

Strategic Mandate Agreement proposal

A submission to begin the process of developing a
Strategic Mandate Agreement for 2014-15 to 2016-17

Submitted to:

The Honourable Brad Duguid

Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

By:

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Introduction

York University's strategic objectives are substantially aligned with the government's policy objectives. York will play a key role in pursuing social and economic development, high-quality education, financial sustainability and accountability, access for all qualified learners, world-class research, innovation and collaboration, and pathways for students.

York is a comprehensive, research-intensive institution located in the heart of Ontario's fastest-growing urban area and the centre of innovation activity. York has become one of the largest universities in North America, and it continues to evolve.

- With over 54,000 undergraduate and graduate students, York educates approximately 10 per cent of Ontario's university students.
- York is transforming itself into the university of the 21st century.
 - York aspires to be Canada's engaged University through a focus on experiential education, discovery, research impact, and community outreach both locally and globally.
 - York's programs prepare graduates who take a broad view of social, political, cultural and environmental concerns. York's graduate programs – which collectively are the second-largest in Ontario – are preparing the next generation of advanced researchers and professionals.
- Interdisciplinarity and a focus on social responsibility are hallmarks of York's teaching and research.
- York's research has impact. York is rated 11th among Canadian universities for the impact of its research outputs, including 7th in the Social Sciences and Humanities and 8th in the Natural Sciences and Engineering. York is a leader in Canada for the quality of its research, and its research funding base is growing. Research at York is supported through 27 interdisciplinary and collaborative research centres, with strengths in atmospheric and space sciences, history and refugee studies, health, the environment, climate change, sustainability and digital media.
- York is globally oriented in our academic programs, research and student population. It has established its reputation worldwide with 280 partnerships with international universities. It attracts new Canadians and international students from 170 countries. More than 270,000 York alumni span the globe. Our students will have increased opportunities for international experiences.
- York is located at the centre of the new urban environment surrounding Toronto and the GTA. York draws students from all parts of the Greater Toronto Area and surrounding region to its Keele and Glendon campuses and to its professional development centres for Business and Law in downtown Toronto. The completion of the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension will connect the Keele campus and the rest of the city and will improve access for students from York Region.

York is pleased to submit this document as a first step in developing a Strategic Mandate Agreement for 2014-15 to 2016-17. York will propose additional institutional metrics after further consultation is undertaken. Note that various components of the document are also subject to further review through the University's normal governance processes.

1: Proposed institutional mandate for 2014-15 to 2016-17

York shares the government's commitment to providing access for all qualified learners.

- York is at the centre of Ontario's fastest-growing and most diverse region. The share of young people seeking a university education can be expected to continue to grow in our region over the next three years.
- York is the university of choice for students who are the first in their families to attend University. York educates more first-generation students than any other Ontario university. York enrolls more college-to-university transfer students than any other university. York provides specialized academic supports for one of Canada's most diverse student populations.

Over the next three years, York proposes to create more opportunities for students in its areas of differentiated strength, including:

- Completion of Ontario's newest Faculty of Engineering, creating "renaissance engineers" who take a multidisciplinary approach to their profession and intensifying the research base in engineering and applied science
- An expansion at the Glendon campus, Southern Ontario's centre for French-language and bilingual university education
- Spaces to accommodate the continued growth in Ontario's largest pool of college-to-university transfer students, including a new initiative in York Region in partnership with Seneca College
- The launch of innovative professional programs that prepare students for emerging fields such as Digital Cultures, Aging, Real Estate and Infrastructure, and Disaster and Emergency Management
- The development of programs on individual and community health, Aging including a new undergraduate BA/BSc program in Global Health, as the University strengthens health research and education as a foundation towards an eventual School of Medicine.

York will continue its well-established areas of program strength at the undergraduate, Masters and PhD levels, including:

- Access and credit transfer
- Arts, media, performance and design
- Bilingual programs
- Business
- Education, human services and community development
- Healthy individuals and communities
- Humanities and social sciences
- Law
- Masters and PhD programs
- Study at the boundary of disciplines
- Studies of the environment, sustainability and the new urban environment.

