

Green Paper Working Group
Teaching and Learning
Executive Summary

A. Vision Statement

York University is a preeminent, learning-centred institution that is responsive to the changing needs of a knowledge-based global society. Our diverse, world-class faculty embrace a range of pedagogical approaches aimed at inspiring students to become reflectively engaged citizens who are socially responsible and able to succeed anywhere in the world.

B. Core values and overarching principles

- An institutional culture that values teaching and learning
- Reflective and evolving approaches to teaching and learning
- Promotion and facilitation of individualized learning
- Integration of theory and practice
- A commitment to democratic citizenship and a global perspective
- Fundamental and transferable skills
- An open, accessible and inclusive teaching and learning environment

C. The Current State: Results of a Force Field Analysis

“Restraining Forces”

1. Cultural
 - Changes in teaching and learning practices are not perceived as important
 - The perception that research is valued more highly than other contributions.
2. Structural - changes in teaching practices are not seen to be feasible
 - Inadequate resources
 - Academic freedom / Collective Agreement issues
 - Discourse about teaching diverts attention from learning
 - There is no shared University reference point
 - Rigid 40:40:20 workload allocation for faculty
 - The current organization of how our curriculum is delivered and the institutional structures we have in place create obstacles rather than pathways for teaching

“Driving forces”

1. Focus on *learning* instead of teaching
 - Build awareness that most university resources are based on student numbers
 - UUDLEs and new Quality Assessment framework
 - AODA requirements for accessibility will require reconsideration of conventional practices.
2. Reframe teaching as a collective responsibility
3. Build on problem-based, inquiry-based, hands-on learning
4. Partnerships with communities, industries, community colleges, other universities
5. Embed wider framework of scholarship (eg Boyer’s framework 1990) at York
6. Expand *information literacy* to support learning and assignments
7. Potential to review % in current workload allocations
8. Opportunities to align undergraduate and graduate programs while maintaining a commitment to interdisciplinary programs.

D. Recommendations for Priority Directions

Goal: “York brings learning to life and life to learning”

Enhancing the Learning Environment

- Develop a University Community Service Learning (or Community-Based Learning) Structure
- Expand internships and/or co-ops
- Explore and expand in-class integration of theory and practice
- Support field placements and practicums for both undergraduate and graduate
- Educate our community about the value of hands-on learning
- Curriculum review
- Enhance interdisciplinary learning
- Reorganize general education
- Capstone courses
- Give students a voice
- Strategize regarding effective and efficient means by which to improve **accessibility**
- Align opportunities for student career exploration with the academic advising process
- Utilize E-learning as a tool to enhance Learning
- Enhance transferable skills in the curriculum - programs, courses, and pedagogical approaches to prepare students for the future through the acquisition of durable, transferable skills such as information literacy, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills.
- Lifelong learning
- Foster global, democratic citizenship

Support Professional Development and Innovation in Teaching and Curriculum

- Establish a teaching and learning innovation fund
- Expand professional development opportunities for FT and PT CDs
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for the integration of part-time CDs
- Create a “Great Teachers in Action Teaching Demonstration Network”
- Expand faculty support and development by the Centre for Support of Teaching
- Create a space for the creative development and testing of teaching ideas
- Establish a committee to assess the potential for a differential teaching load and for increased flexibility

Align Policies and Procedures to Reflect Core Values & Overarching Principles

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Discussion Paper

A. Vision Statement

York University is a preeminent, learning-centred institution that is responsive to the changing needs of a knowledge-based global society. Our diverse, world-class faculty embrace a range of pedagogical approaches aimed at inspiring students to become reflectively engaged citizens who are socially responsible and able to succeed anywhere in the world.

B. Core values and overarching principles

Quality in teaching and learning has its foundation in core values and overarching principles. Based on both research on teaching and learning, and extensive discussions on this topic among members of the GPWG, the following values and principles emerged that were also felt to: 1) reflect York's institutional traditions and strengths; and 2) have the potential to set York apart from other institutions if fully embraced:

- An institutional culture that values teaching and learning, and that is also *seen* to value and support teaching, including enhancement of organizational structures and processes to support and enable teaching and learning. Evidence of a culture that highlights and values teaching and learning includes:
 - o a 'presence' for York's commitment to teaching on York's web site, and improved and more coordinated links to information about teaching and learning initiatives and supports, in order to emphasize the importance of teaching and learning and enhance access to relevant information
 - o enhanced attention to the recognition of and rewards for effective teaching, for example in relation to the encouragement of nominations for and celebration of internal and external teaching awards, and in tenure and promotion and merit pay considerations, in turn fostering greater passion for and pride in teaching
 - o opportunities for significant interaction between full-time faculty and students to promote greater engagement in teaching and learning
 - o articulation of a York "covenant" with its students, setting out York's distinctive features and what students can expect to gain from their educational experience at this university
- Reflective and evolving approaches to teaching and learning, characterized by:
 - o student-centred teaching practices that emphasize the learning process rather than the product
 - o flexibility in teaching and learning, evidenced in evolving course design and teaching methods, to respond to and anticipate changes in students' learning needs and interests, as well as changes in the discipline/field
 - o implementation of models of collaborative teaching that reach across disciplines, fields and perspectives, and engage senior faculty with junior colleagues in mentoring and sharing of teaching practices and experiences
 - o teaching and learning viewed as a community enterprise focused around evidence-informed practice
 - o appreciation of the role of teaching beyond the classroom, so that instructors see themselves not just as teachers but as role models for engaged citizenship
- Promotion and facilitation of individualized learning. Recognizing that students learn and succeed in different ways, York can foster learning and empowerment for all of its students by:

