Working together towards more student-centered admissions

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Executive Summary:
A vision for more student-centered admissions

It is easy to understand why students choose the Faculty of Arts & Science (A&S) at the University of Toronto. Here, they will find unparalleled program and research opportunities on an historic and picturesque campus in a world-class city. During their education, they are connected to a vast network of faculty who are pioneers in their fields, along with their peers, alumni mentors, and a close-knit college community that will support them and help position them for success. By graduation, students earn a prestigious, internationally recognized degree making it easier for them to make their mark on the world. These are just a few of the qualities that make A&S an incredible place to build a future. With so much to offer students, what could be missing?

We know that many students do not begin their A&S journey with ease, starting with the admissions process. At this critical early stage of our relationship with students, we want them to feel empowered and energized to join our community and begin their academic journey. Instead, we know that students find our application process cumbersome, frustrating and confusing. Staff and faculty echo these concerns. Throughout the process, there are numerous steps and places to find and receive information, and the path and the purpose are not always clear. We ask applicants for similar information at multiple times, and we ask them to make choices and selections when we have not given enough information for them to make informed decisions. We also do not effectively convey the breadth of what students can study here, and the range of opportunities they have to shape their education and overall experience.

To transform the applicant experience, A&S brought together our team with representatives from across the Faculty, colleges and Enrolment Services. We spent nine weeks examining the current and related admissions processes from beginning to end, using the methodology of Business Process Reengineering, or BPR (See Appendices for more information on the BPR method). This involved a facilitated, highly structured approach of process mapping, research, stakeholder interviews, brainstorming and design of solutions and key recommendations culminating in this final report. We are focused on meeting students where they are. This has inspired us to think of ways to make our admissions process easier, fairer and more efficient for applicants, right from the start.
What do we imagine we can do better? We know the undergraduate experience begins with more than just checking a box on an application and deciding between the arts and the sciences. In fact, we want applicants to know what they study is fluid and dynamic, and where they will end up is an ever-expanding continuum over which they are the lead curators. We also recognize that not all students start from the same place, or come with the same information or knowledge about who we are and what we offer, or what they want to study or do in the future. What we have imagined is an admissions process that reaffirms the applicant’s agency over their education and that employs technology, efficiency and inter-departmental collaborative leadership to ensure their experience is a positive one.

This report reflects our key findings and endeavors to provide a set of strategic directions for admissions to A&S. We envision more streamlined deadlines and procedures that are easy to navigate and complete. We believe applicants need a single online space where they will be supported throughout their admissions and beyond, and that links all of their pre- and post-admission planning, communications and steps through to graduation.

We are proposing new admissions categories that are more closely connected to academic interests and career paths and that more easily help students select what they want to study and plan for success. With degree options that illustrate the academic versatility A&S offers each student, we aim to highlight the diverse elective courses and customizable program combinations that span both the arts and the science disciplines.

To aid students in their planning at every stage, we want to build an interactive and responsive tool that connects students more directly to the myriad of opportunities and support available, and that will empower them to take the lead in broadening their knowledge and increasing their likelihood of academic and personal success. This should include a review, realignment and development of first-year programming that supports transition.

As early as possible we also want applicants to feel like members of our community through a streamlined college selection process that also integrates residence assignment.

This is a process reengineered to provide applicants with an admissions experience that is easier, friendlier and more personalized for them. We can see better ways for students to access more transparent and timely advice and information about a variety of important factors such as program of admission, college membership, residence and awards, while reinforcing communication that builds connections. These recommendations are a natural evolution building on an existing appetite for change and the momentum of work already underway across the institution. This is our goal; working together towards a more student-centered admissions.

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Case for Action: The Current Environment

Admission to the Faculty is very competitive. A&S receives applications from a large number of highly qualified students from across Ontario and the rest of Canada, as well as from around the world. But the post-secondary landscape is changing: the number of high school students in Ontario and across Canada—indeed North America—is declining and not expected to recover fully until at least 2023. Over the past five years grade 12 enrolment has dropped 5 percent in Ontario and 10 percent in British Columbia; in Atlantic Canada, the drop is even more dramatic. These demographic shifts directly impact the competition amongst top institutions to attract the best students.

Coupled with increased competition is a shift in student choice, away from the Humanities and Social Sciences toward Math, Computer Science, and Commerce. There are several possible reasons, including misperceptions about employment opportunities and the rigour of Humanities and Social Science programs, and a lack of understanding—even among students applying to “Arts” programs—about the Humanities and Social Sciences.

The A&S admissions process, and related processes, are comprised of a myriad and complex network of confusing and misleading procedures, activities, information and interfaces, all of which are both applicant facing and internally focused and involve units from across the University.

For all these reasons—a complex admissions process, a shrinking grade 12 population, increasing competition for the highest quality domestic and international students, declining interest in the Humanities and Social Sciences, as well as a desire to create the most diverse pool—we are rethinking the way students apply and are admitted.

The Faculty acknowledges that much work is already underway across reporting structures to improve information, services and processes for applicants to A&S and other faculties and divisions. Across the University, efforts also continue to focus on improving the prospective student, applicant and overall undergraduate student experience. The aim of the Admissions BPR is to support, expand, build on and align with existing structures and initiatives, to significantly improve the applicant experience, and to better highlight the opportunities we offer, including the fact that we have the most diverse, flexible and wide-ranging program options available in Canada.

This Admissions BPR project is building on this strategy and on the many positive processes and changes already in place or underway. We recognize if we are to maintain our position as the number one university in Canada, we are compelled to ensure that students considering A&S experience relationships and processes befitting that distinction, and reflecting the wealth of options A&S has to offer. Building this positive relationship with students—even before they enroll—is critical to achieving these goals.

More details about the current admissions process and landscape can be found in the Appendices.
End Results: What We Want to Achieve

Our Project Team was charged to develop recommendations that, when implemented, will achieve the following End Results to transform the Faculty’s admissions process and the overall applicant experience.

1. Helps applicants understand:
   a. The ranges of programs and entities to which they may potentially be offered admission;
   b. The timelines, requirements, and expectations to apply and be considered for admission;
   c. The process and timeline for receiving additional information about decisions pertaining to the offer including colleges, scholarships, residence, etc.

2. Is effective and efficient for applicants and delivers timely information and decisions by:
   a. Eliminating unnecessary or repetitive steps;
   b. Reducing the number of different applications and forms required;
   c. Reducing information applicants must provide for admission to A&S to only that required to evaluate admissibility;
   d. Reducing information applicant must provide when applying for programs and other entities (in addition to information provided as part of initial application process);
   e. Adopting a single application deadline for application to A&S, programs, and residence (or fewer than now exist).

3. Is responsive to the applicant’s individual needs at each stage.

4. Reduces the need for students to contact the institution for additional information or help with the application process.

5. Respects the fact that most students apply to five or more institutions (i.e., multiple applications available and utilized on the Ontario Universities’ Application Centre, OUAC).

