The ethical behavior consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research; and<br>d) The ability to appreciate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts. | c) The ethical behavior consistent with academic integrity and the use of appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct of research; and<br>d) The ability to evaluate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts. |
| 5. Level of Communication Skills    | The ability to communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly.                                                                                                                                                                                               | The ability to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas, issues and conclusions clearly and effectively.                                                                                                                                                    |
| 6. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge | Cognizance of the complexity of knowledge and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.                                                                                                                                | An appreciation of the limitations of one's own work and discipline, of the complexity of knowledge, and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.                                                                   |

## APPENDIX E

### Definitions

**Academic Curriculum Committee (ACC):** ACC is a committee of Senate, which engages in on-going review and oversight of all matters related to undergraduate studies, (including degree and program requirements), to the criteria and policies with respect to admission of all students to the University and the transfer of credits from other educational institutions and to makes recommendations to Senate as necessary and appropriate.

**Academic Support Unit:** An academic support unit is a unit whose primary mission is to support the teaching, learning and/or research interests of students and faculty. Academic support units include, but are not limited to, the Office of the Registrar, Library Services, Student Development and Services, University Technology Services and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives.

**Academic Unit:** The Department/School where the program is housed.

**Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC):** AQAPC is a committee of Senate, which is responsible for long-range academic planning, including quality assurance, in accordance with the overall academic objectives of the University, and for making recommendations to Senate as necessary and appropriate.

### **Academic Services**

Those services integral to a student's ability to achieve the program-level learning outcomes. Such services would typically include, but are not limited to, academic advising and counselling appropriate to the program; information technology, library and laboratory resources directed towards the programs; and internship, cooperative education and practicum placement services, where these experiential components are a required part of a program.

**Arm's Length External Peer Reviewer:** An arm's length peer reviewer is an external disciplinary expert who has not been a supervisor, collaborator, departmental colleague (past or present) or co-author of faculty members in the previous six years, and who does not have personal connections with members of the academic unit.

### **Degree**

An academic credential awarded on successful completion of a prescribed set and sequence of requirements at a specified standard of performance consistent with OCAV's Degree Level Expectations and the university's own expression of those Expectations and achievement of the degree's associated learning outcomes.

### **Degree Level Expectations**

Academic standards that identify the knowledge and skill outcome competencies and reflect progressive levels of intellectual and creative development, as established by OCAV. The Degree Level Expectations (as detailed in the Appendices) are the Quality Assurance Framework's link to the [Ontario Qualifications Framework \(OQF\)](#). Degree Level Expectations may be expressed in subject-specific or in generic terms. Graduates at specified degree levels (e.g., BA, MSc) are expected to demonstrate these competencies. Each university has undertaken to adapt and describe the degree level expectations that will apply within its own institutions. Likewise, academic units will describe their university's expectations in terms appropriate to their academic programs.

### **Degree Program**

The complete set and sequence of courses, combinations of courses and/or other units of study, research and practice prescribed by an institution for the fulfillment of the requirements for each particular degree.

### **Desk Audit**

The process associated with the Audit Team's auditing of documents that have been submitted for a university's audit, as required as a preliminary step of the Cyclical Audit. A desk audit is one part of the process to determine an institution's compliance with its own IQAP and/or the Quality Assurance Framework.

### **Desk Review**

A review of a New Program Proposal or Self-Study conducted by external reviewers that is conducted independently of the university (i.e., does not typically include interviews or in-person or virtual site visits). Such a review may, with the agreement of both the external reviewers and the Provost, replace the external reviewers' in-person or virtual site visit in the New Program Approval process and Cyclical Program Review process for certain undergraduate and master's program reviews.

### **Diploma Program**

The complete set and sequence of courses, combinations of courses and/or other units of study prescribed by a university for the fulfillment of the requirements for each particular for-credit or not-for-credit undergraduate and graduate diploma. Not-for-credit and for-credit undergraduate or post-graduate diploma programs are not subject to approval or audit by the Quality Council. The Quality Council recognizes three types of Graduate Diplomas, with specific appraisal conditions applying to each. In each case, when proposing a new graduate diploma, a university may request an Expedited Approval process. All such programs, once approved, will be subject to the normal cycle of program reviews, typically in conjunction with the related degree program.

- **Type 1** – Awarded when a candidate admitted to a master's program leaves the program after completing a prescribed proportion of the requirements.
- **Type 2** – Offered in conjunction with a master's or doctoral degree, admission to which requires that the candidate be already admitted to the master's or doctoral program. This represents an additional, usually interdisciplinary, qualification.
- **Type 3** – A stand-alone, direct-entry program, generally developed by a unit already offering a related master's or doctoral degree and designed to meet the needs of a particular clientele or market.