York is fully engaged in improving the experience of our students and strengthening research within existing resources. State-of-the-art enrollment modeling is allowing York to proactively reallocate student spaces to reflect changes in student needs and workforce demands. Business processes are being updated so that York staff is able to focus on value-added work that supports the institution. Section 6 identifies many ways in which York is making improvements with existing resources. This year York is undertaking an Academic and Administrative Program Review, a structured assessment of all of York's programs and services based on a set of common criteria.

Fully achieving York's proposed institutional mandate will require the government's support:

- Expanding York's undergraduate programs to meet expected student demand will require funding for 1,759 additional spaces by 2016-17 (eligible full-time undergraduate headcount, over 2013-14 levels; see Table 2).
- Expanding graduate enrolments will be achieved by fulfilling the University's current Reaching Higher allocation, with no additional spaces required.
- The government's support will be needed to meet capital requirements of approximately 350,000 gross square feet for increased enrolments.
- Investment will be needed to support the expansion of bilingual programs at the Glendon campus.
- The government's support will also be needed in approving new academic programs. New program approvals will be sought at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- In addition, York expects to submit a proposal to expand programs offered in York Region in partnership with Seneca College. Enrolment levels and capital requirements will be determined after the government policy on satellite campuses is published.

2: Mission and vision

York University's mission statement is available at: www.yorku.ca/web/about_yorku/mission.html . The 2010 Provostial White Paper sets out this vision for York in 2020:

Our students and faculty will be more engaged with the teaching and learning process and with each other. Our linkages with the broader community, both in terms of the teaching and learning process as well as through our research activities, will have broadened and deepened. We will have established a new Medical School and a separate Faculty of Engineering. Our reputation as a research intensive institution contributing to innovation, social and economic development in the Greater Toronto Area, the province, Canada and the world will have been solidified and enhanced. Aspiring to be Canada's Engaged University, we will be seen as an innovator in pedagogy, making use of social media and other forms of technology to meet evolving student needs and creating life-long learning opportunities for part-time, mature and returning students. Our university will be a global magnet for students who will see York's diversity as exemplifying and modeling values of global citizenship. Our reputation as a leader and innovator will have been strengthened and the pride on our campuses and amongst our alumni at where we have been and where we are going will be palpable.

3: Institutional enrolment projections

Table 1: Baseline University Full-Time Headcounts (Eligible and Ineligible)									
Baseline projection for the university as a whole. These should include additional capacity which has already been funded through capital projects currently underway. These projections should not include the impact of proposed projects, or assume provinci									
	Eligible Students								
	Actuals			Preliminary	Projected				
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Undergraduate	37952	37902	37706	37065	37225	37100	37840	38045	38045
Master's	1827	1784	1864	1889	1994	2068	2108	2135	2155
Ph.D.	1116	1091	1019	940	956	969	981	993	1003
Total Eligible Full-Time Headcounts	40895	40777	40589	39894	40174	40137	40929	41174	41203
	Ineligible Students								
	Actuals			Preliminary	Projected				
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Undergraduate	3060	3355	3541	3839	3889	3925	3975	4025	4085
Master's	337	361	375	399	406	412	418	426	432
Ph.D.	153	170	170	193	197	201	206	212	217
Total Ineligible Full-Time Headcounts	3550	3886	4086	4431	4492	4538	4599	4663	4734
Total Full-time University Headcount (Eligible + Ineligible)	44445	44663	44675	44325	44666	44676	45529	45837	45937

Table 2: Projected University Full-Time Headcounts (Eligible and Ineligible)

Enrolment projection for the university as a whole. In addition to the baseline projections in Table 1, these projections should include the impact of proposed projects and provincial approval of future projects or associated policy decisions (e.g., progr

