



Senate Committee on Academic Development Report to Senate – Meeting of November 25, 2010

Development of the Academic Plan

Introduction

In response to Principal Woolf's desire that Senate develop the University's Academic Plan, the Senate Committee on Academic Development (SCAD) received a referral from the Secretary of Senate. The referral, received on September 9, 2010, asked that SCAD prepare a proposal for consideration and approval by the Senate. SCAD was also encouraged to consult with individuals and groups, as appropriate to the task at hand, and to give progress reports to Senate. The process for developing an Academic Plan was discussed at SCAD's first meeting which was held September 29th. It was then considered on October 20th by a volunteer informal working group comprised of 2 elected SCAD members, one ex officio member, the Chair, and the Committee Secretary (with one being the sole Senator on SCAD). The deliberations of the working group were fully discussed at the second meeting of SCAD held on October 27th.

Based on the analysis and discussion described below, SCAD came to the conclusion that the process of developing and writing an Academic Plan for Queen's would be best accomplished through a Senate Task Force created by Senate.

Analysis and Discussion

The Academic Plan:

- SCAD views the development of an Academic Plan as a way to articulate Queen's values and the institution's commitment to quality education and research. The Academic Writing Team's notes in its 23 August 2010 submission, *"It became clear to us that Queen's continues to have a solid sense of community; its members are proud of our university and its traditions, and are deeply dedicated to our core missions.... The more people who think and talk about*

*what makes Queen's the university that it is, and how we can build on our strengths for the future, the better."*¹

- SCAD affirmed that the Academic Plan should not be a financial plan nor a directive to the Academic Deans/Directors on how to manage their faculties/schools. Rather, it should provide an academic foundation upon which operational plans can be developed and budgetary decisions can be made.
- SCAD agrees the Academic Plan should contain tangible goals and metrics that will allow students, staff, faculty, alumni and the general public to measure whether or not Queen's is achieving its goals.

The Process of Writing the Academic Plan:

- SCAD affirmed that the process of writing the Academic Plan must be transparent and seen by the Queen's community to be legitimate and consultative. It believes Senate is the body in which this goal can be best accomplished.
- Significant concerns were raised about the complexity of the task of developing an academic plan, and SCAD noted that internally it lacked the skills and expertise required to complete the task in a way that is both timely yet satisfies the need for extensive consultation. It was noted by a member with long experience that in the past SCAD has typically reviewed documents submitted to Senate or directly to SCAD and made recommendations concerning the academic implications of the matters covered by the documents. SCAD has not normally on its own generated documents of the type here being dealt with.
- While outside consultants/writers will likely be required in the crafting of the Academic Plan, SCAD affirmed the importance that the project be driven by academics that understand the culture at Queen's.

The above considerations led to an agreement among the working group members to recommend to SCAD that it should refer the academic planning process and a specific set of recommendations to Senate. To expedite this process, a set of recommendations were drafted by the working group to be discussed, revised (as needed) and approved at the October 27th meeting of SCAD. This tight timeline was deemed necessary to enable SCAD to meet the Senate Agenda deadline of November 11th that would allow the

¹ Imaging the Future: Towards an Academic Plan for Queen's University, M. Adams, T. Bryant, Y. Chan, K. Nossal, J. Scott & J. Smol., 23 August 2010, page 2.

recommendations to be brought forward at the Meeting of Senate on November 25th (note – the next Senate meeting is January 20, 2011).

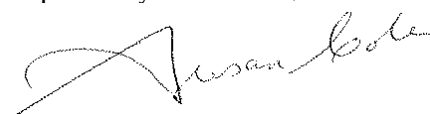
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**Recommendation:
that Senate strike a Task Force to develop an Academic Plan for Queen's
University.**

SCAD recommends that:

1. the membership of the Task Force be decided by Senate but that it include representation by student(s), staff, faculty and at least one member of SCAD
2. the Task Force establish sub-committees focused on specific issues salient to an Academic Plan, for example internationalization, scope of degree offerings, equity issues, curriculum and other issues;
3. the Task Force consult widely through the sub-committees, for example by holding open meetings with experts and representatives of stakeholders and by holding town halls, as required, to focus on specific issues and ensure inclusivity of all members of the Queen's community;
4. the Task Force consider engaging a consultant/writer who has experience with university academic planning and is familiar with the decentralized structure of Queen's;
5. the Task Force report to Senate on a regular basis;
6. administrative support for the Task Force be provided by the University Secretariat.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Cole
Chair, Senate Committee on Academic Development

Members

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- A. Brown, School of Nursing
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