



UGFA Statement on Program Prioritization Process

Members of the Executive of the University of Guelph Faculty Association (UGFA) have grave concerns regarding the Program Prioritization Process (PPP) begun by the University's Administration earlier this fall. These concerns have been raised with Executive by Members in Departmental meetings and, most recently, at an UGFA General Members meeting.

Different segments of the university community, including students and staff, may have various valid questions and worries about the possible outcomes of this process, but the UGFA Executive is concerned primarily with its impact on the university's academic integrity. Above all, we question the validity of a process ranking and assessing the viability of academic programs which is driven explicitly by budgetary pressures.

We question the real nature and extent of the Administration's stated budget deficit and the need to solve it through this exercise. We also think that the process itself, as outlined in the Administration's communications to the university community, is highly questionable.

Specifically, we question the suggestion that information to be included in the templates will represent objective data upon which to rank programs: we fear that the process is already weighted against academic programs. Neither the Faculty Association nor Members as a group, were consulted regarding the criteria or the templates to be used in this process: rather, the Administration has imposed these on the basis of an external consultant's recommendations. We question the extremely short time line for the process which seems arbitrary.

We are also alarmed by the proposed role of the Deans who have been empowered to assign specific programs to different ranking levels after the templates are completed. Finally, we are deeply concerned by the involvement of Faculty Members in a process which will lead, as stated by the Administration, to the termination of other Faculty Members' careers.

Therefore the UGFA Executive has struck two new committees to investigate questions surrounding the PPP and to critique the process: a Financial Committee and an Academic Integrity Committee. Any Members who are interested in participating in either of these committees, or who have information or opinions to share, are invited to contact the chairs of these committees:

Chair, Financial Advisory Com: Professor Herb Kunze (Math & Stats)
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Chair, Academic Integrity Com: Professor Bill Cormack (History)
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