



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

# **Academic Plan 2010-2015**

**24 November 2011**

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## Introduction and Vision

The academic planning exercise in Arts & Science has presented an opportunity to rethink the Faculty and its strategic direction. **Our goal is to ensure the most stimulating and supportive environment possible for our students and faculty as we focus on our core mission of undergraduate and graduate education and advanced research across a wide range of fields.** This document outlines the Faculty's plan, articulating our academic priorities and major principles for enhancing learning experiences and the research environment, outlining our financial and human resource forecasts, and defining key targets for undergraduate and graduate enrolment.

Our aim is for the Faculty of Arts & Science to be distinguished by the following characteristics:

- Our research environment will continue to support curiosity-driven and fundamental research at the highest level:
  - Maintaining and enhancing our global reputation for leading scholarship in all major sectors of Arts & Science: humanities, sciences and social sciences.
- We shall educate undergraduate students who are:
  - Strong analytical, critical and creative thinkers.
  - Excellent communicators.
  - Broadly educated.
  - Engaged and ethically grounded global citizens.
  - Well prepared for careers, or for graduate and professional studies.
- An Arts & Science undergraduate education will be distinguished by our unique opportunity to offer students the 'best of both worlds':
  - All the advantages of unparalleled access to internationally renowned leading scholars across a large, uncommonly broad array of disciplines.
  - A strong sense of community and identity, linked to our students' membership in one of our colleges, and with ample opportunity to learn through high-quality large- and small-group experiences across their programs.
- The Faculty will continue to serve as a pre-eminent home for internationally recognized excellence in graduate education across a wide range of disciplines:
  - Graduate education – one of our most noteworthy comparative advantages – will be integrated with our undergraduate teaching mission wherever possible.
  - Our students will thrive as members of research teams, composed of undergraduate and graduate students, post-docs and faculty.
- The Faculty will embrace its societal responsibility to share knowledge with partners in the public and private spheres, ensuring that our faculty and students have every opportunity to participate in knowledge mobilization and exchange with community partners, both locally and globally.

This vision will be difficult to realize if the Faculty is unable to meet its current financial challenges, which are substantial. While the Faculty's budget plan has put in place a carefully considered strategy for reducing our annual structural deficit, a number of recent developments threaten our long-term financial recovery. Chief among these are the global economic slowdown,

the current deficit in the University's pension plan, and an outlook for government funding of post-secondary education and research that remains very uncertain. We shall need to keep these financial realities in mind as we focus on enhancing the quality of our undergraduate and graduate programs and research environment, while also returning the Faculty to a position of fiscal sustainability.

### **Institutional Context and Process: A Brief Review**

The broader context for academic planning in Arts & Science is provided by the University's current strategic plan. *Towards 2030: A Third Century of Excellence at the University of Toronto* sets forth the following objectives:

- Maintaining our research-intensive culture, the academic rigour of our educational offerings at all levels, and the excellence of faculty, staff and students across all three campuses and partner institutions.
- Enhancing our global reputation for the generation of new ideas and transformative discoveries.
- Engaging all categories of faculty with our teaching mission, and maintaining an emphasis on nurturing inquiring minds and building the creative and analytical capacity of our students at all levels.
- Reinforcing our strengths in research and scholarship through our enrolment and recruitment strategies, and maintaining our leadership position in graduate and secondary professional education.
- Focusing on providing an excellent experience for students, inside and outside our classrooms.
- Contributing substantially to the prosperity of the Toronto region, Ontario and Canada.

These objectives provide a strong framework to guide our own planning within Arts & Science. Further guidance comes from the findings and recommendations of the most recent external review of the Faculty.

The academic planning process was initiated by a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) whose membership, while representative of all the major sectors within the Faculty, was considerably smaller than past planning committees in the Faculty.<sup>1</sup> The decision to proceed with a smaller committee had been explicitly recommended in the report of the external review committee in 2008.<sup>2</sup> The reviewers' rationale was that any attempt to generate draft proposals capable of addressing the Faculty's challenges would otherwise be extremely difficult, as a result of the intense budgetary pressures, complexity of the Faculty, and strong commitment of colleagues and students to existing programs and units. All units within Arts & Science were asked to formulate academic plans according to a set of common templates. In October 2009, the Dean circulated an overview document *Academic Planning in the Faculty of Arts & Science: Context*

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<sup>1</sup> Members included Meric Gertler, Dean (committee chair), Rob Baker (Vice-Dean, Research & Graduate Programs), Parth Bhatt (Chair, French), Craig Boutilier (Chair, Computer Science), Arthur Hosios (Chair, Economics), John Magee (Director, Centre for Medieval Studies), Janet Paterson (Principal, Innis College), Stephen Rupp (Vice-Dean, Faculty & Academic Life), and Suzanne Stevenson (Vice-Dean, Teaching & Learning).

<sup>2</sup> See CPAD memo #81-2007-08. All past CPAD/CASD memos are archived on the Faculty of Arts & Science website at [www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/cpad-info](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/cpad-info).

*and Directions*. This document outlined the broader university-wide context for planning, summarized the 2008 external review of the Faculty and its most important recommendations, described our financial and human resource environment and sketched out five broad academic priorities. *Academic Planning in the Faculty of Arts & Science* was distributed widely throughout the Faculty to provoke discussion and stimulate creative thinking.<sup>3</sup> In addition, in response to the external reviewers' challenge to benchmark our academic performance more systematically, and in line with Provostial recommendations concerning best practices for academic planning, the SPC developed a set of quantitative indicators documenting undergraduate and graduate teaching and research activity, as well as capturing other key details of each unit's human resource complement.<sup>4</sup> These indicators were shared with the chairs of each unit. Units were also encouraged to supplement these indicators with their own, and many did, particularly with respect to their international standing in research and teaching.

Individual plans were submitted in December 2009, following extensive consultation at the unit level intended to involve all major stakeholders: faculty, staff, librarians, graduate and undergraduate students. The Arts & Science Students' Union (ASSU) was asked to make a submission to the SPC and, in the process of formulating its document, consulted widely with undergraduate course unions across the Faculty. In all, some 80 academic plans were received. The SPC then deliberated intensively between January and May 2010, carefully reviewing each of the submitted plans. This process was further informed by the most recent external reviews of each unit, undergraduate and graduate program enrolment data, faculty and staff complement, unit indicators, and budgets.

In parallel with the SPC process, the Dean undertook a series of meetings with Arts & Science alumni representing a wide range of occupations and sectors, to discuss the framework and objectives for academic planning, and to solicit their input and feedback on the planning exercise.

Academic plan recommendations arising from the SPC process were released in July 2010, providing the broad context and rationale and indicating that in the coming months, full public discussion of the recommendations and detailed proposals would be convened in order to ensure that the views and concerns of all relevant stakeholders were part of the deliberations. The goal was to engage in full and thorough consultation following the release of the document, by inviting commentary on the outlined objectives and broad priorities, as well as the specific proposals and possible alternatives. However, because the proposals were developed by a small committee and subsequently released in a way that was perceived as definitive and final, this process evoked an understandably critical response from some quarters of the Faculty.

Throughout the 2010-11 academic year, the Dean's Office was deeply engaged in a wide and extensive process of consultation. A substantial amount of time at each monthly meeting of Arts & Science Council was dedicated both to detailed discussions of specific recommendations as well as to providing full updates on overall academic planning progress. Two well-attended town hall meetings were held in September 2010. Discussions of academic planning initiatives were

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<sup>3</sup> *Academic Planning in the Faculty of Arts & Science 2009-2014: Context and Directions*

<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/academic-planning/cpad-info/pdfs/2009-2010/context-directions.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> See [www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/cpad-info/pdfs/2009-2010/24-2009-10.pdf](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/cpad-info/pdfs/2009-2010/24-2009-10.pdf) for a complete list of the indicators used. For the Provost's academic planning guidelines, see [www.provost.utoronto.ca/Assets/Provost+Digital+Assets/Provost/plana/AcadPlanning2009.pdf](http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/Assets/Provost+Digital+Assets/Provost/plana/AcadPlanning2009.pdf)

also a regular feature of the monthly meetings of Arts & Science Chairs, Principals and Academic Directors (CPAD), and members of the Dean's Office visited individual departments and programs and met with many individual faculty, staff and students to solicit their views and listen to their concerns. Memos from the Dean reporting on the progress of these consultations were circulated to all Arts & Science faculty, staff and students in the fall and spring and posted on a public academic planning website.

This consultation process provided important opportunities for exchange of information and perspectives. While many aspects of the academic planning proposals elicited positive feedback, criticisms and concerns with respect to a number of recommendations were also expressed, particularly those that proposed major structural or organizational changes. The consultation phase was also important in soliciting suggestions for constructive alternatives to such changes within a positive spirit of discussion and debate.