### **Expedited Approval**

Generally, approvals are granted in a shorter time span with less required documentation. The Expedited Protocol requires submission to Quality Council of the proposed program change/new program and the rationale for it. This process does not require the use of external reviewers.

### **Field**

In graduate programs, an area of specialization or concentration that is related to the demonstrable and collective strengths of the program's faculty and to a new or existing program. Universities are not required to declare fields at either the master's or doctoral level.

### **Focused Audit**

A close examination of a specific aspect of an institution's quality assurance processes and practices that have not met the standards/requirements set out by the Quality Council in the QAF or in the institution's IQAP. A Focused Audit does not replace a Cyclical Audit.

### **Graduate Level Course**

A course offered by a graduate program and taught by institutionally approved graduate faculty, where the learning outcomes are aligned with the Graduate Degree Level Expectations and most students are registered as graduate students.

### **Inter-Institutional Program Categories**

For the following categories, the Protocol for New Program Approvals or the Protocol for Major Modifications will be used, as appropriate, and Quality Council's Cyclical Program Review Processes will apply to all elements of those programs as offered by all partner institutions involved.

- **Conjoint Degree Program** – A program of study, offered by a postsecondary institution that is affiliated, federated or collaborating with a university that is approved by the University's Senate or equivalent body, and for which a single degree document signed by both institutions is awarded.
- **Dual Credential/Degree Program** – A program of study offered by two or more universities or by a university and a college or institute, in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a separate and different degree/diploma document being awarded by each of the participating institutions.
- **Joint Degree Program** – A program of study offered by two or more universities or by a university and a college or institute in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a single degree document.

### **Major Modification**

A 'significant change' in the program requirements, intended learning outcomes and/or human and other resources associated with a degree program or program of specialization as defined by the university. Major modifications typically include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Requirements that differ significantly from those existing at the time of the previous cyclical program review;
- Significant changes to the program-level learning outcomes that do not, however, meet the threshold of a new program;
- Significant changes to the program's delivery, including to the program's faculty and/or to the essential physical resources as may occur, for example, where there have been changes to the existing mode(s) of delivery (e.g., different campus and/or online / hybrid delivery – see below);
- Change in program name and/or degree nomenclature, when this results in a change in learning outcomes; and/or
- Addition of a single new field to an existing graduate program. Note that universities are not required to declare fields for either master's or doctoral programs. Note also that the creation of more than one field at one point in time or over subsequent years may need to go through the Expedited Protocol.

### **Microcredentials**

A designation of achievement of a coherent set of skills and knowledge, specified by a statement of purpose, learning outcomes, and strong evidence of need by industry, employers, and/or the community. They have fewer requirements and are of shorter duration than a qualification and focus on learning outcomes that are distinct from diploma/degree programs. While requiring recognition in the IQAP, proposals for the introduction or modification of a microcredential do not require reference to the Quality Council unless they are part of a New Program.

### **Mode of Delivery**

The means or medium used in delivering a program (e.g., lecture format, distance, online, synchronous/asynchronous, problem-based, compressed part-time, multi-campus, inter-institutional collaboration or other non-standard forms of delivery).

### **New Program**

Any degree credential or degree program (within an existing degree credential), currently approved by Senate or

equivalent governing body that has not been previously approved for that institution by the Quality Council, its predecessors, or any intra-institutional approval processes that previously applied. A change of name, only, does not constitute a new program; nor does the inclusion of a new program of specialization where another with the same designation already exists (e.g., a new honours program where a major with the same designation already exists). For the purposes of the Quality Assurance Framework, a 'new program' is brand-new; the program has substantially different program objectives, program requirements and program-level learning outcomes from those of any existing approved programs offered by the institution.

### **Options, Minor, Specialization, and Streams**

An identified set and sequence of courses and/or other units of study, as well as research and practice within an area of disciplinary or interdisciplinary study that are completed on an optional basis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree, and that may be recorded on the graduate's academic record. While requiring recognition in the IQAP, proposals for their introduction or modification do not require reference to the Quality Council unless they are part of a New Program.

### **Professional Master's Program**

Typically, a professional master's degree is a terminal degree that does not lead to entry into a doctoral program. Such programs are designed to help students to prepare for a career in specific fields such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, finance or business among others. A professional master's degree often puts a great deal of focus on real-world application, with many requiring students to complete internships or projects in their field of study before graduation. In contrast, a research master's degree provides experience in research and scholarship and may be either the final degree or a step toward entry into a doctoral program.

