



Standing Committees - Terms of Reference

Curriculum Committee

1. Purpose

The Curriculum Committee is a standing academic committee of the Guru Nanak Institute of Global Studies (GNI) responsible for the development, review, and academic evaluation of curriculum in support of the Institute's academic programs.

The Committee functions in **an advisory and recommendatory capacity** and reports to the Academic Council, which retains final authority over curriculum approval.

2. Mandate

The Curriculum Committee supports the **Academic Council** by ensuring that all curriculum is:

- Academically rigorous and coherent
- Aligned with approved program learning outcomes
- Consistent with BC Degree-Level Standards
- Compliant with **Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB)** expectations
- Informed by disciplinary norms and best practices in Canadian post-secondary education

3. Scope of Responsibilities

The Curriculum Committee shall:

3.1 Curriculum Development

- Review and recommend:
 - New course proposals
 - Course descriptions, learning outcomes, and credit values
 - Course sequencing and level progression

- Ensure curriculum alignment within and across programs

3.2 Curriculum Review and Revision

- Review proposed revisions to existing courses and curricula
- Ensure changes are:
 - Pedagogically sound
 - Academically justified
 - Consistent with program objectives

3.3 Learning Outcomes and Assessment

- Review course-level and program-level learning outcomes for:
 - Clarity and measurability
 - Alignment with assessments
 - Level appropriateness
- Ensure assessment strategies reflect degree-level expectations

3.4 Academic Standards and Coherence

- Confirm consistency in:
 - Credit weighting
 - Academic workload
 - Level differentiation (lower-division / upper-division)
- Identify gaps, redundancies, or misalignments in curriculum

3.5 External Input (as applicable)

- Consider feedback from:
 - External subject-matter experts
 - External Academic Advisory Board members
- Recommend curriculum enhancements based on external advice

4. Authority and Limits

- The Curriculum Committee **does not have final approval authority**
- All curriculum recommendations are submitted to the **Academic Council** for review and approval
- The Committee operates within policies approved by the Academic Council and Board of Directors

5. Composition

Appointment Authority

- Members are **appointed by the Academic Council** (or Senate-equivalent), normally on the recommendation of the **Provost/VP/Academic**.

Chair

- Appointed by the **Academic Council**.
- Typically a **senior faculty member** or **Program Chair**.

Minimum Membership

- 3-5 Members
 - Majority: faculty members
 - At least **1 external academic member** (recommended, especially for new degree programs)
 - Optional: 1 student (non-voting, if program has enrolled students)

6. Chair

- The Chair is responsible for:
 - Convening meetings
 - Ensuring academic rigor in deliberations
 - Reporting recommendations to the Academic Council

7. Meetings

- The Committee shall meet **as required**, and at least **once per academic year**
- Meetings may be held in person or virtually
- Quorum shall be a simple majority of voting members

8. Decision-Making

- Recommendations shall be made by **consensus where possible**, or by majority vote
- All decisions shall be:
 - Evidence-based
 - Documented in formal minutes

9. Reporting and Documentation

- The Committee shall:
 - Maintain written agendas and minutes
 - Submit formal recommendations to the Academic Council
- Records shall be retained in accordance with GNI's records management policies and made available for regulatory review

10. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed:

- Periodically by the Academic Council, or
- As required due to regulatory or institutional changes

Program Review Committee

1. Mandate

The Program Review Committee (PRC) is responsible for the systematic, evidence-based evaluation of the effectiveness, quality, and outcomes of academic programs after implementation. The Committee ensures that programs remain academically sound, relevant, and aligned with institutional objectives and degree-level expectations, and that findings inform continuous improvement.

The PRC is evaluative in nature and does not engage in curriculum design. Recommendations related to curriculum changes are referred to the Curriculum Committee for review.

2. Scope of Responsibility

The Program Review Committee shall:

- a. Conduct periodic program reviews in accordance with the Institute's program review cycle;
- b. Evaluate the extent to which program learning outcomes are being achieved;
- c. Review evidence related to:
 - Student progression, retention, and completion;
 - Assessment outcomes and grading patterns;
 - Practicum or experiential learning outcomes (where applicable);
 - Student, graduate, alumni, and stakeholder feedback;
 - Faculty qualifications, workload, and instructional capacity;
 - Adequacy of learning resources and academic support services;
- d. Assess program relevance, coherence, and sustainability;
- e. Identify strengths, risks, and areas for improvement; and
- f. Make evidence-based recommendations to the Academic Council for program enhancement, continuation, or revision.

3. Authority

- a. The Program Review Committee operates as an **advisory body** to the Academic Council.
- b. The Committee does not approve curriculum or academic policy changes.
- c. All recommendations are submitted to the Academic Council for consideration and action.

4. Relationship to Other Academic Bodies

- **Curriculum Committee:** Responsible for curriculum development, course design, and learning outcomes. Receives referrals from the PRC where curriculum revision is recommended.

- **Academic Council:** Receives PRC reports and determines required actions, approvals, or follow-up.
- **Quality Assurance Committee (if applicable):** May support data collection and institutional analysis for program reviews.

5. Composition

Appointment Authority

- Appointed by the **Academic Council**, often following a recommendation from the **Provost/VP Academic**.

Chair

- Appointed by the Academic Council
- Should not be Program Chair of the program under review (conflict-of-interest control).

Minimum Membership

- **3-5 members**
 - At least **2 external academics** (from recognized post-secondary institutions)
 - At least **1 internal faculty member**
 - Optional: 1 community or employer representative (non-voting)

6. Meetings and Quorum

- a. The PRC meets as required to conduct scheduled program reviews.
- b. Quorum is **50% plus one** of voting members.
- c. Meetings may be held in person or electronically.
- d. Decisions are reached by consensus where possible; otherwise, by simple majority.