As a result of discussions related to the SPC recommendations, major and useful revisions have been incorporated into this Academic Plan. A number of the original recommendations involving major organizational changes have undergone significant modification, while still allowing for the Faculty to achieve its academic objectives. We have also made considerable progress during the past year in further developing those recommendations that received strong support since they were first proposed by the SPC. We have deliberated on these proposals through public discussion, securing approval through the University's normal channels of governance where appropriate, and then proceeding with implementation. The overall outcome has helped the Faculty to move forward in achieving its academic priorities in tough financial circumstances.

The financial challenges facing the Faculty have also demanded a more strategic approach to managing our resources, resulting in a more active role for the Faculty's Budget Committee. The budget framework underlying this plan is presented in a following section of this document.

## **Opportunities and Challenges**

Together, *Academic Planning in the Faculty of Arts & Science 2009-2014: Context and Directions* and the *Towards 2030 Synthesis Report* define a number of distinctive strengths that differentiate the University and the Faculty within the national and international context. First, we are well recognized as a research powerhouse in all three major sectors of the Faculty: humanities, sciences, and social sciences. As but one form of external corroboration, the 2011 QS World Rankings placed UofT in the top 10 internationally for a number of Arts & Science disciplines including computer science, English language and literature, modern languages, philosophy and statistics.

Closely related to this first strength, we are home to the largest single concentration of graduate education activity in Canada, and one of the largest in North America. We are the primary granter of PhD degrees in Canada across many fields and a large number of our graduate units enjoy very strong reputations internationally for the excellence of their programs.

The Faculty of Arts & Science, with its 29 departments and many interdisciplinary centres, schools and institutes constitutes not only the largest but also the broadest and most disciplinarily diverse faculty in the country, if not the continent. The fact that we encompass humanities, social

sciences and sciences under a single institutional roof distinguishes us from other peer institutions where such large groupings are rare.

The college system is another defining feature of the University of Toronto and the Faculty of Arts & Science. We are one of the few in North America to structure our undergraduate academic experience around colleges. Each of our undergraduates is admitted to a college that provides them with a range of academic and other services. The college system ensures that our students can enjoy both the rich resources of a large, broad, research-intensive university and the benefits of belonging to a smaller, more personal community of students, faculty, staff, librarians, and alumni.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the colleges are home to a range of interdisciplinary programs that reflect each college's distinctive identity and history.

Finally, we are fortunate to be situated in the middle of Canada's largest metropolis and one of the world's most culturally diverse and vibrant urban regions. This affords us many benefits. In an increasingly competitive global labour market for academic talent, this vibrant diversity constitutes a real asset. The same qualities help us attract strong graduate and undergraduate students from around the world. With seven million residents in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, we are also fortunate to have a large local pool of prospective undergraduate students from which to draw. At the same time, the city on our doorstep offers many opportunities for collaborative partnerships in research, knowledge exchange and experiential and service learning for our students.

### *Opportunities*

The current juncture presents us with a number of promising opportunities. Demographic forecasts, based on steady immigration to the Toronto region and rising post-secondary education participation rates, suggest that demand for undergraduate spaces in the Faculty of Arts & Science will continue to grow and remain high for some years to come. Indeed, we have already seen ample evidence of this phenomenon in the last few years. Overall applications to the Faculty have risen by more than 10 percent since 2008. First-choice applications from Ontario students have risen by more than 15 percent in the same period, and first-choice applications from students outside Ontario by more than 25 percent. The strength and quality of this pool has allowed the Faculty to raise its overall admission standard, pushing its minimum admission average above 80 percent in all admission streams, with a number considerably higher than this. The Faculty's enrolment plan, outlined in later sections of this document, anticipates a gradual reduction in overall undergraduate intake over five years. The combined effect of these two developments – rising numbers of applications and gradually declining intake – should yield a steady improvement in the quality of our undergraduate student body, allowing us to play to our acknowledged strengths as an academically rigorous and research-intensive institution.

Further contributing to this opportunity, propelled by the strategic direction signalled in *Towards 2030*, the University has made major strides in the past couple of years to sharpen and refine its undergraduate student recruitment strategy. Informed by detailed market research with high-

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<sup>5</sup> The Faculty's external review concurs (p. 10): "With at least a third of the first year students living in the Colleges, and all of them advised there, there is an opportunity to innovate in providing all students in the Faculty with a special educational experience. That is an important mission for the Colleges and a challenge and opportunity for the Faculty."

achieving high school students across the country, we are now better prepared to accentuate U of T's distinctive strengths while also emphasizing Toronto's urban amenities – both of which have been underappreciated by students and parents outside of the GTA and Ontario. This work has provided the foundation for even more successful student recruitment in regions of the country where our profile and drawing power have traditionally been weak, enhancing our success in recruiting the best students from a geographically enlarged pool. The fruits of this labour are already showing up in our application statistics, where we have seen a significant increase in the applications from international and non-Ontario domestic students. Our applications from outside Ontario, which include both non-Ontario domestic students and international students, have risen by 17 percent since 2008.

### *Challenges*

Our opportunities are considerable, but they need to be considered against the backdrop of possible challenges. Foremost among these is a set of financial challenges associated with our primary sources of revenue (a theme to which we shall return in the budget plan presented later in this document). The per-student grant we receive from the Government of Ontario (measured in 'basic income units' or BIUs) has not increased in value for the past 17 years. Undergraduate domestic tuition fees remain closely regulated by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, more tightly limiting annual rates of increase for arts and science programs across the province in comparison to other first-entry programs such as engineering. In the face of such tight constraints on our revenue growth, it has become increasingly difficult for us to meet the needs of our undergraduate and graduate students and to enhance the environment for research.

The end of mandatory retirement in 2005 introduced further uncertainties that continue to present challenges for academic planning and the pace of faculty retirements has slowed considerably. Until 2005, we could routinely expect between 25 and 35 faculty retirements a year. Since then, retirements have declined to between one-third and one-quarter of historical levels and have defied earlier predictions of a smooth return to 'normal'. While this trend has had the benefit of retaining many of our most productive and renowned scholars in the classroom, the unavoidable trade-off is that it has reduced our ability to make new faculty appointments.

Finally, given our obvious linkages to the rest of the globe, major swings in currency exchange rates can pose their own set of threats to our future success. The appreciation of the Canadian dollar in recent times can be viewed as both a plus and a minus. On the upside, a stronger dollar enhances the perceived value of our salaries when we are hiring in international academic labour markets. The downside is that our cost of living becomes more expensive relative to other countries. The same is true for our tuition fees for international students, who represent an increasingly significant component of our enrolment base (see the enrolment plan outlined in a following section of this document).

Other challenges relate to our efforts to enhance our students' experiences within and outside the classroom. From the annual national surveys on the undergraduate student experience, we have learned that, while we have improved along many dimensions since the first survey was administered in 2004, we have some work to do.<sup>6</sup> The 2011 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) revealed that we still lag behind our Canadian U15 peers in some areas– for

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<sup>6</sup> The results of the 2004, 2006 and 2008 NSSE can be found at [www.provost.utoronto.ca/public/reports/NSSE.htm](http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/public/reports/NSSE.htm)

example, in Active and Collaborative Learning, and in Enriching Educational Experiences. The high proportion of students who commute to the university on a daily basis<sup>7</sup>, and the large size of the institution pose significant challenges in this regard.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the 2011 survey results also indicated that all of our benchmarks scores have improved from 2008 to 2011 for FAS senior year students. For the first year students we have made positive and significant growth over 2008 in three of the five benchmarks scores: Level of Academic Challenges, Student-Faculty Interaction, and Supportive Campus Environment. Many of these improvements reflect areas where we have made conscious and deliberate efforts to improve our students' experience. It is also encouraging that we continue to remain above the U15 mean in Level of Academic Challenge and Student-Faculty Interaction for both senior and first year students.

Similarly, the University participates in national surveys of our graduate students through the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS).<sup>9</sup> As in 2005 and 2007, the 2010 results indicate that our students continue to be very satisfied with their academic experience at the University at levels consistently higher than the G13 mean.<sup>10</sup> In particular, our students value highly the intellectual quality of faculty and their fellow students. The University performed higher than the G13 mean in all 2010 benchmark scores: Quality of Teaching, Research Training and Career Orientation, Opportunities to Present and Publish, and Supportive Dissertation Advisor. Doctoral stream students also expressed greater satisfaction with professional skills development opportunities. In general, the results for Arts & Science are very similar to the UofT results, particularly in regard to doctoral stream students. For professional master's students, Arts & Science students report higher levels of participation in research activities than other professional master's students at the University. However, the survey results also identify a number of areas that require improvement. While our students are satisfied with their scholastic experience, their satisfaction with their student life experience lags behind. In coordination with the School of Graduate Studies, and our UTM and UTSC colleagues, we will continue to explore new opportunities to improve the quality of our graduate students' experiences.

While it is clear that U of T is well known and widely regarded internationally by our academic peers, the irony is that it does not enjoy the same reputation across Canada. In particular, we know from recent market research undertaken by the university's strategic communications group that U of T has a low recognition factor and weak profile outside the GTA and especially outside Ontario, amongst the target demographic of academically strong high school students. If we are to succeed in attracting the best and brightest students locally and nationally, then we will have to address these shortcomings.

