

A History of Academic Planning at York 1985-2018

The following is a history of academic planning at York since 1985 with an emphasis on Senate documents, initiatives and actors. Originally prepared in 2001 by Robert Everett of the University Secretariat and published as an appendix to the University Academic Plan 2005-2010, it was most recently updated in June 2014. Not included in this chronology are annual or (more commonly) twice-annual reports by senior academic administrators that assist in documenting progress in the attainment of planning objectives, provide the budgetary context for academic planning, and describe major strategies and initiatives for the achievement of goals.

APPC Academic Policy and Planning Committee (of Senate) 1985-2009

APPRC Academic Policy and Planning Committee (of Senate) 2009 – present

1985

December

Senate approves the report of the Task Force on Academic Planning at York, or APAY (as proposed by the Academic Policy and Planning Committee or APPC); APAY describes the actors, principles and processes by which academic planning will unfold at York. The report sets out an annual planning cycle and defines the linkages between academic and budgetary planning. Senate APPC will play a key role in the interactive academic and budget planning processes.

1986

May

Senate approves the first iteration of the University Academic Plan. As is required under the new APAY framework approved the previous year, APPC recommended adoption of a comprehensive academic plan. York becomes one of the first Canadian universities to adopt an objective-oriented approach to the evolution of academic activities.

November

APPC files a comprehensive report on UAP initiatives. APPC reported on responses from other universities to York's planning initiative. APPC also noted that units had begun preparing their inaugural five-year plans and that APPC itself had launched a UAP initiative which focused on defining York(s) priorities.

1987

March

Senate approves interim procedures for Undergraduate Program Reviews. As called for in the University Academic Plan York becomes one of the first Canadian universities to adopt criteria and process for regular reviews of undergraduate programs.

May

Senate approves University Academic Plan II. The changes approved by Senate applied to every section of the UAP:

- York's mission
- Societal responsibilities
- Environmental constraints and opportunities
- Equity in appointments and a positive climate for women at York
- Expectations that faculty members will pursue teaching, research and service
- Enhanced support of teaching
- Enhanced support of research
- Commitment to part-time and mature students
- Emphasis on (selective accessibility) in admissions
- Cautious enrolment policy that is sensitive to staff and faculty resource availability
- Enhancement of libraries and computing support
- Greater flexibility in planning to pursue new opportunities as they arise
- Enrichment of undergraduate education

October

On a recommendation from APPC, Senate approves amendments to planning processes as APAY II. Changes approved by Senate situate planning in a local-central dialectic. APPC is identified as Senate's leading committee for policy formulation and harmonization.

1988

May

APPC submits a summary report on progress toward certain UAP objectives. Senate approves a series of recommendations involving new or substantially revised sections of the UAP. Senate approved the following new or substantially altered objectives to the UAP:

- Professional Studies
- Part-Time and Mature Students
- Scholarships and Student Assistance
- International Activities
- Enrolment

In addition, Senate approved a recommendation from the Committee on Academic Computing concerning the inclusion of text about computing objectives in the UAP.

1989

May

At two meetings held this month, Senate approves University Academic Plan III. Changes approved by Senate involved the following sections of the UAP:

- Libraries
- Teaching
- Academic Computing
- Undergraduate Education
- Enrolment Policy
- Achieving Our Objectives
- Environmental Constraints and Opportunities

The amendments proposed by APPC included the addition of an appendix on York(s position in system-wide corridor negotiations (i.e., those leading to the creating of a funding formula for universities contingent on achieving enrolment within a negotiated parameter).

1990

May

Senate approves revisions to numerous constituent sections of the University Academic Plan. Changes were developed by a number of working groups composed of members of APPC and others in the academic community. Changes were approved to the following sections of the UAP:

- Graduate Education
- Research
- Other Academic Activities
- Professional Studies
- General Objectives
- Societal Responsibilities
- Undergraduate Education
- Part-Time and Mature Students
- Achieving Our Objectives (minor)

1991

June

APPC reports to Senate on academic planning issues. Among APPC's goals in 1991-1992 was an effort to make the UAP a more strategic document.

