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Council established to review degree-granting proposals

Edmonton... The Campus Alberta Quality Council has been established to review proposals from post-secondary institutions that wish to offer new degree programs.

"The *Post-secondary Learning Act* has opened the door to new degree-completion opportunities and greater flexibility for institutions to respond to student needs," said Learning Minister Dr. Lyle Oberg. - "The work of this council will ensure that new degree programs are of the high quality Albertans have come to expect of their post-secondary institutions."

Institutions that wish to offer a new degree program must present their proposal to the Minister, who looks at factors such as whether there is a system need. The proposal then goes to the council, which will review it to ensure quality and make recommendations to the Minister of Learning.

University of Alberta professor Dr. Doug Owram will chair the new council. "I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues to establish the mechanisms that will continue to ensure Albertans have access to quality degrees," Owram said. "This new team combines a lot of different talents and experience, and I'm looking forward to beginning our work."

The council will begin its work this summer by establishing the conditions and standards institutions must meet to be approved to offer degree programs. It is expected the first degree-proposals will be reviewed this fall. Once a degree program is approved, the council will conduct ongoing monitoring to ensure that quality standards continue to be met.

"These members were carefully chosen to ensure this council will hold the highest degree of credibility in Alberta and across the country," Oberg added. "They are objective, forward-thinking individuals, who are highly respected by the post-secondary system and have demonstrated an understanding and support for lifelong learning."

Council members may be appointed for up to three years, after which they may be extended for another three-year term.

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