

# ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

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## ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation   
Decision   
Discussion/Direction   
Information

**DATE:** 23 January 2024

**FROM:** Undergraduate Studies Committee

**SUBJECT:** Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies –  
Science, Technology & Society specialization

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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 Arts in Liberal Studies program adding a new specialization in Science, Technology and Society.

## BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

The Faculty is proposing to add a differentiated specialization in Science, Technology & Society (STS) to the Liberal Studies program that syncs with the SSH’s strategic academic plan, and supports Ontario Tech University’s ‘tech with a conscience’ mission. At a future date, this program could be cross-listed with a Sociology program currently in development. Additionally, the new specialization is anticipated to increase enrollments to FSSH and serve as a new pathway to FSSH’s graduate Master’s in Social Practice and Innovation (MSPI), as students who pursue this specialization would be prepared to engage with MSPI-relevant topics, issues, and research.

## RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Three new sections for existing courses, likely taught by sessional instructors, will be added for this specialization. These would be open to students across the university in STEM fields as electives.

No additional physical resource requirements.

**TRANSITION PLAN:**

The new specialization is planned to begin in Fall of 2024. No transition plan is needed.

**CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:**

- ✓ FSSH Curriculum Committee: 23 November 2023
- ✓ Faculty Council: 28 November 2023
- ✓ Undergraduate Studies Committee (Recommendation): 19 December 2023
- Academic Council (Approval): 23 January 2024

Informal student feedback occurred during faculty conversations with current and prospective students and through discussions with Academic Advising.

**NEXT STEPS:**

Pending the approval of Academic Council, the changes will be included in the 2024-2025 Academic Calendar.

**SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:**

- [Major Program Modification Proposal](#)