1992

January

Senate endorses *2020 Vision: The Future of York University*. The green paper was produced by the Enrolment Working Group, established by the Academic Policy and Planning Committee of Senate in partnership with the Administration. The document comprised a set of working assumptions to guide academic, physical and other planning activities at York University over the next three decades. *2020 Vision* introduced or extended themes such as diversifying curriculum and re-balancing enrolments (primarily expressed as a shift in the proportion of undergraduate and graduate students but also understood to entail more applied and professional study.) The

green paper assumed that York was a comprehensive university while mapping a path toward the development of new Faculties, programs and campuses.

March

The Board of Governors endorses 2020 Vision. The Board joined Senate in approving the plan given the attention to capital funding and other infrastructure in 2020 Vision.

Senate approves changes to University Academic Plan VI. APPC proposed changes to various elements of the document with a view toward recasting the plan as a more strategic and coherent document which would enable the University to deal more systematically with planning issues. The plan attempted to reference planning more directly to the University's financial context with the addition of specific text on resources for each of the constituent sections of the UAP.

1993

May

Senate approves a new section on Student Assistance for University Academic Plan VII. Changes to the UAP were based on recommendations made by a Working Group on Student Assistance. (This was the last time that the UAP was given a Roman numeral heading.)

1994

January

APPC establishes a working group to consider changes to the UAP section on Part-Time, Mature and Non-Traditional Students (Part IV, C)

May

Senate approves revisions to Part III of the University Academic Plan Changes to the Teaching and Learning section of Part III included a new name -- Teaching.

1995

April

Recommendations of the Working Group on Part-Time, Mature and Non-Traditional Students submitted to APPC Working Group issues companion report entitled "Planning for a New Paradigm." (These recommendations did not result in changes to the text of the UAP.)

May

The annual planning forum is geared toward "The Next UAP" with context supplied by guest speakers on the topics of Strategic Planning in Higher Education: The North American Context' Re-Conceptualizing Curriculum and Learning; External Linkages, International Curriculum and Local Communities.

October

APPC issues the annual Call for Plans. The Call was subtitled a "Message to the Community" and it warned of the need for steep budget cuts and asked:

Can all current programs be sustained?

Are some degree programs no longer economically viable?

How can academic units be restructured so as to support degree programs more efficiently?

Can departments within Faculties be merged?

Is there a way for cognate units to reorganize on a pan-University basis?

1996

May

The planning forum held on May 23 sought to illuminate major planning issues and approaches from Faculty perspectives in the context of integrated planning and budgeting, with attention to priorities in the University Academic Plan.

June

APPC's annual Call for Plans is issued. APPC takes the opportunity to urge planners to bring planning objectives identified in the previous two years to fruition by devising legislative timetables and taking other steps. APPC itself discloses an ambitious academic planning agenda for 1996-1997 that involves a review of APAY and efforts, with Senate committees and others, to encourage greater harmony.

December

APPC issues an unprecedented addendum to the Call for Plans which was woven around the theme of "Academic Profile Indicators: Assessing and Discussion Program Viability." APPC's addendum reiterated the need for attention to restructuring issues, and proposed a series of "crude indicators" of program viability:

- overall academic quality and prestige
- research activities
- YUPR commentaries (especially on structure)
- range and adequacy of curriculum choice
- enrolments per class at each year level, especially at the 3000- and 4000-level
- distinctiveness of the offerings relative to similar programs at York and elsewhere
- degree of specialization of curriculum offerings
- availability of comparable curriculum in other Faculties
- historic pattern of enrolments and projections of future demand
- relationship of a program and its curriculum offerings to other units, the Faculty as a whole, other Faculties, the University as a whole, and to overall academic planning
- ratio of instruction by part-time faculty and full-time faculty

1997

February

On a recommendation from the Committee on Curriculum and Academic Standards, Senate approves a Policy on Access to York Undergraduate Program Review Student Surveys. The policy sets out the terms under which survey data can be accessed. Student surveys had become a required element of YUPRs.