### **Program**

For purposes of this policy, 'Program' will refer to all undergraduate and graduate degree programs, as well as for-credit graduate diploma programs.

### **Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes**

Clear and concise statements that describe what successful students should have achieved and the knowledge, skills and abilities that they should have acquired by the end of the program, however an institution defines 'program' in its IQAP. Program-level student learning outcomes emphasize the application and integration of knowledge – both in the context of the program and more broadly – rather than coverage of material; make explicit the expectations for student success; are measurable and thus form the criteria for assessment/evaluation; and are written in greater detail than program objectives. Clear and concise program-level learning outcomes also help to create shared expectations between students and instructors.

### **Program Objectives**

Clear and concise statements that describe the goals of the program, however an institution defines 'program' in its IQAP. Program objectives explain the potential applications of the knowledge and skills acquired in the program; seek to help students connect learning across various contexts; situate the program in the context of the discipline as a whole; and are often broader in scope than the program-level learning outcomes that they help to generate.

### **Program of Specialization (e.g., a Major, Honours Program, Concentration)**

An identified set and sequence of courses, and/or other units of study, research and practice within an area of disciplinary or interdisciplinary study, completed in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree and is recorded on the graduate's academic record.

- A program constitutes complete fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree when the program and degree program are one and the same.
- A program constitutes 'partial' fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree when the

program is a subset of the degree program. Typically, a bachelor's degree requires the completion of a program of specialization, often referred to as a major, an honours program, a concentration or similar designation.

**Quality Council**

The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the Quality Council) is an arm's length body designed to ensure rigorous quality assurance of university undergraduate and graduate programs. The Quality Council is responsible for the approval of new undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as auditing each university's quality assurance processes on an eight-year cycle. The NU-IQAP will be ratified by the Quality Council.

**Undergraduate Certificate**

A short form credential that forms a coherent program of study organized around a clear set of learning outcomes. Undergraduate certificates are comprised of undergraduate level academic content at least 15 credits. While requiring recognition in the IQAP, proposals for the introduction or modification to an undergraduate certificate do not require reference to the Quality Council unless they are part of a New Program.

**Virtual Site Visit**

The practice of conducting all required elements of the external reviewers' site visit using videoconferencing software and/or other suitable platforms. A virtual site visit will still include elements such as virtual meetings with students, faculty and other stakeholders. It may also include remote attendance at performances or events, and virtual facility tours. A virtual site visit may replace an in-person site visit for certain undergraduate and master's program, with agreement from both the external reviewers and the Provost.

**Report of the**  
**BY-LAWS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**  
**Academic Year 2025-26**

July 9, 2026

A meeting of the By-laws and Elections Committee was held on July 9, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. in F307 and via Teams conference.

Present: K. Srigley (Chair), G. Phillips, C. Richardson, T. Horton, H. Teixeira

Regrets: N. Botham

Recording Secretary: S. Landriault

The meeting was called to order. The Chair offered a Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

Motion 1: Moved by T. Horton, seconded by H. Teixeira that the agenda of the July 9, 2026, By-laws and Elections Committee meeting be approved as circulated.  
CARRIED

Motion 2: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by G. Phillips that the Report of the April 30, 2026, By-laws and Elections Committee meeting be approved as circulated.  
CARRIED

**Business Arising from the Report**

A key activity of the committee this year was its response to the Senate Governance Review. Members reviewed the proposed terms of reference and committee membership structure in order to provide feedback to the University Secretary for inclusion in broader governance discussions with the Senate Governance Committee scheduled for early September. Members of the By-laws and Elections Committee will participate in these discussions to ensure their perspectives are represented as the review progresses.

Discussion focused on the governance review processes, committee effectiveness, and the need to balance committee responsibilities while minimizing overlap across academic committees. Members agreed that governance matters require collective discussion to ensure appropriate oversight and coordination.

The committee considered the frequency of reviewing the Senate By-laws and agreed that periodic review should be used rather than requiring annual reviews. Members noted that by-laws should not be constantly in flux, but should remain stable and serve as guiding documents, while still allowing sufficient flexibility to address emerging needs. It was also acknowledged that systems should be developed to identify policies requiring review and to establish timelines for policies that currently lack review dates.

An update was provided on the long-term governance review process, which is being undertaken in response to provincial expectations regarding good governance practices. The review, supported by consultant Cheryl Foy and other sources of governance expertise, is expected to take one to three years and is currently in the information-gathering stage. Recommendations will ultimately be brought forward to Senate for consideration.

