

**A Report on**  
**Academic Planning and Graduate Education at York University**

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the Vice-President Academic and Provost,  
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## Academic Planning and Graduate Education at York University

### Introduction

The *University Academic Plan: Academic Priorities 2005-2010 (UAP)* has two overarching themes: 1. Attaining the Highest Academic Quality and 2. Knowing Ourselves, and Seeing How We Are Seen. The *UAP* identified the expansion and enhancement of graduate education as a major priority. The highest priority is the enhancement of the research culture at York. Also, the *UAP* calls for a re-examination of structures to ensure that they best support our academic planning.

In this report, the term 'academic planning' is used very broadly to encompass not just the preparation of strategic plans and specific objectives, but also the implementation of these, the assessment of progress, and the allocation of resources to achieve objectives. In short, the term 'academic planning' encompasses all our thinking and decision-making about academic matters.

York is a major centre of graduate education in Canada: it is the second largest centre in Ontario and ninth largest in the country. It has been a long-standing priority at York to increase graduate enrolments both in absolute terms and as a share of total enrolments. Beginning in 2006/07, York expanded very rapidly at the graduate level, supported by new base funding from the Ontario government as part of its Reaching Higher Plan. There was a happy coincidence of York's academic aspirations with the government's funding priorities.

In this context, the President asked the Associate Vice-President (Graduate )/Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies (hereafter Dean of FGS) to prepare a report and make recommendations regarding the best administrative structures and processes to support and enhance graduate education at York.

The report "Realigning Graduate Education at York University" (the Realignment Report) was released in the Spring of 2008. The Realignment Report was widely discussed and a number of concerns were voiced: both procedural concerns, regarding the extent of consultation prior to preparing the Report, and substantive concerns, regarding its recommendations. Accordingly, the Vice-President Academic and Provost (VPA&P) and the Dean of FGS asked me to conduct a community consultation regarding the Realignment Report. At the conclusion of the consultation, I was to submit a report to them that would be available to the community. The consultation and report might identify other issues surrounding graduate education at York that might require attention.

Much has changed since the Realignment Report was released. The rapid expansion at the graduate level has slowed and many of the 'growing pains' have been addressed. As sought by the Report, there has been coordinated planning and budgeting of undergraduate and graduate curricula at the Faculty level. And in the Summer of 2009, the Vice-President

Academic and Provost initiated a strategic planning process leading to the development of a Provostial White Paper setting out a vision for York University, describing where we want to be in ten to fifteen years. The place of graduate education will be a crucial component of the strategic vision.

The preparation of the White Paper will have three distinct phases, as outlined in the July 2009 memorandum from the VPA&P. "The first, the 'green paper' phase will involve the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost (VPA&P), in concert with the Senate Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee (APPRC), producing one or more green papers (discussion documents that precede and inform a policy document). A green paper's framing of the issues, ideas, and suggestions is put forward for discussion so that they can be modified, added to, replaced or abandoned in response to community consultation. In addition, during this phase the Faculties have been asked to provide memos outlining their strategic direction."

This report is written not only, as originally requested, as a follow on from the Realignment Report and community consultations, but also as a contribution to the Green Paper phase. This report focuses less on administrative structure than the original Realignment Report and more on the approach needed to ensure strategic planning and the coordination and integration of all undergraduate and graduate activities in our academic planning. Also, the consultation revealed considerable misunderstanding and ambiguity around our current structures and practices. This report seeks to clarify these misunderstandings and ambiguities. Many of the 'recommendations' are actually re-statements of current arrangements.

The consultation began in the Fall of 2008. A list of those consulted is contained in Appendix 3. In preparing to write the report, I also read the *UAP*, recent Faculty plans, and various York documents relevant to graduate education; previous reports about graduate education at York and reports from other universities; and some of the (albeit small) academic literature about the issues. Also in preparation, I prepared an environmental scan regarding "Graduate Studies at York University and in Canada" (Appendix 1) and "Academic Planning, University Finances, and Budgeting" at York (Appendix 2). It is important to be aware of these wider contexts in order to ensure that our academic planning is well-suited to the challenges ahead. Appendices 1 and 2 were available throughout the consultation.

## **The Place of Graduate Education**

The province-wide expansion of graduate education under the Reaching Higher Plan began in 2004-05. At the end of this expansion, York will have grown by 36 percent at the master's level and 51 percent at the doctoral level. This compares to an Ontario-wide expansion of 52 percent at the master's level and 54 percent at the doctoral level. York's percentage expansion will be slightly less than the provincial average. At the end of the expansion, York will have the second largest number of graduate students in the province (about 3 percent more than the next largest, Ottawa and Western, but 60 percent less than at U of T).

Prior to and during the double cohort, York (and all Ontario universities) grew significantly at the undergraduate level. From 1995 to 2006, most Ontario universities grew well over 50 percent; York grew 51 percent, less than the average. In accordance with our enrolment plan, York undergraduate enrolments have receded slightly from the double cohort peak. Graduate

enrolments are now about 11 percent of total enrolments, roughly their share before the double cohort expansion. This is a lower share than at comparable Ontario universities.

During the consultation, a number of fundamental points emerged clearly.

- There is unanimous recognition of the importance of graduate education at York and wide and deep support for the commitment to expand and enhance graduate education, notwithstanding some concerns about the pace and amount of expansion over the past four years.
- Despite this unanimous recognition and commitment, there were surprisingly divergent views about the actual priority given to graduate education under our current academic planning.

Some felt their Faculty Dean was a leader and spokesperson for graduate education, just as for undergraduate education, whereas others felt their Dean was primarily concerned with undergraduate education. The same divergent views were held about the role of Chairs, within departmentalized Faculties. Also, some felt appointments planning did not take proper account of graduate program needs, whereas others were confident graduate needs were fully integrated. Some felt that graduate education was currently fully integrated into our academic planning, whereas others thought it remained somewhat outside the loop. Some felt the changes proposed by the Realignment Report would weaken graduate education, others felt it would strengthen it.

