Graduate Studies Committee

Report to Academic Council
at its meeting of May 20, 2008

For Action

1. Proposal to Add a New Field in Forensic Bioscience to the Master of Science Program in Applied Bioscience (Faculty of Science)

The Graduate Studies Committee recommends:

> *That Academic Council approve the proposal to add a new field in Forensic Bioscience to the Master of Science Program in Applied Bioscience, Faculty of Science, as set out in Appendix B.*

Rationale:

The MSc in Applied Bioscience, approved by OCGS in December 2006, enables students to become high quality researchers at the interface between chemistry and biology, with competence in both of these subjects and the ability to tackle interdisciplinary problems and to work independently and successfully within collaborative networks. The program equips students with a wide array of both practical and conceptual scientific skills and prepares them for leadership roles in the life sciences. The program currently offers two areas of strength: Biomolecular Science and Environmental Science and Health.

The Faculty of Science proposes to add one additional field to the MSc degree in the area of Forensic Bioscience, and as such would be the first in Canada to offer a graduate program with a field of strength in forensic science. This field will address an emerging and rapidly growing field within the discipline, support the University's mission to provide innovative programs in areas of global significance and capitalize on the experiences and research interests of new faculty as well as synergistic relationships within the University's interdisciplinary environment.

The provision of fields within a graduate program offers students opportunities to enhance their understanding of and conduct research in specialized areas of study which complement their interests and career plans. All students in the MSc program complete their requirements through a combination of coursework, supervised research, a research seminar and a research thesis. The program outcomes, admission and degree requirements and program sequence are consistent for all students. This new field would require the addition of only one new elective course in advanced forensic bioscience.

There are several important reasons for proposing that Forensic Bioscience be added as a field to the approved program. This area of study:

- Supports UOIT's mission to provide innovative programs which are responsive to the needs of students and employers and which advance the highest quality of both research and learning, teaching and professional practice within a technologically enabled environment. In

addition, focussed study and research in this critical area will also support the University in its efforts to make significant contributions to the understanding and resolution of important issues which affect Canadians on a national and global scale.

- Addresses the demand for academically trained professionals who are exposed to state of the art technology, theory and practice of forensic bioscience.
- Prepares graduates to be multi-skilled and highly qualified personnel who are employable in a variety of areas within the forensic science community, such as provincial and federal police services, government and private forensic laboratories, customs and immigration services, coroner's assistants and the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry.
- Capitalizes on the interdisciplinary strengths of the university's talented faculty members and complementary resources, including the Crime Scene House, as well as the Geoforensic Research Facility, and the outdoor research facility for decomposition research that is currently under development.

The proposal to add the new field in Forensic Bioscience to the Master of Science Program in Applied Bioscience is attached as Appendix A.

The original proposal for the Master of Science Program in Applied Bioscience is available on the Academic Council website at:

http://www.uoit.ca/assets/Section~specific/About~UOIT/Governance/Academic~Council/20050315/AppliedBioSci_toCPRC.doc