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## Memo

To : Deans, Principal and University Librarian  
Faculty Council Chairs and Secretaries

From : Leslie Sanders, Chair, Academic Policy and Planning  
Committee of Senate

Date : October 17, 2008

Re : **Call for Five-Year Faculty Plans**



In conjunction with the Vice-President Academic and Provost, the Academic Policy and Planning Committee hereby requests that Faculties submit new five-year Faculty plans.

### **The Context for 2009-2014 Faculty and YUL Plans**

APPC's intention to issue this call was announced in June. The notice last spring urged planners to begin preparations for the development of new plans by embarking on collegial processes involving planners at the unit and Faculty level. APPC recommended preliminary steps including a review of documents such as *2020 Vision: The Future of York University*, the *University Academic Plan 2005-2010*, extant Faculty and unit plans (2003-2008 submissions and subsequent or supplementary documents), UPRs and graduate program appraisals. It was also suggested that this exercise be discussed at Faculty Councils, departmental councils or retreats, and the like.

York has long recognized the value of academic planning. It is an essential aspect of academic life, and this call affords an opportunity for colleagues to engage in the crucial intellectual project of examining disciplinary and interdisciplinary trends, and recommitting to core missions and values. The call also creates a space for positive interactions between planners within and between Faculties and at various levels of academic governance. Sophisticated planning enables Faculties and units to capitalize on opportunities that arise, establishes goals that can be assessed, and aids in the recruitment of faculty and students.

Under normal circumstances, five year plans to replace the 2003-2008 documents would have been submitted to APPC in early 2008. The call was delayed given the intense consultations surrounding the new Faculty implementation and other transitions. APPC is aware that many Faculties have produced long-term plans since the last call in 2002-2003. Even so, it is vital that all Faculties return to the question of how their plans relate to the *University Academic Plan* and address critical questions arising from the evolving planning dynamic. New five-year plans developed by Faculties are also of vital importance as the next, strategic UAP is developed in an iterative, ongoing process that will culminate in 2010. Recent developments – the Integrated Resource Planning framework, strategic appointment opportunities, heightened efforts to locate research at the centre of academic strategic, and budget challenges – reinforce the need to orient

Faculty plans to current contexts.

### **Themes and Organization of the Plans**

Faculty plans of the past have taken many forms. For the purposes of complementarity, coordination and coherence, APPC asks that planners organize their 2009-2014 documents around the overarching themes of the current UAP -- quality and “knowing ourselves” – along with the specific priorities in that document. This would result in documents that are specific and clear about the “attainment of the highest academic quality” and “knowing ourselves, and seeing how we are seen” (the overarching themes) and these priority areas:

- research goals;
- enrolment planning;
- graduate education;
- the student experience;
- strategic priorities in health (a current UAP priority) or areas defined by Faculties as critical to their future;
- contributions to maintaining and extending York’s distinctiveness, and to strengthening our identities and reputations;
- academic governance initiatives adopted in support of other aspects of planning.

Each priority area of the UAP has a series of constituent objectives that should be discussed in the relevant sections of Faculty plans and serve as a platform for more elaborate text.

The UAP was designed to be highly integrated, and the priority areas are mutually dependent. Yet research is identified as paramount. With this in mind, and with the advice and support of the Senate Committee on Research, APPC asks that planners take research into account throughout the plan. APPC also requests that the documents submitted weave together undergraduate and graduate dimensions. Faculty plans should be clear about priorities, challenges and trade-offs. For example, no academic plan should pit teaching and research against one another for they are inextricably linked. Even so, Faculties will undoubtedly face difficult choices and planners should articulate core positions and criteria for decision-making.

Within this overall structure, and in the appropriate passages, plans need to articulate how the following issues impact their vision and long term objectives:

- delivery of curriculum in multiple modes – day, evening, Fall / Winter / Summer – throughout the University, together with access;
- implications for all Faculties of the new Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, the possibility of expansion in the sciences, and plans for medical and engineering proposals;
- demographic trends resulting in growth pressures and how York and its Faculties should respond;

- internationalization.

There is no fixed length for the document. However, it is suggested that it be in a format that will be at once thorough and accessible.

### **Other Planning Matters**

Because of the relationship of Faculty plans to University planning frameworks, APPC would appreciate advice on the next UAP. This may be provided in a covering memorandum or a short written communication in advance of meetings with the Deans / Principal / University Librarian and their colleagues.

