

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

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### ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation   
Decision   
Discussion/Direction   
Information

**DATE: 26 October 2021**

**FROM: Undergraduate Studies Committee**

**SUBJECT: Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Commerce**

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### COMMITTEE MANDATE:

In accordance with the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) Terms of Reference, USC has the responsibility “to examine proposals for new undergraduate degree programs and major changes to existing programs and to recommend their approval, as appropriate, to the Academic Council”.

### MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION:

That pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Commerce.

### BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

The Faculty is proposing several changes to the structure of the program, along with the addition of some new courses and a co-op degree designation option:

- Re-definition of the common core: fewer and revised set of core courses enhance offerings and provide greater flexibility to tailor the academic experience
- Addition of new courses BUSI 1030U and BUSI 3000U, and three zero credit workshops to help students adjust to university life, obtain valuable general skills, and prepare for job search and career planning (XBIT 1500U, 2500U, 3500U)
- Greater flexibility for electives
- Minor adjustments to courses to accommodate the new program structure
- Addition of the co-op option
  - Students who successfully complete three or more co-op work terms will have the co-op designation appear on their degree parchment
  - Students will be required to complete a Co-op preparation course (XBIT 1000U – Foundations for Success in Co-op) prior to participating in a co-op placement

This modification is the result of a thorough internal and external review of the program. The proposed changes will strengthen the core of the program and provide students with flexibility. The program learning outcomes have two small editorial changes but no major revisions.

Students seeking a Business or Commerce degree in Ontario have a lot of options and these programs are offered by almost every single post-secondary institution. Our graduates compete with thousands of others with similar degrees. The proposed changes aim to create an enhanced student experience in the program, match some of the program features and activities offered by provincial competitors, and offer exciting new opportunities for our students. The changes are also designed to improve career readiness by providing curriculum flexibility, workshops, and experiential learning opportunities.

The current pathways and minor programs will be reviewed and changes presented as needed.

While the current internship program has been successful to date, there are a number of challenges, including limits for how international students can participate, the designation does not appear on the parchment, internship does not offer a structure that enables students to bring their experiences back into the classroom and vice versa. The proposed co-op will identify these challenges and allow Ontario Tech's Bachelor of Commerce program to be more competitive amongst similar programs. It will also allow students to be eligible to participate in the Government of Canada's co-op opportunities

#### **RESOURCES REQUIRED:**

No new faculty members are needed as a direct result of these proposed changes to the curriculum. However, some faculty may have to be assigned to new courses based on expertise and interest. Long-term, additional resources may be required as to sustain enrollment growth and increased retention rates resulting from the program modifications. The Faculty may require some support from the Office of the Registrar and C&M to update marketing and recruitment materials including webpages prior to the launch of the modified program.

With regard to co-op, there will be an additional need for funding for site visits, software, and occasional events. Once the modifications have been made to the program there will be need for more employees to support students. Currently, the FBIT Internship office is comprised of one fulltime staff person and one partially appointed Assistant Teaching Professor who oversees the academic components of the program. For the co-op program to be successful, a team of minimum 3 people will be required to run this office. Additional support staff may be required when the program scales up with increased student numbers. Options such as grants, and external funding will be examined when possible. An increase in international tuition revenue can be anticipated as this option will be attractive to international students.

Please refer to attached memo from the Academic Resource Committee (ARC).

#### **TRANSITION PLAN:**

Current B.Com students will continue to follow their current program maps. This change will impact students beginning their first year of Bachelor of Commerce program in Fall 2022. Discussions will begin with partner Colleges to make the necessary adjustments to our pathways programs that are impacted by these program changes. Additionally, the faculty will review the current minors offered and make relevant adjustments (if needed). All these potential changes will be processed as minor program adjustments in a timely manner for seamless implementation of the revised program.

The addition of co-op will impact students beginning their first year of Bachelor of Commerce program in Fall 2022 with the first group of students starting co-op no sooner than spring/summer 2024.

#### **CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:**

Undergraduate Studies Committee: September 2021

Faculty Council: June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Curriculum Committee: May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021

ARC: June 2021, September 2021

An initial committee of interested volunteer faculty members and staff, initiated work on revisions in 2019 and provided high level general recommendations about program features and general direction of the program. A steering committee was then created with representation from a wide range of subject areas within the Bachelor of Commerce program. This steering committee worked on the program details and offered recommendations that are reflected in this proposal. Throughout the process, the committees reviewed business and commerce program structures and features in a number of universities in Ontario, Canada, and the United States.

Throughout the process, the FBIT Undergraduate Education Committee and Faculty council have been updated regarding the proposed changes and plans for the new program. Meetings were also held with some areas within the faculty to discuss the changes. All program areas have been consulted with. Consultation also took place with the Co-op Coordinators in the Faculty of Science and Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

- Pending the approval of Academic Council, this change will be included in the 2022-2023 Academic Calendar

#### **SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:**

- Major Program Modification Proposal – [Bachelor of Commerce](#)
- Major Program Modification Proposal – [Bachelor of Commerce Co-op](#)
- Memo from the Academic Resource Committee (attached)
- New Courses
  - [BUSI 1030U](#), [BUSI 3000U](#), [XBIT 1000U](#), [XBIT 1500U](#), [XBIT 2000U](#), [XBIT 2500U](#), [XBIT 3000U](#), [XBIT 3500U](#), [XBIT 4000U](#), [XBIT 4100U](#), [XBIT 4200U](#)
- Course Changes
  - [BUSI 1450U](#), [BUSI 1520U](#), [BUSI 2040U](#), [BUSI 2200U](#), [BUSI 2312U](#), [BUSI 2603U](#), [BUSI 3171U](#), [BUSI 3260U](#), [BUSI 3305U](#), [BUSI 3312U](#), [BUSI 3340U](#), [BUSI 3360U](#), [BUSI 3390U](#), [BUSI 4230U](#), [BUSI 4701U](#), [XBIT 4500U \(formerly BUSI 4995U\)](#), [XBIT 4600U \(formerly BUSI 4996U\)](#), [XBIT 4610U \(formerly BUSI 4998U\)](#), [XBIT 4620U \(formerly BUSI 4997U\)](#), [XBIT 4700U \(formerly BUSI 4799U\)](#)



## ACADEMIC RESOURCE COMMITTEE

Re: Resources for New Co-op Program

Date: September 2021

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The proposed Commerce Co-op “Additional academic and non-academic human resources” text notes the need for additional support staff:

“Once the modifications have been made to the program there will be need for more employees to support students. Currently, the FBIT Internship office is comprised of one full time staff person and one partially appointed Assistant Teaching Professor who oversees the academic components of the program. For the co-op program to be successful, a team of minimum 3 people will be required to run this office. This includes an Experiential Learning Manager, a Co-op Program Coordinator, and an Industry Opportunity Development Officer. Additional support staff may be required when the program scales up with increased student numbers.”

Ontario Tech is committed to providing the dedicated support needed for students in this program. The University will be exploring an institutional approach to more effectively support experiential, co-op, and work integrated learning program innovations and expansions towards achievement of our Learning Re-imagined goals. Staff resources dedicated to these programs will be examined as part of this process to ensure the required supports across campus are coordinated, scalable, of high quality, and financially sustainable.

Job titles are determined through the Job Evaluation process and are subject to change. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that additional staff will be required to provide experiential learning management, co-op program coordination, and industry opportunity development.

The Academic Resource Committee recommends approval of the proposal, with the understanding that University resources will be reviewed and allocated as necessary to successfully support all experiential, co-op, and work integrated learning program innovations, and job titles will be confirmed through established University procedures.