- There is considerable confusion and lack of clarity about the fundamental locus for integrating graduate planning into our overall academic planning. The first responsibility for the program-specific academic planning of any graduate program rests with the Graduate Program Director (GPD) and the members of that graduate program. This is recognized by all. However, the graduate programs control neither resources, nor appointments, nor levels of student support. There is crucial academic planning related to graduate programs in each Faculty (and in departments within departmentalized Faculties) and in FGS. The ambiguity lies in how it all fits together.

Although the balance across teaching, research, and service may differ across faculty members, particularly at different stages of their careers, all faculty should be active scholars and should have the opportunity to be involved in graduate education. There was unanimous recognition that all new appointments should be either immediately, or within a few years, appointable to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Among members of a graduate program, there may be a distinction between those supervising PhD students and those involved in other ways.

- Graduate education involves everyone. All full-time faculty members have responsibilities to teach, to conduct and publish research, and to contribute service to the university and wider community. Ideally, all faculty members would have responsibilities at both the graduate and undergraduate level. We are all concerned with undergraduate education, graduate education, and research.

- The close connection between graduate education and research is widely recognized. The enhancement of the research culture at York means encouraging and supporting research communities across our campuses – and graduate education and graduate students need to be a full part of these research communities. The enhancement of York’s research culture and the enhancement of graduate education are mutually reinforcing goals.

There are differences across disciplines in the nature of this connection between research and graduate education – for example, in the sciences, graduate students are often contributing participants in a faculty member’s research, whereas in the social sciences, humanities, and professional fields the supervision of graduate students may contribute very little to a faculty member’s own research, indeed may be ‘time away’ from research – nonetheless in all disciplines, graduate work ought to be fully integrated into our research communities.

- There is a great deal of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work at York. Most graduate programs, both disciplinary and interdisciplinary, draw faculty members from several departments and many draw from several Faculties. Any strategy for the enhancement of graduate education must enhance the ability to draw faculty members from different departments and Faculties into a graduate program.

This interdisciplinary work, and our ability to draw together faculty members from across the University, is a great strength of York, a strength that will serve us well because such work is becoming increasingly important in both the scholarly and public policy worlds.

- There are great differences across the Faculties in the place of graduate education and means of academic planning for it. Any strategy to enhance graduate education must recognize these differences across Faculties. A centralized, one-size-fits-all, approach will not be effective in enhancing graduate education.

The differences are due to many factors. There are significant differences between departmentalized and non-departmentalized Faculties. There are differences between professional Faculties and other Faculties. Some differences are due to history: some Faculties originated with a focus on graduate education, for example the Faculty of Environmental Studies, whereas other Faculties have expanded graduate education more recently, for example in Fine Arts. Also some disciplines began with large graduate programs, while others have created a program only recently. Also, the humanities and social science disciplines differ in their academic planning because there have always been large groups of scholars in these disciplines in the Faculty of Arts, Atkinson, and Glendon. This complexity is now greatly reduced as Arts and Atkinson have been combined into the new Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (LA&PS).

- The fundamental issues dealt with in the Realignment Report relate not to graduate education alone but rather to the place of graduate education in our overall academic planning – planning for undergraduate education, graduate education, and research. We need academic planning processes that ensure the full coordination and integration of all our activities. We need academic planning processes with clear responsibilities and reporting lines, that match authority with responsibility, and that ensure ongoing accountability. We need processes that match decision-making with expertise and that

ensure the experience and expertise of those involved in and running graduate programs is fully integrated into our academic planning. There will always be difficult tradeoffs to make between our competing aspirations and goals. We need clearly identified processes and forums where faculty members can collegially discuss these difficult tradeoffs.

The last two points above – our strategy to enhance graduate education must recognize the differences across Faculties; and the fundamental issue is to ensure that graduate education is fully integrated into our academic planning – shaped the consultations. The consultations first involved the Faculty of Graduate Studies, its Council, its committees, and the Graduate Program Directors. But then, the consultation proceeded on a Faculty-by-Faculty basis. In each case, the desire was to meet with the Dean, those faculty members most responsible for graduate education, and those faculty members most responsible for undergraduate education. The make-up of this group would differ by Faculty. In the event, I could not arrange this group meeting with every Faculty, but conceptually this was the approach. The people and councils consulted are listed in Appendix 3.

### Issues, Problems, and Recommendations

One major criticism expressed about the Realignment Report was that it was prepared without any formal consultation with faculty members heavily involved in graduate education, most particularly with Graduate Program Directors. Many felt that the Report offered a model that did not recognize York's reality and furthermore the Report did not clearly enough identify problems that needed to be solved. This magnified an already existing concern that the decisions about how much to expand at the graduate level, and in which programs, had also been made without formal consultation. Senior administrators are often impatient with such criticisms, for understandable reasons. Too often, York's culture is overly concerned with process and the need for consultation and not enough concerned with analysis of the recommended course of action. Senior administrators, although not always formally consulting as they make decisions, spend much of their time listening to the aspirations and concerns of faculty members; consultation is continuous. Often, the University must make commitments very quickly in response to government requests, as was the case when York had to table and then negotiate its plans for graduate expansion. Nevertheless, faculty members heavily involved in graduate education are our most important body of expertise about graduate issues. Long-term success in enhancing graduate education requires that our academic planning draw upon this expertise and that those faculty members have confidence in our academic planning processes and share a commitment to the identified priorities.

- Recommendation 1: The strategic academic planning of graduate education must directly involve the members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The preparation of the Provostial White Paper affords an ideal opportunity for this involvement.

