OntarioTech UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

SESSION:		ACTION REQUESTED:	
Public	☒	**Decision**	☒
Non-Public	☐	**Discussion/Direction**	☐
		Information	☐

TO: Academic Council

DATE: October 22, 2019

FROM: Governance & Nominations Committee (GNC)

SUBJECT: Amendments to Academic Council Executive Committee (ACX) Terms of Reference

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

- Section 1(a) of the GNC Terms of Reference lists one of the responsibilities of the committee as advising Academic Council on the establishment, terms of reference, composition, membership and retirement of its committees.
- As part of the implementation of By-law No. 2, the GNC has been asked to review the Terms of Reference for all of Academic Council's standing committees.
- The committee is recommending that Academic Council recommend the updated ACX Terms of Reference (now Steering Committee) for approval by the Board of Governors.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT:
- In order to assist the GNC with its review, the Academic Council Executive Committee (ACX) reviewed and provided feedback on its Terms of Reference (ToR) in March 2019.
- The proposed changes to the ToR were also presented to Academic Council (AC) for consultation at the meeting on June 25 (deferred from May) and comments from the meeting are summarized below.
- The Report to Academic Council on the Review of Academic Council Executive Committee Terms of Reference dated May 28, 2019 is also attached for ease of reference.

Comments from Academic Council meeting on proposed amendments:
- The proposed mandate of the Steering Committee does not promote bicameral governance.
- By removing the authority of ACX to approve matters during the summer months, would this potentially cause issues?

Rationale:
- The updated ToR reflect a desire expressed by some faculty that ACX become more transparent.
- During the review, the actual activities of ACX were parsed out and set out in the updated ToR.
- The ACX ToR were also updated to reflect the establishment of GNC, which assumed responsibility for nominations and governance matters.
- If matters arise that require approval during a time when AC is not scheduled to meet, a meeting or conference call with Council would be scheduled so as not to impede the approval.

MOTION:

That pursuant to the recommendation of the Governance and Nominations Committee, Academic Council hereby recommends the Steering Committee Terms of Reference (formerly Academic Council Executive Committee), as presented, for approval by the Board of Governors.

NEXT STEPS:
1. If recommended by Council, the Terms of Reference will be presented to the Board of Governors for approval on November 28, 2019.

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:
- Steering Committee Terms of Reference
- Academic Council Report - Review of Academic Council Executive Committee Terms of Reference dated May 28, 2019 (discussed at June Council meeting)

ACADEMIC COUNCIL
Steering Committee

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1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Steering Committee ("Committee") is the body responsible for facilitating the work of Academic Council ("AC"). The Committee's responsibilities include:

    (a) coordinating the business of AC by reviewing and approving the agendas of AC meetings;

    (b) assigning all matters deemed routine and uncontroversial to the consent agenda;

    (c) reviewing the reports and proposals being presented to AC to ensure that relevant background material is available to AC members prior to meetings;

    (d) receiving and reviewing suggested agenda topics from the community and determining whether they are appropriate topics for discussion by AC;

    (e) considering, preparing and scheduling discussions of broad academic interest between 2 – 4 times per academic year; and

    (f) coordinating annual reports from the subsidiary bodies of AC.

2. MEETINGS

The Committee will meet monthly, at least 2 weeks before each meeting of AC, or otherwise at the Committee Chair's discretion. In accordance with the university's *Act* and By-laws, the Committee shall conduct two types of meetings as part of its regular administration: Public and Non-Public.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee shall be composed of:

Ex-officio
- President & Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
- Provost & Vice-President, Academic
- Chair of the committee responsible for undergraduate curriculum
- Chair of the committee responsible for graduate curriculum
- Chair of the committee responsible for research
- Secretary of Academic Council (non-voting)

Elected Representatives from Academic Council

- Between three (3) and six (6) elected representatives of Academic Council (Teaching Staff, Administrative Staff and Students) to ensure the Committee benefits from a balance of skills, expertise, and knowledge among its membership, while reflecting the demographic and cultural diversity of the communities served by the university.
- One of the elected representatives will also serve as Vice-Chair of Academic Council and Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee. The Vice-Chair will be selected in accordance with the relevant procedure established by the Governance and Nominations Committee.

4. QUORUM

Quorum requires that a majority of the Committee members entitled to vote be present.

ACADEMIC COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

SESSION:

Public ⊠
Non-Public ☐

ACTION REQUESTED:

Decision ☐
Discussion/Direction ⊠
Information ☐

TO: **Academic Council**

DATE: **May 28, 2019**

FROM: **Governance & Nominations Committee**

SUBJECT: **Review of Academic Council Executive Committee Terms of Reference**

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

- Section 1(a) of the GNC Terms of Reference lists one of the responsibilities of the committee as advising Academic Council on the establishment, terms of reference, composition, membership and retirement of its committees.
- As part of the implementation of By-law No. 2, the GNC has been asked to review the Terms of Reference for all of Academic Council's standing committees.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT:
- In order to assist the GNC with its review, the Academic Council Executive Committee (ACX) reviewed and provided feedback on its Terms of Reference.

ACX Comments:

Committee Composition:
- eliminate term "core faculty"
- should the member nomination process be set out in the ToR?
- should there be representation of all Faculties on the committee?
    - would lead to a richer discussion if there were representatives from each Faculty on the committee
    - could include a provision in ToR stating that when establishing membership, should consider diversity of representation (different

> Faculties, gender balance, downtown/north campus representation, experience, etc.)
> - committee acknowledged difficulty of filling open positions on committees
> - preference to keep the number of faculty on ACX at 5 with a note about goal of having diversity of perspectives on committee
- should solicit expressions of interest from Academic Council
- change core faculty to "elected faculty representatives from Academic Council"
- add Vice-Chair of Academic Council (AC) to the committee membership
- Vice-Chair of AC should also serve as Vice-Chair of ACX

Mandate Comments
- items #5 & #7 under the mandate are no longer relevant given establishment of the GNC
- #2 should also not be in the mandate of ACX – if advice of AC is required on budgetary matters, then should get perspective of AC as a whole and not only a subset of AC members
  - if new programs are coming through AC, budgetary questions should be considered at the Faculty level
  - ACX can be facilitator of budgetary discussions, but ACX should not be a budgetary committee
  - suggest to GNC that should consider establishing a budget advisory committee
- suggestion that ACX's main role is to facilitate AC activities – consider the information being presented & whether there is sufficient time
- main role of ACX is to review & approve ACX agendas & advise on material

Meeting Dates & Times
- build in flexibility – do not state specific day or time
- suggest stating that ACX to meet at least 2 weeks before Academic Council, as deemed necessary by the Chair

GNC's comments:

- The Vice-Chair of AC should also serve on ACX, either as an ex-officio member or be selected from among ACX members
- After much discussion, the committee supported the approach of soliciting expressions of interest from Council members for positions on ACX and then canvassing ACX for members interested in serving as Vice-Chair.
- This would require updating the ACX Terms of Reference to make the administrative staff member eligible for membership, as well.
- GNC emphasized the importance of ensuring a diversity of perspectives on ACX (gender balance, different Faculties, faculty/students/staff, downtown/north campus, tenured/tenure track & teaching faculty).
- The committee recommended including a statement of the value of having a diversity of perspectives in the Terms of Reference.

NEXT STEPS:
1. Academic Council's feedback will be communicated to GNC at the meeting on June 18, 2019.
2. The Terms of Reference will be presented to Academic Council for recommendation on June 24, 2019.

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:
- Proposed Terms of Reference for ACX
- Current Terms of Reference for ACX