- creating opportunities for students to select from a range of programs, courses, and experiential education opportunities crossing disciplines and Faculties, both at York and beyond
 - providing a range of delivery modes to suit students' learning needs and pace
 - offering opportunities for students to interact with faculty members and other students in a variety of ways, both in class and through technology-assisted communication
- Integration of theory and practice. The community that is York and the wider communities of which York is part – both local and global – provide opportunities for students to both engage and contribute. University study has its foundation in curiosity-driven or enquiry-based research, but university education should also offer opportunities for the application of theoretical and research-based concepts learned in class to “real world” situations, either within the classroom/institution or beyond. Elements of this integration of theory and practice might include:
- problem-based, collaborative approaches to learning
 - community-based learning and other opportunities for experiential education
 - recognition and integration of a range of student experiences and viewpoints into teaching
 - integration of academic and co-curricular aspects of learning
- ‘Social experience with a social conscience’. A central component of a university education is inculcating in our students a sense of democratic citizenship and social justice – cultivating a global perspective of the social and ethical issues around what they are learning. This goal can be greatly enhanced by giving students opportunities to volunteer, perform public service, and through other community engagement activities that align with their interests and/or academic studies.
- Attention to the development of fundamental and transferable skills (in addition to the relevant current knowledge in the field of study) in courses across the curriculum. While knowledge itself may be evolutionary, skills and capacities such as those below – and particularly the ability to write and otherwise communicate clearly and effectively – represent “durable” learning that will serve students throughout their lives and promote life-long learning:
- writing/communication skills
 - critical thinking
 - research and analysis
 - collaborative skills
 - information literacy
- An open, accessible and inclusive teaching and learning environment, which reflects and embraces the diversity of our community, such that we not only have students from a range of backgrounds in our classes, but their perspectives, experiences and contributions are acknowledged and drawn into teaching and learning. Elements of inclusivity might include:
- an interactive approach to teaching and learning
 - fostering of openness to/valuing of a range of disciplines; questions and perspectives; student experiences and viewpoints; and types of learners
 - fostering of an atmosphere of respect: where controversy is welcomed but leavened with compassion
 - promotion of collaborative teaching and learning models

- appreciation of the importance of open two-way communication among students and between instructors and students (communication includes feedback that is timely, relevant and “actionable”)

C. The Current State: Results of a Force Field Analysis

“Restraining Forces”

1. Cultural

- Changes in teaching and learning practices are not perceived as important or necessary to sustain the institution:
 - i. Students will keep coming to York because of our location
 - ii. Students will stay at York because they are already here
 - iii. Students are receiving a good educational experience
 - iv. Traditional models of teaching are good enough / the only models available
- The current University Academic Plan prioritized research due in part to a sense that the emphasis at York has been insufficiently focused on professional standing and contributions. Nevertheless, the perception still exists that research is valued more highly than other contributions. Suggestions:
 - i. Hiring: candidates routinely asked for a research presentation, a small minority of units assess teaching potential beyond how well a candidate manages their presentation
 - ii. Higher expectations and rewards for research than for teaching – “research stars”
 - iii. Few (if any) explicit expectations for professional development of educational knowledge, skills or roles
 - iv. Perception that research is given greater weight in T&P and merit decisions
 - v. Given that the institution currently places little value on teaching, efforts for individuals to engage in teaching excellence get stifled. Has an impact on individual philosophies and priorities.

2. Structural - changes in teaching practices are not seen to be feasible:

- Inadequate resources
 - i. Changes that would improve teaching quality would be very time-consuming and expensive, to the detriment of research activities
 - ii. The lack of monetary resources and the forecast of budget cuts can hamper and negatively influence innovative teaching. (e.g. Martin, Roger, November 2009, *The Walrus*, “Who killed Canada’s Education Advantage? A forensic investigation into the disappearance of public education investment in Canada” pp. 22-27)
 - iii. We cannot afford to/continue to offer the kinds of educational experiences that might enrich student learning and/or that students request (labs, hands-on experience, research-informed learning, projects, experiential and community-based learning)
- Large reliance on PT course directors
- Academic freedom / Collective Agreement issues
- Discourse about teaching (i.e. our own activities) diverts attention from learning (i.e. what students need and experience) – balance is needed

- There is no shared University reference point or definition of characteristics of ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ teaching
- Rigid 40:40:20 workload allocation for faculty, across entire career, regardless of individual goals, skills or preferences
- Teaching perceived to be under-resourced, intensification of faculty workloads is a well-established concept in the literature.
- The current organization of how our curriculum is delivered and the institutional structures we have in place (including resource planning) create obstacles, rather than pathways for facilitated team-teaching. Consider for example the organization of general education and how that could be reorganized to have a YU course offered on one specific subject, such as sustainability, leadership or globalization, taught by a group of instructors, covering the perspective of a biologist, environmentalist and political scientist.

