New Program

Letter of Intent

Template and Guidelines

Proposed Graduate Program in [Program name]

[Give the program name, e.g. Education]

Degree(s):

[List the specific degrees title being proposed]

Ex:
Doctorate in Philosophy Education
Master of Arts Education
Graduate Diploma Program Evaluation

Submitted to:

Council on Graduate Studies
[Date]
Overview

In accordance with the University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the proposal for new programs is prepared by the academic unit seeking to create a new program. According to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance Framework and Guide, a new program is any degree, degree program, or program of specialization that is brand new. That is to say, a new program will have substantially different program requirements and substantially different learning outcomes from those of any existing approved programs offered by the institution.

The creation, evaluation and approval process is normally started by the academic unit or units intending to offer the program, and should be undertaken in consultation with the Graduate Studies Office of the host Faculty. After receiving approval from the departmental assembly, program committee or equivalent, the academic unit completes a draft of the proposed program in the form of the Letter of Intent Template for the Creation of a New Program.

The Letter of Intent is sent for approval to all appropriate faculty authorities (Vice-Dean, Graduate Studies or equivalent, Dean of the faculty or faculties involved, Executive Committee of the Faculty Council or Councils). The letter is then brought to the Council on Graduate Studies by the Office of the Vice-Provost Graduate and Postdoctoral studies. Once approved to go forward, it goes to the Graduate Program Committee which oversees the preparation of the three-volume brief (Volume One: Programs; Volume Two: Faculty CVs; Volume Three: External Reviewers’ CVs).

The letter of intent for new graduate programs is expected to outline:

- the rationale for the creation of the new program (including the program's aim, learning outcomes, degree level expectations, essential requirements, type of student it is expected to attract);
- the societal need and labour market demand for the program;
- the program name and degree designation and their accuracy in reflecting the program content and the terminology used in the discipline;
- how the program is consistent with the University’s mission and academic plans;
- how the program aligns with goals and research strengths of the academic unit(s);
- general admission requirements;
- the general program structure and content;
- rationale for the program length;
- a comparison with similar programs in Ontario or elsewhere;
- a brief evaluation of resources;
- cost recovery;
- the site and method of delivery;
- faculty teaching expertise;
- student interest;
- the administrative structure.

For additional information on the creation of new programs, please consult the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance Framework and Guide.
# New Program Letter of Intent

Submitted to the Council on Graduate Studies

Meeting of (DATE OF MEETING)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Suggestions and sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name of program</strong></td>
<td>In this section, note the name of the program.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Suggestions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Take care to use the correct name.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sample:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Epidemiology</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Type of program</strong></td>
<td>In this section, note the type of program to be offered.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sample:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Graduate Diploma</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Master’s</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Doctorate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Degrees</strong></td>
<td>In this section, note the name of the degree to be awarded.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Suggestions:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Take care to use the correct name(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Use the exact title (for example, “Master of Fine Arts” is correct whereas “Master in Fine Arts” is incorrect).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. There is no need to write in paragraph form; bullet points suffice.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sample:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Master of Science in Epidemiology (MSc)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Doctor of Philosophy in Epidemiology (PhD)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>High-level program requirements</strong></td>
<td>In this section, briefly note the high-level structure of the proposed program.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Suggestion:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• There is no need for a paragraph</td>
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<td>Sample:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Master’s: 21 credits with thesis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Doctorate: 27 credits of coursework, a comprehensive examination (oral and written), a thesis proposal, and a thesis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Graduate Diploma: 15 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsible academic units</strong></td>
<td>In this section, list the participating academic units that will be responsible for the delivery of the program.</td>
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### Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions and sample</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggestions:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. There is no need to write in paragraph form; bullet points suffice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Include any participating institutes.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sample:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School of Political Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Department of Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ottawa-Carleton Institute of Mathematics and Statistics</td>
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</table>

### Fields

In this section, list the names of the proposed program fields.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Note that fields are not required; however, if they exist, they must be listed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Fields must be approved by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Take care to use the correct name(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. There is no need to write in paragraph form; bullets suffice.</td>
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</table>

**Sample:**
- Descriptive and Analytic Epidemiology
- Applied and Clinical Epidemiology

### Intended program Start Date

- [-]*

### Current number of core faculty members

Sample: 14

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### Program Intention

**Program Rationale**

In this section, discuss the rationale for the creation of the program.