	Eligible Students								
	Actuals			Preliminary	Projected				
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Undergraduate	37952	37902	37706	37065	37312	37451	38824	39493	40297
Master's	1827	1784	1864	1889	2008	2103	2167	2219	2263
Ph.D.	1116	1091	1019	940	979	1024	1073	1124	1176
Total Eligible Full-Time Headcounts	40895	40777	40589	39894	40299	40579	42063	42836	43737
	Ineligible Students								
	Actuals			Preliminary	Projected				
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Undergraduate	3060	3355	3541	3839	3899	3955	4299	4410	4768
Master's	337	361	375	399	406	412	418	426	432
Ph.D.	153	170	170	193	197	201	206	212	217
Total Ineligible Full-Time Headcounts	3550	3886	4086	4431	4502	4568	4923	5048	5417
Total Full-time University Headcount (Eligible + Ineligible)	44445	44663	44675	44325	44801	45147	46986	47884	49153

Assumptions for Table 2:

- The government will approve new programs, as listed in Section 5.
- The government will support capital requirements of approximately 350,000 gross square feet for increased enrolments. No capital is proposed for the Glendon campus; this assumes maximum Glendon enrolments of 2,900, with no provision for further expansion or other institutions.
- York expects to submit a proposal to expand programs offered in York Region in partnership with Seneca College. Enrolment levels and capital requirements will be determined after the government policy on satellite campuses is published.

4: Current areas of program strength

Access and credit transfer

Total headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 5,784 (York students admitted on the basis of college transfer)

23% of Ontario's college-to-university transfer students attend York – the highest share of any university. College transfer students account for almost 6,000 of York's undergraduate students. They are found in almost all fields of study, with high concentrations in administrative studies and social sciences.

Arts, media, performance and design

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 2,521

The Faculty of Fine Arts is the largest comprehensive faculty in its field in Canada, and the only fine arts faculty in the province of Ontario. The Faculty of Fine Arts has two nationally-ranked arts programs - Design and Film – and has recently received two new Canada Research Chairs (Interactive Information Visualization and Digitally Mediated Performance) as part of a cluster hire in digital cultures in collaboration with Engineering. Research in Fine Arts is pioneering numerous digital arts programs and digital culture initiatives spanning 3D cinema, data visualization, locative media, virtual and immersive environments, interface and interaction design, spatialized-sound, gaming and digitally-mediated performance. These strengths are complemented by high-demand programs in Communication Studies at the undergraduate level, and Communications and Culture at the graduate level, offered by the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies.

Bilingual programs

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 2,377

The Government of Ontario has designated the Glendon campus as the Southern Ontario Centre of Excellence for French-language and Bilingual Postsecondary Education. The Glendon campus is the only campus in Southern Ontario to offer a range of French-language university programming. It is the only campus in the province to offer all its programs in both French and English. All student services are available in both English and French. The GPA of entering students is among the highest of Ontario's liberal arts faculties. Glendon's bilingual programming has a strong global focus as seen in its graduate School of Public and International Affairs, its Master's of Conference Interpreting, its undergraduate program in International Studies, and its International BA.

Business

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 1,522 (Schulich)

The Schulich School of Business has three major areas of strategic focus: global orientation, innovative and forward-looking programming, and the integration of a much broader frame of reference in all of its business programs. Schulich is one of the world's most globally oriented centres of management learning. The School has a large and growing global footprint, with campuses in Hyderabad, India and Beijing, China. In Fall 2013, Schulich was ranked #1 in Canada in seven straight rankings, and in two of those rankings was rated #1 in the world. Schulich's MBA program is ranked among the world's leading schools by The Economist, Forbes, Bloomberg Businessweek, Expansión (based in Mexico City), Financial Times, The Wall Street Journal, Corporate Knights and the Aspen Institute. The School's Kellogg-Schulich EMBA program is ranked #1 in the world by The Economist in 2013, #5 in the world by The Wall Street Journal in its most recent ranking (as part of the Kellogg global network of EMBA partner schools) and #1 in Canada and among the leading programs in the world by the Financial Times of London. Through the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York also offers one of Canada's largest undergraduate programs in Administrative Studies as well as undergraduate and graduate programs in Human Resources Management. The Faculty of Health offers specialized honors programs in Health Management and in Health Informatics.

