

Dear SGPS Executive,

It has been a pleasure serving the SGPS in my capacity as Graduate Student Senator. Unfortunately academic and personal commitments will not allow me to carry out with the full term of my position, which would have carried on until April 2011. Please accept my resignation as of May 31, 2010. I encourage you recruit suitable candidates for the position and invite them to the April and May Senate meetings. Of course, I would be more than happy to sit down and talk with the executive about the responsibilities of a Grad Senator and provide a debrief of my activities over the past twelve months.

Sincerely,

Andrew Stevens
PhD Candidate
Department of Sociology
Queen's University

In early March, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) posted a “briefing” document about proposed sweeping changes to its research grant programmes and set a March 31st deadline for comments. Virtually everyone who will be applying for SSHRC grants from 2011 on will be affected. If the proposed changes are adopted at the June meeting of the Council, some revised grant programmes will be issuing call for proposals as early as the summer and fall of 2010.

We encourage members of the Canadian Political Science Association to read the briefing document and to send comments to SSHRC. In so doing, members should attempt to be constructive and to offer alternatives to aspects of the proposals with which they disagree or find problematic.

This document is designed to assist our members in thinking about the proposals. We provide an initial reaction and a set of questions that we feel need to be addressed.

According to the briefing document, SSHRC is attempting through these changes to create a simpler and more flexible suite of programmes that fund individual and team research across all disciplines. The new ‘architecture’ is designed to create new opportunities and options, for example through five-year research grants, establishing medium-size grants (\$250-500K), to foster research development and collaborative research. Some of these proposed changes are responses to long-standing recommendations from the research community.

While the overall direction of the changes is clear, many important detailed issues are unclear. Accordingly, there is reason for members of the Canadian political science community to ask pointed questions about the practical implications of the operational procedures that will come into play with the changes. Some of the areas of concern that have been identified as requiring attention and clarification before the changes are finalized are set out below.

The briefing document is silent on perhaps the most fundamental issue relating to the revised grant programmes – the allocation of funds to the various grant streams and programmes. Without a clear sense of funding levels for the different programme envelopes, it is difficult to assess the impact of the proposed changes, especially over the long term. However, we are especially concerned that the cumulative effect of the various changes will be that funding for curiosity-driven research programmes involving one or two researchers may be particularly vulnerable; success rates for such projects are already low and should not be permitted to decline further.

Among the issues warranting attention are the following:

- 1) Under the previous regime, a researcher could hold a Standard Research Grant and a grant from another programme (such as a Strategic Grant). With the consolidation of grant programmes under the proposed regime and with a Research Grant lasting three to five years, will it be much more difficult for researchers to take a leading role in more than one project?
- 2) The division between new and established scholars, and the different weighting of criteria in the evaluation of their Research Grant applications, is to be eliminated. A separate envelope is to

be introduced for new scholars in the Research Development Grant programme. How will this change affect both groups of scholars?

3) The weighting of applicant's 'track record' (now labelled 'capability') has been sharply reduced from 60 per cent for established scholars in the Standard Research Grant competition to 20 per cent in the Research Grant competition, to 10 per cent in Research Development Grants and to 30 per cent in other programmes. This is below the weighting employed by NSERC for its flagship grant programmes. What are the implications of this dramatic downgrading of the applicant's record of achievement?

4) Research Development Grant and Partnership Development Grant applications will not be assessed by external reviewers. The significantly enhanced scale of these grants means that Partnership Development Grants of up to \$500K will be awarded without external assessments. Both Research Development Grants and Partnership Development Grants will be adjudicated by very broad multidisciplinary committees. How will this process work and what will be the implications?

5) The adjudication committees for some grants will be composed of "scholars from the research community and experts from other sectors". What sort of "experts" are envisaged? Why are they to be adjudication committee members rather than external assessors?

6) Partnership Grants will require **a minimum** of 50 per cent of the budget from cash and in-kind contributions from partners. Will this create a significant barrier to researchers whose intended partners are government agencies, NGOs or other third-sector institutions with limited resources? How broadly will "in-kind" contributions be defined? Will the adjudication process favour cash over in-kind contributions, as said to be the case for other granting councils?

