University of Toronto
Major Modification Proposal Template
Proposal to Transition Existing Approved Fields to Concentrations within a Graduate Degree Program

Section 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Program and Degree Levels (master’s, doctoral)</th>
<th>Master of Information and PhD.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ie, does this affect both the PhD and Masters programs or only one)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing, approved fields within the program at each degree level:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library and Information Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archives and Records Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Systems and Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Management and Information Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Information Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Heritage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy of Information</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department / graduate unit (if applicable) with academic responsibility for program:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Information</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty / Academic Division:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Information</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty / Academic Division contact:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adriana Rossini, Registrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adriana Rossini, Registrar</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Anticipated Effective date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 2012</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 10, 2012</td>
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Section 2

1. Executive Summary

This is a proposal to transition the existing, approved fields within the Master of Information (MI) and PhD. degrees to concentrations. These fields were most recently approved by OCGS in 2008. This major modification to the existing degree program(s) will be effective immediately.

The Master of Information and PhD programs have seven fields: Library and Information Science; Archives and Records Management; Information Systems and Design; Knowledge Management and Information Management; Critical Information Studies; Cultural Heritage; and Philosophy of Information.

These fields were originally approved by OCGS in 2008. Under this proposal these approved fields would all become concentrations and would henceforth be noted on students’ transcripts as such.

2. Academic Rationale

Traditionally, any graduate program seeking to advertise or make known a distinctive area of strength or specialization within their program was required (by the Ontario Council of Graduate Studies) to secure formal approval for a graduate field. Fields were expected to reflect the “broad foci of the program” and to be “congruent with the broad expertise of the core faculty members.” The identification of fields within a graduate program was “meant to give specificity to a program compared to other similar programs in Ontario.” Fields were not required within Master’s programs but were required within all PhD programs. The process of approval for a new field was rigorous and required OCGS approval. Fields were recorded on a student’s transcript.

With the transition from OCGS to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council) fields continue to be a feature of graduate programs, where desirable. They are defined by the Quality Assurance Framework as “an area of specialization or concentration (in multi/interdisciplinary programs a clustered area of specialization) that is related to the demonstrable and collective strengths of the program’s faculty.” At the same time, the Quality Assurance Framework also recognizes “programs of specialization” or “concentrations” which it defines as “An identified set and sequence of courses, and/or other units of study, research and practice within an area of disciplinary or interdisciplinary study, which is completed in … fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree, and is recorded on the graduate's academic record.”

Rooted in the Province’s Quality Assurance Framework, the University of Toronto has come to the following clarification of fields and concentrations and their characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>Concentrations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>A field is an identified area of specialization in a graduate degree program that is related to demonstrable and collective strengths of the program’s faculty members. There is no requirement to identify fields in either master’s or doctoral programs. Initial</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Major Modification Proposal to Transition Existing Fields to Concentrations

 proposals for fields require University governance approval and the endorsement of the Quality Council. As with all academic initiatives, proposals for fields require demonstration of adequate resources. Approved fields have the following characteristics:

Advertising: An approved field may be used to advertise an area of strength within a graduate program.

Admission: In some programs, students may be admitted directly into an approved field within a program, though there is no requirement to do so. Students may be identified with a field in a program upon admission.

Requirements: The total number of courses and other program requirements in an individual field normally are the same as the overall degree program requirements, and the same as in any other field in the program. There usually is a common set of requirements for the degree program regardless of field.

Transcript: Approved fields may appear as notations on the student transcript upon completion of the degree program.

Approvals: A proposal for a field follows the Expedited New Program Process and requires University governance approval of the Division and Academic Policy and Programs Committee and requires Quality Council endorsement.

In line with the University of Toronto’s understanding of fields and concentrations, the graduate degree program in Information has prepared this proposal to seek governance approval to transition its existing approved fields to concentrations. The Master of Museum Studies is exempted from this proposal.