“Driving forces”

1. Focus on *learning* instead of teaching

- Build awareness that majority of university resources are based on student numbers (vs. research grants) and that financial stability is ultimately based on students’ academic experience. Reframe and re-label teaching costs as investments in educational effectiveness and student experience, so ultimately benefitting York’s reputation and funding.
- UUDLEs (and potentially new program review processes associated with a newly emerging Quality Assessment framework) will require new attention to pedagogy and curriculum design, as well as content coverage and organization. Continue to use and expand opportunities for educational development arising through UPRs and the new Quality Council process for new undergraduate and graduate programs and reviews of existing programs.
- AODA requirements for accessibility will require reconsideration of conventional practices.

2. Reframe teaching as a collective responsibility to a program to build cohesion and community support

- Requires that we have better information about what’s actually happening in courses and programs, and how well it’s working.
- Enable faculty to get more useful and frequent information about their teaching and courses by leveraging capability for online evaluations
- Student voices need to be heard including an effective feedback mechanism to connect student evaluations with improvements and changes to courses
- Expand opportunities to ‘improve’ / develop teaching
- Building of respect for pedagogy and sharing existing teaching strengths. This includes opening doors and visiting other course directors’ classrooms across the university to learn about teaching excellence.
- Build awareness that we can improve teaching by making small changes and that many changes can improve ‘teaching time- efficiency’ and effectiveness
- Team teaching

3. Build on problem-based, inquiry-based, hands-on learning in the academic plans of the institution
 - Experiential education and community based learning opportunities (including internships, field trips/courses, mini-lectures and workshop series, industry, consortia, etc) to provide opportunities for application and reflection.
 - Learning means “finding out” not just remembering information.
 - Build awareness and skills to use technology to facilitate experiential and research-based learning across the curriculum
 - Collaborate on educational initiatives such as EE to share learning and organize resources efficiently
 - Identify environments which offer opportunities for practical /authentic learning experience and build partnerships, consortia to gain from trade and share or distribute costs.

4. Explore possible partnerships with communities, industries, community colleges, other universities to increase opportunities.
 - Including non-academics and community members in the classroom to add value to learning
 - Life-long learning approach
 - Multiple pathways to learning
 - What is the potential for strengthening the relationship between degree and non-degree programs?
 - Leveraging resources, expertise and community relationships with greater collaboration regarding programs and services between faculties and student service units

5. Embed wider framework of scholarship to recognize different kinds of academic contribution (eg Boyer’s framework 1990) at York
 - Use framework to support recognition of diverse forms and formats of academic / professional contribution, including performance, clinical, engagement with community-based projects, interdisciplinary etc.
 - Use framework to strengthen integration of ‘pillars’ of UAP (eg Scholarship of engagement gives flexibility to integrate contributions to community and internationalization in ways that conventional ‘research’ focus may preclude or exclude)
 - Clarify expectations for professional development and meaningful contributions in all aspects of academic work / roles
 - Review policies and procedures to determine whether teaching is included/recognized appropriately (eg merit form)
 - Improve quality and appropriateness of information and processes used to evaluate teaching, to improve value and effectiveness for instructors and to justify giving greater weight to teaching in T&P decisions, merit etc. This requires the development of much clearer standards for obtaining excellence in teaching.
 - Chairs, FACs, teaching award selection committees etc. need to be better informed about how to assess teaching appropriately for high stakes decisions
 - University guidelines would be helpful
 - Review and change institutional documents etc. to emphasize learning and address implications
 - Willingness to make changes can build on shared desire to make current system better (Aside: could contribute to improved labour relations)
 - Develop evidence-informed institutional statement of conditions associated with high quality learning and characteristics of teaching that promotes it. [Note: Statement becomes reference point for program design, curriculum initiatives, recognition of teaching contributions and teaching development activities.]

6. Changes in student skills and expectations need to be considered –
- 50% students using moodle and learning management systems coming into university; experiences with technology high
 - want/need flexibility
 - volunteering is required in high school – want additional opportunities
 - “engage me when I’m off campus...then I have time to have a conversation with you from my home” perspective – come to campus to “do essential stuff and for services, etc.”
 - NSSE supports interest in experiential education
 - one of the top two reasons for coming to university is career related
7. Students come to university with high comfort levels in using technology, however, they rarely come with the skills to find, evaluate and *use quality information* to support their learning and assignments.
- Information Literacy education is an opportunity to further distinguish York as the university to choose in order to become a successful life-long learner. The increasing pedagogical emphasis on inquiry-based learning and service learning will require a deeper attention to the development of autonomous researchers equipped with the capacity to not only find answers to particular questions but also to identify evidence which supports the social, political, scientific, and/or legal claims they will make as they take up their places in the world. There is potential to more deeply integrate information literacy proficiencies and issues throughout the curriculum in such a way that all students receive relevant, assignment-driven instruction that is tied to their subject area and helps acculturate them to their discipline.
8. Potential to review % in current workload allocations and explore opportunities to increase flexibility for individuals and units.
9. The opportunity to align teaching strengths at the undergraduate and graduate levels while maintaining a commitment to interdisciplinary programs and sharing of resources where appropriate.
10. The time is now to “invest” in leveraging new practices and policies around teaching at York in light of the budget situation.