6. Empowers applicant agency and choice, and does not disadvantage applicants during the admissions process.

7. Ensures applicants have the information they believe is required to make a decision, and understands its value and context to that end.

8. Ensures admission criteria set students up for academic success and align with A&S and college enrolment and academic goals (e.g., promoting Social Science and Humanities opportunities, providing access to the breadth of course and combinations available within A&S and across the University).

9. Contributes to a positive impression of the University, A&S, and the colleges, reinforcing our reputation as a place of excellence and one where students feel valued by the institution and affirmed in choosing us.
Guiding Principles

The following Guiding Principles were developed from the first three weeks of research, examination of current admission processes and stakeholder engagement. These principles provided a framework for the team’s discussions and brainstorming to rethink and simplify the admissions process. They have remained a touchstone throughout the project and will also help guide implementation.

Overarching Theme: A student-centred approach to admissions

Meet students where they are in the process and in their decision-making

Ensure a unified and timely process, minimizing duplicate and unnecessary activities and information requests

Provide applicants with advising and support resources throughout the process

Help applicants navigate the process and make informed decisions based on their situation and requirements.

Give applicants a choice only if it is really a choice

Be transparent so applicants understand options and opportunities, as well as the impact of their decisions and actions

Topics and Issues Considered

From several weeks of research, interviews and process mapping - and in consideration of the end results and guiding principles - we identified key themes and areas of discussion that served as the foundation for developing key recommendations.

1. Admission Streams
   - Discussed alternatives to applying to admission streams
   - Considered a range of options from applying to program, degree, specialty/major/minor, etc.
   - Acknowledged that any solution would have to support enrolment management, financial planning, and other activities currently supported by streams

2. Supplemental Application
   - Discussed the value of and/or alternatives to the range of supplemental pieces that follow the initial admission application
   - Considered a single supplemental application (or means of collecting additional information required based on what applicant is applying to/for)
• Considered unification, non-duplicate provision of information and processes (admissions, residence, college, Ones programs, scholarship, and other) that can be used for multiple purposes

3. College Membership Assignment

• Discussed alternatives to current process in which applicants must rank all seven colleges on their application to the Faculty, and different approaches to assigning college membership

• Considered range of options from not soliciting choice from applicant, to applicant selecting college following admission to Faculty, to applicant indicating only top choice and beyond

• Considered integration of new students into our community and the relationship between college and residence

4. Residence Assignment

• Discussed the disconnect between the application to the Faculty and the application to residence, and that applicants must rank residence options on the MyRes portal application

• Discussed alternatives to the Residence Guarantee as well as applicant awareness and lack of understanding around how to access and retain the Residence Guarantee

• Considered a range of options from not soliciting residence choice from applicant, to applicant indicating only top choice, as well as applicant selecting residence directly during the application to the Faculty, or following admission to the Faculty

• Considered integration of new students into our community and the relationship between college and residence, as well as awareness and promotion of off-campus housing options (in addition to or as an alternative to developing new institutional residences)

• Acknowledged that any solutions that would increase demand would have to be phased in based on institution’s ability to physically accommodate students

5. Transparency

• Discussed being more transparent and proactive in communication with applicants about information collected and evaluation criteria - including decision making processes used for consideration outside of admission eligibility to the University - such as for applicant profiles, awards, alternate offers, college membership, residence assignment, Ones programs, upper-year program admission etc.

• Considered appropriateness of supplemental information and profiles as part of the application process, value and use of information collected, and a range of options including the role of supplemental information and profiles, ranging from not using them to a standard for all applicants and everything in between
6. Admission Criteria, Evaluation and Decision-Making

- Discussed the differences in the application and evaluation processes when comparing Non-Ontario High School applicants, or 105s, with Ontario High School applicants, or 101s, in terms of evaluation, transfer credit assignment and when documents or files are incomplete.

- Considered the equity of these differences when it comes to our decision-making processes and what constitutes “enough information to make an acceptance decision” (i.e., offer is comprehensive and attractive enough) based on research, knowledge of applicant thinking, etc. For example, do applicants need to know which residence they will be admitted to or only that they are guaranteed residence? Do applicants need their transfer credit evaluation? Do applicants need to know specific scholarship information or just that they are eligible?

7. Deadlines and Timing

- Discussed shifting timing of various opportunities to ensure students receive information in a logical sequence, such as consideration of application and admission to Ones programs, admission to limited enrolment programs such as Rotman Commerce, and alternate offers of admission etc.

- Considered what applicants should receive before, during and after offer of admission to the University.

8. Applicant Information and Education

- Discussed tools to provide a more cohesive and integrated approach to online, print and email outreach and communications with applicants, from point of application to course enrolment and beyond.

- Considered consolidation of online portals, websites and forms, including viability of a single-source solution that would integrate pre-application education about program options, requirements and opportunities with advising and support throughout the application process.
Recommendations: At-A-Glance

The following six recommendations provide an overall account of what we heard, researched and imagined that together we can achieve for each and every applicant. We believe transformative change will come from better aligning when, how and where we interact with applicants.

We envision an outcome that makes the overall application experience and processes easier, fairer and more efficient for applicants and for the institution’s units engaged in the process. In addition to new and expanded resources, many of the elements of these recommendations will require institution-wide engagement and collaboration across units.

R1. Simplified Deadlines and Procedures
R2. Integrated Applicant Portal and Communications
R3. Responsive Online Planning Tool
R4. New Admission Categories
R5. Streamlined College Community Selection Process
R6. Aligned First-Year Opportunities

While we considered applicant evaluation and decision-making, we are not recommending changes to the criteria we use to evaluate the eligibility of students for admission to the Faculty, or changes to where decisions are made.

We are also not making any specific recommendations in relation to the transfer credit process because the Faculty is currently undertaking a process streamlining of this area.
Recommendations: In Detail

The following section provides a comprehensive outline of the specific details of each of the six overarching recommendations.

R1. Simplified Deadlines and Procedures

- Description

Consolidate and improve sequencing of applicant deadlines and procedures to minimize confusion and simplify steps around institutional timelines and processes, including:

- Collaboratively review and develop a shared plan for all applicant deadlines and dates to better coordinate and more consistently communicate deadlines within the applicant portal, with the ultimate goal of consolidating and reducing the number of deadlines
- Review the process by which we extend the application deadline with consideration of the relationship with and impact on all supplemental deadlines and milestones
- The same information available on ROSI for evaluation, analysis and processing of Ontario high school applicants should be available in ROSI for Non-Ontario high school applicants to enable more effective enrolment planning through efficient tracking and data reporting for decision making at the Faculty and college level
- Proactively engage non-Ontario high school applicants regarding outstanding documents to enable more timely and earlier evaluation and offer of admission
- In order to address the differing grade timelines applicants experience depending on where they study, tailor communications about required information and next steps based on educational jurisdiction
- Offer qualified international students conditional admission prior to submission of English language proficiency scores
- Offers of admission should contain as much detailed information as possible about the key decision making factors (program, awards, college, residence) to ensure applicants have as much information available, if desired, to help make a decision
- Continue to expand using available grades (for example grade 11/or equivalent, or grade 12 mid terms) to support making offers to applicants as early as possible
- Allow prospective applicants to self-submit their educational history and grades and other information relevant to evaluation/self-evaluation for planning (see R3), and for potential earlier admission response
- Provide automatic and personalized notification to applicants of milestones, next steps and deadlines within a customized online portal (see R2)
- Create a more cohesive awards strategy to stop awarding, changing or retracting of scholarships late in the cycle as this leaves applicants confused about their scholarship amounts and/or with a negative impression
- Improve response timeline to Rotman Commerce applicants, by making offers earlier and more proportionately in line with Faculty offer rounds to support timely applicant response and conversion. Or, making alternate program offers earlier, allowing Rotman Commerce first right of refusal for top Rotman Commerce applicants
Rationale and Need for Change