Fields are rooted in and reflect distinct areas of expertise and scholarship of the program faculty. They tend to identify quite distinct areas of interest and research. In this sense, the creation of a new field commonly reflects a new and substantive direction for a program and is treated by the UTQAP as a subset of the new program category requiring expedited approval by the Quality Council. Fields by virtue of their definition, the investment of time and energy required for their approval, and also by the manner in which they are tied to the demonstrated expertise of the faculty complement, tend to possess a certain sense of stability and constancy. Fields commonly change slowly and infrequently. Often, the identification of fields conforms to established disciplinary norms and has a significance that goes beyond the purely curricular. In certain contexts fields will continue to be seen as appropriate, constructive, and informative.

In contrast, concentrations, while equally rooted in the capacity of the research faculty to support graduate level research in specific areas, suggest a more flexible offering that can evolve in a timely manner and can be appropriately responsive to changes in the area of study.

Concentrations by their very nature will reflect the evolving interests of faculty and prospective students but need not be as entirely distinct and free-standing as a field is expected to be.

This latter construction is felt by the MI and PhD programs to be more appropriate to the nature of their programs, their goals and interests. Information disciplines have undergone significant expansion and specialization from previously. Furthermore, the disciplines are continuously undergoing radical change. Lastly, in the case of the MI, it is important for students graduating from a professional program to identify particular areas of strength in their formation (e.g., Libraries, Information Systems, Archives, Knowledge Management, etc) to present themselves more clearly to prospective employers. The Faculty has found through experience that, although

with all academic initiatives, proposals for concentrations require demonstration of adequate resources. Approved concentrations have the following characteristics:

A graduate program may advertise concentrations in association with the graduate program.

In some programs, students may be admitted directly into an approved concentration within a program, though there is no requirement to do so. Students may be identified with a field in a program upon admission.

The total number of courses and other program requirements in an individual concentration normally are the same as the overall degree program requirements, and the same as in any other concentration in the program. There usually is a common set of requirements for the degree program regardless of concentration.

Approved concentrations may appear as notations on the student transcript upon completion of the degree program.

A proposal for a concentration is a Major Modification and requires University governance approval at the level of the Division and is reported to Academic Policy and Programs Committee for information, and also is reported to Quality Council.
Major Modification Proposal to Transition Existing Fields to Concentrations

Having a single degree with a core basic to all Information disciplines is valuable, being able to present specializations more clearly has proven equally valuable.

Under the UTQAP, any program seeking approval for a concentration is required to bring forward a rigorous academic proposal. This proposal should seek to demonstrate that the proposed concentration is:

- academically defensible / supported by a strong academic rationale
- clearly appropriate given the current state of the discipline or area of study
- an area of identifiable student interest and demand
- intellectually distinct from existing concentrations
- appropriately named, reflecting understood meaning
- supported by adequate resources; a demonstrable area of research and teaching strength among faculty
- is aligned with the overall learning objectives of the particular program

In 2008, OCGS approved all seven of the fields that are proposed to transition to concentrations. Each of them underwent rigorous review, is broadly understood by students, and is designed to fit within the program.

3. Description of the Proposed Major Modification(s)

The Master of Information (MI) and PhD programs have seven fields: Library and Information Science; Archives and Records Management; Information Systems and Design; Knowledge Management and Information Management; Critical Information Studies; Cultural Heritage; and Philosophy of Information. These fields are common to both degrees. The proposed transition of these existing fields within the programs would be effective September 2012. Under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance process (UTQAP) this change is considered a major modification to an existing program requiring Divisional Council approval. The approval of a major modification is reported as a major modification for information to the Academic Policy and Programs Committee of Governing Council and also to the Quality Council.

There are no significant changes at this time to learning outcomes, faculty, resources, modes of delivery, location of delivery, etc.

4. Requirements

None

5. Impact of the Change on Students

Students enrolled in the program will have the option of being grandfathered with respect to existing fields. Concentrations will be available to new students admitted as of the effective date of the change.

6. Consultation
This proposal is the product of extensive discussion and consultation amongst the graduate faculty teaching in this program. Faculty, students and staff have all commented upon the desirability of specificity granted by concentrations, especially given the expansion of information disciplines.

7. Resources:

This proposal has no resource implications beyond requiring the creation and ongoing monitoring of a PoST code in ROSI.

8. Governance Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Approval Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dean’s Office Sign Off</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit level approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty/Divisional Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission to Provost’s Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>AP&amp;P – reported annually</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ontario Quality Council - reported annually</td>
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