Academic planning for graduate education occurs in many places. The program-specific academic planning of any graduate program is undertaken by the GPD and the members of that graduate program. There is crucial academic planning related to graduate programs in each Faculty (and in departments within departmentalized Faculties) and in FGS. However,

there is much confusion and lack of clarity about the fundamental locus for integrating graduate planning into our overall academic planning – where and how should we integrate and coordinate graduate, undergraduate, and research planning? Who is responsible for the resources to support graduate education? How are the resources from the Faculties and from FGS coordinated, particularly when they must be combined to provide support for graduate students? Many Graduate Program Directors (GPDs) felt that resource ‘commitments’ had not been fulfilled, especially commitments for new tenure stream appointments supported by graduate expansion. But many GPDs did not understand our current systems of academic planning, university finances, and budgeting. (These are set out in Appendix 2.) There were different views about how graduate program needs for new appointments are fitted into our academic plans. The lack of clarity is evidenced in other ways. For example, in October 2008, the Academic Policy and Planning Committee of Senate issued a Call for Five-Year Faculty Plans. The Call specifically asked that plans integrate undergraduate and graduate dimensions, examining disciplinary and interdisciplinary trends, and drawing for example both upon Undergraduate Programs Reviews and OCGS Graduate Program Appraisals. My reading of the submitted Faculty Five-Year plans suggests that the integration and coordination was inconsistent across Faculties. It is very unclear whether or how graduate programs were explicitly involved in the preparation of Faculty plans.

The need for clarity is increasingly important for at least two reasons. First, the University is implementing Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) with the goal of ensuring that resources flow to our academic priorities and that those receiving the resources are accountable for the achievement of these priorities. This is consistent with one overarching theme of the UAP: that we know ourselves better in order to ensure that “we are truly improving in line with our objectives.” Graduate education cannot function well with IRP unless there is clarity about how it fits into our larger academic planning structures. And second, the Provostial White Paper will set out a vision for York University. Again, we shall need clarity about how graduate education fits into our larger academic planning structures if the White paper process is to succeed.

The following recommendations form a package. They are stated as recommendations, but in many ways they describe what already exists; they are set out here to help provide clarity.

There are many academic planning processes in the university, being undertaken by different units, following different timetables, and responding to different initiatives and forces. Nonetheless, it is possible to present a simplified picture that captures the essential elements. See Appendix 2 for more detail. There are three key levels of academic planning: the university level, the Faculty level, and in the case of departmentalized Faculties, the department level.

The *University Academic Plan* and other fundamental university-wide documents, such as the upcoming Provostial White Paper, articulate priorities at the university level. This university-level planning is the responsibility of the VPA&P and Senate, especially the Academic Policy, Planning, and Research Committee. There is also university-level planning for graduate education undertaken by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and summarized in FGS plan. Of necessity, many of these priorities must be stated in very general terms. Operating within the framework of university-level documents, the Faculty Plans set out more specific visions and strategic priorities. The Faculty Plan is the responsibility of the Dean/Principal and their Faculty

Council. In departmentalized Faculties, their Plan is further articulated by departmental plans, which are the responsibility of the Chair and members of the department. How then does graduate academic planning fit into these three levels?

- Recommendation 2: The primary responsibility for the program-specific academic planning of a graduate program should rest with the Graduate Program Director and the members of the graduate program. It is recognized that members of the graduate program will be drawn from several departments and several Faculties. It should be the responsibility of the GPD to contribute to the integration of their planning with the planning processes at the department level, at the Faculty level, and in FGS. While GPDs should be academic leaders and have some autonomy, any request or decision that has implications for resources must be relayed to the relevant Dean (or delegate).

Although members of a graduate program may be drawn from several Faculties, virtually every graduate program has a clear 'anchor' Faculty: the great majority of the on-load teaching and supervision are done by faculty members who hold appoints in the anchor Faculty. The term 'anchor' is carefully chosen. The graduate program is not 'within' that Faculty or even 'housed' there; rather it is anchored there, recognizing that it may draw upon faculty members from other Faculties.

- Recommendation 3: Every graduate program should have an identified anchor Faculty. The fundamental locus for integrating graduate, undergraduate, and research planning should be the Faculty. The anchor Faculty has primary responsibility for meeting the enrolment targets of its graduate programs and for providing resources to its graduate programs (just as it has responsibility for undergraduate enrolment targets and resources).

This, of course, largely describes what exists now; but this reality is not recognized sufficiently. Currently, graduate enrolment targets are assigned to Faculties and connected to their budgets (see Appendix 2); the Deans control most of the resources used to deliver graduate education and graduate student assistance, ie the allocation of faculty members' time, and the funds for teaching assistantships linked to the undergraduate curriculum. Under the YUFA collective agreement, the Dean is the employer and responsible to assign teaching loads. The Faculty Dean is also already clearly responsible for integrating graduate program needs in the domains of space planning, computing planning, and staff planning. Our strategy for enhancing graduate education should build upon these structures. It is within Faculties where graduate planning should be coordinated and integrated into other planning. It is there that the results of Undergraduate Program Reviews and OCGS reviews can be brought together, where a strategic view of the development of a discipline or interdisciplinary area can be developed, and where appointment plans – reflecting both undergraduate and graduate needs can be articulated and coordinated. The Dean/Principal together with their Councils is responsible for articulating this integrated vision. However in some departmentalized faculties, there was no collegial forum where undergraduate, graduate, and research plans could be discussed in an integrated way.

The anchor Faculty must recognize that its graduate programs involve faculty members from outside the Faculty and that this involvement is to be encouraged; reciprocally the Faculty



must recognize that its faculty members might be involved in graduate programs anchored in other Faculties and this involvement is to be supported and encouraged.