- Applicants have to track, prioritize and remember a number of varying deadlines, especially when considering that applicants are applying to multiple institutions resulting in multiple deadlines.
- Key information that applicants use in their decision making is made available to them at different times and sometimes late in the cycle of decision making. We discovered at least 12 different deadlines related to admissions steps and processes.
- Applicants miss supplemental steps and deadlines (such as for residence, profiles, college membership), as they are not all outlined in one location and there are a variety of different deadlines for supplemental steps and profiles.
- The Non-Ontario high school evaluation process is complicated and involves manual processes, multiple admission guidelines that are administered manually (i.e. admission to faculty by stream, and admission to colleges), resulting in space filling and admissions closing before qualified applicants have been considered.
- Some out of province school systems have different timelines than Ontario's, such as when they make grades available. Therefore, since our communications about required information and documentation are primarily tailored for Ontario students, these applicants do not always know if they have supplied enough information for evaluation and offer of admission, or do not understand what alternative grade information they can provide.
- There are multiple Ones deadlines, some of which occur before the student has an offer of admission to the Faculty, as well as steps and prompts that occur before course enrolment opens, which can lead to confusion.
- Rotman Commerce offers are made in smaller volumes during the admission rounds and this has resulted in late offers and a potential impact on applicant conversion for the Faculty.
- Scholarship offers come at different times and are communicated from different units (Enrolment Services, Faculty, colleges) and sometimes are offered too late for a student to use to help make a decision.

Benefits that Meet End Results

- Simplified timeline and deadlines will help applicants complete required information and steps in a more timely manner and enable more timely and complete offers of admission.
- Recognizing consideration is needed for Faculty enrolment targets and goals, a more consistent approach to deadlines will improve the likelihood that qualified applicants are fairly considered for admission.
- Applicants will have a more straight-forward application process that potentially minimizes stress and results in a more positive experience and impression of the institution.
- Earlier offers of admission and more complete award and residence information may increase positive impression and conversion of top applicants.
R2. Integrated Applicant Portal and Communications

- Description

Integrate all applicant processes and interfaces (portals, forms, websites, email and other communications) into a more cohesive and simplified “one-stop-shop” that clearly reflects next steps, deadlines and applicant statuses and that seamlessly transitions to the primary student online portal (i.e., ACORN), including the following:

- Integrate the new Online Planning Tool (see R3) to allow for continuity and connection of prospective student research and pre-planning to the application process and post admission transition to studies
- Ensure prospective students are linked to the correct application based on their background
- House all supporting applications, applicant profiles and forms (i.e. relating to college, residence, awards, Rotman, Ones) into one “supplementary space” that ensures applicants have a complete picture and place for engaging in the admission process and all related procedures
- Enable a single log in and entry point for all applicants to access everything they need
- Develop an integrated applicant communications timeline and plan across the Faculty, Enrolment Services and the colleges
- Review and realign print and email communications to more cohesively and strategically present the Faculty and the college
- Collaboratively review all applicant information (i.e. collected within the OUAC application and by all admissions related units) to ensure relevant information is shared with and accessible to all decision makers and the same information is not collected multiple times
- Where possible integrate the online applicant portal directly with current student online resources (i.e. Acorn, Timetable, Degree Explorer) for ongoing, consistent and seamless planning from application through to graduation
- Continue to build on current plans underway to embed and archive all personalized communications
- Design and integrate more tailored communications strategies to priority applicant groups

- Rationale and Need for Change

- Applicants can be confused about which application to use (101 or 105), for example an Ontario applicant studying in a foreign curriculum
- There are at least ten applicant-related portals (Join/MyRes/Status Check/College Profiles/Commerce Profile) that are sometimes connected, but the information is not integrated, therefore applicants have to seek information in different places and the instructions on next steps in the process are not always clear and are not automatically prompted
- There is a time delay between OUAC and when information appears for applicants on various U of T portals (Join, College Profiles), which may confuse applicants about the status of their actions and application
- There is currently no central repository for all communications and applicants receive information from different units and via different means (i.e. via different email accounts and within different U of T websites and portals)
- We lack a consolidated timeline and plan, and look and feel, for applicant email and print communications
• Information that may be very important to applicant decision making (i.e., details on college resources, awards, bursaries) is difficult to find because it is scattered across dozens of institutional websites
• There is duplication of information requested across the supplemental applications (such as for awards, college membership, residence and Ones programs)
• There is a separate contract application for international students which can be confusing in terms of deciding how and where to apply, and that requires manual updating of information by contacting U of T directly, whereas non-contract applicants can make updates online at the OUAC site and changes are transmitted in the nightly download to U of T

• Benefits and Meeting End Results
  • Applicants will have more systematic, easy-to-find and timely communication and instructions
  • Applicants will have a clearer understanding of the interconnected nature of steps and timelines in relation to their admission status and will receive more tailored advising because everything is in one place
  • More consistent data and information will be ready available internally for use in decision making and tracking of applicant activities, resulting in a more consistent and equitable approach
  • A more cohesive communications presence will strengthen our relationship with the applicant and improve the applicant’s understanding of who is interacting with them, when and why

R3. Responsive Online Planning Tool

• Description

Develop an integrated, interactive tool for exploration, planning and support (both academic and non-academic) for both prospective students and applicants, that is also integrated into the applicant portal (R1) and the application (such as via web link), as well as to students throughout their undergraduate career. This tool will allow for continuity of planning and monitoring of progress from application to graduation, and in particular would:
  • Allow applicants an ongoing opportunity to proactively input information related to their academic history, interests and goals (i.e., study interests and experience, career goals, desired skills, other experiences) to provide more immediate and relevant information to help them with research, planning and determination of their areas of study and degree path, and other opportunities
  • Highlight relevant programs and courses, including eligibility for degree and program options and combinations, both within the Faculty and across the University
  • Draw connections between programs and other opportunities such as research, experiential, co-curricular
  • Allow prospective students and applicants to self-submit their educational history, grades and other information in order to self-evaluate their potential for admission to the Faculty, as well as to their preferred college, residence, award
  • Provide comparator information about colleges, residences, scholarships and bursaries, to help students in their decision making and planning for life at the institution
• Automatically connect to the applicant’s intended programs of study including prompting information about the appropriate corresponding course enrolment, pre-requisites and other requirements and pre-populate this information upon admission (within an interactive “cart”):
  ▪ Developed to support as much pre-enrolment as possible, including populating the cart with first-year courses linked to program selection on application and/or admission
  ▪ This is not full and final course enrolment but is a “pre-enrolment” for admitted students who accept their offer of admission
  ▪ Students who accept their offer of admission will be prompted to accept or modify their cart and can do so at any time, as early as possible, as this will be available for students at all phases of admission
  ▪ Be directly linked to current student planning and enrolment throughout their studies
  ▪ Will be intuitive and responsive prompting students for a variety of tasks, steps, progress and opportunities, for example confirmation that courses selected match degree planning, or high school pre-requisites match program pre-requisites, opportunities for study abroad or internships that link with selected courses and program/s
  ▪ Show relevant suggestions for academic pathways based on examples of what other students have taken