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<sup>7</sup> The 2008 NSSE results show that our students spend significantly more time commuting to class, working for pay off campus, and providing care for dependents living with them than is true for our G13 peers. The first two of these time commitments have actually become more onerous for our students since the first NSSE survey was conducted in 2004.

<sup>8</sup> We remain below the national mean on the question of a 'supportive campus environment'.

<sup>9</sup> The results of the 2005, 2007 and 2010 GPSS can be found at <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/about/ger.htm>

<sup>10</sup> The G13 is used as a comparator as the U15 was not in place at the time the CGPSS results were analyzed in 2010.

## Leveraging Our Unique Strengths

To chart a course for the future, the strategy set forth in this academic plan aims to leverage our unique and most distinctive assets in order to reinforce our strengths, while differentiating us clearly from our peer competitors. It is guided by the following underlying principles:

- All units within the Faculty should make major contributions to the three core elements of our mission: undergraduate education, graduate education, and research.
- The Faculty should stimulate and support the generation of innovations in teaching and learning; once pilot initiatives have proven to be successful, the Faculty should (to the extent possible) support these on a continuing basis.
- The Faculty should strive to make more effective use of its existing capacity and resources before it allocates new resources towards its academic goals.
- In general, planning should be prudent, proceeding on the basis of conservative assumptions as a way to minimize the Faculty's future exposure to financial risk.

### *1. Taking Full Advantage of Our Disciplinary Breadth*

The Faculty offers extraordinary opportunities based on its uncommon degree of disciplinary breadth. And yet, we have tended to take this breadth and diversity very much for granted instead of recognizing the opportunities inherent in this structure. Recent years have seen a resurgence of interest – among both employers and educators – in the concept of liberal education, including both arts *and* sciences, as a basis for a well-rounded undergraduate education. At the same time, research on the innovation process highlights how important it is to be exposed to ideas, concepts, and debates from a range of different disciplines and professions as a source of creative stimulus.

Given this, it makes sense to exploit more fully our uncommon breadth and diversity, leveraging our extraordinary talent and depth across many fields to enrich the learning opportunities for our undergraduate students. The process of breathing new life into the idea of liberal education at the University of Toronto has already gathered considerable momentum thanks to the multi-year process of Curriculum Renewal in Arts & Science that is now well underway. Among a number of improvements, we have redefined degree objectives and introduced new breadth requirements.

Several Faculty-wide initiatives will enable our students to take better advantage of our disciplinary breadth and richness.

#### *a. Maintain and enhance the breadth of our undergraduate degrees*

The breadth of the Faculty enables us to offer a wide range of programs that are grounded in a solid foundation of course offerings supported by high-calibre teaching and research. This abundance of high-quality programs gives students a choice in areas of concentration that is unparalleled in Canada. Moreover, the wide spectrum of offerings provides the opportunity for our students to achieve a broad exposure to a range of subjects as they combine majors and/or minors in multiple fields. This opportunity – including the increasingly common practice of combining programs that cross the divides between humanities, social sciences and sciences – is acknowledged and reaffirmed as one of the most distinctive qualities of our undergraduate education. Although this ability

has long been taken for granted by our students and faculty, it will be accentuated as an opportunity that arises from our unique configuration as a Faculty of Arts *and* Science.

In addition to the breadth of programs on offer, we reaffirm the changes implemented through Curriculum Renewal to ensure greater breadth within our bachelor degrees. These include limiting the maximum number of courses required for a specialist program, introducing a new credit/non-credit option to encourage course selection across a wider range of fields, redefining and increasing the number of breadth categories, and increasing the number of breadth courses required for the degree. The introduction of new competencies embedded within all programs of study – critical and creative thinking, communication, information literacy, quantitative reasoning, and social and ethical responsibility – further ensures that all of our students will graduate with a core set of capabilities to serve them well no matter what further educational or career opportunities they pursue.

As an example of continuing progress in implementing the primary recommendations arising from Curriculum Renewal, a working group was appointed in 2010, led by the Chair of Philosophy, to develop guidelines for implementing our new requirements with respect to social and ethical responsibility. The report of the Ethics Education Working Group was circulated widely within the Faculty to very positive reviews, and offers a number of concrete and helpful steps to advance us in this direction.<sup>11</sup>

*b. Develop and implement new ‘Big Ideas in Arts & Science’ multidisciplinary courses*

The most challenging problems of our complex, interconnected world do not always fall neatly into individual academic disciplines or professions. Leveraging and showcasing the multidisciplinary comprehensiveness and strength of the Faculty, we have a tremendous opportunity to put this wide-ranging expertise into action to provide an enriched and compelling learning experience in the first year of the Arts and Science undergraduate degree. This opportunity can be realized through the creation of ‘Big Ideas in Arts and Science’ courses that feature some of our leading faculty members, integrating the best we have to offer from the humanities, social sciences and sciences.

These full-year, thematic, multidisciplinary courses may be team-taught by three professors, each of whom represents one of the major disciplinary sectors in Arts and Science. For example, a ‘big ideas’ course on ‘The Art and Science of The Mind’ could showcase the leading-edge research of a neuropsychologist studying the science of cognition, an economist exploring the cognitive and behavioural underpinnings of decision-making, and a philosopher whose work examines notions of consciousness and understanding.

A comprehensive review of the structure of our first-year academic and co-curricular offerings, including 199 courses, First-year Learning Communities (FLCs) and college-based programs, will be undertaken by a First Year Initiatives Committee. This committee will also research best practices in the area of multidisciplinary thematic offerings, and further develop proposals around the Big Ideas courses to bring forward for consideration.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/committees-reports/EthicsEducWG>

*c. Maximizing breadth through strong inter- and intra-divisional partnerships*

The Faculty is able to capitalize on breadth across the University as a whole, through the programs it jointly sponsors with a number of other divisions. The Faculty offers strong programs that are delivered in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine (the basic medical sciences, as well as the suite of human biology programs, that enrol a substantial number of our students), and encourages the increased involvement of students in research, a goal that has been enunciated by these programs. The achievements and plans of the Commerce program offered in partnership with the Rotman School of Management are also impressive, as is Faculty of Music's commitment to maintaining joint programs that give our students the rare opportunity to combine a broad-based liberal education with intensive music training in small-group settings together with music students.

Even more importantly, the Faculty is strategically situated to strengthen our programs through intra-divisional partnerships and the scholarly strengths of our faculty members. For example, in the fields of environment and resources as well as cultures, languages and literatures, there is potential to further encourage partnerships.

In the area of environment and resources, recent reviews of the Faculty of Arts & Science, the Faculty of Forestry, and the Centre for Environment, coupled with academic planning within several Arts & Science units, have highlighted a need to consider the teaching and research programs related to the environment and natural resources, as well as the most appropriate academic structure to accommodate them. Extensive discussions within the Faculty during the past six months have helped build an emerging consensus around the most effective way to offer high quality undergraduate and graduate programs in this area of critical importance. Our goal is to strengthen our teaching programs and more effectively attract students to study environment and resources by working across disciplinary boundaries. At the same time, we hope to create the conditions to enable our faculty in this area to conduct leading-edge programs of teaching and research. These discussions will continue, with the aim of devising a consensus-based plan during the 2011-12 academic year.

In the area of cultures, languages and literatures, the Faculty of Arts & Science is home to Canada's – and one of the world's – largest and strongest clusters of expertise and teaching in languages and literatures. This represents a tremendous asset on which to build, as it is one of the truly distinctive features of the Faculty and the University of Toronto. It is also at the very core of the humanities, which constitute one of our greatest strengths. During the past year, the Chairs and Directors of the cultures, languages and literatures units have engaged in a sustained conversation to explore ways to achieve greater cooperation and collaboration across departmental boundaries in order to enhance the learning experiences of students, take advantage of creative synergies, and make more effective use of teaching capacity. They have also drawn other humanities units into this discussion, thereby broadening the scope for potential new initiatives. Such collaborative discussions and resulting intra-divisional arrangements can showcase the talented faculty teaching in these units and help the Faculty to achieve its academic priorities.

The priorities and initiatives outlined above are intended to take greater advantage of the breadth of scholarship and teaching across the Faculty. At the same time, the advice from the external review report encouraged us to reconsider the number and scope of our

various units and programs. As an example, faculty and students of the Faculty of Arts & Science and the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design (FALD) engaged in extensive discussion in the previous academic year regarding the prospect of assuming greater ownership of the undergraduate programs in Architectural Studies. These discussions resulted in a proposal being brought forward to Arts & Science Council, the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design Council and University governance to transfer the program to Daniels. The proposal was approved by all levels of governance and beginning September 2012 new undergraduate students entering the University will be admitted directly into the Honours Bachelor of Arts Architectural Studies Major program in the Daniels Faculty.

