

# Academic Planning in the Faculty of Arts & Science 2009-2014

## Context and Directions

With the conclusion of the *Stepping UP* era, the advent of academic planning in Arts & Science presents us with a great opportunity to rethink the Faculty and its strategic direction. Our goal is nothing less than 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 overview document outlines the broader university-wide context for planning, takes stock of the recent external review of the Faculty and its most important recommendations, assesses our financial and human resource environment, and provides some overarching academic priorities to guide us in our collective thinking and planning. The challenges we face are considerable, but so too are the assets we have within the Faculty. Challenging times provide a strong incentive for us to think creatively about how best to build on these assets in order to achieve our important goals.

### The University Context for Academic Planning

Academic planning represents an opportunity for divisions and their constituent units to set forth their vision, priorities, and strategies for implementation over the medium term. The transition to a new budget model in 2007 created a strong imperative for a more division-focused approach to strategic planning. In a departure from past practice, in which all divisions of the university engaged in a 5-year planning process simultaneously, the Provost has specified a new approach much more consistent with current budget planning, in which each division will articulate an academic plan within two years of a new dean coming into office (see *University of Toronto: Academic Planning in the Context of Towards 2030*). Accordingly, the process of generating the next academic plan for the Faculty of Arts & Science will take place during the 2009-2010 academic year.

The broader context for academic planning in Arts & Science is provided by two prior exercises. The first of these, the comprehensive process that led to *Towards 2030: A Third Century of Excellence at the University of Toronto*, articulated key objectives for the University:

- 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 divisional planning (see *Towards 2030: Synthesis Report* – for a more complete discussion of these objectives and the rationale underlying them). By definition, this framework is designed to sketch out broad directions and priorities for the entire university.

Divisional planning, which aims to set forth more detailed academic priorities and strategies for their implementation, is to be guided by the findings and recommendations of the most recent external review of the Faculty. As further noted in the Provost's recent academic planning document (p. 7): "Academic plans should be developed through an iterative process of consultation, formulation, and further assessment. The planning processes should involve not just tenure stream and teaching stream faculty, but also administrative staff and students – i.e. all those who have a stake in the future of the unit."

### **The 2008 External Review of the Faculty of Arts & Science**

The most recent external review of the Faculty of Arts & Science was conducted between January and March 2008. The report of the external review committee and the decanal response constitute important resources to inform the current round of academic planning (see CPAD memo #81-2007-08).<sup>1</sup> The external reviewers acknowledged the extraordinary achievements of the Faculty over the past 5-6 years, despite a daunting set of major challenges in our operating environment, both inside and outside the university: among these, a prolonged period of provincial fiscal restraint, the double cohort, graduate expansion, the end of mandatory retirement, the shift to the new budget model, and the migration of a number of interdisciplinary centres and institutes from the School of Graduate Studies to the Faculty. They argued compellingly that the Faculty must now adopt a strong strategic focus as it charts its future path.

A number of the review committee's key recommendations have already been acted upon. In particular, the Office of the Dean has now undergone a comprehensive restructuring in which clear authority has been delegated to the vice-deans, and the decanal portfolios have been redefined to enhance their operational effectiveness and strategic focus while also reducing their collective financial footprint. At the same time,

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<sup>1</sup> All past CPAD memos are archived on the Faculty of Arts & Science website. See [www.artsci.utoronto.ca/main/faculty/cpad](http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/main/faculty/cpad) for the full archive.

the tradition of discipline-based diversity and representation within the vice-decanal ranks has been maintained. The proposal to create a new chief-of-staff or CAO position has been considered but deferred in light of current budgetary constraints.

A number of other key recommendations arising from the external review are especially pertinent for the current round of academic planning. First, the reviewers advocated a *fundamental rethinking of our planning process*, along two lines: (i) expanding the focus so that it centres less narrowly on complement planning, and (ii) restructuring the planning committee so that it is smaller and better positioned to “make the hard decisions that strategic planning requires” (p. 5). They also strongly asserted the importance of benchmarking against peer public institutions in Canada and the US when evaluating the activities of the Faculty.

We fully intend to follow this advice, and have already adopted a number of practices during the past year consistent with the committee’s recommendations. In particular, the financial challenges facing the Faculty have necessitated a more strategic approach to resource allocation, resulting in a more active role for the Faculty’s Budget Committee and the creation of a new Budget Strategy Subcommittee. In the course of the past two annual budget planning cycles, we have begun the transition from uniform, across-the-board budget reductions for all units to a more strategic and selective approach. These developments lead quite naturally to a strategic planning process in which resource allocation decisions are driven by academic priorities. Hence, just as the University’s strategic planning exercise and annual budget planning have now become closely connected, so too will the Faculty’s own academic planning be linked to the annual budget planning process for its academic units. This will help us ensure that academic planning encompasses far more than just complement planning. Building on this more strategic approach, the Faculty’s Strategic Planning Committee will be considerably smaller than past planning committees, while at the same time ensuring appropriate representation of the major sectors and types of unit within the Faculty.

