



## GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

*Report to Academic Council  
at its meeting of June 21, 2016*

### FOR ACTION

#### 1. Faculty of Health Sciences – New Graduate Diploma in Work Disability Prevention

The Graduate Studies Committee recommends:

*That Academic Council recommend the proposed Graduate Diploma in Work Disability Prevention to the Board of Governors for approval.*

#### Rationale

The Faculty of Health Sciences proposes a new Graduate Diploma in Work Disability Prevention. This proposed program builds on our existing relationship with the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College (CMCC) as well as the objectives of the UOIT-CMCC Centre for Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation (Centre) and the Canada Research Chair in Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation held by the Centre's Director, Dr. Pierre Côté.

Work disability is a multifaceted problem that extends beyond disease and medical diagnosis. Evidence indicates that work disability results from complex interactions between stakeholders (employer, insurer, healthcare providers) and the worker. Workplace disability creates a large burden at different system levels, impacting the worker, the company and society. Enabling Canadians with work disability to regain ability to work is an important priority. Research suggests that disability determinants can be a combination of physical, work environment, healthcare system and compensation system factors. This has led to developing work disability prevention programs that replace the disease treatment (biomedical) model with a work place prevention (biopsychosocial) model focusing on patient reassurance and workplace interventions.

The proposed diploma specifically targets the societal networks and complexities of return to work coordination. It fills a gap in the current program offerings at other institutions by focusing on unique applications of the biopsychosocial model of return to work. Rather than focusing on just the diagnosis, the program also delves into understanding the root causes of disability. It also creates the potential to develop strong relationships with the community and employers to create specific experiential learning opportunities.

The program delivery will be online and will be directed at regulated health professionals, specifically chiropractors, kinesiologists, nurses, occupational therapists, physicians and physiotherapists, and individuals with a Masters in Social Work. The part-time nature of the program combined with the focus of online education will aid students in their ability to continue full time employment or other professional/personal activities while enrolled in the course. The online component of the program will aid in building a community of experts linked by their online learning experiences. Students will also have the ability to establish the practicum elective within their home community.

The full proposal is attached.