## *2. Leveraging Our Excellence in Research and Graduate Education*

As the *Towards 2030 Synthesis* document rightly emphasizes, our research strength is another asset that differentiates us from our peers. It only makes sense, therefore, that we focus on new ways to play to this considerable strength as we consider future academic priorities and plans for the Faculty. As noted earlier, many of our scholars have received international recognition and honours for their research and publications. A large number of them have also been recognized through their designation as endowed chair holders and professors (44), holders of Canada Research Chairs (58), and University Professors (23).

Given our oft-stated commitment to the principle of enriching the undergraduate experience by linking it directly to the leading-edge research being conducted at this university, we need to pursue every opportunity to ensure that our most distinguished scholars are also deeply engaged in our undergraduate mission.

Our size, international reputation, and recent growth as a centre for graduate education constitute another distinctive strength to accentuate as we move forward. In keeping with the strategic goal articulated in *Towards 2030*, we are committed to maintaining and enhancing this strength. With the anticipated gradual reduction in undergraduate enrolment, coupled with recent and anticipated graduate growth, the Faculty expects to see its ratio of undergraduate to graduate enrolment continue to fall over the planning period. This process creates opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students. Thanks to graduate expansion funding, graduate students will be able to take advantage of more opportunities to work as teaching assistants, while the greater prevalence of TAs will allow us to increase the number of tutorial groups to the benefit of our undergraduates. Beyond these positive developments, we must be ready to explore other opportunities to integrate our two educational missions more effectively.

Accordingly, the following priorities have emerged through the planning process:

### *a. Integrate strong research units with undergraduate initiatives*

The Faculty is home to a large number of centres and institutes that we need to engage effectively in enriching the learning experience of our undergraduates through teaching and research supervision at the undergraduate level. As noted in the 2008 external review report, we should aim to realize opportunities to bring together our research and graduate education missions with our undergraduate education mission, as “the very definition of a high quality undergraduate program” would include faculty active in research and

teaching both graduate and undergraduate students. Wherever possible, the Faculty should explore areas in which units can make appropriate contributions to undergraduate as well as graduate education. Our goal should be to engage the resources of these units effectively to enrich the learning experience of our undergraduates.

*b. Expand the number of research opportunities for our undergraduates*

A central component of the vision for the Faculty is that the opportunity to work closely with leading scholars in a wide range of disciplines will become an ever more powerful force attracting academically accomplished prospective undergraduates to study at this university. We currently offer a range of such opportunities, including the 299 Research Opportunity Program (ROP) and 399 Independent Experiential Study courses, as well as summer RA programs. Some of our undergraduates are also able to work within research teams on a part-time basis throughout the academic year. Since the establishment of the 299 and 399 courses in the early 1990s, the interest of our undergraduates in participating in research-based courses has grown over time, to the point where student demand has outstripped the supply of appropriate opportunities.

Moreover, we know from NSSE data as well as from the academic planning submission from the Arts & Science Students' Union (ASSU) that many of our students crave such experiences, and have chosen to study at U of T in the hope of becoming involved in a faculty-led research project. We also know that our students express frustration at not being able to access information about the availability of these opportunities (especially those occurring outside the 299/399 programs) in a timely fashion.

The Faculty is committed to expanding the number of research opportunities provided through 299 and 399 courses as well as summer research assistantships, and will be working with departments to scale up current offerings through:

- Mounting a campaign through the Dean's Office to increase participation in 299 and 399 programs, as well as summer RA programs, by faculty members of Arts & Science departments; this may require that the Faculty enhance the budgets for these programs in order to stimulate and support increased activity.
- Adopting further mechanisms for enhancing the collection and circulation of information to students regarding the availability of all forms of research opportunities. Here, the Dean's Office can build on the recent pilot project to catalogue all forms of experience-based learning opportunities across the Faculty for inclusion in the new online (searchable) Calendar, and regularize this process on an ongoing basis.
- Proceeding with the initiative proposed by the ASSU executive to establish a new undergraduate research fund, jointly funded by the Faculty and ASSU, to support research projects initiated by students under the supervision of a faculty member.

In all of these initiatives, the primary beneficiaries will be our undergraduates, who will enjoy more opportunities to work with our most distinguished scholars.

*c. Engage the Graduate Advisory Committee in reviewing admissions and sources of graduate support*

Graduate enrolment has expanded dramatically across the Faculty Arts & Science in recent years, with the addition of 900 masters and PhD students since 2004. The province has recently announced a third phase of graduate expansion funding. The details of this next round of expansion are just starting to come into focus and we will need to ready our plans. Although the Faculty has already made progress towards its strategic goal of increasing the absolute and relative size of graduate education activity, the third round of graduate expansion represents a crucially important opportunity for us to continue in our pursuit of this goal, and we will need to revisit a number of key policies and practices in this area to guide this process.

A number of our academic units have assigned a high priority to expanding graduate enrolment still further and, in some cases, establishing new masters or doctoral programs. More than a few have signalled a strong interest in increasing the number of international doctoral-stream students in their programs. And many units have highlighted in their plans the importance of enhancing financial support for their graduate students as they compete with the best programs around the world for the top students. Finally, the challenge of supporting those students who are continuing beyond the years of the funding commitment but have not yet finished their theses remains a concern, especially for those units where foreign-language and fieldwork requirements are integral components of graduate education.

For these reasons, the three-campus Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) has been charged with developing guidelines to help steer graduate enrolment. The membership of the GAC is broadly-based, ensuring appropriate representation of faculty and students from across all major sectors of the Faculty and from all three campuses, following past practice. The GAC will be responsible for reviewing both graduate enrolment planning and the various aspects of graduate student support. The GAC's work will be informed by the plans of the three divisions, as well as the detailed unit-level reports, and will submit recommendations to the Tri-Campus Deans. Under these broad headings it will:

- Consider unit-specific enrolment targets for the various programs (PhD, Masters, Professional Masters).
- Examine the implications of changes in the ratio of domestic:international doctoral stream students and investigate alternative mechanisms for funding increased numbers of international students.
- Monitor implementation of RA support related to the 2008 increase in the minimum stipend rate, and propose adjustments as required.
- Consider accommodations for students who need to be away from the university for extended periods as part of their studies or research.

The GAC began its work in 2010-11, with a view to allowing sufficient time for any changes in policy, practice or enrolment targets to be in place for following admission cycles.

### *3. Enhancing Our Students' Academic Experience*

At the centre of the mission of the Faculty of Arts & Science is a commitment to excellence in education. The vision articulated at the beginning of this document sees an Arts & Science undergraduate education as being distinguished by our unique opportunity to offer students the 'best of both worlds': to provide them with all the advantages of unparalleled access to leading scholars across a broad array of disciplines (as addressed in the preceding section), but also, a strong sense of community and identity, coupled with ample opportunity to learn in high-quality experiences across their programs.

We have already acknowledged the very large proportion of our undergraduates who commute to campus on a daily basis. This seems to be a primary factor determining their degree of engagement and the quality of their experience at the university. This feature, combined with the large size of the institution, has challenged student engagement and a sense of community amongst our students. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge some impressive recent successes in addressing this longstanding challenge, including the First Year Learning Communities (FLC) project, which originated in our life science departments and has now spread to other units across the Faculty. A number of colleges and departments have also made effective use of support from the Student Experience Fund to create new physical spaces and special services targeted expressly to the needs of commuter students. Several IT-based initiatives have utilized the university's portal and other channels to communicate important academic and social information more effectively to our students. Successive iterations of NSSE attest to the positive impact these measures are beginning to have – no mean feat at a time when resources are extremely constrained – and yet also demonstrate how much work remains.

Initiatives such as the 199 first-year seminars, and the 299/399 series of subsequent opportunities for small-group learning in a variety of settings, reach more than half of all Arts & Science students. College-based "One" programs, in which small cohorts of students pursue a common curriculum together during their first year on campus, represent another effective means for achieving the same goal. And many of our language courses across the Faculty offer further opportunities for small-group learning and community-building.

At the same time, we have improved the large-class learning experience in a variety of different ways. Foremost among these, we have made a concerted effort to ensure that these courses are taught by our very best faculty. The list of teaching awards won by these faculty attests to the success of this approach. As noted below, we have also taken major steps to improve the effectiveness of tutorials associated with large classes – for example, by strengthening the abilities of our TAs to enhance the writing skills of their students. We have also worked closely with the office of the Vice-Provost, Students on a number of key initiatives to identify and assist students encountering academic difficulties, particularly in the earliest years of their studies.

Even at a time of fiscal restraint, the Faculty must find ways to redirect scarce resources to improve the quality of the undergraduate experience. The following enhancements both inside and outside the classroom are proposed in order to achieve this goal:

#### *a. Reinvest in teaching capacity*

As outlined in the complement planning section of this document, the Faculty faces significant constraints as it strives to make new appointments. There are large variations

in undergraduate teaching activity levels from one unit to the next across the Faculty. A substantial number of our departments have experienced very high student demand relative to the size of their teaching complement, at least since the advent of the double cohort phenomenon in the middle of the past decade.<sup>12</sup> In addition, recent budget constraints have limited unit-level capacity to manage this demand.

