



Conducting Consultation in Curriculum Development Processes

1. Purpose:

The following document is designed to present protocols for consultation in the curriculum development process, allow for increased communication/collaboration among peers, and build consistency in curriculum across the School and collaboration across the institution. Information obtained through consultation is used to make informed decisions about curriculum content, instructional methods, assessment strategies, and other relevant aspects.

This collaborative process helps ensure that the curriculum aligns with the needs, goals, and values of the community it serves. Additionally, consultation fosters a sense of ownership and commitment among stakeholders, leading to increased support for the curriculum and its successful implementation.

As a faculty with a vision of being recognized as a leading interdisciplinary engineering school, it is imperative to acknowledge the inevitable overlap and intersection of knowledge domains across our academic units. In this light, consultation emerges as a vital mechanism to harness the collective expertise inherent within our academic community and stakeholder network. It stands not as a means for any singular academic unit to monopolize knowledge domains, but rather as a collaborative tool to foster synergy and innovation across diverse disciplines. The role of consultation in proposing new and revised programming, and the expectations for its documentation, will oversee, create strategies, plans and ensure common Continuous Program Improvement framework across all Lassonde programs meet compliance in governing legislation for curriculum approval requirements set out in the [York University Quality Assurance Procedures \(YUQAP\)](#).

2. Definitions:

- **Consultation:** Consultation in the context of curriculum development refers to the process of seeking input, feedback, and guidance from various stakeholders to inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of an educational curriculum. This collaborative approach involves engaging with individuals or groups who have a vested interest in the curriculum to gather diverse perspectives, insights, and expertise to create well-rounded and effective educational programs.
- **Proponents:** A curriculum proponent refers to the individual or entity that actively supports or advocates for a particular educational curriculum and brings forward the proposal (e.g. proposal for a new course, changes to existing courses, changes to degree requirements, etc.) for community consultation and approval.
- **Stakeholders:** Stakeholders in curriculum development refer to individuals, groups, or entities that have a vested interest in the planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of the School's educational programs. These stakeholders play crucial roles in shaping the content, structure, and delivery of curricula in post-secondary educational settings.

3. Consultation Protocols:

3.1. Identifying Stakeholders

Proponents have the responsibility of identifying the various stakeholders who will be required for consultation on curriculum items. Stakeholders may include:

- **Faculty and Instructors:** Academic professionals who are directly involved in teaching and research and contribute their expertise to shaping the curriculum.
- **Students:** As the primary beneficiaries of the education provided, students are important stakeholders. Their needs, interests, and feedback help shape the curriculum to be engaging, relevant, and responsive to the evolving demands of the job market.
- **Administrators:** Academics leads, including the Dean, department Chairs, and academic affairs personnel, play a key role in curriculum development.
- **Accreditation Bodies:** External organizations responsible for accrediting educational institutions often have specific criteria that curricula must meet.

- **Industry and Employers:** Post-secondary institutions collaborate with industries and employers to ensure that the curriculum aligns with the skills and knowledge needed in the workforce. Input from professionals in the field helps create programs that prepare students for real-world challenges.
- **York Governing Bodies: The Board of Governors and the Senate** may set regulations, standards, and funding policies that impact post-secondary curriculum development. Compliance with these regulations is a significant consideration.
- **Alumni:** Graduates of post-secondary programs can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the curriculum in preparing them for their careers. Their feedback can inform ongoing curriculum improvements.
- **York Community:** Organizations within the local community may have an interest in the curriculum, particularly if the post-secondary institution has a community engagement or service-oriented mission. Collaboration with these organizations can enhance the relevance of the curriculum.
- **Technology Providers:** As technology continues to play a significant role in education, stakeholders may include technology companies providing educational tools, software, and resources.
- **Advisory Boards:** Some institutions establish advisory boards composed of professionals from relevant industries. These boards provide advice and feedback on the curriculum to ensure it remains current and aligned with industry trends.
- **Educational Researchers and Specialists:** Researchers in education, curriculum development, and pedagogy may contribute valuable insights and evidence-based practices to enhance the quality of post-secondary curricula.
- **International Partners:** In an increasingly globalized world, institutions may collaborate with international partners to ensure their curricula are globally competitive and culturally relevant.

The collaboration and input of these stakeholders help ensure that post-secondary curricula are comprehensive, relevant, and meet the diverse needs of students, industries, and society.

3.2. Consultation Process

The goal of seeking consultation is to solicit feedback to the Undergraduate or Graduate Program Director who will share the communication to the curriculum committee Chair and any other subject expert/s. The consultation process must take place to ensure that those who have expertise in the specific area can solicit feedback to look more broadly at impact or crossovers. It is also important that the information is sent back to the proponent in a written form and this statement gets appended to the proposal.