Education, human services and community development

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 2,210

York is one of Ontario's largest producers of new graduates in Education and Social Work. York's programs are distinguished by the University's commitment to work with partners and engage with the community. The Faculty of Education's BEd pre-service teacher education program integrates equity and social justice throughout the curriculum, and it gives underrepresented individuals an opportunity to become teachers. York is the largest provider in Ontario of in-service courses to over 5,000 teachers annually. York's teacher education program for deaf and hard of hearing students is one of only two in Canada. The School of Social Work is recognized as having one of the most progressive and socially responsive social work programs in Canada. The School offers two undergraduate (BSW) streams and the MSW and PhD. York students are equipped for professional practice in a wide variety of social work arenas, from work with individuals and families to practice with community, policy, research, and international settings.

Healthy individuals and communities

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 8,503

York University has made a substantial investment in advancing health education and research over the past decade, including establishment of the Faculty of Health in 2006. The Faculty of Health, with over 11,000 students and 400 faculty, is unparalleled in North America for its critical mass of education, research and local-global community engagement. Health graduates each year over 2,000 student 'Agents of Change' in Nursing, Psychology, Kinesiology & Health Science, and Health Policy, Management & Informatics. York is one of Ontario's largest producers of graduates in professional programs in Nursing, Clinical Psychology, and Kinesiology. Health programming at York is built on a dynamic interdisciplinary learning environment where the focus on prevention and wellness to improve the overall health of individuals and communities aligns with achieving sustainability of the health care system. This unique approach to train students for careers in the health sector encompasses a spectrum of disciplines from the social sciences, nursing, psychology, to education, business, law and the biological sciences. York's health research builds on

established strengths in neuro-cognitive science, mental, creative and physical health, life sciences, social and environmental determinants, critical disabilities, nursing and critical health studies. Partnerships on campus - such as the life sciences and social-environmental determinants of health - and the rapidly evolving academic/community network (York Health Academic Network in GTA/York Region) are laying the foundation for further development.

Humanities and social sciences

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 21,210

Research and teaching strength in the humanities and social sciences form the core of York University. York is distinctive in making liberal arts a critical foundation for learning across the university, enhancing the capacity of our graduates as global leaders for the 21st century. The recent concentration of liberal arts programs, and the pairing of them with a range of professional and applied programs in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, has created an institutional framework in which novel interplay between and among disciplines thrive. Containing top-ranked disciplinary programs such as History, Political Science, Geography, and English, and one of Canada's largest undergraduate business schools, a rarely paralleled array of language programs, and a vast range of interdisciplinary degree programs, the new Faculty creates myriad meeting grounds among knowledges and methods for the eminent scholar and the first-year student alike. Research in the humanities and social sciences has national and international impact (see "Master and PhD programs").

Law

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 906

Osgoode Hall Law School ranks second in Canada in Maclean's survey of law schools. As of October 2012, Osgoode ranks fifth out of 500 law schools outside the United States, based on the number of times that papers by Osgoode faculty and graduate students have been downloaded in the preceding year. Osgoode is distinctive in developing experiential programs in collaboration with community partners (such as the Disability Rights Clinical program with ARCH, Parkdale, the LAWS collaboration with the Toronto District School Board, the directed research course with Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the business law clinic with Stikeman Elliott, and a new intellectual property intensive program with external partners). York is home to the Law Commission of Ontario.