D. Recommendations for Priority Directions

Goal: ‘York brings learning to life and life to learning’

The focus for this GPWG was originally defined as “teaching and learning” and the current state described in *Section B* incorporates an analysis of both. In terms of enhancing student education, however, the group determined that the emphasis needs to be on *learning*. The following section provides a list of initiatives that were submitted by members of the GPWP as holding promise in supporting and/or expanding educational strategies that contribute to the realization of the core values and overarching principles - Enhancing the Learning Environment. Finally, suggestions are offered regarding the processes that might facilitate the learning initiatives. The processes focus on: 1) Support Professional Development and Innovation in Teaching and Curriculum; and, 2) Align Policies and Procedures to Reflect Core Values and Overarching Principles.

Enhancing the Learning Environment

The GPWG emphasized the need for bluesky thinking if we hoped to differentiate York and obtain our vision for education. The Working Group considered both how we learn (educational strategies that contribute to the core values and overarching principles) and what we learn (how our curriculum contributes to the realization of those values and principles). There was a strong consensus that “real change” will not be realized by tinkering at the edges but rather will necessitate some sort of change across the curricula. Examples of promising initiatives identified by the group are listed below:

Initiatives:

1. Integrate theory and practice as core to all degree requirements. Experiential education provides a framework for the integration of observations, generalizations, reflections and revisions as part of an integrated approach to learning.
 - Educate our community about the value that hands-on learning adds to our students, faculties and communities:
 - i. UUDLEs and the newly emerging Quality Council framework from COU/OCAV is a driving force that supports this process
 - ii. Provide resources to fully explore the integration of experiential education strategies into our curriculum to address students’ expressed desire to link with communities in order to gain more applied experience while they are completing their undergraduate degrees
 - iii. Invest in a centralized office to coordinate, oversee and develop various EE opportunities with Faculties; allowing for each individual Faculty to operationalize and manage its own set of priorities; ultimately a designated EE coordinator in each Faculty would be ideal.
 - iv. Provide Faculties with opportunities to collaborate and learn from one another on and about EE projects
 - v. In order to best determine how to move forward, a community service learning committee comprised of students, faculty and staff might be established to consider coordination, oversight, outreach, relationship management and potential risk management concerns depending on external sites for CBL, CSL and TIP.
 - vi. From a quantitative perspective and given the establishment of a significant data pool over time, we could identify any potential linkages between service learning opportunities to GPA, retention rates and securing research and/or employment opportunities. In addition, increases in media coverage may be desirable related to University reputation.
 - Develop a University Community Service Learning Structure (or Community Based Learning Program)

In alignment with the UAP commitment to enhancing community learning and the student experience, the concept of community service learning is intended to foster engagement, reflective thinking, civic responsibility and community partnerships. It creates the opportunity to apply academic research and teaching towards the betterment of social issues within local communities. York students, faculty and staff are already being recognized for their positive contributions to surrounding communities and beyond through service learning and volunteerism. As such, this recommendation involves building on this foundation by developing the infrastructure to support the curricular expansion of community service learning.

This approach would enhance students' learning experiences and the University's relevance and reputation in the community. Most importantly, students would be applying their knowledge, skills and abilities in a tangible context, linking theory and practice. In addition to valuable learning and experiential opportunities, students would have the prospect to further develop skills, such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration and leadership. A program like this can highlight the positive impact that York students, faculty and staff are having on the community. The desired end result is a culture of increased social awareness, civic responsibility and community partnership, with improved actual and perceived relevance of York undergraduate education, which directly contributes to student recruitment, retention and engagement objectives.

- i. Introduce a co-curricular activity, such as an "alternative" reading week program, which provides students with valuable practical experience by contributing to the local community during the fall or spring reading weeks - the activity should promote the application of knowledge from the classroom in an interdisciplinary and diverse context. This approach would foster student engagement and offer students an alternative to more traditional non-academic reading week activities.
 - ii. Identify opportunities for suitable Honours thesis research and major research projects to involve primary or secondary participation in community service learning initiatives, while overseeing a small group of lower level undergraduate students. For the lower level undergraduate students, this engaging experience would provide the opportunity to participate in the application of research and explore their interests in graduate level studies and/or career directions. The Honours students leading the projects would also acquire valuable project management and leadership experience while conducting their research. Although opportunities already exist informally at the graduate level, a similar community service learning model could also be formalized as it relates to graduate students overseeing undergraduate students in the context of their research. These initiatives could be further enriched through the inclusion of career exploration components, such as workshops.
- Expand the Technology Internship Program (TIP) across the University including internships and/or co-ops (see Appendix A for further information) for liberal arts and professional programs as well as technical.

Students and their parents are increasingly identifying career outcomes as a priority when choosing a post-secondary institution. Co-curricular internships provide students with the opportunity to apply their knowledge from the classroom in relevant paid work term positions. As such, this recommendation is to expand the existing Technology Internship Program (TIP) to a broader University wide internship and/or co-op program. This would provide the opportunity to leverage the existing structure, which involves the collaborative management of the program through partnerships between Faculties and the Career Centre. The Faculties provide academic leadership for the program (eg. setting eligibility criteria and assigning grades) and the Career Centre contributes job search, career exploration and program coordination/administration expertise.

It is important to note that York International also provides opportunities to work abroad through their York International Internship Program (YIIP).

- Explore and expand in-class integration of theory and practice including, for example, simulations, laboratories.

- Explore/support field placements and practicums at both the undergraduate and graduate levels where applicable including the creation of independent research/study courses where they do not currently exist.