### **The Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies / Arts and Atkinson**

It would be inappropriate to ask Arts and Atkinson to prepare a document similar to that of other Faculties. Even so, we ask that the current Deans jointly compile and transmit available, relevant documentation (such as LA&PS implementation plans and IRP commitments) and participate in planning discussions leading up and following the submission of plans. It is anticipated that a more formal long-term plan will be a priority for the new Dean and colleagues in LA&PS next year, but significant forward planning is occurring in the lead up to the Faculty's launch in 2009. If it is possible, APPC would also welcome contributions from the Dean-elect as part of this exercise.

### **Time Lines**

APPC asks that five-year plans be submitted no later than March 1, 2009. This timing is crucial. The Deans / Principal / University Librarian will be invited to attend a meeting of APPC in March to discuss the plans and broader planning issues, and both the texts provided by planners and the dialogue with planners will inform subsequent discussions as the UAP renewal process intensifies.

October	APPC Issues the Call for Plans
March 1	Submission of five-year plans (or LA&PS documentation)
March	APPC Meetings with Dean / Principal / Librarian
April	Report on Senate on Faculty plans Annual Academic Planning Forum on "The Next UAP" (Date TBA)

Please contact the Committee's Secretary, Robert Everett of the University Secretariat, ([beverett@yorku.ca](mailto:beverett@yorku.ca) / -44733) should you have any questions about the call for plans or this correspondence.

APPENDED: *University Academic Plans 2005-2010 Objectives*

# **UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC PLAN 2005-2010**

## **Overarching Themes and Specific Objectives**

### **Overarching Themes**

**Attaining the Highest Academic Quality  
Knowing Ourselves, and Seeing How We Are Seen**

#### **I. Research Priorities**

**In the next five years the University will:**

- intensify and widen the research culture at the University and invest in research infrastructure
- develop the means – both quantitative and qualitative – to measure and document York’s research successes
- complete a review of research structures and regulatory processes to ensure that they complement overall research priorities, and provide the resources to sustain the structures in place to realize research objectives
- foster cooperative research within the University and build cooperative partnerships outside York
- implement a communications plan in support of research
- provide the support needed for the Libraries to fulfill their mandates in support of teaching, learning and research in the context of evolving technology and with the goal of information literacy

#### **II. Overall Size and Enrolment Planning**

**In the next five years the University will:**

- manage enrolments to ensure that overall and Faculty-specific targets are met while focusing attention on high quality
- make the ongoing adjustments necessitated by changes in student preparation and experiences resulting from reforms to the Ontario secondary school curriculum
- monitor system and government developments carefully and adjust targets upwards *if* there are sufficient resources for doing so or if we conclude that there are significant drawbacks in not doing so

#### **III. Graduate Education**

**In the next five years the University will:**

- increase the number and proportion of enrolments in graduate students, while maintaining high quality graduate education

- increase doctoral enrolments in selected areas
- address long-standing supervisory issues such as student needs and inequities of supervisory loads
- increase Masters levels enrolments in a manner that is consistent with other planning objectives and encourage the development of Masters programs that may or may not develop into doctoral programs

#### **IV. The Student Experience**

##### **In the next five years the University will**

- assign high priority to understanding student expectations and experiences, and to taking the steps necessary to enhancing the student experience throughout the University.

#### **V. Strategic Priorities in Health**

##### **In the next five years the University will**

- actively support initiatives in health, in particular the initiative to develop a health-related Faculty if such is approved by Senate and – separate and apart from a health Faculty – the articulation of a medical school proposal

#### **VI. Maintaining and Extending York’s Distinctiveness**

##### **In the next five years the University will**

- promote and expand community education initiatives
- promote further internationalization initiatives at the Faculty-level and pan-University with a view toward ensuring that every student has the opportunity to have a significant “international” component in their studies

#### **VII. Identities and Reputations**

##### **In the next five years the University will**

- conduct and disseminate research on the University’s reputations
- make warranted substantive changes to improve our reputations
- implement communications plans in support of reputation

#### **VIII. Academic Governance Issues**

##### **In the next five years the University will**

- improve governance processes in support of academic planning

- develop more sophisticated means of assessing ongoing and proposed academic activities
- review academic programs and unit structures (Faculties, schools, departments, interdisciplinary programs, Colleges, ORUs, etc.) to achieve a structural array that is appropriate to York's overall mission and to the objectives set out in this plan
- pursue cooperation with other institutions on the basis of quality imperatives and consonance with other articulated objectives