- Recommendation 4: The Faculty-level responsibility to integrate and coordinate graduate plans into their Faculty-level academic planning should be more explicitly articulated. Each faculty should have a collegial forum (perhaps Faculty Council) at which the integration of undergraduate, graduate, and research plans can be discussed. Also, the Faculty-level responsibility to encourage and support cross-Faculty contributions should be articulated.

The precise means and reporting relationships to ensure this integration will differ by Faculty; in some cases there will be an Associate Dean with graduate responsibilities. The means will differ between departmentalized and non-departmentalized Faculties. In some departmentalized Faculties, Chairs are being encouraged to be academic leaders, drawing together undergraduate, graduate, and research matters.

The consultation revealed considerable uncertainty among faculty members about the exact responsibilities of the AVP (Graduate)/Dean of FGS. This uncertainty is heightened when it is appreciated that much fundamental graduate planning and resource allocation occurs at the Faculty level. The responsibilities need to be clarified, most especially around what it means that the person holds the title of Associate Vice President (Graduate), and not just Dean of FGS. A recommendation as to the exact responsibilities is beyond the scope of this report. Nonetheless, it is clear that a AVP (Graduate) will have pan-university responsibilities, with particular concern for issues that arise in all graduate programs, for all graduate students, and for issues that involve cross-Faculty resource allocation. Also the responsibilities should be assigned recognizing the context for graduate studies in Ontario and across Canada. See Appendix 1. Of particular importance in Ontario will be the requirement that all universities develop their own system of quality assurance, including quality assurance at the graduate level. This system will replace the current system of OCGS reviews and mechanisms for approval of new graduate programs.

- Recommendation 5: The pan-university responsibilities of the AVP (Graduate) should be better articulated. The AVP (Graduate) should be responsible for quality assurance, including program review and new program approval at the graduate level across the entire university.

The Dean of Graduate Studies has always had a special responsibility to speak on behalf of the highest standards of academic work, both in teaching at the advanced level and in research. The Dean also has a responsibility on behalf of all graduate students, their financial support, and the graduate student experience. These responsibilities arise partly out of a sense that the graduate degree, especially the PhD, is an institutional degree. FGS is a centre of expertise on graduate matters and a forum for sharing concerns and best practices. On many matters, for example the implications of the CUPE collective agreement for graduate student support, it builds up an expertise that Faculties and individual programs simply do not and could not attain. FGS is the liaison between graduate programming at York and at other universities.

At present, there is considerable 'cross-Faculty movement' of faculty members: the faculty member is appointed to one Faculty (with all their on-load teaching responsibilities formally determined there) and yet they teach on-load in a graduate program anchored in another Faculty. This is important not only for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary graduate programs, but also for disciplinary programs. For example, in several humanities and social science disciplines Glendon faculty members teach (on their Glendon load) in graduate programs anchored in LA&PS. Curiously, despite the importance of this movement for York's interdisciplinary work, there is no monitoring of it, nor is any officer clearly responsible for encouraging and maintaining it. The consultation revealed that currently it has proven very difficult to make new arrangements for cross-Faculty movements. Long standing arrangements continue with little difficulty.

- Recommendation 6: The AVP (Graduate) should be responsible for monitoring, encouraging, and facilitating cross-Faculty movement at the graduate level. The AVP (Graduate) should be provided with base funding to finance new cross-Faculty movement on a temporary basis until long-run arrangements can be made.

It is beyond the scope of this report to recommend the source of the base funding, but a logical strategy would be to transfer a tiny portion of the base funds of each Faculty for this purpose.

There are analogous issues of faculty movement with Faculties, especially departmentalized Faculties. These intra-Faculty movements are just as important, indeed even more important, for interdisciplinary work at York. They are also important for drawing faculty members into disciplinary graduate programs. These intra-Faculty issues are best addressed at the Faculty level. It is the responsibility of the Dean/Principal to monitor, encourage, and facilitate such movements.

A GPD has a nuanced and complex role to play in academic planning, beyond the planning of their own graduate program. The consultation revealed that in some cases GPDs had seen little responsibility to keep in touch with the Dean of the Faculty that supplied the resources for their program and whose budget was reduced due to graduate enrolment shortfalls in their program. In other cases, GPDs made offers to incoming students containing enriched levels of support without the approval of the Dean of FGS. A GPD has a fundamental relationship with both the Dean of a Faculty and the Dean of FGS.

- Recommendation 7: The Graduate Program Director should be a joint appointment of the Dean of FGS and the Dean of the anchor Faculty. The GPD should have a reporting relationship to both. The Dean/Principal and Dean of FGS might delegate this reporting relationship in ways suited to their Faculty.

There is another layer of complexity in departmentalized Faculties. Most graduate programs will have a natural anchor department: the majority of on-load teaching and supervision is done by members of the anchor department, although the members of the program are drawn from many departments. The department is a fundamental structure of the Faculty. Departments are the third fundamental level of academic planning; faculty members are appointed to departments; departments are the vehicle to develop, mount, and review (through UPRs) the undergraduate curriculum; they are the vehicle for the tenure and promotion process. They are the focus for many initiatives, be they mentoring new faculty, developing a seminar series, or

supporting new pedagogies in that discipline. It is at the department level that the coordinated planning and budgeting for the undergraduate and graduate curricula can be best done.

- Recommendation 8: In departmentalized Faculties, graduate programs should have an identified anchor department. The academic planning of the graduate program should be integrated and coordinated with the planning of the anchor department. In particular the undergraduate and graduate curricula should be planned and budgeted in a coordinated manner; and the appointment needs of the graduate program should be integrated into the appointments planning of the anchor department. The appointment plans of the graduate program and graduate department are integrated into the Faculty's appointment plan. The GPD should have an explicit role in the governance of the department and should work closely and cooperatively with the Chair.

The precise means to ensure this coordination and for the GPD to contribute to departmental governance will differ by Faculty and department. In some cases currently, the GPD is a member of the department executive committee and the Chair is the collective academic leader. Special creativity will be needed to deal with the case of departments – for example the Department of Humanities and the Department of Social Science in LA&PS – that would be the anchor for several interdisciplinary graduate programs.

