



To: Faculty Council

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Item: Academic Appeals Board

Jurisdictional Information:

(a) Divisional

The Faculty Council has authority to approve the creation of new committees and to dissolve committees that no longer serve a useful purpose.

(b) Central

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs of the Academic Board approves divisional appeals procedures.

Previous Action Taken:

The Faculty's Ombuds Committee's function was adopted by Faculty Council in April 1972 to serve in an "ombudsman" capacity so that any academic member of the Faculty (staff, undergraduate or graduate student) may challenge any intra-Faculty administrative, executive or policy decision below the level of Council and request a reconsideration for stated reason(s).

Highlights:

The rationale for the proposal to replace the Ombuds Committee with an entirely new body to handle student appeals at the Divisional level is informed by the principles set out by Governing Council "Guidelines for Academic Appeals Within Divisions." (Document appended, see also (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Policies/Policy/appeal.html>)) Clearly there is no longer need for a Faculty Committee to serve in an "ombudsman" capacity to faculty and staff as there are structures and organizations in place to handle faculty and staff complaints, e.g., the Memorandum of Agreement between the University and its faculty and staff labour agreements.

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This recommendation is to establish an Academic Appeals Board to replace the Ombuds Committee, which did not have the authority to overturn a decision of a Standing Committee of Council. The Board will hear appeals of undergraduate students against decisions of Standing Committees of Council. Rulings on such appeals will be binding and final as far as the Faculty is concerned; this Board will also develop and disseminate recommendations arising from appeals. The Board will report to the Faculty Council on an annual basis.

Recommendation:

THAT the Academic Appeals Board of the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering replace the Committee known as the Ombuds Committee effective June 1, 2009.