These wide variations in teaching volume relative to department size, as well as the annual exercise of allocating additional one-time-only (OTO) resources to those units experiencing the highest levels of student demand, underscore the critical needs being faced by a substantial number of units within the Faculty to expand their teaching capacity and enhance the quality of their students' learning experience.

For this reason, it will be critical to enhance the teaching capacity of those units experiencing the most pressing demand. The SPC recommended 48 high-priority and 13 second-priority tenure-stream or teaching-stream appointments. With a number of our revenue-raising measures beginning to bear fruit in 2010-11, the Faculty authorized searches in 2011-12 for a substantial number of new faculty positions, with highest priority given to those units experiencing the most severe enrolment pressures. If the Faculty succeeds in continuing to improve its financial condition, we are hopeful that additional new appointments will be possible in future years of this plan.

*b. Make better use of existing teaching capacity*

There may also be opportunities to make better use of the resources for teaching and learning in some units that are not currently being sufficiently utilized. As we are confronted with applications from exemplary students for all our programs, in order to manage student demand more efficiently and create greater latitude it makes sense to consider redistributing enrolments towards those units where there is more capacity to accommodate them. Recent initiatives to expand and upgrade the teaching resources available in these departments must be acknowledged and leveraged more fully for the benefit of our students. In addition, individual units with low undergraduate enrolment should consider how to increase their reach to students, including offering breadth courses to appeal to students outside their programs.

Student demand pressure in some high-enrolment units could be better managed by revisiting and opening up program requirements without compromising the integrity of these programs. The Dean's Office has already begun to work with units to identify new opportunities (as appropriate) for students taking programs in high-enrolment units to satisfy more of their program requirements through completion of courses offered by low-enrolment units. At the same time, units with low enrolment will in turn work with high-enrolment units to help meet the student demand. Such actions benefit students in multiple ways – by opening up more choices of courses to satisfy their program requirements, and by making it easier to enrol in courses of interest. There is real value in our exploring the potential to make better use of the wonderful assets – human and otherwise – that are currently somewhat underutilized in our low-enrolment units.

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<sup>12</sup> Some units with low ratios of undergraduate FCEs to faculty FTEs show relatively high ratios of graduate student FTEs to supervisory capacity.

*c. Support successful innovations in teaching and learning*

The past few years have seen a wave of impressive supports for curricular and co-curricular activities across the Faculty. Many innovative ideas have come forward, driven by the dedication of individual units to improve the academic experience for our students. These innovations have made significant contributions, although a number of them have been funded to this point on a pilot basis. Given the strength of the pilot projects that have emerged, the Faculty commits to continuing funding for the following Faculty-wide initiatives:

- *First-Year Learning Communities (FLCs)* have expanded to include 13 different life science groups in the colleges as well as groups in actuarial science, commerce, computer science, economics, and international relations. We currently have 30 FLCs groups with some 650 first-year students participating. We will continue to fund and expand this successful program. In partnership with the Centre for International Experience, we will consider how to bring international and domestic students together to assist in easing the transition to university life.
- Our students now have the opportunity to take Arts & Science courses that are taught by excellent faculty from other divisions through the University's recently inaugurated *Undergraduate Course Development Fund (UCDF)*. These courses allow our students to benefit from the full diversity and breadth of scholars in the university and to be exposed to different disciplinary approaches and points of view. We introduced 16 such courses for 2011-12 and we will continue to take advantage of this opportunity.
- We are seeing increased participation in the International Course Modules (ICM) and 399 programs and new inquiry-based experiential learning opportunities, such as Science Abroad. These new opportunities offer students an experiential learning component with a global perspective on their field of study. Many of these opportunities are also tailored to the specific needs of science students, who often face the additional challenges of laboratory requirements and very structured programs of study
- The Faculty also reaffirms support for the 199 program (as well as the 299 and 399 programs as noted earlier). Student input, including the academic planning submission from ASSU, is absolutely unequivocal in its strong support for this small-class first-year experience. Therefore, it must remain one of the keystones of our efforts to deliver high-quality learning experiences to our students. That said, we are also aware of challenges faced by particular units in mounting their standard number of 199 courses, and the Dean's Office will investigate ways to enhance the flexibility of implementation of this program.
- We will continue to support Faculty academic support services. The *Writing Instruction for TAs (WIT)* program aims to develop undergraduate students' writing skills by training teaching assistants, who are often a frequent point of contact for students. As part of this program, select undergraduate courses incorporate a variety of methods to assist students in strengthening and honing their writing abilities. The *English Language Learning (ELL)* program assists

undergraduates whose first language is not English as well as native speakers seeking to improve their English language skills.

Many innovative ideas have come forward in prior rounds of CRIF competitions, driven by the dedication of individual units to improving the academic experience for their program and non-program students. The Faculty will continue its annual CRIF competitions in order to identify promising innovations in teaching and learning. Once proven successful, we will aim to fund as many as possible on a continuing basis where appropriate.

*d. Enhance quality and optimize selection in our programs of study*

All of the measures described above will have beneficial impacts on the quality of our undergraduate student experience. At the same time, it is important that we also focus on individual programs of study offered by our various units, to ensure that these are as strong as possible, within the resources available to us.

The recently adopted *Guidelines on Design and Review of POST Offerings* point out that the Faculty currently has on the books almost 400 undergraduate programs of study (POSTs), around 300 of which are Major and Specialist POSTs (roughly 170 Specialists, 130 Majors, and 100 Minors). We can rightly pride ourselves on the breadth of choice that we offer to students, and this continues to be one of our most distinctive strengths. At the same time, many concerns have been raised about whether such a dizzying array of programs best serves our students. The sheer number of choices available may in fact be magnifying the sense of confusion and elevating the degree of difficulty our students encounter when navigating program offerings and requirements.

In response, the Faculty's POST Advisory Committee was established in part to provide a body to review periodically the set of POST offerings across the Faculty and to make recommendations regarding their range and organization. In examining and (re)approving curriculum in recent years, that committee has focused primarily on the internal rationale underlying each program rather than on the overall set of the Faculty's offerings. The time has come to review this full set for coherence and clarity, and the above Guidelines recently adopted by Arts & Science Council<sup>13</sup> present a rationale and process for such a review.

Since the Faculty's individual academic units are clearly in the best position to understand the structure and demands of their disciplines, the process will begin with each unit reviewing its own set of programs as they prepare them for re-approval as part of Curriculum Renewal. The recently approved Guidelines are designed to help units ask a set of appropriate questions in such a review: is this the best arrangement of the subject matter for undergraduate students? Can an undergraduate student understand the set of programs and make meaningful choices among them? How could we better help students understand the reasons for this arrangement? Is this set of programs sustainable? Has each of these offerings proved sufficiently attractive and meaningful to enough students to justify its separate existence?

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<sup>13</sup> See [www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/faculty-governance/arts-science-council/arts-science-council-2009-2010/mar-1.10](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/faculty-governance/arts-science-council/arts-science-council-2009-2010/mar-1.10) for further details.

Once units have reviewed their offerings, the POST Advisory Committee will review each unit's set of programs as part of the current program re-approval process, with an eye to the overall appropriateness and viability of the suite of programs across the Faculty. If we respond well to this challenge, we can both remain true to the nature of our disciplines and present our students with a more manageable set of meaningful choices.

#### *4. Our Colleges: Capitalizing on a Unique System of Communities*

The colleges make many important contributions to the experience of our students. They play a key role in recruitment and admission. They provide residential experiences to roughly forty percent of our incoming class each year. They are the focal point for student life and student services, including registrarial and academic advising, libraries, writing and math support, and financial and personal counselling and referrals. They are also a source of identity for, and point of contact with, many of our alumni.

The colleges have also played an extremely important role as sites of innovation in undergraduate education through the offering of interdisciplinary undergraduate programs. More recently, they have generated innovative new ways to organize first-year undergraduate education. Programs such as Vic One and Trinity One provide small-group learning experiences that enhance the development of learning and social communities within their undergraduate cohort. It makes sense to build on this distinctive legacy as we explore new ways to enhance the experience of our students – both undergraduate and graduate. For example, many of the colleges are also home to entire departments as well as centres and institutes. While there are clear examples of close collaboration between the host college and the units that reside within them, there are many more cases where the presence of these units has been taken for granted, or where there are considerable unrealized opportunities to form closer relationships for mutual benefit.

Another focal point for innovation might be the unprecedented graduate expansion we are experiencing and the opportunities that might exist to link the colleges' aspirations and assets with our graduate education mission. Possibilities here are numerous, and might include fostering mentorship opportunities in which graduate students work with undergraduates in research and teaching. In those instances where colleges provide the physical setting for centres, institutes or departments, they represent natural focal points for nurturing closer interaction between undergraduate students and the research and graduate teaching activities being undertaken in these units. In still other cases, our colleges host undergraduate programs in fields where another unit in the Faculty offers a graduate program. Clearly, there is much to be gained by bringing these two spheres of activity much closer together.