Since the goal of consultation is to seek input, feedback and guidance, stakeholder groups are not expected to approve or veto proposals.

- The proponent(s) shall:
 - Facilitate consultations among interested parties at the earliest opportunity.
 - Consultations requests must be made via email to the Undergraduate or Graduate Program Director, who will share the communication to the Chair of Curriculum Committee and relevant stakeholders.
 - Clearly articulate the objectives and purpose of the consultation, outlining what is being proposed and why.
 - Create and maintain open channels for communication, allowing stakeholders to ask questions or seek clarification.
 - Provide reasonable timelines for feedback and consultation with the relevant stakeholder groups, identified clearly in the Consultation Request Letter.
 - Make reasonable efforts to confirm if input/statements of support from stakeholders.
 - Once the deadline for consultation has passed, append a checklist identifying which stakeholders were requested to be consulted with, and whether feedback was received by the deadline identified.
 - Append a summary of the responses that were received, or confirmation that no response was received. The summary may include PDFs of email responses received from stakeholders.
 - Documenting the consultation efforts taken allows the university governing bodies (Faculty Council, ASCP, APPRC and Senate) to be satisfied that the consultation process was followed, and that other parties have no concerns or questions about the proposal to be addressed.
 - Provide an overview of the consultation undertaken with relevant academic units and an assessment of the impact of the major modifications on other programs.

- The stakeholder(s) shall:
 - Actively participate in the consultation process by responding to requests for feedback and engaging in discussions
 - Represent the interests, needs, and concerns of the stakeholder group they represent.
 - Share specialized knowledge or expertise related to the subject under consideration.
 - Express opinions, concerns, feedback and solutions transparently and constructively.
 - Respond within the specified timeframe to requests for input or feedback.

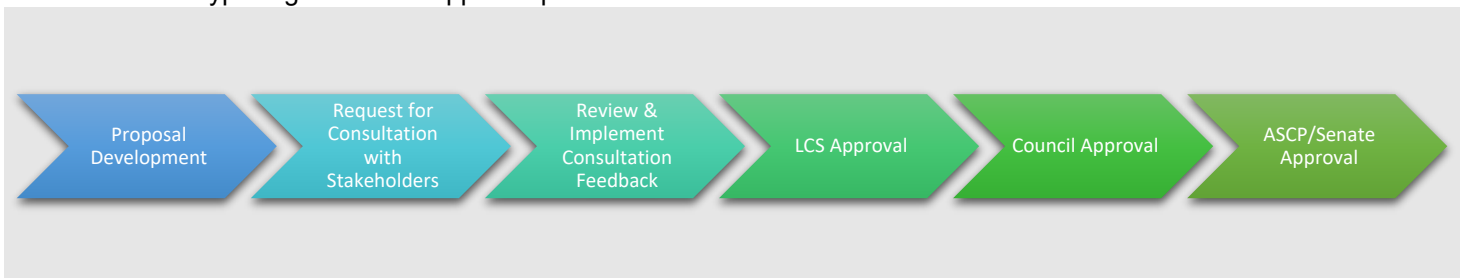
The proponents and department curriculum committees should commit to Continuous Program Improvement by regularly seeking ways to enhance the consultation process.

3.3. Guide to Consultation in Curriculum Development Process:

- Consider if the proposal will influence change/s that may impact other courses.
- Consider if the course overlaps and have similar course description, learning outcomes, and learning objectives taught by another unit.
- Is there evidence of effective pedagogical approaches in the curriculum design such as the revised Curriculum Map/Accreditation Unit tables/Program learning outcomes?
- Consider opportunities that will allow proponents to present items at the respective curriculum committee meetings.
- Does the proponent's department have enough resources (particularly instructors) to consistently teach the course, or do you require resources from other departments?
- Consider the current student demand of the proposed course and any other units that may benefit from the course.
- Have you considered cross-listing courses?

3.4. Timelines & Approval Processes:

- Stakeholders shall be provided a **minimum of 3 weeks** deadline to provide feedback and consultation on curriculum proposals.
 - Following the consultation process, proponents are responsible for reviewing the concerns, suggestions, and feedback from stakeholders, and be **willing** to modify the proposal based on valid and constructive feedback received during the consultation.
 - If the proponent does not receive feedback by the date outlined in the consultation request letter, after reasonable efforts have been made to confirm that no input/statements of support have been or are expected to be received, the proponent may proceed with bringing the item forward to the next steps in the approval process.
- The typical governance approval process for curriculum items is as follows:



4. Supporting Documentation:

- Consultation Request Letter
- Consultation Response Letter
- Proof of Consultation Attachments

5. Resources and References

- [York University Quality Assurance Procedures \(YUQAP\)](#)