May

APPC presents Senate with an edited version of the UAP. Revisions are intended to delete stale references while ensuring a more coherent, consistent document after changes to the UAP have been made over time September.

In conjunction with the President, APPC commissions a background paper on Glendon in light of challenges facing the University as a result of enrolment shortfalls at the College. The final report was submitted in November. Publication of the report led to a call for proposals.

December

APPC calls for responses to the Glendon background paper and issues terms of reference for a process of consultation and development of recommendations.

1998

May

Senate approves a planning framework for Glendon over a three- to five-year period. The framework includes 11 specific points to guide planning at Glendon.

June

APPC issues an annual Call for Plans that is set against a forecast that York was poised to see relative financial stability after nearly a decade of budget cuts. If this projection holds, academic planning in the next three-year cycle will be conducted in a new and welcome context. The Call contained a series of 21 questions ranging over the full span of academic activities.

November

APPC sponsors a special planning forum on the topic of Planning Processes in Special Circumstances: Case Studies and Issues.” In the first of two special forums in 1998-1999, APPC posed a series of questions about planning processes in the context of trends in public policy and post-secondary funding:

Can internally-defined academic priorities be reconciled with external pressures, and if so how?

It is likely that many future funding opportunities must be assessed and pursued in a short span of time. Are current planning processes suitable in such circumstances? If not, how can processes be adapted without undermining academic planning principles?

How should York's planning processes address issues associated with demographic, application and enrolment patterns?

These questions related to trends such as tiered funding (for research infrastructure), conditional funding and demographic growth.

APPC recommends that the Vice-President (Academic Affairs) provide funding to help identify and support the development of promising curriculum proposals, and concluded that it should accept responsibility for ensuring that the University responds in an appropriate, timely and efficient manner to funding opportunities that are contingent upon meeting explicit objectives or that must be addressed in a short span of time.

1999

January

APPC reports to Senate on its analysis of the University's Fair Funding proposal. Under the Fair Funding opportunity, funds must be used to (increase the total number of faculty and enhance instructional quality at the University. York's share of the Fair Funding allocation was \$12.5 million. APPC reported that it had endorsed the proposed division of revenue between (innovation and consolidation (i.e., new programs and existing programs), and commented favourably on other aspects of the proposal, such as the accent on cooperative (inter-Faculty or inter-unit) planning.

February

The second in a series of special planning forums is held, with the focus on Planning Processes in Special Circumstances: Inter-Faculty Initiatives. In the second special forum of the year, APPC sought answers to these questions:

What are the formal policies and procedures for inter-Faculty planning that are now in place?

What informal practices appear to be working well -- or poorly? In what specific cases?

What can be done to facilitate the process?

What role should APPC play?

February

APPC established a Task Force on International Activities. The task force is asked to consider a wide range of issues which include, but are not limited to

degree and non-degree curriculum;
the possibility of creating a School of International Studies
recruitment, enrolment support of international students
research activities and research centres
exchange programs;

work study, co-op programs and internships.

April

APPC endorsed, for the purpose of consultations at the annual planning forum, a document prepared by the Vice-President (Academic Affairs) entitled Strategic Planning for the New Millennium. The document, described as a work in progress, was prepared on the basis of longer-term discussions with APPC and its Technical Sub-Committee, Deans, the Long-Range Planning Committee (YUFA - Administration).

May

The annual planning forum focuses on Strategic Planning for the New Millennium with a view toward identifying and supporting concrete initiatives. The 1999 forum featured discussions of these key themes in the New Millennium document:

- International Activities (Task Force Recommendations)
- Issues in Distance Education
- Directions for Health Studies
- Directions for Applied Science and Engineering
- Issues in Research
- Anticipating Changes in the External Environment
- Issues in Business Studies

June

APPC authorizes a series of initiatives coming out of the that year's planning forum, including the development of a "Prospectus for Engineering at York" prepared by the Dean of Applied Science submitted in 2000.