Faculties and departments are fundamental units for academic planning, especially appointments planning. They also have an important physical dimension: they are where people have offices, pick up their mail, attend meetings and seminars, and chat in the hall, and so on. Both the academic and the physical are important in building research communities. Faculties and departments are fundamental research communities. By anchoring graduate education within these communities, we enhance both graduate education and research.

In summary, there are multiple places for the academic planning of graduate education: each individual graduate program, the Faculties and departments, and FGS. The VPA&P and Senate APPRC are responsible for university-wide plans. The task is to identify as clearly as possible the responsibilities of each and to ensure as much as possible the coordination among them. A missing connection at present is between Faculty activities and plans and FGS activities and plans. There was little evidence that the Faculty plans had been read together to present an aggregate picture of graduate education for the whole university.

Recommendation 9: There should be a coordinating/planning committee chaired by the AVP (Graduate) made up of representatives of all the Faculties and of FGS. It might be that these representatives will be an Associate Dean from each Faculty.

A sound planning framework is only the beginning if we are to achieve our academic objectives in graduate education. We also need a clear accountability framework; only then can we satisfy the UAP's admonition that we know ourselves better to ensure that "we are truly improving in line with our objectives." The consultation saw relatively little linking of planning with accountability, very little measurement of results against objectives; perhaps this is because our current practices lack clarity. There is work still to be done.

## **Other Issues and Suggestions**

In the course of the consultation, a number of other issues arose that should be flagged for further attention. Each might be the subject of a further study.

- The current process for appointment and re-appointment to graduate programs has many problems. For example, programs develop criteria, yet frequently ask for exceptions.
- The current process for establishing the amount of assistance/support in an offer of admission is cumbersome and inflexible. There are continuing issues in science disciplines where the support includes money from a faculty member's research grant.
- The current system of marketing and advertising graduate programs was criticized as too centralized and unsuited to how graduate students choose programs.
- Some Faculties felt that many activities of FGS were overly bureaucratic and a redundant level of supervision. A careful analysis of each FGS task, many outlined on page 4 of the Realignment Report, might be undertaken to see whether it might be better handled at the Faculty level. It may prove that some activities might be devolved to certain Faculties, but not to all.

## Appendix 1

### Context: Graduate Studies at York University and in Canada

Any redesign of the organization and administration of graduate education takes place in a wider context. It is important to understand this context in order to ensure our organizational and administrative structures are well-suited to the challenges that graduate education will confront in the years ahead.

#### University Academic Priorities

It has been a longstanding priority at York University to enhance graduate programming and to increase the share of graduate enrolments in total enrolments. These graduate priorities are given particular prominence in the *University Academic Plan: Academic Priorities 2005 – 2010* (UAP).

Most universities in Canada have similar graduate priorities. The large research-intensive universities focus more on increasing the share of graduate enrolments, while the comprehensive universities focus more on growth. Even the primarily undergraduate universities seek to increase graduate enrolments at the Masters' level.

The similarity in priorities across universities means that there is always intense competition between universities to attract good graduate students and that it is difficult to expand graduate enrolments while still maintaining the quality of students. Many universities are trying to differentiate themselves according to the range and quality of their graduate programs.

#### Size of Graduate Programming

York University is a major centre of graduate education in Canada. York's graduate activities (measured by the number of students in 2005) are the second largest in Ontario and the ninth largest in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

A few examples locate York in the broad pattern. University of Toronto and University of Montreal have the largest number of graduate students by a considerable margin. The next group include UBC, Alberta, and McGill. York is comparable in size to Western, Concordia, and Ottawa. York is significantly larger than Queen's, McMaster, and Simon Fraser.

#### Ontario Government Policies

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<sup>1</sup> The data in this, and following sections unless indicated, are taken from 37<sup>th</sup> *Statistical Report 1992-2005*, Canadian Association of Graduate Studies, 2008.

The provincial government through its operating and capital grants, and through tuition policy and financial assistance to graduate students, has direct influence over graduate enrolments.

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the focus of Ontario policy was to expand capacity at the undergraduate level to accommodate the double cohort and the demographic and other forces increasing the demand for undergraduate university education. The focus then shifted to the graduate level, anticipating that these same forces would increase demand for graduate education. In 2003 a Task Force Report from the Council of Ontario Universities recommended that “the province establish a 10-year goal of doubling graduate enrolment in Ontario universities.” The Rae review in 2005 also recommended graduate expansion. In 2005, the Government of Ontario announced its *Reaching Higher Plan for Postsecondary Education*. It committed to “significantly expand graduate education by 12,000 full-time students by 2007-08 and 14,000 students by 2009-10.” This would be approximately a 40% increase over Ontario’s full-time graduate enrolments in 2004.

For the first time in over twenty years, the universities’ priority to increase graduate enrolment was matched by a government willingness to finance the expansion. The Ontario government has provided both operating and capital funds to support the planned expansion. All universities submitted plans for expansion and eventually each university was assigned a target and an operating grant to finance it (provided the planned increase in enrolment is achieved). Perhaps not surprisingly, the total requests submitted by Ontario universities exceeded the expansion planned by government. Competition for students has been intense and many universities have not made their graduate enrolment targets.

### Federal Government Policies

The federal government does not have any direct involvement with graduate enrolments, but it has significant influence through the provision of financial support for graduate students. The three national granting councils (CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC) have programs for support of graduate students. In 2002 as part of its national strategy for innovation, the federal government declared that graduate enrolments at both the masters’ and doctoral levels should increase by 5 percent annually to 2010. A major new initiative was launched in 2003, the Canada Graduate Scholarship Programme, intended to make our support levels for graduate students internationally competitive. And in 2008, the Vanier Scholarships for doctoral students were announced, providing even higher levels of support.