The review is expected to lead to more regular governance assessments, including annual Senate surveys, as well as improvements in onboarding and training for Senate members and committees.

The committee also discussed accountability mechanisms for Senate committees that may be unable to fulfill their responsibilities. Members agreed that the By-laws and Elections Committee should play a facilitative role by identifying concerns and bringing them to the attention of the Senate Executive Committee when support or intervention is required. Committee-level decision making was emphasized, with decisions supported by clear rationales.

The Chair will incorporate the agreed revisions into the governance review document and forward the updated version to the University Secretary.

Further discussion will be held regarding the nomination and election process for faculty representatives serving on hiring committees for senior administrator positions once the Deans have presented the proposed revisions to *Senate By-law 10.1.2: Faculty Council Nominations and Elections Committee Procedures* at their respective Faculty Council meetings for consideration and feedback. This process, which occurs at the faculty level and is formalized through a Senate vote, remains under review.

Discussion of the amendment of Senate By-law 9.10, to include the Provost and the VP, Finance and Administration in the ex officio non-voting membership of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC) was deferred for discussion at the next By-laws and Elections Committee meeting. The SBAC is in the process of reviewing its terms of reference and, relatedly, its membership. The By-laws and Elections Committee looks forward to receiving this review soon.

**By-laws Amendments – Motions Removed from the June 12, 2026, Senate Agenda (Senate By-laws 9.4 and 9.12, see attached Agenda Item 4)**

Membership and representation on Senate committees was discussed. Members recognized challenges associated with committee continuity, large committee sizes, and changing membership. Discussion included the potential use of voting and non-voting memberships, particularly where ex officio positions cannot be reduced. It was agreed that membership decisions should be based on the requirements of the position rather than the individual, with a clear rationale for assigning voting or non-voting status.

Student representation was another area of focus. Members emphasized the importance of student participation in the work of Senate, including the role of informed and consistent participation in meaningful committee work. Suggestions included assigning a single student designate to each committee for the academic year (i.e. not switching between representatives) and supporting the participation of a wide range of student Senators on committees. Further discussion on student committee attendance and representation will continue.

The Provost advised that discussions regarding AQAPC membership will be scheduled for the first meeting of the academic year in August.

**Appointment of a Second Librarian to Senate - By-law 9.0(c)**

The Provost advised that, in accordance with By-law 9.0(c), designated Librarians will be assigned to a faculty for the purposes of nominations and elections to Senate committees.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Katrina Srigley  
Chair  
By-laws and Elections Committee

Motion 1: That Senate receive the Report of the By-laws and Elections Committee dated July 9, 2026.

**Nipissing University**  
**Annual Report of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC)**

August 14, 2026

During the 2025-2026 academic year, the Senate Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC) met on three occasions: February 27, 2026; March 27, 2026; and May 12, 2026.

**Membership and Attendance**

| Member                                          | Attendance |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Robin Gendron, Chair (resigned April 20, 2026)  | 2          |
| Nathan Colborne                                 | 3          |
| Graydon Raymer                                  | 3          |
| Chris Greco, Acting Chair                       | 2          |
| Hilary Earl                                     | 3          |
| Dan Jarvis (resigned May 7, 2026)               | 2          |
| Nicholas Botham (May 1, 2025 to April 30, 2026) | 0          |
| Logan Lloyd (May 1, 2026 to April 30, 2027)     | 1          |

**Business Conducted During the 2025-2026 Academic Year**

During the reporting period, the Committee:

- Reviewed and discussed the Committee's terms of reference, mandate, and membership.
- Considered revisions to the terms of reference to include the Provost and Vice-President Academic (PVPA) and the Vice-President Finance and Administration (VPFA) as ex officio, non-voting members of the Committee.
- Discussed opportunities to clarify the role of the SBAC and establish an annual work plan and timeline to enhance understanding of the University's budget development process and strengthen the Committee's advisory role to Senate regarding academic resource allocation.
- Elected a Chair and Acting Chair of the Committee.

**Outstanding Items**

The following matters remain outstanding and will be addressed in the upcoming academic year:

- Finalize, review, and approve revisions to the SBAC terms of reference and membership structure.
- Develop and implement an annual work plan for the Committee.
- Respond to the request from the Senate Governance Review Committee to review the proposed terms of reference and provide feedback.

**Motion 1:** That Senate receive the Annual Report of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee dated August 14, 2026.