Another key recommendation of particular importance to the current planning exercise addresses the issue of interdisciplinary units within Arts & Science. The reviewers note that the Faculty had added 15 such units since July 2005, through AIF competitions, the relocation of units from SGS to FAS, and other means (e.g. college initiatives). Referring to this phenomenon, the review committee commented (p. 6): “At a time of seemingly diminishing resources, the proliferation of such units and their accompanying costs in course releases, administrative staff, and demands on units for courses to go along with the new enterprises, seems profligate.”

In the short term, this development has posed a major challenge for coordination, communication and representation for such interdisciplinary units. The Faculty acknowledged this challenge and responded to it with the creation of a new body representing the directors of EDU Bs and Cs and college programs (not already represented on CPAD). This new body – the Coalition of Arts and Science Directors (or CASD) – has been convened by the Vice-Dean, Interdisciplinary Affairs, to whom such EDU directors report. It has met at least twice per term during the 2008-09 year, and the

dean and various vice-deans have also attended these meetings when appropriate. At the same time, the Dean's Office has ensured that all written communications directed to members of CPAD now also routinely circulate to CASD members. And beginning this year, the Faculty's HR office will be providing this group with training on academic administrative procedures in Arts & Science.

While the formation of CASD has helped address key short-term challenges of coordination, communication and representation, the longer-term questions posed by the review committee remain on the table. While interdisciplinarity is of obvious intrinsic value, what importance does the Faculty and the University place on such interdisciplinary units, particularly at a time when resources are increasingly under stress to the point that our traditional 'core' disciplines are suffering from repeated rounds of base budget cuts? How frequently are such units subjected to thorough reviews that ask searching questions about the quality of their programs and the value they add to the institution? How can we better facilitate coordination between these units and the discipline-based departments on which they often rely for teaching resources and student access to courses to fulfill program requirements?

Clearly, the reviewers have questioned the sustainability of the status quo, and imply that a reassessment and rationalization may be in order if we are truly to succeed in serving the needs of our students. Moreover, they suggest that one important principle to guide any future reorganization would be to realize opportunities to bring together our research and graduate education missions with our undergraduate education mission (p. 9): "Indeed, the very definition of a high quality undergraduate program in the Faculty would seem to us to include faculty active in research and teaching both graduate and undergraduate students."

The external review report also raised important questions about the relationship between the Faculty and the colleges. The reviewers argued that the challenges facing all interdisciplinary programs in the Faculty seem to be especially acute when these programs are situated within a college. In this sense, as the decanal response indicates, it makes sense that any comprehensive review of interdisciplinary programs within the Faculty should also include college programs, though we see no reason why they deserve any extra degree of scrutiny simply because they happen to be situated within a college. Clearly, our objective in evaluating all of our programs should be to ensure that they are academically strong and sustainable.

At the same time, the reviewers noted that the colleges continue to play a leading role in enhancing the quality of student life and the student experience within the University and the Faculty, acknowledging their importance in recruitment, admissions, orientation, residence life, academic advising and support. As they observe (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."

We shall return to this theme below, in addressing the role of the colleges as key contributors to both student life and academic life on the St. George campus.

### **The Faculty's Financial and Human Resource Context**

The external reviewers acknowledged the tight financial constraints within which the Faculty has had to operate within the past few years. The primary sources of pressure include: (i) a provincial operating grant per student (BIU) that has remained frozen for many years – hence declining in real value over time; (ii) provincial regulation that limits the annual rate of increase of our tuition fees; (iii) the end of mandatory retirement; (iv) salary and benefit costs for faculty, staff, and TAs that have been increasing significantly faster than our revenues; and (v) more recently, the pronounced downturn in financial markets and the world economy. As a result of these pressures, the Faculty was anticipating a cumulative deficit in the order of \$48.5M as of the beginning of March 2009 (see CPAD memo #43-2008-09 – Budget Update).