The focus of federal policy is support for research – highly complementary to graduate education – and since the late 1990s the federal support for research at universities has increased very significantly. The budgets of the three federal granting councils were increased and major new programs were introduced including the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Canada Research Chairs Program, the Network of Centres of Excellence Program, Support for

Indirect Costs of Federally-funded Research, and Genome Canada. In the case of some graduate programs, especially in science, health, and engineering, the faculty members' research grants provide an crucial source of support for graduate students.

### Enrolment Growth

Beginning in about 2000, graduate enrolments began to grow rapidly across Canada. From 2000 to 2005, national enrolments grew by 30% and Ontario enrolments grew by 24%. In contrast, York enrolments grew by only 13%. York had grown more rapidly than the national or provincial rates from 1992 to 2000.

York has grown extremely rapidly, by 20%, over the last two years (2005 to 2007). (This calculation uses the York Factbook data; system wide data are not yet available for comparison.)

### Graduate Share in Total Enrolments

Despite the large size of York's graduate activity, it has a smaller share of graduate in total enrolments than most comparator universities. (System wide comparative data are most available for Ontario.) In 2004, York's graduate share in total enrolments was 9.7% compared to the Ontario system's 10.3%. Toronto was 18%, Queen's 14.5%, Ottawa 13%, Carleton 12.6%, Western 11.7%, and McMaster 11.5%.<sup>2</sup>

After the recent rapid graduate growth, York's share was 11.1% in 2007. (Comparable data from other Ontario universities are not yet available.)

### Fields of Graduate Study

It has been a longstanding priority at York University to become a more comprehensive university by diversifying its enrolments, particularly through new degree programs in health, engineering and applied science, and professional fields. This diversification would be at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The recent Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) reports do not provide data on graduate enrolments by field by university; they only report total Canadian enrolments by field. Using these national data and the York Factbook data, we can roughly compare York's pattern of fields with the national pattern of fields (as defined by CAGS). The field definitions are broad (CAGS uses Statistics Canada definitions) and are somewhat problematic, because different universities assign their graduate programs under these broad fields in different ways. Nonetheless, a rough picture can be discerned.

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<sup>2</sup> Data are taken from *Facts and Figures 2006: A Compendium of Statistics on Ontario Universities*, Council of Ontario Universities, 2006.

York has a significantly higher share of its graduate enrolments in the fields: 'Arts and Communication,' 'Social Sciences and Humanities,' and 'Business, Management, and Public Administration.'

York has a significantly lower share of its graduate enrolments in the fields: 'Education,' 'Physical and Life Sciences,' 'Engineering and Architecture,' 'Health and Fitness,' and 'Natural resources.'

#### Other Graduate Issues:

There are a number of issues that will shape graduate education in Ontario, some recent and others longstanding. They include:

- proposed changes to the Ontario Council of Graduate Studies regulations for the review of graduate programs (OCGS Reviews) which will shift responsibility for quality assessment to the universities, though subject the universities to audit. There are also changes proposed to the process for approving new graduate programs.
- increased concern about the graduate student experience; and the use of the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (GPSS) to assess the student experience
- changing demographics of graduate students (older, often immigrants, other commitments, different life stages etc.)
- increased concern about how graduate education prepares students for careers outside of academe
- development of more opportunities for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work and collaboration, and for team-based projects
- accreditation of professional programs
- increased interest in 'professional' degrees
- concern about time to completion of graduate degrees and attrition in graduate programs
- concern about graduate tuition fees and the adequacy of student support
- concern about academic quality of graduate programs
- concern about quality assurance in an international context and the international mobility of students
- desire to increase the numbers of international students
- development of joint and dual degree programs (using two or more universities)
- concern about increasingly complex requirements dealing with accountability, research ethics, and intellectual property



## Appendix 2:

### Academic Planning, University Finances, and Budgeting

The organization and administration of graduate education take place within the basic academic planning and budgeting structures of the university. It is important to recognize and understand these university structures when considering any redesign of the administrative arrangements for graduate education.

#### Academic Planning

There are many academic planning processes in the university, being undertaken by different units, following different timetables, and responding to different initiatives and forces. Nonetheless, it is possible to present a highly simplified picture which captures the essential elements.

There are three key levels of academic planning: the university level, the faculty level, and in the case of departmentalized faculties, the department level. Each level prepares an academic plan.

The fundamental academic planning document at the university level is the University Academic Plan, prepared by the Vice President Academic and the Senate Academic Policy and Planning Committee (APPC) and approved by Senate. The current plan, *University Academic Plan: Academic Priorities 2005-2010 (UAP)* was approved by Senate in June 2005.

The context for university-wide academic planning is shaped by other fundamental documents such as York University's Mission Statement, planning principles adopted in earlier University Academic Plans, *2020 Vision: The Future of York University* (endorsed by Senate 1992), and *Principles Guiding Research at York* (approved by Senate 2001).

The *UAP* recognizes that academic planning "must be supple, capable of responding quickly to external phenomena in a timely and appropriate manner." Thus the *UAP* is not a blueprint, but rather a broad statement of strategic direction.

Also, the *UAP* articulates priorities at the university level. Of necessity, many of these priorities must be stated in very general terms. The academic activities of York University are extraordinarily diverse – from fine arts to engineering, from business to environmental studies. Each broad area requires its own more specific academic plan. These are provided by the faculty plans. At regular intervals, Senate APPC issues a call for faculty plans. During the fall of 2008, APPC will be issuing this call.

Operating within the general framework of university-wide documents, the faculty plans set out more specific visions and strategic priorities. The faculty plan is the responsibility of the dean/principal and their faculty council. Each faculty may also have its own key strategic

planning documents that shape its overall academic development. In departmentalized faculties, the faculty plan is further articulated by the department plans.