7) The Research Grant criteria will include "leveraging of cash or in-kind support from the host institution and/or from partners, where appropriate". Will Research Grant applicants without partners be disadvantaged? What is to protect curiosity-based research from being squeezed out over time?

8) The open Standard Research Grant stream and the Strategic Grants stream are to be integrated, and SSHRC's thematic priorities (such as Aboriginal research and business innovation) considered in the assessment process. Will applications not addressing thematic priorities be disadvantaged?

9) Some grant programmes will have no upper funding limit. Without major funding infusions, how will this effect the funding available and the success rates for applications to various grant streams?

10) For Research Grants, two new interdisciplinary adjudication committees are proposed: "Research Creation, New Media" and "Aboriginal research, Northern Studies". Do political scientists proposing research on Aboriginal self-government want linguists, economists and musicologists assessing their applications (any more than musicologists, economists and linguists want political scientists assessing theirs)?

11) The new proposed date for submission of Research Grant applications is September 15th. This seems problematic, given that the first two weeks of September are the busiest and most stressful of the year.

We urge CPSA members to review the SSHRC document (available at http://sshrc.ca/site/whatsnew-quoi_neuf/Program_Architecture_Consultation_e.pdf) carefully with these concerns in mind and to bring their views to SSHRC's attention (PA-project@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca). In order to help the CPSA represent our members' interests, both in the period when responses are being accepted, and subsequently as the changes are implemented, we request that CPSA be copied on responses to SSHRC. They may be sent to Sally Rutherford (sally_rutherford@cpsa-acsp.ca).

**University Planning Committee Proposal (UPC)
Senate Operations Review Committee (SORC)
March 25, 2010**

Introduction

Based on the Senate discussions on November 26, 2009 and February 18, 2010, Board of Trustees discussions on December 6, 2009 and March 6, 2010, SORC discussions on January 13, February 10, March 10 and March 15, 2010, and correspondence received, the following report and recommendations are presented for approval to the Senate on March 25, 2010.

The attached report includes:

1. Two recommendations from SORC
2. A revised mandate, terms of reference and composition for the UPC
3. The original proposal referred to SORC October 4, 2009, also on the web at www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Oct22_09/UPC.pdf

Background

SORC reviewed feedback from the Board and Senate meetings, and correspondence at its meetings on March 10 and 15, when it met to finalize a set of UPC recommendations for approval by the Senate on March 25. The proposal will then be sent to the Board of Trustees for consideration at its meeting on April 30.

Analysis and discussion

The following changes are highlighted:

- Addition of a sunset clause of three years to evaluate the committee and decide whether to dissolve, continue or modify it;
- Addressing Board comments that equal representation by Senate and Board members was not necessary and to add weight to the side of Senate, if anything;
- Proposed language is “review and comment and make recommendations to the Senate and the Board of Trustees” to clarify that the final authority for decision-making continues to reside with Senate and Board; this will provide increased clarity on the UPC’s mandate as an advisory body;
- Reduced membership to nine (9) in response to Board and Senate concerns that previous Options A (19) and B (20) were too large to function effectively;
- Inclusion of dean, faculty, staff and student members on the committee;
- Inclusion of the University Registrar and VP (Finance and Administration) as non-voting participants, for their expertise and advice;
- Members are subject to nomination processes of the Senate and the Board and will serve up to either two- or three-year terms;
- The UPC should meet at least once every two months, using appropriate technologies to enable members to participate;
- While “Observers” have been removed, this category remains available to individuals or groups in accordance with existing Senate policy on attendance of non-members;
- SORC also notes that planning remains the province of the deans and faculties, since the purpose of the UPC is to provide a review of faculty plans and other initiatives within the context of overall university planning and fiscal resources.

Recommendations

Recommendation #1

Accept the revisions to the mandate, terms of reference and composition of the UPC.