2. Curriculum review - Ask units to reflect/report on the ways that the curriculum supports the realization of the core values and overarching principles

- Incorporate this task as part of the UPRs (through UUDLEs) and newly emerging Quality Council framework for undergraduate and graduate reviews
- Incorporate as a priority in Faculty Academic Plans
- Think about who our students are and their needs, both those who are pursuing graduate education for a career in teaching and research and those who are pursuing related careers.

3. Enhance interdisciplinary learning

- **INTERact** – formally encourage inter-disciplinary student work on real-world projects
Annual project for students that requires inter-disciplinary work on a meaningful and topical project brief e.g. an Education student is teamed with an Environmental studies student and a Fine Arts student and given a real-world project brief.
- (Introduce or) reorganize general education – currently students are exposed to multiple disciplines by the requirement that they take one course in social sciences, one course in the humanities, and one course in natural science, and/or modes of reasoning, or foundations. The General Education Committee might instead consider a model where there is an interdisciplinary general education course organized around a specific topic (eg., sustainability) that is team taught by several faculty from different disciplines so that students see how a biologist, sociologist and philosopher, for example, might approach the issue of sustainability. Several different topics might be selected in order to give students some choice.
- Examining what administrative structures/practices could enhance our support of graduate interdisciplinary programs, particularly in relation to our ability to provide appropriate program-specific courses and supervisory support without overloading faculty appointed to more than one graduate program.

4. Rethink general education - Utilize a portion of the first or second year foundations course to embed curriculum within the course that focuses on student success and reflective thinking; use a team teaching approach with contributions from Counselling & Disability Services, the Writing Centre, various student success departments across the Faculties, the Career Centre and other academic and support services as applicable (ie. learning skills and strategies, writing skills, career exploration, information literacy, etc.)

- Opportunity to build on the success of the foundations of learning course, which provides students with explicit support in maximizing their experience at York, which is validated by embedding the material within the structure of a compulsory course
- Sessions could be integrated into the regular lectures or treated as on campus “field trips” during the regular class time to increase student familiarity with the campus and services
- *Challenges* may include coordination and availability of resources, and buy-in from faculty and the support units

5. Some of the above initiatives might be best facilitated/supported through the development of core/capstone courses (potentially with shared facilitation based on expertise among faculty, support staff and community partners in a team teaching approach) which emphasize student success and interdisciplinary studies. For example:

- Transition to university course focused on student success, which incorporates learning strategies and skills, writing skills, and career exploration (i.e. the existing foundations of learning course could provide a structural basis)
- Interdisciplinary general education courses, which creates the opportunity for students to understand their field of study in a broader context (i.e. one example discussed in the working group was a general education course on sustainability)
- Community service learning courses, which align with the curriculum and provide students with valuable practical experience and exposure to contemporary societal issues
- Course(s) focused on supporting students in creating meaningful connections between their education, experiential/service learning and career experiences and assists them to explore and prepare for transition to further education and/or other career and life pursuits
- *Challenges* would include coordination and availability of resources, and buy-in from faculty and staff

6. Give *Students a Voice* - Students should have an opportunity to try to make the most of their own education and this includes having information about professors and courses

- Expand the number of ways that students have to provide feedback on teaching and learning (in addition to formal course evaluations) and ensure that course directors are responding as appropriate to students' requests for change
- Fund discipline-based student associations to create an online Anti-Calendar, like UofT's
- Develop a teaching website, akin to the York Research website, where each instructor has a personalized profile, with picture, explaining what they are most proud of in terms of what they do with their classes, or any other information, including course-specific information, they wish to provide.
- Every course should have a web presence including at least the course outline like Atkinson had or the Faculty of Health
- Set up a university based **Teaching Evaluation Working Group** that will draw on current research and expertise to:
 - explore better ways of integrating and implementing the results of student evaluations at departmental/area levels
 - develop concrete practices and means of changing the prevalent student perception that teaching evaluations do not have any consequences
 - write up a report with specific and concrete recommendations
 - present a summary of this report at Faculty council meetings and Senate

7. Strategize regarding the development of the most effective and efficient means by which to improve **accessibility** including targeted populations such as commuter students, first generation, PT, mature, internationally educated professionals (IEPs), Aboriginal, youth at risk – this does not mean compromising standards or quality but rather ensuring that capable students are ensured access. Suggestions include:

- Ensure that each Faculty offers at least one degree program in a flexible, non-traditional format (e.g. student can achieve a degree by attending classes in the evenings and on weekends) and move toward offering more degrees in alternative formats
- Specifically consider how we can enhance the delivery of lectures to improve the life of the commuter students (i.e. can we find a way to reduce the number of trips to campus through increasing the number of "blended" courses). This needs to be done in a planned, deliberate fashion including targeting specific courses or programs (rather than just the ones that faculty decide to address). Also look at what technologies we can use to enhance the interactions between students and instructors outside of class time and independent of "distance."
- Review recruitment, admissions and retention

- Integrate more information about career and graduate school options at all stages of degree and non-degree programs
- Leverage the York Region expansion and the potential need for York to take some portion of that growth to increase the quality of our undergraduate students by raising our GPA requirements for new applicants and ensuring that recruiting strategies are in place such that we will attract the majority of ‘first choice’ candidates
- Establish a fund to support more and better de-centralized advising services, with a commitment to expanded pan-university professional development and faculty- specific advising forums/activities
- Develop programs and courses that are flexible, accessible and that consider as much as possible the individual needs of students.
- Support student academic success in all phases across the student life cycle. For example:
 - Weave student success resources into course and/or program delivery (writing centre, counselors, career centre, etc).
 - Support the expansion of student success strategies in the classroom and beyond.