A crucial academic planning decision is the appointment of tenure-stream faculty members. These appointments are rooted in and justified by academic plans. The Vice-President Academic calls for appointment requests from the deans/principal of the faculties. In departmentalized faculties the dean/principal receives appointment requests from the departments. The appointment process moves from the designation of the field (and rank) of appointment, through the search, and finally to selection and offer of appointment. These appointments move through the same three-level academic planning process and are based upon the three levels of academic plan. The key to good appointment planning is good academic planning at the university, faculty, and department levels. It is at the faculty level that this crucial part of academic plans is implemented: tenure-stream appointments are made to the faculties, and within departmentalized faculties to departments. (Although not formally an academic planning process, the tenure and promotion process moves through these same structures and levels: from department, to faculty, to university level.)

A recent initiative at York has been the development of business plans – or what might alternatively be called ‘plans for implementation of the academic plan.’ These annual documents set out the initiatives to implement the academic plans. Also, they endeavour to establish benchmarks to assess progress towards academic objectives. Thus far, business plans have been developed at the level of the Vice President Academic and the level of the faculty.

Another important component of academic planning is the regular review of existing undergraduate degree programs (UPRs) and graduate degree programs (OCGS reviews). These reviews operate under general guidelines established by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV); each university establishes its own policy and procedures for these reviews which must be in conformity with the OCAV guidelines. (To be precise, this correctly characterizes the current framework for UPRs, but captures only the spirit of the current OCGS reviews. It is proposed that OCGS reviews be changed to follow the same framework as the UPRs.) These degree reviews are important means to carefully consider academic objectives, to set out the current means to achieve them, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to develop initiatives to strengthen the degree programs. The reviews are crucial not just for internal academic planning, but also for quality assurance directed toward those outside the university.

There are also procedures for the approval of new undergraduate and graduate degree programs. OCAV is now developing revisions to the framework for the approval of new degree programs

Other planning processes integral to academic planning are space planning, computing and academic technology planning, library planning, and student financial assistance planning. These tend to be handled at the university wide-level, but faculties gather together their concerns for input into the university plans. For example, deans articulate their space needs within the university space planning, and faculties forward their computing plans as input into the university-wide computing plan.

## University Finances

University finances and budgets are very complicated. Nonetheless, it is possible to present a highly simplified picture which captures the essential elements. It is fundamental to recognize that academic plans come first. Academic plans must drive budget planning.

The starting point for budgeting is a forecast of the money that the university will have available for its operations. The money comes from two main sources: government operating grants and tuition fees. Both the operating grants and fees depend upon enrolments – very simply, if enrolments go up, the university has more money to spend and if enrolments go down, there is less money available. (There are also funds from research grants and contracts, and monies from endowments and annual fundraising, which contribute to operating revenues. Although each of these is important, they are relatively small and not of the essence to this analysis.)

The funding of capital expenditure is extremely important but cannot be dealt with in this simplified picture.

In recent years, the Government of Ontario has provided new operating grants for the growth of undergraduate education and for the growth of graduate education. Each university has a target level for undergraduate enrolment growth and graduate enrolment growth. If these targets are achieved, the university receives the additional operating grant for the growth. If the university falls below its growth target, it loses the operating grant (and the tuition fees) for the shortfall. (However, if the university grows beyond its target, it does not get still additional operating grants, rather only the tuition fees.)

## University Budgeting

Each university begins its planning and budgeting assuming it will achieve its undergraduate and graduate enrolment targets. Given the target enrolment, total money (from operating grants and tuition fees) available for expenditure is known. Again, there are many complexities, but a simplified picture is possible.

First, certain funds are allocated to cover inescapable cost increases, for example insurance costs, heating costs, and faculty and staff salary increases. Sometimes funds are set aside for special priorities – for example faculty appointments or support for graduate students. Then the available funds are divided between the five divisions that make up the entire university, the largest of which is the Vice President Academic's division.

Unfortunately, over most of the last decade and likely in the years ahead, the increase in total university income is less than the increase in total costs and therefore each division receives a budget cut. Its allocation is smaller than in the previous year.

On receiving its allocation, each division divides it among its subunits. The Vice President Academic divides her/his allocation among the faculties (with an allocation for other subunits such as libraries etc). Again, the faculties in most years have faced a budget cut because the Vice President Academic Division (and all divisions) faced a budget cut.

Each faculty (other than FGS) receives its allocation (its budget) and is given the responsibility of meeting an undergraduate enrolment target and a graduate enrolment target. Thus the fundamental responsibility to achieve the total enrolments needed by the entire university – both undergraduate and graduate – rests with the faculties. If each faculty meets its targets, the overall university budget is sound. If faculties do not meet the targets, there are problems: the overall university budget assumed a certain total amount of money would be available to spend, but there is a shortfall.

Also of course, if a faculty does not meet its undergraduate and graduate enrolment target, there is a shortfall in its own faculty budget.

Thus, the faculties are fundamental organizational units in the university financial and budget planning, just as they are fundamental organizational units in academic planning. The financial and budgeting structure of the university is mapped onto the academic planning structure. The faculties are given responsibility to achieve the undergraduate and graduate enrolment targets and are given the resources to hire faculty and to deliver the education for their students, both undergraduate and graduate. Hence, the faculties at York have come to be called 'resource' faculties and the dean/principal has come to be called a 'resource' dean.

A recent initiative at York has been the development of Integrated Resource Planning (IRP), intended to make a closer link between academic plans and budget allocations. When an academic priority is identified, it should be possible to identify resources allocated to pursue this priority, and also to provide measures of the extent to which the priority has been realised. IRP is in the early stages of implementation.