In response to these challenges, the Faculty's Budget Committee has adopted a multi-year strategy to contain expenditures and strengthen our revenue base. On the expenditure side, the past two years have seen budget cuts of 2% base + 2% OTO (2008/09) and 1.25% base + 2% OTO + selective additional OTO and centrally applied base reductions (2009/10). These cuts have yielded roughly \$5.5M in base budget savings and a further \$9.5M in OTO savings (of which approximately \$6M was directed to the University's deficit repayment plan and \$2M was used to cover some of the initiatives normally funded through endowment income). Meanwhile, the Faculty is pursuing revenue growth by increasing international undergraduate enrolment, expanding our summer teaching program, shifting to a program fee for full-time study, and introducing new ancillary fees to recover materials costs in certain lab-based science courses. We have also decided to maintain overall undergraduate enrolment at 2008/09 levels for the next two years, instead of reducing enrolment in line with earlier plans.

The sum total impact of these revenue-raising strategies is considerable. In gross revenue terms (i.e. before any additional central or divisional costs are taken into account), we estimate the *cumulative* impact through 2013-14 to be between \$130M and \$150M. Taking account of central costs<sup>2</sup>, the net gain to the Faculty is anticipated to be \$84M to \$97M. So the good news is that these revenue-raising initiatives are likely to bring significant financial benefit to the Faculty. However, three very important caveats are in order. First, all of these revenue-raising measures will be at least partially offset by attendant increases in the Faculty's costs. Second, as noted above, we have already accumulated a deficit approaching \$50M arising from past shortfalls between revenues and expenditures. A substantial portion of the net new revenues arising from our strategic budget measures will have to be used to retire this accumulated debt, limiting

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<sup>2</sup> These include the central costs levied against divisional income under the new budget model: University-wide costs, the student aid set-aside and our contribution to the University Fund.

funds available to support new initiatives. Finally, the full impact of these measures will not be felt for at least four years. As a result, our forecasts show that *our costs will continue to rise more rapidly than our revenues for at least the next two to three years, adding further to our accumulated deficit before this figure begins to decline.*<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, several other considerations about which there is still much uncertainty will have a major impact on our financial situation over the next few years. Foremost among these are: (i) future provincial grant (BIU) funding for post-secondary education, (ii) the structure of the next provincial framework for tuition fees, once the current framework expires at the end of the 2009/10 academic year, and (iii) the outcome of negotiations to determine salaries and benefits of our teaching complement over the next few years. The impact of each of these sources of uncertainty on our financial picture is likely to be considerable, though specific outcomes will not be known for some time. While it is important for our academic planning to anticipate a range of possible outcomes, it is also prudent to plan conservatively when it comes to our financial resources.

This financial update shows that, while we have made considerable progress toward financial recovery thanks to the measures we've adopted since 2008, we still have much work to do. In particular, if our compensation costs continue to increase at rates that are comparable to recent past agreements, while our BIU income per student remains fixed (or suffers from provincial discounting), this will mean that our net revenue growth will be severely constrained. The difficult measures needed to rectify our financial situation are likely to last throughout this planning period, so we cannot look to revenue growth to feed innovation. We will need to innovate within our current means. The bottom line is that, at least for the next few years, *any new initiatives supported by the Faculty can only be funded at the expense of existing activities*, since it is imperative that we avoid worsening the Faculty's financial situation in the interim.

In addition to financial resources, our human resources constitute a critically important dimension of the health and vitality of the Faculty. The past few years have been marked by two major developments. The appointments authorized under the *Stepping UP* plan have enabled many units within Arts & Science to renew their teaching and research complement: collectively, they have appointed 79.54 new tenure stream and 9.49 new teaching stream faculty, representing a very substantial and welcome injection of new talent into the system (Table 1).<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the elimination of mandatory

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<sup>3</sup> To put this issue in context, in recent years our salary and benefit costs alone have been increasing by about \$9M each year. To generate sufficient additional revenues to cover this increase, the Faculty needs to bring in nearly \$14M in new gross revenues *each year*, once central costs are taken into account. This amounts to a total of \$45M (net) or \$70M (gross) over the 5-year planning period.