Content suggestions:
- Provide a justification for the creation of the proposed program (e.g. societal need, labour market demand).
- Comment on the program’s aim, learning outcomes, degree level expectations and the essential requirements.
- Discuss the appropriateness of the program name and degree designation and their accuracy in reflecting the program, content, and terminology used in the discipline.
Program Rationale

Formatting and writing suggestions:

- Write in sentence form.
- Use separate paragraphs for separate ideas.
- Use sub-headers if appropriate.

Program Structure

In this section, give a brief description of the program’s structure, content and general admission requirements.

Content suggestions:

- Describe the type of program (e.g. graduate diploma; course-based master’s; master’s with thesis; master’s with research paper; co-op option; collaborative program; PhD).
- Comment on the number of compulsory, elective, and optional courses.
- Provide a clear rationale for the program length that ensures that the program requirements can be reasonably completed within the proposed time period.
- If the program provides access to further graduate studies, comment on this link.

Formatting and writing suggestions:

- Use separate paragraphs for separate ideas.
- Use sub-headers if appropriate.
- If the proposed program has more than one degree-type, ensure that the specific degree or diploma being described is clearly noted to avoid confusion.

Governance Structure

In this section, explain the governance structure of the proposed graduate program.

Content suggestions:

- Explain the governance structure of the graduate program, including the roles of the program director and of the program committee.
- Explain how admissions are handled.
- Describe the mechanisms used to oversee comprehensive examinations, thesis committees (if applicable), fulfillment of program requirements, and graduation.

Resource suggestions:

- List the by-laws or statutes of the academic unit.
- Identify the terms of reference of the graduate program committee and any sub-committees.

Formatting and writing suggestions:

- Include an organizational chart as an appendix, if appropriate.
**Governance Structure**

- Elaborate briefly on each point.
- Use separate paragraphs for separate ideas.
- Use sub-headers if appropriate.
- If the program has more than one degree-type, ensure that the specific degree or diploma being described is clearly noted to avoid confusion.

**Administrative Structure**

In this section, write a brief statement about the administrative support for the proposed program.

Content suggestion:

- Describe the administrative support that will be dedicated to the program. This can include details of administrative staff, advisors, experiential learning coordinators (co-op, internship, field placement, practicum, etc.) and research facilitators.
- Indicate the level of staff support you anticipate needing, and the general responsibilities you anticipate the support staff will need to have.
- Include comments on the adequacy and strengths of the administrative support and, if necessary, identify any concerns.

Note: While it is appropriate to refer to positions, administrative staff should not be referred to by name.

Resource suggestions:

- Refer to the faculty web site that lists the support staff for the program.
- Refer to organizational charts, if available.

Formatting and writing suggestions:

- Write in sentence form.
- Use separate paragraphs for separate ideas.
- Use sub-headers if appropriate.

**Mode of Delivery**

In this section, discuss the appropriateness of the proposed mode(s) of delivery to meet the intended program learning outcomes and Degree Level Expectations. Please specify if the program will be held at a site other than the University of Ottawa or if the program will be offered online.
Institutional Context

uOttawa Mission and Strategic Plans

In this section, briefly explain how the program and its learning outcomes will relate to the University’s mission and the strategic plans of the university, faculty or unit. Note that, for programs offered by Saint Paul University, these comments can be framed in the context of SPU’s mission and strategic plans. Similarly, if the proposed program will be offered jointly with Carleton University, please discuss how the program also aligns with the mission and strategic plans of Carleton.

Content suggestions:

- Explain how the program and its learning outcomes relate to the University’s mission and strategic plan.

Resource suggestions:

- Consult Destination 20/20.
- Consult the Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA).
- Consult the Strategic Areas for Development in Research (SADR).
- Consult the strategic plans of your Faculty or academic unit.