• Present timetable and degree planning resources to applicants
• Build on and integrate existing online tools that promote program picking, career planning and alumni profiles, co-and extra-curricular opportunities to ensure a cohesive platform
• Provide applicants with more information about scholarships and financial support and how it varies by college to help students in their decision making and be more financially prepared in advance of their studies
• Within the online planning tool, provide an option for timely access to personalized one-to-one advising, live chat, peer mentors, which will require an investment in advising resources

• Rationale and Need for Change

• An applicant’s ability to compare information about programs, colleges, residence and other opportunities and resources available is difficult because the information is in a variety of places, not connected, difficult to find or not available
• The relationships between admission and degree requirements, program and course prerequisites are not well articulated within the current application process
• Students might not realize until during their first year that they are interested in a program for which they do not have prerequisites
• Applicants may have specific program interests but are unsure of the links to career and future pathways; this is something parents in particular are seeking from universities or they are devaluing arts and science offerings because of a perceived lack of future options and career success
• Colleges have differing levels of resources in terms of awards and scholarships and applicants are not aware of that when making their selections at time of application
• Financial information is also scattered, complicated and confusing for applicants in terms of the supports available between UTAPS, awards profile, college bursaries and scholarships, faculty scholarships
Benefits that Meet End Results

- A holistic planning tool will enable students to make informed decisions about programs and courses, with a clearer illustration of the relationship between admission and degree requirements, program and course prerequisites
- Applicants will be exposed to options and opportunities they may not have been aware of or may have not otherwise considered
- Student transition will be made easier and less stressful because more questions will be answered earlier and automatically, without students having to track down information, rules and advice
- A singular repository of this complete applicant profile will enable earlier and better collection of applicant data for enrolment management and planning

R4. New Admission Categories

Description

Revise current admission streams into admission categories that are directly aligned with degree pathways, and, change the emphasis of what students interact with on the application to focus more on their programs of study. This will enable greater exploration of breadth across disciplines and signal a stronger, more definite link between interests indicated on the application with the admission outcome, including:

- Organize programs under new categories by degree pathway: Arts, Science, Commerce
- Investigate possibility of a broader admission category such as Arts & Science, that could be tied to a Bachelor of Arts & Science degree or similar degree and program pathways that more visibly and intentionally promote studying breadth as an option, from the outset
- Programs should fall under the category that aligns with the degree pathway. Review Computer Science and its current position as a separate admission category and consider it in relation to the new Science admission category
- During the admission process, allow applicants to engage with and select their intended programs of study rather than emphasize admission streams
- Allow applicants to indicate up to three programs of study across the admission categories
- Allow applicants who are unsure about their programs of interest to simply indicate their interest by admission category, after which they may be prompted to provide more information to help them determine potential programs of study
- Position and explain programs, particularly in the offer of admission, according to entry type and program admission status, including whether they have no limitations for enrolment, or if there are restrictions due to program demand or other requirements (such as year two application or progression requirements) and clearly explain how to get into their programs of interest
- Applicants will be considered and receive an offer for one admission category (to support enrolment planning). The offer of admission will explain the applicant’s status in up to three programs chosen on the application, but the student will be identified with one admission category for enrolment planning purposes
- Ensure program options are available for searching, sorting and displaying to applicants in a variety for ways (i.e., sort by admission category to show link to degree credentials, by career or broad field, or A-Z through online planning tool linked to applicant portal and application)
Enable alternate offers to all qualified applicants and, where possible (with the understanding of consideration needed around enrolment targets) make alternate offers according to the applicant preferences outlined on the application.

Inform applicants more specifically about their potential to receive alternate offers (i.e., whether to A&S, to other faculty/division or campus).

Show students relevant suggestions for academic pathways based on examples of what other students have taken (see R3).

Review the policies around pre-requisites for courses and programs, and determine a more consistent manner to administer them.

Provide alternatives to ensure students are enabled to change their mind and pursue different combinations or programs post admission to the Faculty.

**Rationale and Need for Change**

Current admission streams do not highlight all options available and, in fact, serve as a barrier to students pursuing breadth during their first year, because there are enrolment restrictions tied to admission streams. There is also no option for applicants who know they wish to pursue both Arts and Science areas.

Our current degree structure does not adequately reflect the breadth of A&S in terms of student interest and ability to pursue both the Arts and Science disciplines as a degree path.

Current admission streams are more focused on internal enrolment planning instead of student interest.

It is not clear on the application, or from the offer of admission, what students are being admitted to study; it leaves applicants with the impression that they are admitted to an individual program when they are not.

Our current structure creates a division between the Humanities and Social Sciences that we believe does not help the challenges faced by Humanities programs.

The admission to program process that occurs at the end of first year adds further confusion when students realize they are ultimately not admitted to the program they originally indicated on their application.

Computer Science and Commerce can be perceived as direct-entry programs as they are their own, separate admission streams, and they do not administer their admission in the same way, which can cause more confusion by comparison.

There is no relationship between admission requirements and prerequisites. For example, calculus may be listed as a requirement for admission to the Computer Science stream but is not actually required for admission to the Computer Science program. Also, a student can gain admission to the Social Sciences stream, for example, without the prerequisites needed for their economics program of interest in that stream.

Applicants are disadvantaged because they can only apply to one stream, perhaps also not understanding that there are differential cutoffs for streams, and they will not usually be considered for an alternate offer to A&S.

The alternate offer process is limited because, for the most part, only non-Ontario high school students applying to Commerce and/or Computer Science are made alternate offers to A&S; the majority of A&S alternate offers are made to UTSC and UTM and this is not fully transparent on the application.
If applicants are refused admission, they are not automatically redirected to alternative options in a timely way; many applicants are not aware of alternative options and spend time in circles to navigate their potential path.

