

Curriculum Renewal at Ryerson – the Green Paper

March 2012

Background to the Green Paper

- Provide students with more choice and opportunity for broader education/more say in defining their own curriculum
- Encourage new, innovative curriculum packages (including interdisciplinary ones)
- Retain strong professional program base, with intentional curriculum

Background to the Green Paper

- Proposals and consultations – Fall 2010 and Winter 2011
- Senate approval of modified tripartite curriculum structure – June 2011
- Curriculum Renewal Committee (CRC) struck – Summer 2011
- CRC begins work – September 2011
- CRC releases Green Paper – January 27, 2012

Curriculum Renewal - Guiding Principles

1. Ryerson provides career-relevant education with sufficient rigour and depth to serve this mission.
2. Students should have flexibility to define their personal educational and career goals.
3. Graduates must be well rounded, with a breadth as well as a depth of knowledge.

Curriculum Renewal - Guiding Principles

4. Degree level expectations (UDLEs) establish a framework for defining the attributes of a Ryerson graduate, both generally and on an individual program basis. The revised curriculum model should ensure that students meet these objectives.

Curriculum Framework from Senate

- Core courses - 60% to 75%;
- Professionally related elective courses - 10% to 30%;
- Liberal studies courses - 10% to 15%, representing a required 6 courses (4 in Engineering).

The CRC Mandate

- Policy
- Access and academic advising
- Registrarial issues

Policy Proposals

1. A single curriculum policy
2. Standardized names – Major, Combined Major, Concentration (6 to 12 courses within the program core, noted on transcript)
3. Course categories – Core, Open Electives, Breadth/Liberal Electives
4. Writing Intensive (W) courses – 6 in total, from any category (Core, Open, Breadth/Liberal)
5. Breadth/Liberal and W-Course Governance

Policy Proposals – Course Categories

- **Core** – the heart of the program. These are the courses *required* to deliver the Major. Can be offered as a Major in a given discipline/area of study OR as a Combined Major (partnering between two disciplines/areas of study).
- **Open** – the “choice” category. Students decide what is important for them. Often used to obtain a Minor.
- **Breadth/Liberal** – this category permits students to explore varied and diverse ways of seeing the world.

CURRENT PROGRAM MODEL	NEW PROGRAM MODEL	
	Core Courses	
Professional 50-75%	Major 60-75%	Combined Major 60-75% total
Professionally Related 10-40%	Open Elective Courses 10-30%	
Liberal Studies 8-20% (6 courses)	Breadth/Liberal Elective Courses 10-15%	
	MINOR	
	6 courses	
	Up to 2 core courses can be used in a minor.	
	Up to 2 Breadth/Liberal Electives courses can be used in a minor	

The Current Situation

- Of 73 programs surveyed
 - 38% are aligned, 62% not aligned
 - 44% of non-aligned programs are close (within 3% of program balance parameters based on %-core).
 - 66% of programs are aligned or closely aligned
 - 34% are not close to alignment

Policy Proposals - Writing (W-) Courses

- *Individually* written, out-of-class assignments which require students to carry out an analysis of the assignment's subject and make and justify an evaluative, comparative or explicatory judgment, and which provide them with commentary on the clarity of organization, logic, syntax, and grammar of their writing
- Criteria to be developed

Policy Proposals - Governance

- A sub-committee of Standards to review and recommend Breadth Electives and Writing courses to Senate. (Sub-committee → Standards → Senate)
- Composition and exact mandate under development.
- Membership to reflect the broad Ryerson academic community.

Access and Advising Proposals

1. Retain but improve course intentions
2. Present Open Electives in categories to facilitate due consideration of choices
3. Adopt the recommendations of the academic advising report from the University Committee on Student Success

Access and Advising Proposals – Academic Advising Report

1. Establish a central coordinating function related to academic advising at Ryerson.
2. Develop early warning systems for students who may be in academic difficulty.
3. Develop a list of outcomes for advising at Ryerson.
4. Develop a common interpretation, implementation and communication of policies and procedures
5. Make RAMSS more user-friendly and build additional tools to assist students.

Registrarial Proposals

1. Bands – retain for Breadth/Liberal Electives, but do not institute new ones for Open Electives
2. Curriculum framework - a phased-in implementation
3. Temporary and partial moratorium on curriculum changes

Some Outstanding Issues

- Whether to allow the use of extra Core courses in a student's own program as Open Electives
- Find ways to persuade students to do course intentions (about 80% already do) - will be less problematic as historical data emerges
- Create strategies to ensure programs provide sufficient spaces in their Open Elective courses
- Devise a system to ensure that restrictions (by the delivering program) and exclusions (by a student's own program) on Open Electives are in place for valid reasons

Next Steps and Timelines

- Development of a White Paper to firm up these proposals – further consultation
- Communication with each program about its status relative to aligning with the framework (iterative dialogue)
- Policy and administrative proposal to Senate and Provost for May, 2012
- 2 to 3 years to complete policy revisions and to finalize implementation steps

Questions?

Advice?

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