8. Align opportunities for student career exploration with the academic advising process by introducing a career exploration session prior to or parallel to course selection for incoming students and expand the Career Centre’s professional development sessions for academic advisors across the university

- Improves the student experience through the consistency and accuracy of information provided and early access to career exploration expertise, which supports students in making more informed decisions and aids in student success and retention
- *Challenges* would include coordination and availability of resources, and buy-in from the advising centre leaders and staff

9. Utilizing E-learning as a tool to enhance Learning:

E-learning combines “flexible learning as well as distance learning and uses ICT’s as a communications and delivery tool between individuals and groups, to support students and improve the management of learning” with the “aim to transform higher education into a more student-focused and flexible system,” providing “ubiquitous and lifelong access to higher education.” (Source: Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE).

Currently at York, e-learning is mixed. In some cases, students access syllabi, course readings, limited online material, and bibliographic services. In other cases, some teacher-student and student-student communications are provided, and in a few courses, more advanced technologies are employed. Getting out in front of e-learning technology has the potential to: 1. Enhance the quality of teaching and learning for both on-campus and off-campus students; 2. Widen access to university education, especially for non-traditional or external students by facilitating virtual-mobility of students; 3. Supplement traditional learning modalities in a cost-effective way; and 4. Ultimately, enable learners to study any program offered by York from anywhere in the world through virtualization and remote e-learning technologies.

- Joint effort required with support from senior administration to provide conditions under which e-learning would prosper and faculty who have the subject knowledge and expertise to show the will to adapt to newer learning pedagogies and technological tools.
- CST facilitates local dialogues within Faculties on e-learning to allow for localized solutions customized to different programs/degrees to develop.
- Based on the recommendations of the CST and possibly Deans, select pilot projects and initiatives (at least a few from each Faculty) and facilitate development through funding, technical and infrastructural support, and pedagogical guidance on online delivery.

- Disseminate findings through peer-reviews, workshops and showcase the pilot projects on e-learning. Involve teaching staff by inviting constructive critique.
- Offer workshops to teaching staff on e-learning, technological tools that are available, course delivery models that can be used, and address concerns of skeptics through capacity building.
- For all instructors so desiring, use technology course fees to fund digital capture of classroom/lecture experience, in MP4 format for mobile devices. A similar proposal is in the draft IT Strategy for York.
- **No website left behind!** In order to work towards an innovative teaching environment, York might start with ensuring that *every* course has a dedicated course website as a requirement. For some faculty members/instructors, the site (template) may be just a link to the course outline, the timetable and contact details. For others, this can be Moodle, blog etc. The proposal introduces a minimum requirement which will hopefully lead to a commitment to complementary resources. The method of teaching delivery does not need to change, but to meet the needs of our mobile and part-time working student body, we need to provide better access to resources, requirements etc. Faculty members/instructors need only complete an online form to populate the website. Course websites are common in many faculties, but there is currently no requirement to provide this baseline service across York.
- Technology simulations

10. Enhance transferable skills in the curriculum - programs, courses, and pedagogical approaches to prepare students for the future through the acquisition of durable, transferable skills such as information literacy, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills. (See one example: Information Literacy and the Role of York University Library in teaching and facilitating student learning, in Appendix A)

11. Lifelong learning

- Identify how college (CAAT) partnerships, continuing education, distance education can all be relative and meaningful ways for people to learn and continue their education. Also requires a clear differentiation between what colleges and universities aim to accomplish.
- Stronger links between degree and non-degree courses and programs with the aim of providing advanced degree credit for completion of non-degree certificates
- Should we open up access for people to audit courses?

12. Global, democratic citizenship – foster collaborative, community and global learning.

- Experience the global perspective. York is well-positioned in learning in and of the world. We have an incredibly diverse population, unlike many institutions (e.g., multi-racial; 1st generation; refugees). The York student body brings a truly global perspective to the educational experience, in and out of the classroom. At York you get a “true liberal” education, and exposure to new ways of seeing the world we live in.
- Linking teaching and learning initiatives with internationalization strategy to expand opportunities for students to have international placements
- Democratic citizenship and social conscience are areas where we can effectively bridge our colleges in the learning experience at York. By developing community based learning initiatives, our colleges can be engaged in social justice projects with the York community. In combination with our general education program, we can further introduce issues on diversity, society, and globalization in the curriculum.

Support Professional Development and Innovation in Teaching and Curriculum

In order to support the above initiatives, thought will need to be given to how to best support faculty including both full-time and part-time course directors. A number of initiatives were identified to create an environment for teachers and teaching that inspires and supports creativity, scholarship, and innovation.