June

Senate approves comprehensive revisions to the Policy on Undergraduate Program Reviews. Changes approved by Senate were based on recommendations emerging out of the Undergraduate Program Review Advisory Committee (UPRAC) formed by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV).

June

APPC issues its annual Call for Plans, but, in a departure from previous practice, does not require planners to file detailed or multi-year plans. The Call posed two specific questions:

What significant changes in the context for planning or Faculty priorities have occurred since responses to the Call were submitted in the spring of 1999? How will Faculties respond?

Have there been impediments to realizing objectives since responses were submitted in the spring of 1999? If so, what are those impediments and how should they be overcome?

APPC chose this "experimental change in the customary planning mode" in order to "relieve planners of the burden of producing lengthy and elaborate documents on an annual basis. The

Committee also cited the detailed nature of responses to the 1998 Call and the “strong possibility that universities will be asked to respond in short order to new government initiatives” and hence “benefit from some additional flexibility.”

[From this year forward the Senate planning committee seldom decrees the creation of plans by Faculties for a variety of reasons, including the tendency to create plans in the first year of a Dean or Principal’s tenure. Faculties were found to be revising plans on their own rhythms. An exception was the year 2009.]

2000

March

APPC receives the report of the Task Force on International Activities and launches a new wave of consultations. The report, entitled “Moving Forward the Internationalization of York” becomes the focus of consultations with Senate committees (and others) and is the centrepiece of a dedicated forum that helps identify pilot projects.

May

In an effort to restore transparency to planning processes, APPC’s report to Senate this month provides an overview of responses to the Call for Plans. APPC is heartened by the continuing, active interest in developing innovative curriculum but is worried by the repeated emphasis on the lack of resources to accomplish academic planning objectives.

2000

June

Senate approves revisions to the pivotal Part VI of the UAP. Revisions to Part VI - including the new name of “Strategic Priorities” -- are intended to update, contextualization, and concretize key planning objectives. The new text puts a premium on regular reporting on progress toward the attainment of objectives.

APPC issues its annual Call for Plans. The Call poses a single questions for planners, one which was informed by Senate’s approval of revisions to the UAP and the impact of budget cuts: What steps have been taken to limit the effect of budget cuts on the achievement of Faculty and unit planning objectives and on efforts to pursue strategic priorities reflected in Part VI of the University Academic Plan?

2001

May

APPC reports on a planning agenda for 2001-2002 based on responses to the Call for Plans, meetings with Deans and Faculty Council representatives and discussion at the annual planning forum. the annual planning forum is set against the Call for Plans 2001-2002; possible revise and revisions of the University Academic Plan in 2001-2002; academic planning processes and the possibility of changes in 2001-2002; and academic planning priorities or initiatives that merit special attention or support. The forum was built around three breakout sessions:

Academic Implications of Changes in Ontario=s Post-Secondary System from York's Perspective (e.g., private programs and institutions, cooperation with CAATs and other institutions, conditional and targeted funding)

Academic Implications of Technology Enhanced Learning (e.g., Internet courses)

Academic Implications of Trends in Program Funding (e.g., fee de-regulation, cost recovery, revenue generation, non-degree curriculum)

June

Senate approves "Principles Guiding Research at York" as recommended by the Committee on Research with the concurrence of the Academic Policy and Planning Committee. The five principles are accompanied by a strategic research plan developed by the Vice-President Research and Innovation in consultation with Senate committees. The plan sets out specific objectives and processes by which to measure and report on progress.

2002

May

The planning forum for this year was organized around the theme of "Understanding and Responding to Secondary School Reform in Ontario." Following background talks at the opening plenary, participants discussed various aspects of preparation for additional growth and a new cohort of students.

October

In a "return to long term planning" after many years of a more improvised approach, APPC called for Faculties to prepare new five year plans. The Committee also asked planners to comment on two additional matters:

Preparations for the double cohort-driven enrolment growth

The role of UPRs and graduate program appraisals in unit and Faculty planning

2003

February

A special meeting of Senate was held to coincide with the annual planning forum on "Equity and Planning: Transforming Objectives into Action." The forum resulted in the creation of an action plan for focussing on equity-related planning initiatives.