Master's and PhD programs

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 2,883

York is Ontario's second-largest provider of graduate education. York graduates can be found as policy makers and advisors, researchers for industry and not-for-profits, as well as in academic roles. York's programs integrate professional skills development to prepare students for careers in social, political, cultural and economic sectors. York outperforms seven of the U-15 universities in rankings of the impact of its research outputs, with an overall national ranking of 11th. HESA's ranking of university research impact places York 8th in Canada in Science and Engineering, and 7th in Canada in Social Sciences and Humanities. This ranking is based on bibliometric (h-index) data normalized for academic discipline and number of faculty. The 2013 QS World University Rankings, based primarily on research activity, place York in the top 15 universities in the world for business research, the top 40 for history and the top 100 for English language and literature, modern languages, linguistics and geography. York ranks in the top 150 in accounting, economics, mathematics, media studies, philosophy, political science, psychology, sociology and statistics. York outperforms many of the U-15 universities in these rankings.

Study at the boundary of disciplines

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 4,486

York's teaching and research make particular provision for the exploration of borders between traditional disciplines. In the Humanities and Social Sciences, in particular, York was a pioneer in creating such programs as Business and Society, Law and Society and Children's Studies. York is moving to newer fields such as Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies; Critical Disability Studies; and Disaster & Emergency Management. Organized research units such as the Centre for Vision Research and the York Centre for Health Research bring together the best researchers and teachers from multiple

Faculties and Departments to performing interdisciplinary scholarship. On a smaller scale, programs in digital media (Computer Science and Fine Arts), disease modeling (Mathematics and Health) and ecology (Biology and Environmental studies) provide opportunities for bridging disciplinary gaps that were formerly unavailable.

Studies of the environment, sustainability and the new urban environment

Total full-time headcount (eligible) (2012-13): 776

York is a global leader of studies of environment, sustainability and urbanism across disciplines. York's Faculty of Environmental Studies (FES) is Canada's founding program in environmental studies, the largest in the country and the most interdisciplinary environmental studies program in the world, with numerous international partnerships and local community engagement projects. FES is the foundation for an unusual depth of research and education on sustainability that exists across the university. All Faculties at York are engaged in preparing students to understand and engage with a changing social and physical environment, with certificates and diplomas in Planning, Business and Sustainability, Community Arts, Environmental Education, Sustainable Energy, Urban Ecologies, Disaster Management, GIS and Remote Sensing, and a joint MES/JD, as well as undergraduate collaborations with Health and Engineering, and an active Environmental Science program. York's Geography department is the national leader in the study of arctic physical environments. York researchers are the national leaders in atmospheric and weather studies. York's programs in social geography and urban studies provide strength in urban growth, urban sustainability, urban livability, city planning, and municipal/civic governance.

5: Proposed areas of strategic growth focus over the next three years (see Table 3 for new program approvals)

Engineering and science

Demand from Ontario students for engineering degrees has expanded by over 30 per cent in the past five years. Employers in Canada are increasingly seeking engineering graduates with both a depth of technical knowledge and a breadth of professional skills. The new Lassonde School of Engineering will offer 2,500 places for undergraduates, and will partner with the Osgoode Hall Law School and York's Schulich School of Business to teach law, business and entrepreneurship classes to students alongside a comprehensive, accredited engineering curriculum. The Lassonde School of Engineering is creating entrepreneurial engineers with a social conscience and a sense of global citizenship – the Renaissance Engineer. The first stage of this project has been completed with students now enrolling at Lassonde (applications increased 26% in the first year) and an innovative new engineering building set to open in 2015. By extension, York's programming in the sciences is being redeveloped in the context of the new standalone Faculty of Science.

Bilingual programs

The Ontario Government's Action Plan for French-language Postsecondary Education calls for an increase in access to French-language postsecondary education and services in central and southwestern Ontario, giving college and university students more opportunities to study in French and prepare for future jobs. Located in mid-town Toronto, with almost 50 years of experience in French-language university studies, Glendon is perfectly equipped to serve as the Southern Ontario 'hub' for French-language university programming, in collaboration with Ontario's bilingual universities and Francophone colleges.