Recognizing the important role that the colleges play in creating supportive learning (and social) communities for our students, we will engage in a number of initiatives to leverage this advantage more fully.

##### *a. Expand first-year programs to all colleges*

The success of the small-cohort programs in Arts & Science is widely acknowledged. Students in these programs benefit from joining a small cohort of fellow students and sharing much of their first-year experience with them. Each of these programs has been designed to showcase the resources and highlight the history and identity of the

sponsoring college, providing a window onto future opportunities for more in-depth study in later years. They have also succeeded in attracting excellent students to the University of Toronto by accentuating the distinctive and supportive nature of these learning communities.

Given these advantages, and acknowledging the track record of success already established, we are very pleased to support proposals from colleges to establish new first-year programs that build upon their unique strengths. University College launched UC One in September 2011 and proposals have been formulated by St Michael's College, Woodsworth College, New College and Innis College. The Dean's Office will continue to work with the colleges to develop these proposals, which have received support and seed funding from the Provost to help launch these initiatives.

*b. Integrate colleges more fully into graduate and research missions*

The Faculty has recently welcomed a number of centres that were previously situated within the School of Graduate Studies. Three of these offer graduate programs in fields that are closely aligned with undergraduate college program offerings in Arts & Science: the Centre of Criminology and Sociolegal Studies, the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources, and the Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies. There is scope for the operations of these units to become more closely aligned and perhaps integrated with the cognate undergraduate college programs.

One very successful model of graduate-undergraduate alignment is the Cinema Studies Institute at Innis College, which offers both an undergraduate program and masters program. A proposal for a PhD program has also been developed. Although the Institute is an administratively distinct EDU, it is physically located within the College and this arrangement has worked extremely well for both parties, and for the tremendous benefit of both undergraduate and graduate students associated with the Institute's programs. This relationship has been codified in the form of a memorandum of understanding between the College and the Institute, which sets out common goals and responsibilities.

Discussions have been underway between Woodsworth College (Criminology, Employment Relations) and two graduate centres (Centre of Criminology and Sociolegal Studies, Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources), between University College (Drama) and the Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies, and between Victoria College (Literary Studies) and the Centre for Comparative Literature. The Faculty will continue to encourage and support these discussions in appropriate ways to advise on how best to achieve closer alignment of graduate-only units with undergraduate college-based programs.

*c. Enhance academic support services for our students*

Student input to the planning process noted that the colleges are essential to a student's experience in the Faculty, and emphasized the central importance of interactions with college advising staff. Students also identified a need for more comprehensive advising that goes beyond a focus on students at risk or students facing immediate course choices, and for increased coordination in communication by the Office of the Faculty Registrar (OFR), the college registrars' offices and university-wide offices. The Faculty encourages

the colleges to ensure adequate and consistent levels of support for the full range of advising activities (responsive to the spectrum of students from ‘at risk’ to high-achieving), and for the various communications functions that play a key role in the relationship between the Faculty and undergraduate students.

In order to assist, the Faculty has recently initiated a review of registrarial capacity in the colleges, assembling an appropriately broad and representative group to assist in this task. The OFR will also work with university-wide services (such as the Career Centre and Academic Success Centre) and with the colleges to ensure a cooperative, complementary and student-centred delivery of student support services.

Our students have also emphasized how much they value the support and advice they receive from the college writing centres. The student input to the planning process reaffirmed the importance of writing skills for our graduates’ prospects in both future employment and graduate/professional studies. Students praised the assistance they receive in the college writing centres and would like to see capacity increased. The Faculty continues to invest heavily in student writing through ongoing support for the college writing centres, and encourages the exploration of additional approaches to service delivery to ensure maximum benefit for the resources available. Specifically, the Faculty endorses efforts by the college writing centres to consider methods for reaching a greater number of students – such as devising group workshops and integrating writing instructor assistance with courses – to complement the one-on-one services provided.

Moreover, the Faculty views the college writing centres as key contributors to the Faculty-wide initiatives on student writing, and encourages the writing centres to continue their positive work in the context of the writing strategy coming out of Curriculum Renewal. For example, substantial resources are being directed to further development of writing pedagogy within our academic units through the WIT project, which has benefited from the substantial expertise of college writing instruction staff. The Faculty has also invested in English Language Learning courses and drop-in sessions, in partnership with several colleges, to help students who may have difficulties with university-level English.

Students further identified information technology services as an area with clear opportunities for improvement, with the potential to enhance communications with students and provide support for them as they manage their academic careers in the Faculty. The OFR is collaborating with the University’s IT services to develop and bring on stream a series of tools and services that will help students monitor their progress toward completing program and degree requirements, plan out their course choices and create their timetable each year. The development of a number of these functions has been assisted by direct involvement with students. The colleges also have been instrumental in piloting innovative uses of technology for academic support. The colleges will continue to work collaboratively to identify best practices across the range of student services and sharable resources such as IT innovations, with the goal of enhancing those functions on behalf of our students.

*d. Provide further support for international students*

The Faculty has welcomed increasing numbers of international undergraduates to study at the University. This trend further enhances the diversity of our students' learning experience, encourages deeper mutual understanding of different cultures, and fosters the development of global networks that will enrich our students' future lives. International undergraduate enrolment growth has also been pursued as part of the Faculty's broader financial strategy, and we can expect international enrolment to increase further in the coming years.

Our recent experience also highlights that international students bring with them a set of special needs and challenges that must be acknowledged and met in order to ensure their smooth entry and subsequent academic success in our programs. We are aware that the colleges, as the first point of contact for students, have already been asked to shoulder growing responsibilities to support the needs of international students. We acknowledge this challenge and will continue to work in support of the efforts underway in the Provost's Office to respond to these needs.

At the same time, the Faculty supports important initiatives such as the International Foundation Program at New College, which aims to enhance English-language and learning skills for academically qualified international students before they are admitted to degree programs in Arts & Science. The Dean's Office has recently developed systematic guidelines and practices with respect to other similar programs across the Faculty, as a way of ensuring that these students are well prepared for successful studies at U of T.

*5. Engaging with the Community: Globally and Locally*

An increasingly important component of the Faculty's educational mission is promoting our students' understanding of and engagement with the wider world around them, at home and abroad. At a time when local and national spaces are increasingly penetrated by global flows of people, capital and ideas, we have a societal duty to produce graduates who have global fluency – the skills to communicate effectively across languages, cultures and boundaries - to engage productively in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

This can take many different forms, including finding ways to provide meaningful international experiences to more of our students, either by expanding existing programs (exchanges, summer abroad) or by creating new ones on the basis of successful pilots (internationalized course modules, science abroad programs joint courses and field work with international partners, and other academically based international opportunities). The creation of a restructured portfolio in the Dean's Office – Associate Dean, Interdisciplinary and International Affairs – provides a focal point for such initiatives, and positions the Faculty to collaborate effectively with its closest partners in this field: Woodsworth College, and Centre for International Experience (created from the merger of the International Student Exchange Office and the International Students Centre).

While expanding the range of international opportunities for our students, we should not lose sight of the valuable experiential and service learning opportunities that abound locally. Such

encounters provide valuable enrichment for our students' learning experience. They also enable the University to meet its broader obligation to contribute to societal needs by applying its expertise and resources towards important community goals, whether focused on building economic prosperity, addressing social problems or resolving environmental challenges.

Therefore, we must consider how we can offer our students new opportunities in research and learning that will enrich their knowledge of and engagement with global and local communities. More generally, we have a responsibility to provide the next generation of global citizens with the skills to mobilize their knowledge in the service of societal needs. The Faculty will continue to strengthen our connections with community partners in the private, public and voluntary sectors, both globally and locally.

*a. Expand the number and range of international opportunities for our students*

One of our objectives is to enable as many of our students as possible to undertake a significant international experience during their studies in the Faculty. An impressive number of academic unit plans highlighted creative new ways for more of their students to study and undertake research abroad during their degree programs. As a result, a comprehensive review of international activities across the Faculty was initiated in the 2010-11 academic year that resulted in a description of all current undergraduate Faculty activities and opportunities for further initiatives.<sup>14</sup> The report found that many units are already creating new and innovative opportunities for student engagement in international activities, but challenges remain in encouraging engagement with international activities, and some potential resources that might be tapped to develop new programs or partnerships. To capitalize on this interest and move forward in supporting the development of this key priority, the International Advisory Working Group was struck in order to support the development of international opportunities for our students.

The Internationalized Course Modules (ICM) pilot program, which enables students and faculty members to integrate international components into existing courses, has proven to be highly popular with students and faculty alike and the Faculty commits to increasing funding to this program and funding it on a continuing basis. The 399 program offers students an opportunity to work on a faculty-led research project, and many of these are set in international locales. The Dean's Office will work with individual units to expand the number of potential placements through this program. Our goal is to ensure that this program becomes fully integrated within the Faculty's emerging international strategy.

*b. Expand the number and range of service and experiential learning opportunities*

Notwithstanding the importance of international experiences, there are many valuable opportunities for our students and faculty to engage with community partners locally. Recent initiatives have stimulated important new efforts in service learning across all sectors of the Faculty, and student demand for such experiences is strong and growing.