Formatting and writing suggestions:

- Write between ¾ and one page of information.
- Use separate paragraphs for separate ideas.
- Use sub-headers if appropriate.
- If the program has more than one degree-type, ensure that the specific degree or diploma being described is clearly noted to avoid confusion.
- Write with a forward focus; indicate where this program is heading in the future.

Goals and Research Strengths of the Academic Unit(s)

In this section, comment on how the proposed program matches the goals, teaching, and research strengths of the academic unit(s) involved.

Comparison with Similar Programs in Ontario and Elsewhere

In this section, provide a brief overview of how the proposed program compares to other programs, within the University of Ottawa, within Saint Paul University, within Ontario or elsewhere.

Content suggestions:

- Refer to the table of similar programs included in the appendix section (developed by the academic unit).
- Highlight the ways in which the proposed program is differentiated from other programs within the University of Ottawa, within Saint Paul University, within Ontario or elsewhere. Indicate how the new program will not adversely affect existing programs within the University of Ottawa and Saint Paul University.
Comparison with Similar Programs in Ontario and Elsewhere

- Demonstrate that programs within the University of Ottawa and Saint Paul University have been consulted, if similarities do exist.

Formatting and writing suggestions:
- Include evidence of having consulted within the University of Ottawa and Saint Paul University (if applicable) in letter form; include it in the appendix section.
- Use separate paragraphs for separate ideas.
- Include sub-headers, if appropriate.

Cooperation and Partnership Opportunities (if applicable)

In this section, comment on the possible cooperation or partnership opportunities, if any, with other institutions.

Content suggestions:
- Describe any potential participation in collaborative programs, joint institutes, double-degrees or other significant partnerships.
- Note any unique opportunities available through partnerships with other departments.
- Comment on possible international research partnerships.

Students

Student Demand and Interest

In this section, discuss student interest in and demand for the program.

Student Demographics

In this section, comment on the type of students the program expects to attract.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Intake</th>
<th>Total Intake</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
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<td>2016-2017</td>
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<td>2017-2018</td>
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<td>2018-2019</td>
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<td>2019-2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020-2021</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

In this section, discuss the projected graduate student intake over five years, referring to the table above.

Content suggestions:

- In the above table, provide the projected enrolments for students at launch and over the next five years. If significant increases or decreases in enrolment are projected, explain reasons for the changes.
- Indicate any intentions to change the size of the program over the next eight years.
- Discuss plans for marketing the program and recruiting students.

Formatting and writing suggestions:

- Use separate paragraphs for separate ideas.
- Use sub-headers if appropriate.
- Refer to the table above.
- If the program has more than one degree-type, ensure that the specific degree or diploma being described is clearly noted to avoid confusion.

Resources

Program Resources

In this section, assess how well the Faculty’s human, physical and financial resources will support the delivery of the program.

Content suggestions:

- Discuss whether there are sufficient qualified professors to ensure the supervision and instruction of students.
- If the program is proposing fields, ensure that each field is adequately supported by professors’ research to sustain each field.
- Comment on the faculty members’ recent research or on the professional/clinical expertise needed to sustain the program, promote innovation, and foster an appropriate intellectual climate.
- Indicate whether the program will have enough support staff, physical space, and library and technical resources.
- Comment on the quality of on-campus and off-campus library resources, and the suitability of laboratory facilities and equipment available to support student research.
- Comment on the adequacy of office or study space, and other program-related facilities.
- Assess the appropriateness of the financial support available to Canadian students and students with permanent-residence status.
- If applicable, comment on international graduate student participation and funding.

Formatting and writing suggestions:
**Program Resources**

- Use separate paragraphs for separate ideas.
- Use sub-headers if appropriate.
- Refer to the table.
- If the program has more than one degree-type, ensure that the specific degree or diploma being described is clearly noted to avoid confusion.

**Program Funding**

Comment on whether or not the program will be cost-recovery.

Revised by Director of Quality Assurance Office, Graduate Studies on June 30, 2016