Professional programs

York proposes a suite of new programs at the undergraduate, Master's and PhD level to build on its position as a dominant provider of professional education. New programs are primarily in the fields of digital fine arts, engineering, health, education, gerontology, and business. Various liberal arts programs are also integrating professionally-relevant content into the curriculum. A new doctoral program in Disaster and Emergency Management will address a widely-recognized need for researchers and teachers in this field.

Table 3. New Program Approvals in Emerging Areas of Focus					
Program area (area of development)	Target total full-time headcount (eligible) (2016-17)		New program approvals		
	Number	Proportion of instit'l total (%)	Undergraduate	Masters	PhD
Engineering and applied science	1719	4.1%	Civil and Mechanical Engineering Chemical Engineering	Electrical, Mechanical and Civil Engineering	Electrical, Mechanical and Civil Engineering
Bilingual programs (all to be offered at Glendon)	2484	5.9%	Business Science BioMed Psychology Communications/ Journalism Foundations of Law		
Professional programs	6461	15.4%	BA (Educational Studies) Digital Cultures Information Design Composition for Visual Arts BFA Interactive Media Design (with Seneca College) Neuroscience	Education Digital Cultures Media Industry Studies Real Estate and Infrastructure Social Media Marketing MBA specializations in Global Retail Management and Agri-Business	Digital Cultures Disaster and Emergency Management Media Industry Studies
Individual and community health	8773	20.9%		(Global) Public Health Aging and Gerontology	Nursing
Credit transfer, partnerships with colleges, York-Seneca	To be det'd	To be det'd	Bachelor of Technology Human Services Fine Arts Environmental Technologies Urban sustainability See BFA above Other programs to be determined as part of York-Seneca proposal		

Targets are subject to revision based on student demand and related factors.

Healthy individuals and communities

York will continue to develop its strength in health professions and research with the launch of the Faculty of Health's Global Health degree (BA and BSc), the first of its kind in Canada, which will provide graduates with the knowledge and skills to improve health for people and communities worldwide by creating conditions that allow for greater health equity. The Faculty will also launch an undergraduate program in Neuroscience, a professional Master's MPH in Global Health, and a new PhD in Nursing to meet the demand for researchers and teachers in this field. Over the medium term, York will continue to develop its proposed School of Medicine, focused on integrative primary care and serving the

growing needs in York Region. This School will be distinctive in its broad inter-professional focus, clinical/community/population health integration, culturally responsive, eHealth technology enabled, and embedded in the diversity of the York Region. Research relationships with regional clinical partners, community health and regional health authorities are expanding to allow for a smooth integration of clinical and population health-based research into the broader York research landscape.

Credit transfer, partnerships with colleges, York-Seneca

York will expand its partnership with Seneca College, with a view to creating a satellite campus in York Region thereby expanding student choice and mobility and advancing college-university transfer more broadly throughout the system. The partnership would build on the strengths of each partner offering an integrated and holistic joint program to provide students with breadth and depth in critical inquiry as well as the specific knowledge and focused skills needed to succeed and contribute to innovation in the knowledge economy. The York-Seneca partnership would be much more than another 2+2 or bridging program; it would constitute a new, integrated and forward-looking approach to postsecondary education that could serve as a model for the sector. Several curricular projects are underway in the areas of engineering and technology, human services, digital media, urban sustainability and environmental technology. This initiative builds on York's strength as Ontario's largest recipient of college-to-university transfer students, and our commitment to access and student mobility.

6: Activities that profile institutional strengths in each component of differentiation

Jobs, innovation and economic development

York's greatest contribution to jobs, innovation and economic development is the quality of our graduates. Almost half of York's 270,000 alumni have graduated in the 21st century. They are redefining leadership in business, fine arts, public policy, law, science, education, history, criminology, environmental sciences, psychology and other fields. The share of graduates who are employed two years after graduation consistently meets or exceeds the Ontario average. Innovation York works with external partners including MARs Innovation and VentureLab to bring technologies and applications to market. York's Knowledge Mobilization (KM) Unit works to ensure that local solutions to pressing social issues have the opportunity for broader application. With over six years of experience, York's KM Unit has supported more than 250 community-campus collaborations, helped community partners raise over \$1M for social services and programs and attracted over \$17M in engaged scholarship funding for researchers, students and partners.