<sup>4</sup> A total of 142.25 positions were approved in the *Stepping UP* plan (130.76 tenure stream and 11.49 teaching stream). Hence there are currently 53.22 unfilled positions at the end of Stepping UP. A further 6.00 Stepping UP searches have been authorized for 2009-10.

retirement in 2005 has introduced tremendous uncertainty and complexity into the Faculty's human resources planning. While mandatory retirement was still in place, we could routinely expect something like 25-35 retirements a year. Following its elimination, retirements declined to between one-third and one-quarter of historical levels and have defied earlier predictions of a return to 'normal' levels by remaining this low through 2009 (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Stepping UP Appointments and Retirements, 2005-2009**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
Total hires	17.32	26.51	18.00	18.69	8.51	89.03
Tenure stream hires	14.32	22.51	16.00	18.69	8.02	79.54
Teaching stream hires	3.00	4.00	2.00	--	0.49	9.49
Total reaching NRD	37	29	27	33	36	162
Retirements	37	11	7	9	9	87
Total continuing	0	18	20	24	27	75 <sup>d</sup>
Total tenure stream <sup>a</sup>	653	643	668	679	697 <sup>e</sup>	
Total teaching stream <sup>b</sup>	69	64	76	83	82 <sup>e</sup>	
CLTA & part-time <sup>c</sup>	149	175	137	150	153	

Notes: a. Full-time, including colleges and TYP (source: *Facts & Figures*)

b. Full-time Lecturer/Senior Lecturer (including term, annual, continuing) (source: HRIS)

c. Source: *Blue Book*

d. 14 faculty members continued working after their NRD but are now retired as of 2009

e. Figures do not include faculty positions associated with three former SGS centres that joined FAS recently (Criminology, Drama, Industrial Relations & Human Resources)

The recent downturn in the world economy, with its eroding effects on retirement savings, has delayed still further any return to normal rates of retirement. As a result, the number of post-65 faculty who have not retired has risen to 75 during the past year, a figure approaching 10 percent of our tenure-stream and teaching-stream faculty complement (see Table 1). All indications are that the average age of retirement will rise to the late 60s or higher. While this development is welcome for many reasons – the cohort of post-65 faculty includes some of our most productive and renowned scholars and teachers – it poses significant challenges for complement (and financial) planning, and will reduce our ability to make new faculty appointments for some years to come.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> While advancement certainly plays an important role in raising funds to endow new positions, our expectations regarding future prospects must be kept within realistic bounds. To put this into perspective, we currently have 44 endowed chairs and professors within the Faculty. Prior to 1995 this number stood at 5. This growth in endowed positions during the past 15 years was heavily influenced by generous matching programs. These programs have now ended and the recent economic downturn has also had a predictable effect on this type of advancement activity.

This point holds important implications for academic planning in the Faculty. First and foremost, it seems clear that *innovation and renewal within the Faculty cannot rely on the ability to make new faculty appointments to the extent that was true in the past. Instead, unit plans will have to focus primarily on other means for achieving their aspirations with respect to teaching, learning and research.*

Clearly, these conditions represent a considerable challenge to academic planning over the next five years. The easy response would be to conclude that we must postpone important improvements to our undergraduate and graduate programs, student experience, and the research environment. However, we simply cannot afford to stand still waiting for better financial times if we are to maintain our status as a leading centre of excellence for teaching and scholarship within the University of Toronto, nationally and internationally. Despite our resource challenges, we have many enviable assets on which to build – as noted in *Towards 2030* – and this requires us to be doubly creative in reimagining the future.

### **Academic Priorities and Principles for Arts & Science**

In a Faculty as large and diverse as ours, specific priorities with respect to individual disciplines, units or areas of activity are best defined in a bottom-up fashion. Nevertheless, building on the foundations laid in *Towards 2030*, as well as in the Provost's recent academic planning document, we can articulate a set of overarching priorities and principles that will guide academic planning within the Faculty of Arts & Science. As a core precept of strategic planning, organizations such as ours should identify and *leverage their unique, most distinctive and valuable assets*, since these will reinforce our strengths while differentiating us most clearly from our peer competitors.

In this sense, the most obvious place to start is indeed the very diversity and breadth referred to above. The Faculty of Arts & Science, with its 29 departments, 8 EDU As, and many more EDU Bs and Cs, constitutes not only the largest but also the most disciplinarily diverse faculty in the country, if not the continent. And yet, we have tended to take this breadth and diversity very much for granted instead of recognizing the opportunities inherent in this structure. The fact that we encompass humanities, social sciences and sciences distinguishes us from other peer institutions where such large groupings are rare. 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. Furthermore, some of our peer institutions have invested significant resources in reuniting the arts and the sciences to create a richer learning environment for their undergraduates, something we already have in place as a source of potential

enrichment for the education we can offer our students.<sup>6</sup>

Given this, we would be foolish not 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 its most significant achievements thus far has been the institution of redefined degree objectives, including new breadth requirements. This represents only the first important step within a larger process of enhancing breadth opportunities for our students. Other avenues, such as mounting new, multi-disciplinary ‘big ideas’ or ‘Arts and Science’ courses in first year, are still in the early stages of discussion and development, but merit serious attention. Undoubtedly, the current academic planning exercise will succeed in identifying other equally promising opportunities to take advantage of our breadth to enrich the learning experience of our students without necessarily creating new interdisciplinary units within the Faculty.

