

COUNCIL OF
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Applied Degrees – How do we
Prepare for 2007

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Background

The “college” applied degree in Ontario

News Release April 28, 2000

“The Government of Ontario will allow Ontario’s colleges of applied arts and technology to offer applied degrees on a *pilot-project* basis and has approved the establishment of private degree-granting institutions in Ontario...”

To ensure the highest quality from these new and expanded institutions the Government will establish a Quality Assessment Board, which will assess new degree programs offered by Ontario colleges, out-of province institutions located in Ontario.”

Ministry Consultation Paper: “Increasing Degree Opportunities for Ontarians”

April 2000

Applied Degrees

- Pilot projects will be approved to allow colleges of applied arts and technology to grant applied degrees.
- A maximum of *eight* new pilot projects will be approved per year for these years. Each project will normally consist of one college offering one program in a field where the college demonstrates academic excellence.

Consultation Paper (cont.)

- An applied degree program will be defined to include programs that
 - offer a high quality of education
 - respond to demonstrated demand from students and *employers*
 - *do not duplicate programs offered at universities in Ontario*
- *The success of the pilot projects will be evaluated at the end of three years*

News Release March 27, 2002

"Ontario students will now have the opportunity to enroll in applied degree programs *that will prepare them for today's highly skilled job market*", Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister Dianne Cunningham announced today, as nine colleges received approval to proceed with plans to offer *12 programs on a pilot project basis*.

"New applied degree programs at our colleges will both expand choice for students and ensure that Ontario has the *educated and skilled workers* we need to support a growing economy for the 21st century.

March 27, 2002 (cont.)

"Approved applied degree programs will cover a range of fields including financial services management, information technology, electronic business, automotive management and environment site remediation."

"The evidence we saw suggests that the new programs will be very popular with *employers looking for better qualified graduates and with students looking for ways to prepare themselves for the new economy.*"

News Release: November 29, 2002

"The Ernie Eves government today approved *22 new applied degree programs* to be offered at 16 Ontario Colleges to ensure students have access to the high quality programs needed for today's workplace...

These colleges have demonstrated their ability to deliver new high quality programs *to prepare students for highly skilled jobs in today's economy...*

We have gone beyond our original plan for the pilot phase to approve a total of 34 new applied degree programs to provide students with a wider range of choices for postsecondary programs."

November 29, 2002 (cont.)

Colleges may continue to submit proposals for applied degrees that respond to students and employers needs for advanced training...

In March, Cunningham announced the approval of 12 pilot applied degree programs during the first round of the pilot program. The first of these programs took in students starting in September 2002 and the remaining programs are expected to accept students for fall 2003.

Summary

April 28, 2000

- eight new pilots per year for three years
- success of the pilots to be evaluated at end of the three years

March 27, 2002

- 12 programs on a pilot project basis

November 29, 2002

- 22 new applied degree programs
- notion of "pilots" abandoned
- references to "evaluation" dropped

Observations

- There is no evidence in any of the ministry's public statements that college applied degrees were intended to prepare students for advanced study at universities.
- Neither the ministry, ACAATO nor individual colleges of applied arts and technology approached Ontario universities with a request that we consider graduates from these programs for admission to professional or graduate programs.
- The first students were admitted to these programs in September 2002 and by November 29th, of that year, some three months later the government deemed them a huge success and apparently abandoned any thoughts of evaluating them.

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- Need to develop advice to students who might wonder about future study
- Marshall memorandum of May 2002, intended to specifically to address the question of whether graduates of college applied degree programs will be eligible and admissible to university graduate and professional programs:

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-The memorandum emphasized:

- regulatory bodies role in determining basis for admission to programs
- highly competitive nature of admissions process
- affinity of undergraduate degree program with graduate program
- need for programs to establish track record
- role of departments in admission process and difficulty in making broadly applicable statements regarding admissions matters

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- Marshall – Patterson memorandum issued in June 2004 added two important points to the Marshall memorandum of May 2002:

- Normally admission to an Ontario university graduate program requires a four-year Bachelor's degree or equivalent from a recognized institution. Admission to an Ontario university professional program varies with requirements ranging from a minimum of two or three years of study in a program leading to a Bachelor's degree from a recognized institution, to completion of a four-year Bachelor's degree from a recognized institution.

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- Since Canada does not have an institutional accreditation System, Ontario universities consider the functional equivalence to accreditation for a Canadian university as having the appropriate provincial charter, coupled with membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). For Ontario-based institutions, this also includes membership of associate membership in the Council of Ontario Universities.