

Memo

To: Faculty
From: Scott Walsworth, Vice-Provost, Faculty Relations
Date: September 16, 2024
Subject: Substantive changes to the University Standards

Greetings Faculty,

I am writing to provide some initial information on the work ahead of us regarding the process for updating the University Standards and the creation of standards for the new tenure track teaching stream. The process described below integrates two important initiatives: updating the 2011 University Standards and creating teaching stream standards for departments, colleges and the University. This work will span the 2024/2025 academic year and will culminate in revised department and college standards (concerning the teaching stream) and revised University Standards (concerning general updates and the teaching stream), all approved by June 2025.

It is critical to recognize that the University Standards are created only after the URC has received and reviewed standards from the Colleges (see article 15.9.4.ii), and the same applies to CRCs who devise standards only after they have received and reviewed submissions from Department Renewals and Tenure Committees (see 15.9.3.iii). This ground-up approach assures that faculty in every unit have an opportunity to inform the standards at all levels.

In this [link](#) (and posted on the [VPFR website](#)), you will find a side-by-side presentation of the 2011 University Standards along with suggested amendments for consideration. The suggestions are informed by a collection of efforts by the URC since 2021 including consultations, a review of recently approved revised college standards, and a scan of standards employed in the U15. The suggestions are offered for consideration only; they are not instructive, instead they provide a helpful starting place for the important discussions that will happen in CRCs and departments. You are equally invited to disregard the suggestions just as you may design entirely different standards. The CRCs will compile the feedback from department committees and revise college standards for submission to the URC.

An extensive consultation process is in place to ensure the revised University Standards reflect the interests of all stakeholders. I begin this process with separate meetings with deans, and department heads, and the USFA. I am meeting individually with every CRC and I will hold a number of townhalls to hear directly from faculty. In addition, the URC is engaged with the Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement, the Office of the Vice Provost Teaching and Learning and Student Engagement, and the RSAW committee.

This will be a busy year for collegial process work. Updated standards that reflect our shared vision of acceptable levels of performance are critical for making informed and fair tenure and promotion decisions. This is important work, and I thank you in advance for your engagement.

An outline of the consultation process:

1. **Consult with Deans and EDs:** brief presentation at Dean's Council (Sept 10) and more in-depth discussion at Deans Team meetings (September 10 and 11).
2. **Consult with the USFA:** date to be determined.
3. **Consult with CRCs:** VPFR to meet with all 17 CRCs in their first or second meeting. Visits completed by mid-October 2024.
4. **Townhall for Department Heads:** initial reactions and feedback. October 22, 2024 @ 10:00-11:30, Arts 120.
5. **Solicit feedback from CRCs:** dept committees will submit comments for general updates and submit new teaching stream standards to CRCs, who will compile comments and devise college standards for the teaching stream for transmission to the URC. All feedback regarding university standards and new teaching stream standards received by January 1, 2025.
6. **Sub-committees of URC formed and informed:** training and input from OVPIE, OTLSE, and RSAW committee. Completed by January 1, 2025.
7. **Drafting of URC Standards:** university standards revisions initially drafted by sub-committees and new teaching stream drafted by separate URC subcommittee. Circulate to CRCs and solicit feedback. Draft circulated by February 15, 2025 and feedback deadline April 1, 2025.
8. **Townhall:** standards revised and presentation of 2nd draft to wider faculty – then revised based on feedback. Townhall first week of May, 2025. Time and Location TBD.
9. **Final approval** of third draft by URC: completed by June 1, 2025.

Below I draw you attention to a summary of the substantive suggested amendments to the University Standards.

- Updated principles to reflect the University Plan 2025, the University Vision and Mission statements, and ohpahotân
- Category 2
 - A broader understanding of evidence of teaching performance
 - Revised list of potential sources of evaluation to include assessments of Deans or Department Heads, and and outside references concerning Indigenous-based and/or community-based teaching
 - Added guidance concerning the known equity bias of student feedback
 - Specific requirements of teaching performance for teaching stream appointments
- Category 4
 - Overhauled for clarity
 - A new table to describe categories of scholarship and sources of evidence

- Additional language to signal that promotion to the rank of Professor is neither automatic nor based on years of service
- Category 5
 - Addition of educational leadership for teaching stream appointments including a list of activities and possible evaluation methods
 - Specific requirements by rank for Assistant, Associate, and Professors of Teaching regarding educational leadership, to accompany existing requirements
- Category 6
 - Added requirement for evidence of university level committee work, and evidence of committee leadership for tenure as or promotion to Professor and Professor of Teaching
 - Added clarification for valuing extension work



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I acknowledge that I live and work on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. We pay our respects to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