Four further priorities emerge from a strategic review of our other distinctive assets and the *Towards 2030* exercise. First, we must find new ways to rebuild the learning experience we provide our students. Second, we need to do more to leverage our tremendous capacity and excellence in research and graduate education to enhance learning opportunities for both our undergraduate and graduate students. Third, we need to capitalize more effectively on our unique college system. Finally, we must identify new opportunities for our students and faculty to become more deeply engaged in the global and local communities around them.

### *1. Rebuilding the Student Experience: Intensifying Our Efforts*

One of the defining features of the University of Toronto is its dual character as an internationally recognized research powerhouse and a large, accessible, publicly funded, big-city university. In this latter guise, a very large proportion of our undergraduate students are ‘commuters’ who do not live on campus. Something like 60 percent of them have *never* lived on campus, which 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 preponderance of very large classes in the first and second years of most of our programs, has engendered a well-recognized lack of engagement and weak sense of community amongst our students. This general condition seems to be compounded by the difficulties our faculty, administrative, and support staff face – despite their heroic efforts – in providing sufficient attentiveness to the needs of individual students.

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<sup>6</sup> Noteworthy examples include UBC, McGill, and McMaster, all of whom have created special ‘Arts & Science’ programs for gifted undergraduates as a way of overcoming the fragmentation in their faculty structures arising from the fact that they lack unified faculties of arts and science.

It is important to acknowledge some recent successes in addressing this longstanding challenge – foremost among these, the much-lauded 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 recent Student Experience Fund competitions to create new physical spaces and special services targeted expressly towards 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 the National Survey of Student Engagement (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 hard work is still to be done.

As for class size, here too we can point to important innovations such as the 199 first-year seminars, and the \*99 series of subsequent opportunities for small-group learning in a variety of other settings. Collectively these innovations reach more than one-half of all Arts & Science students. Also significant are college-based initiatives such as Vic One and Trin One, in which small cohorts of students pursue a common curriculum together during their first year on campus. And many of our language courses across the Faculty offer further opportunities for small-group learning. Elsewhere, we have devised new mechanisms for enriching and improving the quality of small-group learning in tutorials, by focusing on TA training in areas such as discipline-based writing instruction (through the WIT program – another product of Curriculum Renewal).

Clearly, one priority for future innovation will be to devise new ways to provide more and better small-group learning experiences for our students. It is also important to recognize that such initiatives, while critical, are also resource-intensive. Hence, it will be equally important for us to find new ways to improve and enrich the large-group learning experience within the Faculty. Given our financial challenges, large classes will remain a fact of life in Arts & Science for some time to come. Instead of denying their existence and potential value, we should instead focus on finding new ways to perfect this experience.

Here too, we have a record of success on which to build. Many of the courses we teach in venues such as Convocation Hall routinely garner very strong evaluations from our students. This is in large part the result of enlisting some of our very best scholars and teachers to staff these courses. In a direct way, this practice capitalizes on one of our other distinctive features – our status as a centre of top-notch research and the presence of world-renowned scholars – to enrich the large-class experience. Alternatively, instead of conceiving of large-group and small-group learning experiences as binary alternatives, we should view them as mutually complementary and focus instead on how one can be used to enrich the other.

Another celebrated pilot initiative – the Socrates Project – does exactly this, by enabling gifted senior undergraduates in Philosophy to serve as specially trained TAs for their

more junior peers in large first-year courses. The evaluation results from this pilot project confirm very high levels of approval for this approach, from both the first-year students and those lucky enough to serve as their TAs. No doubt there are many other potential innovations in large-class teaching that remain as yet undiscovered or untried, and it is our collective responsibility to identify and implement these new ideas to the benefit of our students.

In sum, what measures can we implement to improve the student experience significantly across the many disciplines within the Faculty?

## *2. Graduate Education and Research Excellence: Leveraging our Advantage*

The collection of three-campus and single-campus programs that make up the graduate enterprise in Arts & Science constitute the single largest concentration of advanced teaching and research activity in Canada. This is yet another asset that differentiates us from our peers, as the *Towards 2030 Synthesis* document rightly emphasizes. It only makes sense, therefore, that we focus on new ways to play to this considerable strength as we contemplate the next five years and beyond.

The Faculty has recently 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. While the bulk of this growth has been accommodated by expansion of existing programs, we have also created several new Master's and PhD programs, and others are currently working their way through the approvals process (see Table 2).