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<sup>14</sup> *Overview of International Activities Faculty of Arts and Science, University of Toronto Academic Year 2009 – 2010*, available at: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/cpad-info/pdfs/2011-2012/Overview%20of%20International%20Activities.pdf>

The logical next step is to create more of these opportunities by engaging with partners in government, community-based organizations, the voluntary sector and the private sector. More broadly, at a time when universities are being asked to make ever-larger contributions towards societal needs, we should consider what new or expanded roles the Faculty might play in this regard. To be sure, the production of well-educated and globally fluent graduates are the most important impact universities have on the surrounding economy and society, and fundamental, curiosity-driven research remains the ultimate wellspring for many downstream practical advances and applications.

Recently, the Ethics Education Working Group was tasked with reviewing ethics education as well as service learning and how it contributes to the social and ethical responsibility competency required of our programs. Service learning offers one way that a program might incorporate this competency, though the resource demands can prove challenging. Several of the recommendations in the Group's report<sup>15</sup> relate to the need for the Faculty to develop guidelines on how units can incorporate the social and ethical responsibility competency into their programs, sharing best practices for service learning delivery and models for scaling up service learning without overly taxing resources.

We therefore support the many initiatives proposed in college and department plans to enhance and support local service and experiential learning opportunities for our students. The Dean's Office will aim to improve the collection and circulation of information to students documenting the availability and nature of such opportunities.

*c. Support the continued growth of graduate-professional education in the Faculty*

In recent years, the Faculty has become home to a number of important professional masters programs, spurred on at least in part by the provincial government's graduate expansion campaign. These programs now span all three major sectors of the Faculty and attract students with practical and applied interests. They also represent an important opportunity for deepening our engagement with surrounding communities.<sup>16</sup> Through input to the planning process, the importance of such programs has been reaffirmed, and the Faculty will support the development of strong and innovative new professional programs.

*d. Support knowledge mobilization and technology transfer in support of societal needs*

While the fundamental importance of basic, curiosity-driven research within the Faculty is undeniable, it is also imperative to acknowledge the University's wider responsibility to contribute to social, economic and environmental needs and challenges. A number of departments and institutes have highlighted in their plans the already considerable amount of activity related to knowledge transfer, as well as their aspirations to achieve more in this area. At the same time, the Office of the Vice-President Research (OVPR) has created a new Chief Innovations and Partnerships Officer position to promote the University's efforts in knowledge transfer and partnerships locally and globally.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/committees-reports/EthicsEducWG>

<sup>16</sup> The list includes: the MSc in Planning, Master of Public Policy, Master of Global Affairs, MSc in Applied Computing, Master of Industrial Relations and Human Resources, and MA in Creative Writing, with other proposals in development.

Accordingly, the Faculty will support those units and individuals who express an interest in engaging in more proactive knowledge mobilization efforts, and will work in cooperation with the OVPR to achieve a higher level of activity in this area.

## **The Faculty's Financial Challenges**

The Faculty has operated within tight financial constraints during the past few years. Indeed, our annual expenditures have outstripped our annual revenues by a considerable margin since at least 2007-08. This situation arose for several different reasons. Provincial grant (BIU) levels per student have remained frozen for 17 years and annual rates of increase in undergraduate tuition fees are tightly constrained by provincial regulation. Meanwhile, our salary and benefit costs (making up 82 percent of our net operating budget) have been increasing significantly faster than our revenues.

During the 2009-10 budget year, the gap between our annual revenues and expenditures – commonly referred to as a structural deficit – stood at just over \$22M (on a net operating budget of \$222M). When added to the annual deficits accumulated over the previous few years, our total accumulated deficit as of 30 April 2010 was approximately of \$51.2M.

Clearly, this situation was unsustainable over the long run. For this reason, we have been following a plan devised by the Faculty's Budget Committee to address this challenge by identifying opportunities to raise our revenues and trim our expenditures. Our revenue-raising strategy has been based on four primary elements: (i) a revision of our undergraduate enrolment targets, which now forecast a more gradual decline in our annual intake and total enrolment; (ii) an increase in international undergraduate enrolment; (iii) the gradual transition to the program fee tuition structure for all Arts & Science programs, which will enable us to dedicate new resources towards the improvement of undergraduate education<sup>17</sup>; and (iv) taking advantage of the provincial government's graduate expansion program to finance our increasing graduate enrolment.

At the same time, we have reduced expenditures through a series of base and one-time-only budget cuts administered across all units within the Faculty beginning in 2008-09. We have also slowed our academic hiring dramatically over the same period, in response to greatly reduced rates of retirement amongst our faculty. Some recent developments have further impacted our budget picture in important ways. The global financial downturn led to a cancellation of the normal payout from University endowments in 2009, compelling the Faculty to cover unfunded liabilities such as needs-based student aid and endowment-based faculty salaries and program expenditures. To finance this cost, the Faculty borrowed \$3.5M from the University's special loan fund, a sum that must be repaid over five years. Fortunately, the subsequent recovery in financial markets enabled the University to restore an endowment payout for 2010, at a rate within the normal range.

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<sup>17</sup> In keeping with its commitment to Governing Council, the Faculty has established a Program Fee Monitoring Committee to track the impact of this fee structure on student enrolment patterns, retention rates, reliance on financial aid, the generation of new revenues to meet the needs of our students, and other pertinent indicators of student performance and wellbeing. A progress report from the Committee was provided to Governing Council in June 2011 with a second report to be provided in the spring of 2012.

Second, the Provost announced that the Faculty's share of the University Fund allocation for 2010-11 would be increased by \$4.25M and a further \$3.4M for 2011-12, which represent significant increases in our base budget funding from the University. These decisions were made to recognize the significant progress that the Faculty has already achieved through its own initiative to improve its financial picture, to acknowledge our recent performance in increasing the volume of externally funded research grants, and to ensure that the University's largest division will continue to thrive.

In addition, the March 2010 Provincial Budget announced that the number of Ontario Graduate Scholarships will increase by 1,000 (a 50 percent increase province wide). This is especially good news for a graduate-intensive Faculty such as ours, as it begins to bring external scholarship support into line with our greatly expanded graduate enrolments in the wake of graduate expansion. At the same time, the Province has extended the current tuition fee framework through 2011-12, meaning that we continue to face the same limitations on annual domestic undergraduate tuition fee increases. The 2010 Provincial Budget also introduced improvements to student financial aid in the form of major changes to OSAP, which bring some important financial relief to many of our students.

The combination of the Provincial announcements, the restoration of an endowment payout, the increases in our University Fund allocation and, above all, our own hard work in pursuit of a carefully considered budget strategy, means that our overall budget picture has improved somewhat. The latest forecast shows the Faculty's annual structural deficit shrinking from \$22M in 2009-10 to \$14M in 2010-11, and declining further to \$9.6M in 2011-12.

*Challenges ahead: staying the course to achieve financial sustainability*

While our annual structural deficit has been shrinking, the Faculty must still contend with the deficit it has accumulated through our annual shortfalls over the past several years. Our forecasts indicate that the accumulated deficit will continue to grow (though more slowly) to an estimated \$65M by the end of 2011-12. The Faculty's long-term budget strategy will need to acknowledge this deficit and develop a plan for retiring it over time. To put this challenge into perspective, if we were to retire this debt over a 15-year period, and assuming that no interest was levied against it, this would translate into \$4.3M in annual repayments – roughly 2 percent of our annual operating budget.

Second, the University has devised a multi-year plan to address the deficit in its pension plan currently estimated at approximately \$1 billion. The Faculty of Arts & Science will be expected to contribute financially to this recovery strategy in proportion to its share of the University's overall operating budget. Current plans call for the Faculty's contribution to reach \$20M per year for the next 15 years. While the Provost's Office was able to offset most of the cost of this contribution for 2011-12 through a substantial OTO transfer to Arts & Science, the Faculty's budget plan will be expected to accommodate these additional annual special payments..

Third, our budget plan assumes that the pace of new faculty appointments will remain quite constrained over the next several years. Until the number of annual faculty retirements once again approaches normal levels experienced before the end of mandatory retirement (roughly 25-35/year, versus current rates of 6-12/year) on a sustained basis, the number of net new

appointments to the Faculty will remain necessarily small. Further details with respect to complement planning are outlined in a later section of this document.

Fourth, since our largest single expenditure category by far is salaries and benefits, the future financial health of the Faculty – and the rate at which we can reinvest in the classroom, the research environment, and faculty renewal – will be greatly impacted by the pace of future salary increases.

Given the significant uncertainties we continue to face with respect to the pension plan, retirements, salary increases, and major determinants of our future revenue base such as tuition fees and provincial grants, it is critically important for us to plan future hiring and other major expenditures in a prudent and contingent manner that keeps the Faculty on a path to financial sustainability, while also retaining sufficient flexibility to allow us to respond to unanticipated developments (both positive and negative). For the time being, this circumstance puts a premium on our ability to innovate within our current means.