Initiatives:

1. Establish a teaching and learning innovation fund and create more opportunities as an institution to recognize excellence in teaching and learning (e.g. awards, host conferences, etc.)
2. Establish more and better professional development opportunities for both full time and part time teaching faculty that are accessible, timely and appropriate (e.g. more fully support the *Develop a Teaching & Learning* infrastructure that supports teaching at all levels – may need managerial appointments at the Faculty level with a reporting mechanism up to the VPA&P
 - Establish expectations for participation in professional development for teaching
3. Develop a comprehensive strategy for the integration of part-time course directors into their Schools or Departments such that they feel valued and understand their contributions to the mission of their respective units and the university as a whole
4. Create a “*Great Teachers in Action* Teaching Demonstration Network” that will:
 - have a corresponding rich media website with webcast (video streamed) teaching demonstrations by exceptional and award-winning York instructors, educators and TAs
 - give in-person teaching demonstrations for new faculty, TAs, and faculty
 - offer formal and well organized mentoring for faculty and TAs
 - includes in class, hybrid and fully online, rich medias courses
5. Expand faculty support and development by the Centre of Support for Teaching
6. Create a space for the creative development, incubation and testing of teaching and curricular ideas
 - Profile teaching and learning on the York University web site to provide a shared network of resources
 - Develop a set of recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and course evaluations
 - Create a central online repository of service learning and experiential education opportunities across the University
7. Establish a committee to assess the potential for a differential ‘teaching load’ based on an individual assessment, and with the potential to vary over the lifespan of a career, that would reflect faculty skills and priorities
8. Establish a resource team lead by the Centre for the Support of Teaching, with assistance from Learning Technology Services, the Career Centre and/or Faculties/other departments as appropriate to develop a repertoire of resources/assignments/etc., which encourage active experiential learning and career exploration by students in the classroom
9. Review and analyse the organization of teaching to assess opportunities for increasing flexibility in order to advance teaching innovation such as collaborative teaching, interdisciplinary courses, pan-Faculty program creation at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
10. Create a University Teaching Innovation Fund to help faculty offset costs associated with the development of a new idea or change in their course curriculum.
11. Ensure that commitments to teaching and learning are expressed throughout the University at all levels (departments, Faculties, Colleges, administrative units) in ways that are visible and measurable.

Align Policies and Procedures to Reflect Core Values and Overarching Principles

There is much that York might do at minimal (or no) cost in aligning the University's policies and procedures to reflect the values and principles articulated above.

Initiatives:

1. Hiring practices should emphasize both teaching and research as core components of scholarship – this might include a lecture as part of the interview process.
2. Establish a committee to explore Tenure and Promotion standards for competence, high competence and teaching excellence. The language on the criteria for obtaining excellence (or even high competence and competence) is vague in many unit standards. Develop an attainable and credible standard so that a file with teaching excellence and research competence gets the same treatment as a file with Research Excellence and teaching competence. Criteria will have less to do with student evaluations; much more to do with superlative teaching skills; creative educational leadership; successful innovations; significant contributions to technological enrichment of teaching; publication of innovative textbooks, websites, online materials; development of significant new courses or curriculum reform; innovative ways to promote student involvement in research and opportunities for discovery-based learning; participation and presentations at pedagogical conference sessions. All Schools and Departments should be consistently and fairly addressing, defining, weighting and valuing excellent teaching (and supervision).
3. The FGS appointment criteria should be reviewed to determine whether scholarship more broadly defined might be incorporated into the criteria. Standards for membership versus supervision might vary.
4. Merit awards might be reviewed to determine the extent to which excellence in teaching is a factor in the decisions (including if any awards are given on the basis of excellence in teaching alone) and relative to the importance given to professional contributions and service
5. Celebrate Teaching:
 - Cultivate and promote the **Top Teaching at York** initiative: Going Beyond Bringing Research into the Classroom
 - Teaching Champions need to be recognized and utilized to engage colleagues to help change the culture and be motivators for successful change - Establish Distinguished University Teaching Professors
 - Fund Endowed Teaching Chairs, as at the University of Alberta
 - Rather than presenting teaching awards at Convocations, where few faculty attend, or announcing awards in the last Senate meeting of the academic year when the announcements get buried, hold a teaching excellence celebration in the Fall highlighting all teaching-related awards. Invite students of the honoured instructors research and scholarly achievement and/or service.
 - Establish an Honour Roll for teachers to broaden recognition of teaching beyond just the few winning annual awards. This also creates a pool of faculty recognized for their teaching, who would then be considered for other teaching honours internally and externally (e.g., 3M Awards).
 - Centralize nomination processes for external teaching awards and/or have a workshop to support nominations

Appendix A

1) Technology Internship Program (further details)

The current TIP program contributes to recruitment and retention efforts for the associated Faculties and provides students with valuable practical work experience and job search skills. However, expanding the program creates challenges related to coordination, resources and funding, as true co-curricular internships are not self funding. However, the contributions of the program are broader than can simply be captured in the expense per student. Given the existing structure, quality standards and employer relationships, expansion would be less costly than duplicating resources, structures and expertise in each Faculty, which is particularly important in our current financial climate. This would also promote the objectives of increased collaboration across Faculties and the reduction of silos. As with the community service learning structure, continued maintenance of a quality experience for employers and students is a necessity because of the potential reputation impacts. In essence, although additional resources would be necessary to expand university wide, this approach provides opportunities for increased economies of scale and scope. In order to best determine how to move forward with the expansion, an internship/coop committee should be established with members from the existing TIP Governance committee, students and additional faculty and staff as appropriate.

