An Academic Partnership of Retirees and Queen’s University

Introduction

A partnership agreement has been developed to enhance the continued scholarly and creative lives of retirees, complement the existing academic infrastructure and programs of Queen’s University and build on the strengths of the Retirees Association of Queen’s (RAQ). The idea began with a small working group of RAQ council. That group reviewed the history and achievements of RAQ, considered a number of models for potential new initiatives and examined developments at other universities in Canada and the United States.

A series of meetings, co-ordinated by the office of the Vice-Principal Academic Patrick Deane, were held which provided an opportunity to discuss activities designed not only to be of interest to RAQ members but which would enhance the learning environment and reputation of the university. Alistair MacLean, Dean of Arts & Sciences and John Holmes, past-president of the Queen’s University Faculty Association, attended to ensure that envisaged activities did not conflict with university policy or existing employee agreements.

The joint membership and involvement of retired faculty and staff has been a traditional strength of RAQ. Although enhancement of the academic activities of RAQ was a major objective of this initiative, it was considered important to avoid a model that could create a sense of disenfranchisement among staff retiree members. It was decided therefore to make this academic initiative a special project within RAQ.

The discussions with VP Deane and other members of university administration concerning this initiative led to enhanced awareness and support of the role of RAQ, now and in the future. In order to further facilitate the development of this academic initiative, and in view of the mutual interests of the university and RAQ, a Statement of Intent was signed in November, 2007 between RAQ and Queen’s University, represented by VP. Deane.

Purpose

This Academic Partnership of Retirees and Queen’s University will foster and support the continued scholarly and creative lives of its members, promote the continuing sense of membership in the “Queen’s family” and through its programs benefit the university and community. The partnership is intended to become a full-fledged complement to Queen’s existing academic infrastructure and programs. The major contribution to the university by RAQ members will be volunteer expertise. The university will contribute space and financial resources.
Objectives

To formalize the partnership between Queen’s and RAQ on such activities as:

1. Organizing events that enhance the visibility of the university through lectures and workshops
   a. Monday Morning Forum

2. Enhancing the learning environment of the university
   a. Review applications for high-profile scholarships
   b. Mentor students applying for external scholarships
   c. Mentor undergraduate students
   d. Chair thesis defenses
   e. Participate in student recruitment

3. Enhancing the national and international reputation of the university
   a. The Human History of Queen’s Project
   b. Identify and participate in selective interdisciplinary research Projects (e.g. aging)

4. Other activities of mutual interest.
   a. Participate by invitation on university committees
   b. Assist Department of Development in public relations and fund-raising

Administration of the Partnership

On behalf of RAQ

RAQ will exercise oversight of its role in the partnership by establishing a Standing Committee of RAQ, named for the interim the RAQ/Queen’s Academic Partnership Project. Membership on the committee shall consist of three retirees appointed by Council and the President of RAQ who shall serve as an ex-officio member. The Committee will report regularly to the Council and to the AGM.

On behalf of the Partnership with Queen’s

RAQ and Queen’s University will exercise joint oversight of the Academic
Partnership by establishing a Joint Academic Partnership Coordinating Committee with a mandate to meet regularly to:
1. review proposals for partnership arising from RAQ, members of the Queen’s faculty and staff and individuals;
2. consider proposals within their own organizations in terms of potential for support and activate projects; and
3. monitor progress on agreed-on projects.

Resources

In order to nourish this initiative, and other activities of RAQ, it is highly desirable that dedicated space for RAQ be found on, or adjacent to, the campus. This would provide a much needed home, space and facilities for RAQ members. Identifying such a short- or long-term facility should be a priority, especially at this time of considerable campus construction.

In the meantime, RAQ requires:
1. the continued use of the RAQ office
2. a small meeting room for meetings and projects.
3. additional financial resources to be determined.

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