**Benefits that Meet End Results**

- Presents applicants with a more transparent picture of what they are applying to and being admitted to study, and makes a stronger link between how their admission connects to the entirety of their undergraduate degree studies, planning and decision making.
- Positions program and degree opportunities more around student need and interest rather than institutional structures and organization.
- If what applicants are asked to select on the application is easier and more relevant to their thought process and personal planning, it will be easier for them to adapt, transition successfully and know what to expect.
- Better highlights breadth of options available spanning the arts and the sciences.
- Encourages departments to think about their entry type and as it relates to the admissions process.
- Permitting application to multiple programs, across admission categories, will enable alternate offers and a more positive outcome for the applicant. We will also potentially lose fewer top applicants by increasing the number of alternate offers directly to A&S.
- We will have more program information and data to help in planning and tracking of student interests and demand.

**R5. Streamlined College Community Selection Process**

**Description**

Provide a clearer method of comparison, and an improved and consolidated process, for the college and residence application that enables students to more effectively find their community, including:

- No longer ask applicants to rank all seven colleges; Allow applicants to indicate up to three colleges in order of preference, or no preference, on their application to the Faculty to ensure a maximum number of applicants gain membership to one of their preferred community choices.
- Applicants who indicate no college preference may be prompted for more information, including indicating residence needs, to help with college assignment.
- Enable the applicant to input information about their housing needs and interests as part of their application to the Faculty to facilitate earlier communication about housing status.
- Provide more general and relevant information about college and residence denoting the universal services, resources and opportunities (including improved web content and virtual tours of campus life and surrounding setting).
- Use the information applicants provide to ensure they are not presented with college or residence options on their application that are not available to them.
- Prompt applicants about the likelihood of getting their preferred choices and/or how to select to improve their odds, given that there are continued space constraints and varying assignment criteria administered by the different colleges and residences.
Formalize a planning committee of the Faculty and college registrars:
- Determine and annually review college distribution criteria and commitment to support more systematic decision-making of college membership while preserving college autonomy and meeting diversity goals
- Within the above process, integrate assignment of applicants with no college preference
- Review and determine what comparative information about colleges can and should be shared with applicants, through the planning tool, to assist them in selecting their college preferences on the application

Create a consistent approach to allow newly admitted students to request a change in college membership

Examine how the Residence Guarantee is administered including:
- Collective review and joint planning committee of college deans of students and Housing Services around current practices and agreements for residence assignment and decision making
- Review eligibility and consider relationship to diversity criteria for college communities (for example, transfer students are not currently eligible)
- Applicant’s indication of residence need on the application to the Faculty should be enough to qualify them for the Guarantee; the applicant should then have only one additional step to confirm residence after they have been offered admission to the Faculty

Provide ongoing personalized prompts to applicants to indicate any further information that may be required to finalize residence assignment

Provide offered students with as much information as early as possible about their residence assignment to assist in decision making

Increase residence capacity by building more residences, including consideration for how new residences are linked to colleges and students’ sense of belonging to a community within the greater Faculty and University

Rationale and Need for Change

- Applicants are often confused between college and residence application and selection processes
- Ranking colleges and residences sets expectations of getting top choice(s) but the University cannot meet this for all applicants
- Students are unaware that they can be a member of a college but a resident of another college or Chestnut
- Applicants must navigate to each college’s website or through each college’s printed material to compare features and offerings between colleges
- Applicants with no college preference are forced to rank all seven colleges, wasting their time and entering them into a pool competing with other applicants who do want a certain college
- Students are disproportionately distributed across the seven colleges in terms of various demographic elements such as programs, streams, international/domestic, transfer. For example in 2015 the percentage of international students distributed across the colleges ranged from 14 percent to 37 percent
- There are a number of differences across colleges in terms of the types of services and amenities available, such as staff-to-student ratios, college fees, room size, age of facilities, student life
opportunities, etc. that are not always evident to applicants in their research and selection of colleges preferences
- There is a lack of transparency around criteria used for eligibility and decision making (i.e., marks) used for college membership and residence assignment
- There is no consistent process in place across colleges to enable admitted students to request to change their college membership
- There are multiple websites and applications for residence; MyRes and Star Portal are two separate portals and this is confusing
- Specific, personalized housing information is not included in the offer of admission making it difficult for some students to make a decision about their offer of admission
- Some residences are full before all offers of admission are made which can disadvantage students offered admission later in the cycle
- Some non-residence guaranteed students, who are seeking residence at their college, are not assigned a space in their college because the current practice houses all guaranteed students first

**Benefits that Meet End Results**

- The process of finding a college community and housing will be easier for applicants
- Applicants will be more equally enabled to make informed decisions with regards to college and residence preferences
- More applicants will get one of their top three college preferences indicated on their application and those with no preference will not be “forced” to choose
- College makeup will more broadly reflect the overall population of the Faculty
- Colleges will not be ranked against each other
- The Residence Guarantee will be more transparent

**R6. Aligned First-Year Opportunities**

**Description**

Review development and positioning of first-year opportunities and transitional programming to ensure student understanding, engagement and more equal access to these offerings, including:

- Develop a shared, consistent approach to developing and administering first-year programming across the Faculty and colleges
- Review and clarify role and purpose of all first-year opportunities, such as the role that first-year courses can play in the success of transfer students
- Present applicants with the opportunity to apply for any transitional first-year programming only after receiving an offer of admission to the Faculty, to avoid confusion with admission to program of study and more alignment with course offerings and opportunities
- Consider the time at which Ones programs, or any other transitional first-year programming, offer admission and, if admission is rolling, institute enrolment planning to reserve spaces for qualified students who are admitted late in the cycle
Investigate how we can expand course offerings that support student transition and encourage exploration across disciplines, or where students do not necessarily have the academic background.

### Rationale and Need for Change

- There are a number of similar sounding, yet differently named and administered first-year opportunities, such as Ones, 199s, First Year Seminar, FLCs.
- Staff and faculty articulate difficulty around how best to promote and explain the similarities or differences of first-year programming and difference from or relationship to course enrolment.
- It is unclear how offers to Ones programs relate to admission to the Faculty and colleges because currently Ones admission can happen during the Faculty admission process.
- Ones program offers are made at different times meaning that applicants admitted to the Faculty at later stages are not always eligible and are disadvantaged by early deadlines.
- Requirements for Ones applications differ by college; requirements may include an essay, resume, submission of extracurricular high school activities.
- There is confusion around being admitted to a college versus being admitted to a Ones program, and whether or not the two are linked.

### Benefits that Meet End Results

- Students benefit from first-year and transitional programming and a stronger alignment and more cohesive approach to these will raise awareness and help applicants better understand the value and benefits of first-year opportunities and the differences, if any, between them.
- Supports student success during transition and beyond.
- A more consistent approach to administering and developing this type of programming will ensure more equity of access for all applicants, regardless of their college membership or their time of admission to the Faculty.
- Potentially encourages more intentional connection between first-year options and program interests.
- A consolidation of application and assignment to these programs will ensure a single point of collection of any applicant data, including integration of previously collected data to ensure information is not requested again unnecessarily.
Implementation Planning

The team recognizes these recommendations are extensive. Successful implementation will require significant investment of resources and a sustained, collaborative effort carried out across the institution. While each individual recommendation is focused on specific issues and ideas, there are challenges and broader goals to be considered for successful implementation and improvement of the applicant experience as a whole.