The TIP provides a proven structure for the internship experience, which fosters a continuous learning loop in that students apply their knowledge on the job, further develop their skills and knowledge while on work term in their 3rd or 4th year and then bring that experience and information with them back into the classroom to complete their studies. This contributes towards an enriched classroom experience for both the returning student and also for the students who did not participate in the program. The learning agreement (i.e. including learning outcomes), start of term and end of term communications, and work term report are important pieces of this continuous learning process. The existing structure allows for 4, 8, 12 and 16 month internships, with enrollment in a zero credit course for each term and pass/fail grading assessed by the faculty members. The students are also trained in job search skills, which they apply to securing internship positions. They also receive ongoing advising and support during their internship search process and while on work term.

Through contact with the employers and students, the Career Centre aids in ensuring that the internship is relevant to the field of study and works to moderate challenges should they arise between the student and the employer. In addition, employers' feedback indicates a movement away from more traditional and potentially restrictive co-op models. The existing TIP structure ensures that the program qualifies as an organized internship program by maintaining eligibility criteria, supporting the linkage to curriculum and monitoring the quality of the program (i.e. employers are eligible for a \$3000 tax credit for each student per term). This structure also increases the likelihood of a more positive and intentional learning and work term experience for students and employers, which further contributes to the reputation of the University and the perceived value of York degrees and curriculum. Measures of success for this program include the total number of; students on internships, employer partners, internship opportunities, positions filled, extension of work terms and TIP students hired by internship employers upon graduation, and the year over year growth in each of these categories. Cost per student and project budget vs. actuals are also important measures. In addition, the number of students who select their York program based on the availability of an internship program, and the nature of the overall program feedback from students and employers.

2) Information Literacy

Teaching and learning at York is not isolated to the classroom but occurs through a variety of mediums and environments such as co-op placements, online environments, labs, field trips and the library. Research processes are as important and crucial as subject content to academic success. They include awareness of library research tools and strategies, as well as discipline-specific research skills. They are the language through which ideas can be discovered, collated, explored and expressed. Research proficiencies also build confidence and independence, empowering students to fully participate in a scholarly community – much like speaking a language allows one to participate in that community.

Effective Information Literacy (IL) instruction mirrors the research requirements of a discipline at all stages and levels. Just as subject content is developed throughout the years of study in a discipline, early and ongoing integration of IL into the curriculum with increasing complexity that is in step with the needs of the discipline is crucial for student success and retention. Students who know how to find, evaluate and use information in their assignments develop confidence and expertise and can focus on higher level engagement with their subject matter.

Perhaps uniquely in Canada, the approach used by York Library also includes, wherever possible, an emphasis on some of the challenges and skills needed for interdisciplinary research, as well as exploration of the socio-political issues of information production, dissemination and preservation which impact researchers, particularly at the graduate and faculty levels. This approach stems not only from the scholarly interest in these issues and challenges, but also from the desire to support and build upon the University's traditional strengths - a commitment to interdisciplinarity and a strong tradition of social and political activism.

York can and does in many areas already, distinguish itself as a Teaching and Learning Institution by integrating IL throughout the curriculum in such a way that it:

1. Is delivered incrementally over the course of study, increasing in sophistication as subject content and subject-specific research tools are developed over time
2. Is closely tied to subject matter and other subject-specific research methods and tools
3. Becomes an integral part of assignments and testing, and is assessed in the same way that subject content and the use of discipline based research and communication are assessed over the course of a program of study.

York librarians are a significant resource. They have been very active in teaching and learning initiatives at the University and have won awards for their teaching. In particular, they have developed a reputation as Canadian leaders in information literacy initiatives. Some examples of successes are:

- At York, public service librarians teach more than 50% of our student body each year in workshops or lecture halls.
- Librarians have developed a number of online tools to assist research activities and have embedded library resources into the course management system and student portal.
- Librarians also teach for-credit courses in certain disciplines and offer extra-curricular programming designed for all members of the community at different levels of sophistication in the research process.
- This year, librarians are working in conjunction with FGS to develop workshops for graduate students on the research competencies required for thesis proposal writing. The scholarly communications team hosts workshops on issues in journal publishing,

and they are co-developing a learning commons with the writing centre, the learning skills centre and the counseling and development centre to better support undergraduate researchers.

- They are also working closely with several departments to incorporate information literacy learning objectives into all years of their degree programs. Librarians emphasize critical thinking, basic research tools and useful strategies for navigating what is increasingly a morass of undifferentiated online information.

Studies have shown that when students receive contextual, staged instruction on the use of library resources as an extension of their critical thinking and reasoning, they subsequently change the way they approach research for their courses. Once they have the tools to conduct discerning literature searches, to read critically and to evaluate the information they find, students recognize the benefits of these processes and are able to transfer these skills to other courses and assignments.

However, this can be done to an even greater extent by:

1. Identifying core courses at every level that require an information literacy component be integrated into the course with clear objectives and assessment.
2. Designing assignments that have a subject and a process component so that students have to demonstrate proficiency in the tools they use within the subject context.
3. Hands-on instruction is the most effective way to teach information literacy. This can be accomplished by providing multi-functional library computer labs that will accommodate the numbers of students that we need to instruct. For example, if a first year course has 1200 students enrolled, then they can be instructed over the course of a week or two in groups of 100 in a computer lab that seats 100 students. These “dry labs” will include hands-on instruction and practice, followed by take-home assignments that cover the skills taught in a subject-specific context.
4. The instruction would include communication tools in the discipline, evaluation of the communication (articles – scholarly and non-scholarly works); reading for information; writing effective annotations, reports, essays; use of software to accomplish specific tasks; ultimately using the skills as an extension of their critical thinking.

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