Faculty of Graduate Studies in Academic Planning, Finances, and Budgeting

The basic structures for academic planning and budgeting are: the university-wide level, the resource faculties, and their departments. The complex task for the organization and administration of graduate education is how to integrate and coordinate graduate education with the basic structures.

In principle, graduate education could be the responsibility of each resource faculty (and their departments) and integrated into their academic planning and budgeting. There would be no Faculty of Graduate Studies. The dean and faculty council of each resource faculty would be responsible for both undergraduate and graduate education. This approach is relatively rare in Canadian and US universities, although it is common in European universities.

Most Canadian and US universities create another organizational unit – a School of Graduate Studies or a Faculty of Graduate Studies – with special responsibility for graduate education within the basic structures. This is the case at York. However, the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) is not a regular faculty within these basic structures. The Faculty of Graduate Studies is not a resource faculty. The same is true at virtually all Canadian and US universities: the school/faculty of graduate studies is not a resource faculty.

Some Canadian universities have a mixed model. Their Faculty/School of Graduate Studies deals with graduate education in most faculties; but certain faculties operate on their own, usually these are professional faculties.

It is interesting to note that another type of academic unit – the Organized Research Units (ORUs) – share some of the complex dilemmas as FGS. The ORUs must integrate and coordinate with the basic three-level structures, particularly for example making sure that their priorities regarding tenure stream appointments are part of the decision making. And ORUs have a potentially significant place in graduate education, as focal points for interdisciplinary research and places where graduate students can receive financial support and participate in research.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies at York has a budget, within the Vice President Academic's division. The FGS budget is divided roughly into two parts. The first part, representing about 85 percent of expenditure, provides money for financial support of graduate students. Very often, the terms of this financial support are set out in the letter sent to each student when they are offered admission to their graduate program. The second part of the FGS budget pays the salaries of the staff and the administrative costs in the FGS office.

Two of the central tasks of FGS are the delivery of the curricula of the graduate degree programs and the provision of financial support for graduate students. For both of these tasks, FGS utilizes resources that are in the budgets of the resource faculties. To deliver the curricula, FGS utilizes the time of faculty members whose salaries are in the budgets of the resource faculties. Also the dean/principal of the resource faculty is formally responsible for the

assignments of the teaching load of each faculty member. To support graduate students, FGS uses teaching assistant positions that are used to deliver the undergraduate curriculum and are funded through the budgets of the resource faculties.

In addition, many other activities of FGS are funded through the budgets of the resource faculties. For example, many of the YUSA staff positions of the graduate programs are funded this way, as are the computing budgets to support graduate education.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies, unlike any other faculty, has a university-wide responsibility. At York, and in many universities, this university-wide role is recognized by having the Dean of FGS also hold the position of Associate Vice President (AVP). This AVP is responsible for all aspects of quality control in graduate education and for maintaining equitable standards across all academic disciplines. Of course all faculty members and administrators are committed to academic excellence, but there are always pressures of other priorities and concerns. In most universities, including York, the Dean of FGS/AVP has a special responsibility to articulate standards of academic excellence, in both teaching and research, and to speak in their behalf in the councils of the university.

Thus the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the resource faculties are inextricably interconnected in both academic planning and budgeting. The question is: what organisation and administrative structure for FGS will best allow York to flourish?

### Appendix 3: Consultations

Sheila Embleton, Vice-President Academic & Provost (until June 30 2009)  
Doug Peers, Associate Vice-President (Graduate)/Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies  
Mamdouh Shoukri, President  
Patrick Monahan, Vice-President Academic & Provost (from July 1 2009)

Lorna Wright, Chair, Faculty of Graduate Studies Council  
Faculty of Graduate Studies Council  
Faculty of Graduate Studies, APPC  
Graduate Program Directors  
Graduate Students Association, Executive  
David Leyton-Brown, former Dean, FGS, and former Director OCGS  
John Lennox, former Dean, FGS  
Ron Pearlman, former Dean, FGS  
Susan Warwick, Associate Dean, FGS  
Asia Weiss, Associate Dean FGS  
Brian Abner, Associate Vice-President, Academic Resources Planning  
Adrian Shubert, Associate Vice-President, International  
Deans' Meeting  
Senate, APPC  
Bob Everett, Secretary to Senate, APPC  
Franco Vaccarino, Principal, U of T Scarborough  
Michael Marrus, former dean of the School of Graduate Studies, U of T  
Professor Suzanne MacDonald  
Professor Bernie Lightman  
Professor John Spencer  
Professor Jonathan Edmondson  
Professor Marcel Martel  
History Program Grad Council  
Professor Julia Creet  
Professor Ross Rudolph

Professor George Comninel  
Bob Drummond, Dean of Arts  
Martin Singer, Dean-designate LA&PS  
Faculty of Arts Chairs' Meeting  
Professor Paul Axelrod  
Professor Barbara Crow  
Patrick Monahan, Dean, Osgoode  
Professor Ben Richardson

Faculty of Science and Engineering Council  
Professor Norman Yan  
Nick Cercone, Dean FSE  
Walter Tholen, Acting Dean FSE  
Professor Anatharaman Kumarakrishnan  
Ken McRoberts, Principal, Glendon College  
Glendon Chairs and Coordinators  
Barbara Rahder, Dean, FES  
Professor Martin Bunch  
Rhonda Lenton, Dean, Atkinson  
Atkinson College Council  
Barbara Sellers-Young, Dean, Fine Arts  
Professor John O'Neill  
Professor Nick Rogers  
Statistical Consulting Service  
Alice Pitt, Dean, Education  
Professor Joan Steigerwald  
Dezso Horvath, Dean, Schulich  
Professor Bernie Wolfe  
Harvey Skinner, Dean, Health  
Professor Gordon Flett  
Professor Philip Kelly

Written submissions from: GPD Caucus, Faculty of Science and Engineering, Professor Dorothy de Val (Fine Arts), Glendon Faculty Council