Key Challenges

Throughout our analysis and brainstorming, we noted the following potential challenges, including:

- The need for substantial change management and collaborative leadership and integration across different reporting structures will be required with Enrolment Services, Recruitment and Admissions, Colleges, Academic Departments, Financial Services
- Many of the recommendations directly impact units outside of A&S, given the nature of how the University organizes certain functions at both a central support level and unit or divisional level
- There are currently a number of inequities in resources across the colleges, such as scholarships, residence space, and advisor-to-student ratios
- There are a range of process streamlining and other improvement projects underway that will overlap and require integration and collaboration
- There are a number of stand-alone or connected online and interactive tools already in place to support various aspects of admissions - determining how to integrate, build on or move away from these tools to develop new tools will require a complex review and analysis
- Many of the changes will impact enrolment data management and require adjustments to models used for tracking and forecasting
- A significant investment of new resources will be required in time, budget and expertise to fully implement the six recommendations
- We may not be able to achieve more equity and transparency in all desired areas due to certain institutional strategies and unequal distribution of resources

Checklist for Implementation Teams

In addition to a continued focus on making the admission process easier, fairer and more efficient for both applicants and the institution’s units involved in admissions, it is recommended that the implementation teams also consider the following checklist for every aspect of the admissions process and applicant outcomes including:

- Be general and systematic where possible, for all applicants; At the same time, allow and provide more tailored information wherever and whenever possible
- Integrate all aspects, data collection and processes, both applicant facing and within institutional processes
- Develop interactive and responsive tools and information, linked directly to actions and required steps
- Provide accessible information that helps students consider all options and make decisions
✓ Enact coordinated and collaborative leadership of all units involved with A&S admissions

✓ Build proactive promotion of the benefits and value of being here, including more emphasis on community and opportunities

✓ Focus on mindful planning and intentional outreach that takes into account existing initiatives and how these recommendations may be considered and deployed in other areas of the University to improve the overall U of T applicant process
Background: Current Issues in Admissions

The following list is not meant to be exhaustive. It was developed as part of the original Admissions BPR overview document to outline the complexity and current issues to be investigated:

- Applicants and other stakeholders (e.g., parents, high school guidance counselors, peers, etc.) describe the current application and admissions processes as complicated, cumbersome, and confusing, creating the perception that Arts & Science is not student centered. Applicants describe the process as involving an endless series of applications, forms, deadlines, etc. via multiple websites and portals. In addition to application for admission, students may be required to complete separate supplemental applications for programs and/or colleges and well as applications for scholarships, the Ones programs, and residence. The process is a tangle of deadlines and forms.

- Processes are even more complex and difficult for international students given additional institutional and government requirements, applicant needs, geography, and time.

- The current application process does not actively promote, and in fact undermines, one of the key competitive advantages of the Faculty of Arts and Science: access to the breadth of programs available to students. Applicants can apply to only one stream within Arts & Science; if they are not admissible to that stream, they are refused admission to A&S altogether. This has particularly been an issue in recent years where the admission cutoffs for some streams have been very high (e.g., 90 percent for Computer Science) or where admission decisions are made based on a combination of academic performance and supplemental information (e.g., Rotman Commerce). Thus, Arts & Science is sending very good students to other universities. At the same time, once a student is admitted to A&S, he/she can register in courses in any stream. The only advantage of being admitted to one stream over another is priority registration in courses within a specific stream.

- In relation to the above as well as in regards to the question of equity for all applicants, A&S only makes alternate offers of admission to International students who are not admitted to Rotman Commerce and Computer Science. The alternate offer is made directly to the Social Sciences Stream (for Rotman Commerce) or Math and the Physical Sciences (for Computer Science), rather than giving the student a choice of either Social Sciences or Humanities. Further, unlike International students, Ontario students of high caliber who are not admitted to these highly competitive streams are not offered any alternate admission to A&S.

- In addition to choosing a stream, applicants are asked to identify a “subject of major interest” without being provided with clear instructions on the difference between a stream and a subject of interest. Many applicants assume that they are applying to a specific program when they select a “subject of major interest,” (e.g., Actuarial Science) and are confused when they receive an offer of admission to a stream (e.g., “I've been admitted to the Math and Physical Science stream, but I applied to Actuarial Science!”). In fact, Arts & Science doesn't do anything with “subject of major interest” data except perhaps to try to predict interest in POSts in second year.

- At least one program, Rotman Commerce, requires students to complete a supplemental application form. Students applying to Rotman have an additional application deadline to meet. Two colleges (Trinity and Victoria) require students to complete a supplemental application. Students must also complete applications for scholarships, the Ones programs, and to residence.
• Applicants from jurisdictions outside Ontario often face document deadlines that are not aligned with their local or national school systems (i.e., grades and language proficiency scores). To encourage students from across the country and across the world to apply to Arts & Science, we need to better understand and accommodate students’ constraints and ensure students understand alternatives (e.g., submitting grade 11 grades in lieu of grade 12 grades).

• A majority of applicants do not understand the University of Toronto college system - what it means to be part of a college and the impact of a college on their academic career - let alone how to rank/choose a college. Especially problematic is the fact that applicants are required to rank all seven colleges in order of preference, and an application is considered incomplete and is not assessed if all seven colleges are not ranked. Surveys of admitted students (both students who accepted our offer of admission and those who declined) indicate that the majority (just under 70 percent) has no strong preference when it comes to college choice. However, once they have had to rank the colleges, being admitted to a fifth or sixth choice college doesn’t feel very welcoming.

• As well, some colleges - Trinity, Victoria and Innis - only admit students who have ranked them first, which begs the question of why applicants have to rank all seven colleges. Woodsworth also only accepts Rotman Commerce and residence applicants if they have selected the college as their first choice. Thus, students are asked to provide rankings for colleges for which they won’t be considered, creating additional work and potentially setting incorrect expectations.

• Although not technically part of the admissions process, students are invited to apply for a Ones programs in advance of being admitted to Arts & Science. This is confusing to many students who assume that, if they are being invited to apply for a program like the Ones, they must already have been admitted to the University. But this is not the case. Complicating the process even further is the fact that different Ones programs have different application deadlines: the deadline for VIC ONE (for 2016-17 admission) is March 16; for TRIN ONE, April 20; and for Munk One, early June. The other Ones programs have no specific deadline, but continue to accept applications until they are full.

• Even though most Arts & Science students will live in residence in their colleges, students are still required to submit a separate application for residence. The deadline to indicate interest in residence is March 31; students who miss this deadline - or perhaps hesitate to complete an application in time because they haven’t yet been admitted to Arts & Science - no longer qualify for the first year residence guarantee. After admission, students then have to rank their residence choices by another deadline. In addition, most residences then have an additional application students must submit in June.

• To apply for Provincial, A&S, College, and Institutional financial aid, students must complete a variety of forms and provide information multiple times.