**Table 2: New Graduate Programs in the Faculty of Arts & Science since 2004**

<b>2004</b>	Joint U of T/York PhD in Ancient Greek and Roman History
<b>2005</b>	Collaborative PhD in Geology and Physics
	Collaborative PhD in Jewish Studies
<b>2006</b>	MA in Women & Gender Studies
	PhD in Planning
<b>2007</b>	Master of Public Policy
	MA in Cinema Studies
<b>2008</b>	MSc and PhD in Cell & Systems Biology
	MSc and PhD in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
	Collaborative MSc & MAsC in Optics
	Collaborative PhD in the Dynamics of Global Change
	Combined JD/MA in English (Law and Literature)
<b>2009</b>	Collaborative MA and PhD in Sexual Diversity Studies
	Collaborative MA in Jewish Studies
	Collaborative MA and PhD in Diaspora & Transnational Studies
<b>2010</b>	Master of Global Affairs
	MSc in Applied Computing

Looking to the next five years, it is likely that the rate of growth of our existing graduate programs will be somewhat slower than what we have experienced over the past five years. We could also see an increase in the ratio of PhD to Master's students in these programs, as a significant proportion of recently arrived Master's cohorts proceed to doctoral studies. At the same time, we might also expect more departments to consider developing new professional Master's programs, especially in light of current economic conditions that seem to favour such options.

In the bigger-picture view, the Faculty's enrolment plan – which is strongly consistent with the vision presented in *Towards 2030* – is to reduce undergraduate enrolments to pre-double cohort levels over the next few years. With the rise in graduate enrolment that we have already achieved, and gradually declining undergraduate numbers over the past few years, we have seen the ratio of undergraduate to graduate enrolment in the Faculty decline from 7.43 in 2005-06 (the peak year of the double cohort phenomenon but before graduate expansion had gotten fully underway) to 5.73 by 2008-09 (see Table 3). With the further (albeit more modest) graduate expansion that is anticipated, along with the expected decline in undergraduate enrolment, we should see this ratio continue to decline through 2013-14.

**Table 3: Graduate and Undergraduate Enrolment, Fall 2004 to Fall 2008**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Change 2004-08	% Change
<b>Graduate<sup>a</sup></b>							
PhD	1,944	2,005	2,127	2,245	2,363	419	22
Master's	822	798	828	1,045	985	163	20
Prof Master's	147	162	186	219	279	132	90
Total Graduate	2,913	2,965	3,141	3,509	3,627	714	25
<b>Undergraduate<sup>b</sup></b>	21,256	22,039	21,368	21,049	20,794	-462	-2
<b>Ratio</b>							
Undergrad:Grad	<b>7.30</b>	<b>7.43</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>5.73</b>	<b>-1.56</b>	<b>-21</b>

Notes: a. Does not include part-time or special students

b. FTE – i.e. November 1 sessional FCE/5

This shift in the composition of our student body has the potential to benefit both the graduate and undergraduate experience. 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. Moreover, the planned overall reduction in undergraduate numbers should eventually translate into smaller class sizes.

Beyond these benefits, we must be ready to explore other opportunities to integrate our

two educational missions more effectively. This could be achieved in a number of different ways. For example, the growing graduate presence in the Faculty creates new possibilities to provide meaningful research experiences for more of our undergraduates, perhaps by working with graduate students as research mentors. While our existing 299 and 399 courses have proven to be highly successful and popular with our undergraduate students, opportunities are limited by the number of faculty able and willing to accommodate undergraduates within their research projects, and student demand for such experiences outstrips our supply. This should not be that surprising, since we know from NSSE and other sources that one of the primary factors motivating our students to study at the University of Toronto is the opportunity to become engaged actively in the leading-edge research programs of our faculty.

On this same theme, the Faculty is home to a number of graduate-only research and/or teaching units, many of which are internationally recognized in their fields. These units represent a major unrealized resource for enriching the experience of our undergraduates by linking them more directly to these research-intensive centres of activity. Here again, the *Towards 2030* process highlighted the value of taking greater advantage of our research and graduate prowess by providing more opportunities for our undergraduates to participate in these activities. It follows logically that we should ensure that all of our current graduate-only units become directly involved in teaching and research supervision at the undergraduate level.

By the same token, as the last external review of the Faculty noted, we are also home to a large and recently expanded number of interdisciplinary centres and institutes. In relation to the questions raised earlier about the role and contribution these units make to the Faculty, it is fair to ask to what extent they have benefited the wider community beyond the faculty members and graduate students affiliated with them. In short, we need to engage these centres and institutes far more effectively to enrich the learning experience of our undergraduates.

