

II Question Period continued

**2. Responses from the Vice-Principal (Academic) to questions jointly submitted by Senator Stevens and Senator J. Welsh on September 24, 2009**

October 22, 2009

1. **Given that Ontario's Reaching Higher program has begun providing Queen's with millions of dollars for facility expansion that is tied to the growth in Graduate Student enrollments, a) what specific measures have been taken to increase graduate student workspace (i.e., office and lab space) in proportion to enrollment growth in each academic unit of the university, and b) where specifically have the funds been allocated?**

**Response provided by the School of Graduate Studies**

In addition to the capital expenditures noted in the response to this question when it was posed in 2008, a total of three capital projects to increase graduate student workspace have been completed or are underway. In Cultural Studies, workstations were added to accommodate up to 40 master's students and 10 doctoral students and a lounge was constructed, adding a total of 107.4 sq. m. For the Masters in Public Health program, a total area of 216 sq. m. was added with the following areas constructed: 20 graduate workstations, a team group workroom to accommodate up to 20 people, a classroom for 30 people and small seminar room. Construction is underway for a new School of Kinesiology and Health Studies building, scheduled to open in early 2010, that will result in a great deal more workspace and laboratory facilities for graduate students.

**2008 Question and Response provided for background** – from Senate Minutes, November 27, 2008

**Question from Senator J. Welsh, President, Society of Graduate and Professional Students (Submitted for the October 23, 2008)**

Given that the Province of Ontario provides standards for work space for graduate students in various disciplines, that the Ontario Reaching Higher program allocates capital funding to universities specifically for the space needs related to graduate student enrolment growth, that graduate student enrolments at Queen's have increased greatly under the Reaching Higher program, and that Queen's has already begun receiving Reaching Higher capital funds calculated according to graduate student enrolment growth, the Society of Graduate and Professional Students would like to know:

- a) What is the current estimate of total Reaching Higher graduate student capital funds Queen's is set to receive?
- b) How much has been received to date?
- c) How are the funds being allocated?
- d) How much total work space is currently allocated to graduate students at Queen's?
- e) What percentage of the standard graduate student work space, across each discipline, does this represent at Queen's?
- f) How has this changed since the Reaching Higher program began in 2003?

**Response provided by Dr. Patrick Deane, Vice-Principal (Academic) Dr. Janice Deakin, Associate Vice-Principal & Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Research and Mr. Andrew Simpson, Vice-Principal (Operations & Finance), November 27, 2008**

The purpose of the Graduate Capital grants, as stated by the government, is to “support capital construction and renovation in support of graduate expansion”. To date Queen’s has received \$2.7 million in graduate capital funding. The future annual funding stream will depend on the University’s ability to meet graduate enrollment growth targets.

The graduate capital funding has contributed to the University’s overall capital program, of which graduate expansion is an important component. Long before the Reaching Higher program, the University started to invest in infrastructure required to accommodate the growth of graduate programs. The capital construction and renovation projects funded by the University in the recent years significantly added and improved space for graduate students. Some examples of completed projects include: Louise D. Acton Building (School of Rehabilitation Therapy), Goodwin Building (Mining), Dupuis Hall (Chemical Engineering), Ontario Hall (Art), Goodes Hall (Business), and Chernoff Hall (Chemistry).

From 2001-02 to 2007-08, the total number of graduate students at Queen’s has grown 41% from 2,224 to 3,127. In the same period of time, office space allocated to graduate students has increased 41%, from 6,562 M2 to 9,241 M2. Applying an average renovation cost factor, this increase in graduate student office space represented at least \$4.2 million investment from the University.

While the Ontario government does not stipulate a standard for the amount of office space for a graduate student, a commonly-used metric developed by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) suggests 4 M2 per student as a benchmark. Queen’s provided on average 3 M2 per graduate student in 2007-08, which is ranked sixth in Ontario. In addition to graduate office space, the University also provides study space on campus both within and outside the library system. While it is difficult to delineate graduate study space from undergraduate, we can report that Queen’s is number 2 in Ontario, second only to the University of Toronto (St. George campus) in on-campus study space for students overall.

Finally, in the development of new graduate programs and the periodic assessment of ongoing programs, space requirements for graduate students are reviewed as part of a seven-year cycle by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS). While no specific square footage requirements are provided, appraisers focus on space available specifically earmarked for graduate students and the graduate program in general. On occasions where space is not adequate (as described by either the university or noted by appraisers during their campus visit), information is requested from the university about plans to address the problems.

**2. What has been the change from last year in the number of TAships and paid TA hours in each Department and Faculty?**

**Response**

The Faculties have been consulted regarding their TAships and information is being gathered by the Office of the Vice-Principal (Academic). For some Faculties it is very early to draw significant assumptions from their data as it is subject to many issues such as timing of posting, timing of course offerings, etc. Institutional Research and Planning will provide an institutional wide snapshot regarding TAships and this information will be presented to Senate at a future meeting.

3. **What is the existing University policy regarding the hiring and duties of undergraduate TAs, including allowing them to lead tutorials?**

**Response**

The Senate Policy on *Teaching Assistants at Queen's University* makes no distinction between the defined roles of undergraduate TAs and graduate TAs. The *Policy* defines "Teaching Assistant (TA)" as:

- **undergraduate TAs** who serve under the supervision of a course supervisor in one or more of the following capacities: marker, laboratory demonstrator, tutorial leader, or other supporting role in the delivery or preparation of degree-credit courses; and
- **graduate TAs** who serve under the supervision of a course supervisor in one or more of the following capacities: marker, laboratory demonstrator, tutorial leader, or other supporting role in the delivery or preparation of degree-credit courses.

The Senate Policy on *Teaching Assistants at Queen's University* can be found at:

<http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/policies/TAs.html>

4. Will senior administrative job searches at the Queen's be subject to the same equity provisions as other staff and faculty hiring (i.e., will the same procedures be followed and the same data be collected)? **An oral response will be provided by Irène Bujara, University Advisor on Equity at the October 22, 2009 Senate meeting.**
5. Has Queen's met its equity commitments under the Federal Contractors Program since its inception? **An oral response will be provided by Irène Bujara, University Advisor on Equity at the October 22, 2009 Senate meeting.**
6. Does the Vice-Principal Academic plan to replace the Diversity Advisor in his office, and if not, why? **A response will be provided by Senator Deane at the November 26, 2009 Senate Meeting.**