Recommendation #2

Dissolve the current Senate Budget Review Committee and add to Senate Procedures the requirement that annually or more frequently as required, the Principal ensure that there is a report to Senate about the development of the annual budget.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Stairs (Chair)

J. Brien

E. Culham

S. Goodspeed

T. Lin

A. Stevens

University Planning Committee

Mandate

The University Planning Committee (UPC) is a joint committee of the University Senate and the Board of Trustees. Its major responsibility is to ensure that academic planning and the management of resources (people, money, space) are fully integrated. It ensures that decisions reached in the academic sphere and initiatives from individual faculties and units are made with full knowledge of the fiscal and infrastructure implications for the University as a whole. Furthermore, it enables the Board of Trustees to have a full understanding of the academic endeavours of the University.

The UPC has two primary roles.

Its first role [I] is to review and comment, including making recommendations, on new and proposed plans of the Senate and the Board of Trustees, including the University Academic Plan.

Its second role [II] is to serve in an advisory capacity for the University's budget development process. The UPC will comment on whether the budget recommendations are congruent with the University Academic Plan.

Terms of Reference

The UPC shall review, comment, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees and Senate regarding the impact of the following on overall University planning and budgeting:

Role I

- a) the University Academic Plan and any major initiatives that have significant resource implications;
- b) annual planning reports from the Faculties, Library and other units as prescribed by the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic);
- c) reports from the Vice-Principal (Research) on the major operations, institutes, and initiatives that receive significant support from the budget of the Vice-Principal (Research), and on the anticipated impact of new funding opportunities;
- d) the annual report from the Vice-Principal (Advancement) and future fund-raising priorities, including their relationship to the University Academic Plan;
- e) the Campus Plan and other reports and updates from the Campus Planning and Development Committee.

Role II

- f) annual planning reports as prescribed by the Vice-Principal (Finance and Administration), from those administrative and service units that report directly to the Vice-Principal (Finance and Administration);
- g) the development of the University budget before it is transmitted to the Board of Trustees' Finance Committee.

Administrative and Other Matters

1. Meet at least once every two months utilizing appropriate technologies to ensure that members are able to participate in the work of the UPC.
2. The UPC will function for an initial period of three years, at which time the Senate Operations Review Committee will review its value and make a recommendation to Senate to continue, modify or dissolve the UPC.
3. The Senate Nominating Committee, the Board of Trustees Nominating Committee and the University Secretariat will be responsible for the election of members according to the established procedures of the Senate and of the Board of Trustees.
4. Faculty and staff will serve up to a three-year term; students up to a two-year term.

Composition of the UPC

Elected

One student, trustee or senator, elected by the student trustees and the student senators
One staff member, trustee or senator, elected by the staff trustees and the staff senators
One Dean elected by the Faculty Deans
One Faculty senator proposed by the Senate Nominating Committee and elected by the Senate
One trustee proposed by the Board of Trustees Nominating Committee and elected by the Board of Trustees

Ex-Officio

Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), Chair of the UPC
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Chair of the Board of Trustees, or delegate
Chair of the Board of Trustees' Finance Committee, or delegate

Total membership: 9

Invited participants (non-voting) will include but are not limited to:

Vice-Principal (Finance and Administration), non-voting
University Registrar, non-voting

University Planning Committee

Mandate

The University Planning Committee will be a joint committee of both the University Senate and the Board of Trustees. It will be Queen's senior planning committee and a bridge between the two governing bodies of the University. The University Planning Committee has three primary roles, although in all three its major responsibility is to ensure that academic planning and the management of resources (people, money, space) are fully integrated. In its first, and more formal, role the University Planning Committee is a critical step in the development and approval of plans. Its second role is to serve in an advisory capacity to the senior administration of the University. Its third role is to provide an extended point of contact between Senate and Board to ensure that decisions reached in the academic sphere, and initiatives from individual Faculties or units, are made with full knowledge of the fiscal and infrastructure implications for the university as a whole, and that the Board of Trustees has a full understanding of the academic business of the University.

The Chair of the University Planning Committee will be the Vice-Principal Academic.