Finally, as noted earlier, many scholars in Arts & Science have received international recognition and honours for their research and publications. A large number of them have been recognized through their designation as University Professors (19), endowed chairholders and professors (44), and holders of Canada Research Chairs (58). Given our commitment to the principle of enriching our 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 deeply engaged in our undergraduate mission.

In sum, how can we create productive new connections between research, graduate education and our undergraduate education mission?

### *3. The Colleges: Capitalizing More Fully on Unique Assets*

The college system is a defining feature of the University of Toronto and the Faculty of Arts & Science. We are the only university in Ontario<sup>7</sup>, and one of the few in North America to structure our undergraduate academic experience around colleges. Since each of our undergrads is admitted to a college, this unique institution forms a key component of our students' identity and social community. Their presence 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 fellow students, faculty, staff and alumni.

The colleges have historically made 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, writing and math support, and financial and personal counseling and referrals. They are also a primary 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. Traditionally this has been manifested through the offering of interdisciplinary undergraduate programs that embody each college's distinctive personality and history and complement the offerings of our departments, centres and institutes. More recently, the colleges have generated innovative new ways to organize first-year undergraduate education. Programs such as Vic One and Trin One have, as acknowledged above, provided small-group learning experiences that enhance the development of learning and social communities within their undergraduate cohort.

Going beyond undergraduate education, the colleges offer an important space for scholarly and social interaction between faculty from across the wide range of Arts & Science disciplines who hold college membership. They are also home to entire departments as well as centres and institutes, thereby providing direct support to the wider teaching and research mission of the Faculty and University.

As noted earlier, the 2008 external review of the Faculty commented on the unique and important role that the colleges play in contributing to student life and the student experience. The reviewers strongly implied that there are considerable unrealized opportunities to innovate still further in enriching the learning experiences of our students. They also remarked on the difficulties arising from the lack of coordination or communication between the colleges and the other units within the Faculty over matters such as access to courses and provision of teaching resources.

Given the distinctive and important role that our colleges play in shaping the experience

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<sup>7</sup> Trent has residential colleges, but they do not offer academic programs.

of our students, it makes a good deal of sense to take seriously the challenge presented by the external reviewers. How can we build further upon this unique asset to contribute in new ways to our core mission of teaching and research?

Recasting this question, what new opportunities might exist to forge a stronger and closer working relationship between the Faculty and the colleges? One focus could be to rethink and rejuvenate the relationship between colleges and other units within the Faculty – departments, centres and institutes – so that they come to view one another as partners bringing complementary capabilities together in the service of our students’ needs.

Another focal point for innovation might be around the unprecedented graduate expansion we have experienced in recent years. What new ways might exist to link the colleges’ aspirations and assets with our graduate education mission? To this point, the colleges’ role in this aspect of the Faculty’s activities has been modest. Yet, if the balance between undergraduate and graduate enrolment does indeed continue to shift in the direction anticipated in the future, it would make sense for the colleges to reconceive their role in graduate education and research. 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 could become the focal points for nurturing closer interaction between undergraduate students and the research and graduate teaching activities being undertaken in these units.

In short, how can academic units collaborate with the colleges to build on mutual strengths and to renew the sense of community among our undergraduate and graduate students?

#### *4. Engaging with the Broader Community – Globally and Locally*

Our educational mission as a Faculty is to provide our students with the critical thinking skills, analytical mindset and knowledge base for successful careers in particular disciplines, occupations and employment settings. An increasingly important complement to this mission is the goal of 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 are prepared to participate fully and effectively in this new world.

We know from the burgeoning demand for participation in international exchanges and summer abroad programs that many of our students are keen to avail themselves of opportunities to travel while engaging in their studies. A review of international strategy

within the Faculty during the 2008/09 academic year<sup>8</sup> reached the conclusion that we should strive to find ways to provide meaningful international experiences to more of our students. This could include expanding opportunities within existing programs as well as broadening the range of different types of international experiences available to students.

In order to achieve this goal, it will be necessary for us to think creatively about alternative new models that augment and complement the traditional semester- or year-long exchanges and summer abroad programs that have been in place for many years. Once again, there are some interesting recent innovations to inspire the development of novel approaches in this area.

The joint minor model piloted with the National University of Singapore represents a useful way to add value and greater coherence to international exchange experiences, while overcoming long-recognized barriers to students in the sciences who have hitherto been reluctant to participate in study-abroad programs. The joint minor model is now being expanded to include disciplines in the humanities (English) and social sciences (Geography). At the same time, international internships are beginning to attract more interest from students wishing to augment their practical experience in a foreign setting, but much more could be done to expand such opportunities.