## **The Undergraduate and Graduate Enrolment Plan**

Our plan for the planning period attempts to balance a number of different objectives:

- As a large, publicly supported university situated in the GTA, we are obliged to help the Province of Ontario meet its goals for ensuring access to undergraduate postsecondary education.
- At the same time, we have sustained considerable growth in the lead-up to the double cohort in 2005, which has put significant enrolment pressure on a number of our undergraduate programs. In its past plan, the Faculty articulated the goal of returning to pre-double cohort levels of enrolment, consistent with the University's more recent strategic plan, which calls for the bulk of future undergraduate enrolment growth to occur on the Mississauga and Scarborough campuses.
- As the home to Canada's largest cluster of graduate education, the Faculty and the University (through *Towards 2030*) have endorsed the goal of accentuating this internationally recognized advantage through further expansion in graduate enrolment.

In weighing these different objectives, we will proceed with the following elements for the Faculty's enrolment plans.

### *Undergraduate Enrolment Plan*

The Faculty will shift the focus of its enrolment planning from managing its total enrolment to managing its annual intake as well as the process allows. The advantage of this approach is that it will serve to minimize year-to-year fluctuations in the size of our incoming class, thereby facilitating planning by our colleges and departments. Second, as noted in the earlier discussion of teaching capacity, the Faculty will aim to manage its intake across the six different streams to make better use of existing capacity (especially in the physical sciences), to the extent that applicant demand allows while maintaining quality.

While we reaffirm the goal of reducing our domestic intake over time, a significantly slower rate of decline is proposed as a way of managing the Faculty's revenue flow in a more sustainable way. At the same time, our goal is for international intake to continue to increase until 2013 and

then remain constant through the end of the planning period. As shown in the following table, the net result (notwithstanding some fluctuations from year to year), is that overall intake will decline by roughly 700 students between 2009 and 2013.

**Table 1: Undergraduate Enrolment Intake, 2009-2015**

|               | 2009 <sub>a</sub> | 2010 <sub>a</sub> | 2011 <sub>b</sub> | 2012 <sub>c</sub> | 2013 <sub>c</sub> | 2014 <sub>c</sub> | 2015 <sub>c</sub> |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Domestic      | 5368              | 4769              | 4941              | 4516              | 4406              | 4406              | 4406              |
| International | 1030              | 1162              | 1162              | 1283              | 1293              | 1293              | 1293              |
| Total         | 6398              | 5885              | 6103              | 5799              | 5699              | 5699              | 5699              |

a. Actual enrolment   b. Projected enrolment   c. Target enrolment

### *Graduate Enrolment Plan*

The Faculty set ambitious goals for expanding its graduate enrolment when it last updated its plans in 2005-06. Since then it has experienced a period of unprecedented growth in graduate enrolment, having taken full advantage of the graduate expansion opportunities arising from the Ontario government's Reaching Higher program. As the following table attests, the Faculty has largely met its overall goals.

**Table 2: Graduate FTEs, 2004-2010**

|                      | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  | 2010  |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Doctoral Program     | 1,845 | 1,932 | 2,053 | 2,173 | 2,290 | 2,442 | 2,464 |
| Doctoral Masters     | 785   | 812   | 835   | 1,045 | 980   | 986   | 898   |
| Professional Masters | 116   | 127   | 140   | 164   | 209   | 290   | 311   |
| Total                | 2,746 | 2,871 | 3,028 | 3,382 | 3,480 | 3,718 | 3,673 |

Total graduate enrolment has increased by more than 900 students with strong and steady growth in the PhD programs, very rapid growth in the professional masters programs, and a levelling off of enrolment in the doctoral stream masters programs after 2007.

Future years are expected to see further strong growth in the professional masters programs. There has been a strong increase in enrolment and the demand for spaces in these programs continues to grow. This reflects enrolment expansion in some existing programs, the further growth of recently established professional programs such as the Master of Global Affairs (MGA), Master of Public Policy (MPP) and the Master of Science in Applied Computing (MScAC), and proposals for new professional masters programs. Total enrolment in professional masters programs may reach 500 or even more by the end of the planning period.

Many units see doctoral stream masters programs as a means to recruit students to their doctoral programs; thus maintaining a reasonable enrolment in many masters programs is important. However, some units have opted to trim their doctoral stream masters program to provide sufficient resources to mount new professional masters programs. Also, some units have focused their efforts more directly on the PhD program; the number of direct-entry doctoral students has risen considerably over the past few years.

Enrolment in doctoral programs is expected to increase somewhat but the level of growth will depend on at least two factors: (i) each graduate unit's appetite for further expansion and (ii) provincial government approval of additional new spaces. Certainly some units expect no further growth, believing they have reached the upper limit of the number of doctoral students they can properly support. However, many other units are very keen to grow their doctoral programs and at least two units (the Women and Gender Studies Institute and the Cinema Studies Institute) have developed proposals for new PhD programs to be instituted during the planning period. In order to accommodate further growth, it will be critically important for these units to take advantage of the third round of provincial graduate expansion funding.

In addition, it is clear from units' academic plans that a strong cohort of high-quality international graduate students is of great importance to many of our graduate units. However, we need to establish a balance in enrolment of domestic and international students that maximizes the overall academic benefit. The provincial government provides the University with very little support for international students and this, coupled with their ineligibility for most major Canadian scholarships, makes it impossible for the Faculty to support the number of international students it would otherwise like to see. In the absence of government programs designed to support international students, future increases in international enrolment may well depend on supervisors or graduate units bearing a higher proportion of the additional costs, or the ability of these units to raise funds from external donors. Nevertheless, the Graduate Advisory Committee will continue to review this question with an eye to suggesting creative ways forward.

The net result of past and anticipated growth in graduate enrolment, coupled with gradual decline in undergraduate enrolment, is a growing ratio of graduate to undergraduate enrolment within the Faculty. This profile is consistent with the vision presented in *Towards 2030*, and is expected to bring many attendant benefits for both the graduate and undergraduate experience.

### **Faculty Complement Planning: A Contingent Approach**

The past few years have been marked by two major developments. The appointments authorized under the last complement plan enabled many units within Arts & Science to renew their teaching and research complement: collectively, they have appointed 89 faculty, representing a very substantial and welcome injection of new talent into the system. In addition, a further 44 positions were filled through Canada Research Chairs, bridges, endowed and other appointments. At the same time, the elimination of mandatory retirement in 2005 introduced tremendous uncertainty and complexity into the Faculty's human resources planning.

The SPC recommended 48 high-priority and 13 second-priority appointments to help units meet their pressing teaching needs, noting that as conditions change over the course of the planning period, this commitment should be revisited. The Committee therefore also recommended that the Faculty institute a process whereby individual units' requests for appointments be considered and reviewed on an annual basis. As a result, the Faculty Appointments Committee was established in 2010-11 with a mandate to review requests for academic appointments on an annual basis and to advise the Dean on searches to be undertaken in the academic units.

The Faculty Appointments Committee began its work in the spring of 2011 and has already approved the first round of searches for new appointments arising from this plan, driven primarily by the need to address the most pressing enrolment demands across the Faculty.

### **Conclusion: Planning Our Future**

This is both a challenging and auspicious time to be formulating the next academic plan for the Faculty of Arts & Science. We have never faced bigger challenges than the financial circumstances now confronting us. While the signs of economic recovery are at times encouraging, it will likely be some years before we see sustainable improvements to our resource base. And yet, we are blessed with many enviable assets: a broad array of strong departments, centres, institutes and programs whose faculty conduct leading-edge research with substantial international impact; a distinctive college system that supports our undergraduate mission in many important ways; the nation's largest, broadest and most internationally distinguished cluster of graduate education; a legacy of successful innovation in undergraduate education in both small and large class settings, and outside the classroom.

The times call for measured reflection and carefully considered action in order to reinforce our strengths, address pressing needs and capitalize on opportunities. The priorities proposed in this document were formulated on the basis of the principles enunciated during the academic planning process, starting with *Towards 2030*, and were strongly shaped by the feedback received during the 2010-11 academic year. Indeed, the academic planning exercise has stimulated a deep and broad discussion of change within the Faculty. This discussion has already helped us identify creative alternatives to significant structural change, while still allowing the Faculty to achieve its important academic objectives and financial challenges. In other cases, discussions of possible new initiatives continue, with all stakeholders participating fully.

The Faculty will continue to engage in this consultation and deliberation process as key aspects arising from the plan are further developed. Reports on further progress, including working group reports, will be broadly distributed for input and brought to the Faculty of Arts & Science Council at regular meetings, as will recommendations requiring governance approval. Subsequent developments will be discussed at Arts & Science Council and documented in future periodic updates from the Dean's Office.

Through this process, it is our hope that the Faculty will be able to meet its most important academic and financial objectives, to the ultimate benefit of our students. Our goal is to ensure that the Faculty's academic programs and research activities are as strong and coherent as they can possibly be, and that our students' learning needs are well served.