7. Program Review Process

The PRC shall follow a structured review process that includes:

1. Review of a **Program Self-Study Report** prepared by the academic unit;
2. Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data;
3. Consultation with faculty, students, and relevant stakeholders;
4. Optional external academic input; and
5. Preparation of a **Program Review Report** with findings and recommendations.

8. Reporting

- a. The PRC submits a written Program Review Report to the Academic Council.
- b. The report includes:

- Summary of evidence reviewed;
- Key findings;
- Commendations;
- Recommendations; and
- Suggested timelines for follow-up.

c. The Academic Council determines required actions and assigns responsibility for implementation.

9. Record-Keeping

All PRC records, reports, and supporting documentation are maintained in accordance with the Institute's Records Management and Retention Policy.

10. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference are reviewed every **three (3) years**, or earlier if required by changes to institutional governance or quality assurance processes.

Academic Appeals Committee

1. Purpose

The **Academic Appeals Committee** is a standing committee established to provide a fair, transparent, and impartial process for the review of academic appeals submitted by students.

The Committee ensures that academic decisions affecting students are reviewed in accordance with approved academic policies, principles of procedural fairness, and natural justice.

2. Mandate

The Committee shall review and adjudicate student appeals related to:

- Grades and academic standing
- Academic progression or dismissal
- Academic integrity findings (where permitted by policy)
- Other academic decisions eligible for appeal under GNI policy

3. Scope of Authority

- The Committee reviews whether:
 - Policies were applied correctly

- Procedures were followed
- Decisions were reasonable and evidence-based
- The Committee does not re-grade academic work, except where policy explicitly permits
- Decisions of the Committee are **final** within the Institute, subject to any external review rights under applicable law

4. Composition

Appointment Authority

- Appointed by the **Board of Directors**
- Academic Council administers it

Chair

- Appointed by the **Board of Directors**
- Must be **independent of day-to-day academic administration**

Minimum Membership

- **3-5 members**
 - Majority must be faculty
 - At least 1 member not involved in the original academic decision
 - No administrators directly responsible for the decision under appeal

5. Meetings and Decisions

- Meetings shall be convened **as required**
- Decisions shall be based on:
 - Written submissions
 - Applicable academic policies
- Decisions and rationales shall be documented in writing

6. Reporting

- The Committee reports annually (in aggregate form) to the **Academic Council**
- Individual appeal outcomes remain confidential

Research and Ethics Committee

1. Purpose

The **Research & Ethics Committee (REC)** oversees ethical standards and scholarly integrity for research conducted under the auspices of GNI.

The Committee ensures that research involving human participants, communities, or sensitive data complies with recognized ethical standards and institutional policies.

2. Mandate

The Committee shall:

- Review and approve research proposals involving:
 - Human participants
 - Indigenous communities or knowledge systems
 - Sensitive personal or cultural information
- Ensure ethical compliance consistent with:
 - Canadian post-secondary research norms
 - Respect for participants, communities, and knowledge holders

3. Scope of Responsibilities

The Committee shall:

- Review research ethics applications prior to data collection
- Ensure informed consent, confidentiality, and risk mitigation
- Monitor approved research, where necessary
- Provide guidance on ethical research practices and integrity

4. Composition

Appointment Authority

- Appointed by the Academic Council, on recommendation of the Provost / VP Academic.

Chair

- Appointed by the **Academic Council**
- Must have demonstrated experience in **research ethics**.

Minimum Membership

- **3-5 members**
 - At least **1 member with ethics expertise**
 - At least **1 external member (recommended)**

- At least **1 community representative** (non-academic)
- Faculty majority

5. Authority and Limits

- The Committee has authority to:
 - Approve, require revisions to, or decline ethics applications
- The Committee does **not** evaluate academic merit beyond ethical considerations

6. Meetings and Records

- Meetings shall be held **as required**
- Decisions shall be documented and retained for regulatory and audit purposes

7. Reporting

- The Committee reports annually to the **Academic Council**
- Aggregate data may be used for institutional quality assurance

Indigenous and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Committee

1. Purpose

The **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Indigenization (EDI-I) Committee** supports GNI's commitment to **inclusive academic environments**, respect for diversity, and meaningful engagement with Indigenous perspectives.

The Committee provides guidance on integrating equity and Indigenization principles into academic and institutional practices.

2. Mandate

The Committee shall:

- Advise on policies and practices related to:
 - Equity and non-discrimination
 - Diversity and accessibility
 - Inclusive curriculum and pedagogy

- Respectful inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems
- Support institutional alignment with evolving best practices in EDI and Indigenization

3. Scope of Responsibilities

The Committee may:

- Review academic policies and curricula for EDI considerations
- Recommend strategies for:
 - Inclusive teaching and learning
 - Culturally respectful engagement
- Provide advice on institutional initiatives related to reconciliation and inclusion

The Committee is **advisory** and does not override academic decision-making bodies.

4. Composition

Appointment Authority

- Appointed by the Board of Directors.
- Board appoints, Academic Council collaborates.

Chair

- Appointed by the **Board**
- Chair should have demonstrated EDI expertise.

Minimum Membership

- **3-5 members**
 - Representation from faculty, staff, and (where possible) students
 - At least 1 external or community-based member (recommended)

5. Chair

- The Chair shall guide discussions and ensure respectful, evidence-informed deliberation

6. Meetings and Reporting

- The Committee shall meet **at least once per academic year**
- The Committee reports advisory recommendations to:
 - The Academic Council, and/or
 - Senior Academic Administration