By the same token, the three-year pilot project to support Internationalized Course Modules (or ICMs), funded by the Provost's Student Experience Fund, has proven to be extremely popular with students and faculty alike. This program has enabled instructors to enrich existing courses by taking students abroad to experience first-hand the phenomena, cultures, key events, or unique natural settings they have been studying in class. Such trips, which typically last no more than two weeks, represent a more compressed opportunity for an international experience. With the recent changes to the academic calendar creating a new intersession period in the first two weeks of May (following the Winter term, but preceding the Summer session), there are new opportunities to develop and extend this model. Finally, our 399 courses offer students the chance to work on a research project with a faculty member over a longer period of time, and many of these involve international travel as part of a research team.

All of these existing models can surely be built upon and extended further. There is also considerable scope to develop entirely new models for meaningful international experiences. The recent reorganization of decanal portfolios in the Faculty and the recently announced transformation of the interdisciplinary portfolio into the position of Associate Dean, Interdisciplinary and International Affairs, provides a new focal point for optimizing our existing international activities and developing new ones. We shall continue to work closely with Woodsworth and other colleges that are actively involved

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<sup>8</sup> Members of the International Strategy Task Force, chaired by the Dean, included David Bailey (Physics), Joe Desloges (Woodsworth College), Stephen Rupp (Spanish & Portuguese), Janice Stein (Munk Centre), Judith Wolfson (Vice-President, University Relations), and Joe Wong (Asian Institute).

in promoting international experiences for our students, as well as the International Student Exchange Office and the office of the Assistant Vice-President, International Relations.

It might also make sense to consider how the previously discussed goal of integrating our undergraduate experience more directly with graduate education and research might be achieved by taking greater advantage of international settings and experiences. The recent collaborative project between our Asian Institute and Fudan University in China might provide a template for future initiatives. Under this project, U of T students travelled to China to take a course with fellow students from Fudan, jointly taught by faculty from both universities. This model could be adapted to accommodate both senior undergraduates as well as graduate students, with one or more research modules introduced to augment the experience still further.

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 right here on our own doorstep. Such encounters serve dual purposes. They provide valuable enrichment for our students' learning experience. At the same time, they 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.

Undergraduate demand for experiential and service learning opportunities appears to be very strong, and the importance of this form of learning has recently been affirmed in the Faculty's ongoing Curriculum Renewal exercise. Recent competitions funded by the Student Experience Fund and the Curriculum Renewal Initiatives Fund have stimulated important new efforts in service learning across all sectors of the Faculty. We are now collecting and organizing information that documents current service and other experiential learning opportunities to make it easier for our students to take advantage of them. The logical next step will be to create more of these opportunities by engaging with partners in government, community-based organizations, the voluntary sector and the private sector. Such an initiative could take many forms and would be strongly aligned with the ethic that is manifest in the growing number of professional Master's programs now hosted by the Faculty, including the Master of Public Policy, the Master of Science in Planning, and the recently approved Master of Global Affairs and Master of Science in Applied Computing.

More broadly, at a time when universities are being asked to make ever larger contributions towards societal needs, the time may be right to consider what new or expanded roles the members of the Faculty might play in this regard. It must be said that the biggest impact universities have on their surrounding economy and society has always been achieved through their role as producers of well-educated graduates who enter the labour force. Moreover, fundamental, curiosity-driven research remains the ultimate wellspring for many downstream practical advances and applications. Nevertheless, as a publicly funded institution, we have a responsibility to ensure that those faculty members (or students) who wish to transfer and commercialize their

knowledge or mobilize it in the service of social needs are supported and encouraged in their efforts to do so.

In sum, how can we offer our students new opportunities in research and learning that will enrich their knowledge of and engagement with international and local communities? More generally, how can we foster new avenues for knowledge mobilization in the service of societal needs?

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

This is both a challenging and auspicious time to be embarking on academic planning in 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 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 and most diverse cluster of graduate education; a legacy of successful innovation in undergraduate education in both small and large class settings, and outside the classroom.

This is a perfect occasion for measured reflection and strategic action. Our task now as we plan for the next five years is to find creative ways to build on, develop, and accentuate these strengths. Our goal is to ensure that, in five years' time, 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.

To this end, it is important that our planning process encourages all units within the Faculty to make some difficult but smart choices about their future priorities and activities. At the same time, we must encourage and reward innovation that aligns well with our collective goals.

October 2, 2009