



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council (April 8, 2025)
Faculty Council (April 29, 2025)

From: Professor Stark Draper
Vice-Dean, Research and Chair, Research Committee

Date: February 21, 2025

Re: **Closure of the Institute for Sustainable Energy, an Extra-Departmental Unit, Type C in the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering**

REPORT CLASSIFICATION

This is a major policy matter that will be considered by the Executive Committee for endorsing and forwarding to Faculty Council for vote as a regular motion (requiring a simple majority of members present and voting to carry).

BACKGROUND

The Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) was founded in 2010 as an Extra-Departmental Unit, Type D (EDU:D) within the Department of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering.

In 2013, the Faculty approved a motion to advance the CSE to an Extra-Departmental Unit, Type C (EDU:C) and to rename it the Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE). Its renewed mandate was to engage in research and scholarly work in energy, facilitate collaborative research projects with industry, and enhance the training of energy research personnel. The EDU:C is currently housed in the Department of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering and the Department of Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry.

The ISE was reviewed in 2023-2024 as part of the Faculty's goal to review EDU:Cs on an ongoing basis. A review committee was struck consisting of the Vice-Dean, Research and members of the Faculty's Research Committee. The ISE director submitted a self-study to the review committee in June 2024, and the review committee submitted its report with recommendations to the Dean in October 2024.

PROPOSED

The review committee concluded that the ISE has largely been inactive in recent years and lacks a detailed plan to restart its activities. It therefore recommended the closure of the ISE, with a suggestion that if there is a desire to start an EDU:C in Sustainable Engineering, it should begin from scratch. The Dean agreed with this recommendation.

IMPACT

Closing the ISE will have a minimal impact on donors. The Faculty will continue to administer the Hatch Graduate scholarships.

The role of faculty members in the EDU:C is unclear, as are the number of graduate students associated with the ISE and how they have benefitted from their involvement. It is likely that the closure of the ISE will have little to no impact on them.

The ISE does not contribute to the salary of its supporting administrative staff member, who is part of another EDU:C in the Faculty.

CONSULTATIONS

In writing its recommendations, the review committee consulted the ISE director and the chairs of the host academic units (Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry and Mechanical & Industrial Engineering). It also reviewed information provided in the self-study.

The chairs of Chemical Engineering & Applied Chemistry and Mechanical & Industrial Engineering were also consulted on the proposal to close the ISE and had no objections.

The recommendation to close the ISE was approved by the Faculty's Research Committee on November 8, 2024.

RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL

THAT the Institute for Sustainable Energy, an Extra-Departmental Unit, Type C in the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering, be closed effective immediately.