Teaching and learning

York is enriching the quality of academic programs and the student learning experience by focusing on student learning outcomes (SLOs), technology enhanced learning (TEL) and experiential education (EE). York is taking a lead role in the development of a student-focused learning approach that clearly articulates competencies and SLOs by institutionalizing curricular mapping for all academic programs. We are also setting as a priority the measurement of SLOs. Through a broad consultation process, York has also developed an institution wide TEL initiative that aligns with the MTCU focus on online education and increased flexibility for students. Building on Faculty-based innovation in EE, York is developing a pan-university strategy to ensure that all students have access to hands-on learning opportunities. To improve student success, York is implementing a comprehensive, institutional-wide retention strategy that includes an innovative first-year student transition program as well as an initiative to improve PhD completion rates. York is currently piloting the YU Start Program with a group of 1500 new students.

Student population

York shares the government's commitment to providing access for all qualified learners:

- York educates more first-generation students than any other Ontario university. 28.7 per cent of York's full-time students are the first generation in their families to attend higher education. This includes 11,699 full-time students in 2011-12, plus 2,453 part-time students.

- York is one of Ontario's top two universities for educating newcomers to Canada. 10.8 per cent of York students are permanent residents who have come to Canada from other countries.
- York enrolls more college-to-university transfer students than any other Ontario university. Almost 6,000 York students were admitted as college transfer students.
- York is serving the rapidly-growing northern half of the GTA. More students from York Region attend York University than any other university.
- On the Glendon campus, Francophone and Francophile students can pursue their studies in French and receive services in French.
- York is tracking ahead of target with 10% of the student body being international students by 2013, and 12% by 2017.

Research and graduate education

York is implementing a new institutional strategic research plan (for 2013 - 2018) that enunciates a vision for the future impact of research at York that aligns with teaching and learning experiences. York University is a leader in research that crosses disciplinary boundaries, and this is reflected in the narration of our research across six intersecting themes:

- Advancing Fundamental Discovery and Critical Knowledge
- Analyzing Cultures and Mobilizing Creativity
- Building Healthy Lives and Communities
- Exploring the Frontiers of Science and Technology
- Forging a Just and Sustainable World
- Integrating Entrepreneurial Innovation and the Public Good

For the next five years we see opportunities to significantly advance research of our six themes as well as particular opportunities in five areas:

- Digital Cultures
- Engineering Research that Matters
- Healthy Individuals, Communities and Global Health
- Public Engagement for a Just and Sustainable World
- Scholarship of Socially Engaged Research

Program offerings

York offers a comprehensive range of programs that reflect the needs of the GTA's highly diversified economy. York is known for its strength in interdisciplinary and collaborative programs that bridge liberal arts and professional programs. Current and proposed areas of strength are identified in Sections 4 and 5.

Institutional collaboration to support student mobility

York University is the recognized provincial leader in college-university collaboration including unique partnerships with the French-language colleges. In addition to our flexible block transfer credit policy that allows for a predetermined number of credits/courses, we offer 14 successful collaborative programs including Design with Sheridan College and a Collaborative BScN nursing program with Seneca and Georgian Colleges. York shares the Keele campus with Seneca College. In addition to the comprehensive list of courses from other Ontario universities that we already recognize, York has launched a new cross-registration initiative with Ryerson that allows students at either institution to take up to 24 credits at the opposite University. York's concurrent teacher education program allows Ryerson's early childhood degree students to receive a York BEd simultaneously. The concurrent program also allows GTA college students in technical programmes to become certified teachers. Other innovative activities include our bridging programs for internationally educated professionals (e.g., Nursing, Business, IT, Human Resources Management, Conference Interpreting and Engineering) as well as transition programs to facilitate access for students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., Transition Year Program, Women's Bridging Program).