• Decisions about admissions to A&S, various programs (e.g., Rotman Commerce as well Ones programs), and residence are communicated to students at different times in the cycle. This asynchronous delivery of information may inhibit or delay a students’ ability to evaluate an offer of admission to A&S until they receive enough information to fully evaluate an offer.

• Internal processes for receiving, distributing, evaluating, and communicating decisions about applications, and for interacting and communicating with students, are complex, impacting effectiveness, efficiency, and customer service. There is a great deal of back and forth and a large number of manual internal processes required to facilitate information sharing, processing, decision making, yield, and communication among OUAC, ES, the Faculty, and the colleges. The impacts are not only internal but can have a negative impact on the applicant experience in terms of timeliness, completeness of information received, etc.
The Current Application Process At-a-Glance

Initial Activities Completed / Information Submitted via OUAC / U of T Application Website

Additional Activities Required / Information Submitted via Supplemental Applications and Processes

The Applicant Experience By-the-Numbers

Throughout the admissions process, applicants to A&S encounter a variety of different applications, forms, websites, portals and deadlines.

13 Applications

OUAC-101
OUAC-105D
OUAC-105F

Contract applications for International, International Transfer, Part-Time Degree and Non-Degree

Transitional Year Program (paper application)

Late Exceptions (paper application)

Seniors (paper application)

Academic Bridging Program (ABP)

Diploma to Degree (D2D)

Visiting and International Summer Program
Internal Transfer

7+ Applications After completing OUAC/OUAC-equivalent application
MyRes (ranking residence)
Star Portal (applying to residence)
Awards Profile
Rotman Supplemental
Trinity/Victoria
8 Ones Applications
FLC

8 Portals
Join
MyRes
Star Portal
Status Check
Trinity Portal
Acorn
ROSI
Rotman Portal

370+ Unique websites for information gathering
U of T
20 Faculties/Campuses
7 Colleges
30 Academic Departments within Arts and Science
281 Programs (listed in Program of Study grids)
Enrolment Services
Financial Services
Course Calendar
University Life site
16+ Student Life sites (including Student Housing, CIE, Health & Wellness, Sports, etc.)

4-6 Log ins/credentials
Applicant ID/Person ID
Join ID/UTOR ID
Star Portal ID
MyRes ID

4+ Supplemental profiles
Awards
Rotman
Trinity/Victoria
Multiple Ones

12+ Deadlines
Early consideration
Application
English proficiency and other documentations
Rotman supplemental
Trinity supplemental
Victoria supplemental
Residence guarantee application
Residence deposit
Multiple Ones deadlines
Offer acceptance
Project Scope

The scope defined the range and variety of what was investigated during the project in order to determine aspects and focus of research, investigation and stakeholder engagement.

**Process Start:** An applicant (101 or 105) begins completing the application for admission via the OUAC or U of T website

**Process End:** An applicant has enough information to make a decision.

**Sub-Processes:**

**Strategic Enrollment Management**

- A&S and colleges conduct enrolment management activities, including initial planning and ongoing updating (e.g., capacity, yield, targets, cutoffs, etc. from A&S to colleges, college to A&S, A&S to Admissions)

**Application to University**

- Applicant completes and submits OUAC or U of T application

**Document and Information Submission**

- Applicant submits A&S admission requirements (e.g., providing high school transcript, interim grades, language proficiency scores, etc.)
  - Applicant responds to requests for additional documents or information from A&S

**Application to Colleges and Academic Programs (Supplemental Applications) and for Scholarship and Residence**
• Applicant completes and submits supplemental application for admission to Rotman Commerce (if required)

• Applicant completes and submits supplemental application Trinity, and/or Victoria (if required)

• Applicant indicates interest in residence via MyRes or Join portal

• Applicant indicates interest in and/or applies for institutional and college scholarships via Join portal

• Applicant completes and submits required video for admission to Rotman Commerce (if required)

• Applicant is invited and optionally completes and submits application to a Ones program

• Applicant responds to requests for additional documents or information from various entities

Evaluation, Decision, and Offer

• 101 Candidate Evaluation and Decision (A&S and Colleges)
  o Enrolment Services informs A&S of admissible 101 candidates
  o A&S makes admission decisions for 101s from list provided by ES and inform colleges
  o Colleges make membership decisions for 101 students from list provided by A&S and inform A&S
  o A&S communicates A&S and colleges admission decisions to ES

• 105 Candidates Evaluation and Decision (ES)
  o ES makes admission decisions for 105s based on A&S and College defined parameters

• Scholarship Evaluation and Decision (Colleges and ES)
  o Colleges make scholarship decisions for 101s and inform ES
  o ES make scholarship decisions for 101s

• ES Communicates Offer(s) to Student
  o ES communicates offer of admission, offer of membership to college, and scholarship information (if applicable) to student

Acceptance and Yield Management

• Student accepts offer of admission and offer of membership to College

• A&S and colleges manage yield

Communications
• A&S, colleges, Enrolment Services, and students communicate (including formal like application requirements, Visa requirements, missing information, and decisions, and informal like student questions, status inquiries, etc.)

Excludes

• Recruitment is not in scope for this BPR. However, impacts of the team’s Admissions recommendations on Recruitment will be identified so adjustments can be made to the appropriate Recruitment processes

• College Admission Tool (CAT)

• Transfer credit evaluation

• Processes executed after applicant accepts (TBD)

Constraints

• Autonomy of the Federated Colleges with respect to student recruitment, admission, and awards

• Governing Council Policies and Principles for Admission

• Ministry 2018 requirements for providing net tuition information

• OUAC agreement and processes

• University’s criteria for eligibility for Residence guarantee

• Note: The team should understand these Constraints but is able to identify recommended changes that the Sponsor will take to the Executive Steering Committee for review at the midpoint meeting. The ESC will inform the team as to whether it will support recommendation of team changes within the appropriate institutional governance structures during implementation.

Applicant Definitions

• OUAC and Ontario high school applicants: Ontario high school students and international students currently attending an Ontario high school or students abroad following an Ontario curriculum (101s) must apply using the Ontario Universities’ Application Centre (OUAC) application, a common, multi-institutional application hosted by OUAC and accessed by students via a URL directing them to the OUAC website. For one fee, students can apply to up to three Ontario universities using a single application. OUAC automatically provides Ontario high school marks to universities selected by students.
• **Non-Ontario high school applicants:** Out of Province, international (except those attending schools following the Ontario high school curriculum), and Ontario students not currently attending high school (i.e., who have already graduated and may be on a gap year or have been working), and any student transferring from another college or university (105s), have the option to apply via the OUAC application should they wish to apply to more than one Ontario university. If they are only applying to U of T, these students can instead use the U of T “contract” application with OUAC. This lowers their cost, provides more revenue to the University, and allows recruiters to promote direct application in the hope that students only apply to U of T. The U of T application is branded as an institutional application but is hosted by OUAC on the university’s behalf.