Terms of Reference

The University Planning Committee shall:

1. Review the Plan for the University annually, and recommend revisions to it as necessary, for approval by the Senate and the Board of Trustees;
2. Review, for recommendation to the Senate and the Board of Trustees, major initiatives (including those which are part of submissions to external agencies) that have significant resource implications, providing comment on how the proposals fit within the University Plan;
3. Review and approve annual planning reports as prescribed by the Vice-Principal (Academic) from:
the Faculties, the School of Graduate Studies, the Associate Vice-principal (Academic), the Associate Vice-principal (Student Affairs), the University Registrar, the University Librarian, and other units (as appropriate) that report directly to the Vice-Principal (Academic), providing comment on how the plans relate to overall University planning and current budgeting.
Approved plans are to be reported to the Senate and the Board of Trustees for information;
4. Review and approve annual planning reports as prescribed by the Vice-principal (Finance and Administration) from those administrative and service units that report directly to the Vice-principal (Finance and Administration), providing comment on how the plans relate to overall University planning and current budgeting. Approved plans are to be reported to the Senate and the Board of Trustees for information;
5. Review and approve annually a report from the Vice-principal (Research) on the major operations, institutes, and initiatives that receive significant support from the budget of the Vice-principal (Research), and on the anticipated impact of new funding opportunities (from federal, provincial, or private agencies or businesses) as they arise.
Approved plans are to be reported to the Senate and the Board of Trustees for information;
6. Receive annually from the Vice-principal (Advancement) a report on advancement efforts of the previous year and review, for recommendation to the Senate and the Board of Trustees, future fund-raising priorities and their relationship to the University Plan;

7. Make recommendations to the Campus Planning and Development Committee of the Board of Trustees on capital projects and other expenditures that fall outside the annual budget (such as those encompassed by the Capital Renewals process). For all major projects, the University Planning Committee will be provided with a total impact analysis that assesses the ongoing costs of maintenance, utilities, etc.;
8. Review, for recommendation to the Senate and the Board of Trustees, the annual report on campus planning, including any updates, amendments and elaborations; and
9. Report to the Senate any matters of concern formally identified as such by a majority of the Committee.

Composition of the University Planning Committee

Ex Officio

Chancellor

Chair of the Board of Trustees, or delegate

Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees, or delegate

Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Vice-Principal (Academic) - Chair of the University Planning Committee

Vice-Principal (Finance and administration)

Vice-Principal (Research)

Dean of Graduate Studies

Dean of Arts and Science

Elected

5 faculty members, no more than two to be from any one Faculty, elected for staggered 3-year terms

1 department head, not to be from a Faculty with two currently serving faculty members

1 Faculty dean elected for a two year term (by and from the Faculty Deans excluding the Dean of Arts and Science and Dean of Graduate Studies);

1 non-academic staff member, elected for a 2-year term;

1 graduate or professional student, elected for a 2-year term;

1 undergraduate student, elected for a two year term; and

The Rector

Observers

Dean (Health Sciences) or delegate, unless elected

Associate Vice-Principal (Student Affairs)

Vice-Principal, Advancement

Budget Committee

Terms of Reference

The Budget Committee, a sub-committee of the UPC shall:

1. Review the budget framework prepared by the University administration in consultation with the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis; this framework (including the models and projections upon which it is based) will be provided to the Joint Administration/Faculty Association Committee to Consider Matters and to Discuss and Negotiate Matters Related to Terms and Conditions of Employment of Faculty (The Joint Committee) as will updates to the framework should these arise;
2. Receive and respond to budget submissions from all Faculties, areas, and units;
3. Make budget recommendations available to the University Planning Committee during development of the recommendations, for comment on whether those recommendations are congruent with the University Plan; deliver the final budget to the University Planning Committee in a timely fashion to ensure that it is in a position to make comments in advance of the budget being transmitted to other deliberative bodies;
4. Make budget recommendations available to the University Senate for comment before they are transmitted by the Principal to the Finance Committee of the Board; and
5. Deliver budget recommendations to the Principal of the University for transmittal to the Finance Committee of the Board. Any comments of the University Planning Committee and Senate shall be included in the material for the Board, along with the Principal's own comments.

Composition of the Budget Committee

Members:

Three faculty members of UPC (one of whom shall serve as chair):

The staff member on the UPC

The Rector

Vice-Principal (Academic)

Associate Vice-Principal (Finance)

Principal