• **Non-101 and non-105 applicants:** The Faculty also considers applicants from non-traditional pathways and these are reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

### Consultation with Stakeholders

To gain insights and feedback on the current admissions process and confirm the need to make changes, team members met with more than 100 individuals and representing key stakeholders and groups from across the Faculty, Colleges and broader University.

**Consulted Groups**

- Academic Department Undergraduate Chairs
- Administrators and Program Coordinators
- College Ones Programs Coordinators
- College Deans of Students
- College Principals
- College Registrars
- Enrolment Services (Recruitment, Admissions, Awards, Operations)
- Financial Services
- First Year Learning Communities/First Year Seminars Coordinators
- Housing Services
- International Foundation Program Coordinator
- Office of the Faculty Registrar
- Rotman Commerce
- Senior Coordinator, AODA
• Students (Various including from ASSU, UC Lit, and individual student interviews and surveys)

• Student Accounts

• Student Life

• UTM and UTSC Registrars

Project Leadership Groups

Executive Steering Committee (ESC)

The Executive Steering Committee (ESC) is a cross-functional team that is comprised of senior leaders from across the University that advises the Chair and Project Sponsor (see Advisory Group Chair below) and guides and supports the BPR team throughout the entire project.

The ESC establishes and approves project end results before the team begins its work. As policy changes emerge from the process, the ESC approves or rejects those changes, or makes recommendations to an appropriate governing body. Upon completion of redesign, the committee receives a final report; reviews the team’s recommendations; and approves the implementation schedule. The ESC also advises on the implementation schedule, execution of resulting projects, and their coordination with other institutional initiatives and units. Additionally, the ESC is charged with advocating for change resulting from the team’s recommendations.

Membership

Chair: David Cameron, Dean, A&S

Carol Chin, Principal, Woodsworth College

Charles Keil, Principal, Innis College

David Mulroney, President, St. Michael’s College

Donald Ainslie, Principal, University College and Provostial Advisor on Undergraduate Humanities Education

Dwayne Benjamin, Chair, Department of Economics

John Magee, Vice Dean, Faculty and Academic Life, A&S

Josh Barker, Vice Dean, Graduate Education and Program Reviews, A&S

Kim McLean, Chief Administrative Officer, A&S

Kumar Murty, Chair, Department of Mathematics

Mayo Moran, Provost, Trinity College
Advisory Group (AG)

The Advisory Group (AG) provides guidance to the team and supports change management and communication planning. The AG is a mechanism for getting a broader group engaged in the BPR by establishing two-way communication. The AG, BPR Team Leader, and BPR Project Leader meet often to review progress and provide the opportunity for the AG offer guidance for the team during its work. AG responsibilities also include communicating BPR-related information to their constituents; providing feedback on communication approaches and effectiveness; and supporting the BPR project, especially with respect to resource impacts in their areas while staff are working as part of the team.

Membership

Chair and Project Sponsor: Deborah Robinson, Faculty Registrar & Director of Undergraduate Academic Services, A&S

Arlene Clement, Director, Student Housing Services

Cheryl Shook, Registrar, Woodsworth College

George Taylor, Manager, Faculty Budget and Finance

Lucy Fromowitz, Assistant Vice President, Student Life

Mark Johnston, Academic Services Architect, NGSIS

Melinda Scott, Dean of Students, University College

Merike Remmel, Assistant University Registrar and Director, Enrolment Services

Nicola Woods, Associate Faculty Registrar & Director, Student Recruitment & Admissions, A&S

Phillip Wright, Director, Information & Instructional Technology
Project Team

The Team Members are charged with and facilitated to rethink processes to meet the end results as outlined by the Sponsor. Team members are trained in highly specialized Process Innovation approaches; teamwork is time boxed using aggressive schedules to deliver results. Team members are a mix of people familiar and not familiar with the process being reengineered and come from both within the organization and sometimes outside. Team members serve full time during the early stages of the project research and mapping.

Membership

Co-Leader: Melissa Hill, Director, Student Communication, A&S

Co-Leader: Nelson De Melo, College Registrar, Trinity College

Carol Ye, Undergraduate Student (International), A&S

Curtis Norman, Manager, Access Programs, Frontline Services & Communication, Woodsworth College

Kelly Jay, Associate Faculty Registrar and Director, Student Affairs, A&S (on leave)

Kerri Huffman, College Registrar, New College

Liza Nassim, Dean of Deans of Students, Woodsworth College

Madeline Taylor, Undergraduate Student (Domestic), A&S

Mahvish Wesley, Associate Director Domestic Recruitment & Admissions - A&S

Parisa Memari, Associate Director, Admissions, Enrolment Services

Poppy Lockwood, Vice-Dean Academic Planning & Strategic Initiatives

Facilitators

Team Facilitator: Kevin Ciotta, Principal, JM Associates

Mapping and Content Specialist: Tracy Poole, Principal, JM Associates

Overview of BPR Methodology

Week 1: Mapping (Training, Overview, Problems, Plan Research, etc.)
Week 2: Mapping (Overview, Problems, Plan Research, etc.)
Week 3: Brainstorming
Week 4: External Research (solo work by team members over week)
Week 5: Design New Process
Week 6: Walkabout Interviews (small group team work over weeks)
Week 7: Walkabout Interviews + Reporting Out
Week 8: Final Design
Week 9: Final Design

Map the Current Processes: Weeks 1 and 2
Two weeks are devoted to mapping the current process. A fully developed understanding is obtained by creating maps of process steps, noting forms used, resources required, and staff and departments involved. The team also evaluates process effectiveness in terms of client service, resource, backlog, duplication, and delivery. This works provides an end-to-end view of the current process and allows team members to identify truly “broken” pieces.

Brainstorm: Week 3
The team goes through myriad exercises to develop an extensive list of possible solutions to transform the process.

External Research: Week 4
The team engages in external research, including investigating and interviewing other universities and businesses. This allows team members to gather information about alternative approaches and processes, technologies, and service philosophies. Team member research and report on unique approaches that may catalyze other ideas and have potential for redesign recommendations.

Design New Process: Week 5
The team reconvenes to construct the new design. Using maps of the current process, ideas developed during brainstorming, and information gathered in the previous week of research, the team begins to document recommendations for transforming and radically redesigning the process.

ESC Midpoint Meeting
The ESC evaluates and advises on suggested policy and procedure changes identified by the team during design.

Walkabout Interviews: Weeks 6 and 7
This step is vitally important to the success of the new design developed by the team the previous week. Team members conduct interviews with stakeholders affected by the new design. Data collected during each interview is used to validate the team’s understanding of the current process and to further inform the team about the needs, concerns, and ideas of those who will affect and be affected by the new design.

Final Design: Week 8 and 9
The team confirms their understanding of the current process, documents suggested improvements, evolves recommendations, and verifies that the proposed recommendations support the End Results.

Report Writing
The BPR Team Co-Leaders and Team Facilitator document the team’s recommendations. The report presents and illustrates the team’s recommendations, contains philosophies, and serves as a blueprint for implementation.

Report Presentation to ESC
The entire BPR team participates in a presentation of recommendations to the ESC.

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