October

It was agreed that it would not be appropriate for APPC to request "elaborate" documentation given that full plans had been submitted early in the year. However, APPC did agree to engage Faculty planners during the course of the year.

APPC determines and announces that it will not set about revising the pivotal “Strategic Priorities” section of the UAP, opting instead to create an entirely new plan.

2004

February

APPC asks planners to meet with it, and to prepare by submitting a document of no more than five pages on the implementation of strategic planning objectives, and impediments to success.

May

APPC confirms that the “Strategic Priorities” section of the UAP, due for renewal in 2004, would not be updated. Instead, a new University Academic Plan would be drafted and submitted to Senate.

Autumn

Preparations are underway to draft a new UAP. The steps taken include

- environmental scans
- consultations with Faculty planners and the wider community
- retrospective analysis of previous plans
- drafting of a discussion paper for feedback

Some possible themes for the new UAP were dropped from consideration during this process, including admissions and equity which is preserved in the UAP as a reference point alongside other enduring planning principles excellence in research and teaching; the special opportunities and responsibilities of an institution set in a uniquely dynamic, metropolitan and multi-cultural milieu; academic freedom, social justice, accessible education, and collegial self-governance; equity; the allocation of resources in line with academic objectives and the maximization of resources; balance and diversity; innovation and interdisciplinarity.

2005

May

Senate approves the University Academic Plan 2005-2010. The new plan identifies “enduring” planning values in the introduction and has two organizing themes: quality, and knowing ourselves and how others see us. The priorities are organized around the following categories:

- Research (described as paramount in an integrated plan)
- Graduate education
- Health (the establishment of a Faculty of Health and a possible medical school)
- Graduate education (enrolments and programs)
- York’s distinctiveness (including internationalization and communities)
- Identities and reputations
- Governance in support of other objectives

In presenting the plan, APPC emphasizes that success will depend on planners making “difficult choices.”

2006

April

APPC convenes a roundtable on UAP implementation and monitoring with the Vice-Presidents in anticipation of submitting a report to Senate on progress in June.

May

The spring academic planning forum was entitled “Improving the Experience and Broadening the Mandate: Part-Time, Mature and Non-Traditional Students. Constituent themes included:

Services for Students
Student Experience and Student Interaction
Pedagogy and Curriculum
Recruitment and Student Support
Graduate Studies and Research

APPC and SCOR submit a joint report to Senate on the prioritization of research in planning, finding, in general, that much more needs to be done to accomplish research goals. Each committee comments from the standpoint of its mandate, and together presents 17 recommendations concerning:

- the need to quantify and evaluate changes in research support over time in line with UAP goals
- innovative allocation decisions to promote research among the entire professoriate
- improve communications and coordination to achieve research goals
- urgent development of an indicators project
- tracking research activity at the University, Faculty, and Unit/discipline levels
- documenting and publicizing graduate student research activities
- a review of Organized Research Units at the Faculty and University levels, to resolve “fundamental questions about their status
- supporting researchers in connecting with other institutions and communities, and to foster cooperative internal and external partnerships
- develop appropriate initiatives, clarify responsibilities for publicizing research, and document efforts in annual reports of the vice-presidents
- monitor research cultures at the Faculty level including periodic consultation with faculty research committees and other bodies
- review mandates and responsibilities of bodies involved in governance of research
- early notice to the community and thorough consultations
- clarify assessment standards in relation to the achievement of UAP priorities,
- investing, maximize and increase resources, and for documenting the efficacy (or not) of allocations
- sophisticated research dimension addressed in the rationale for all new programs
- better integration of ORUs and other research structures
- better integrations of ORU needs into appointments planning

June

APPC comments for Senate's benefit on an action plan for the UAP.

October

APPC undertakes an initiative concerning on a "Research and the University Academic Plan: A Call to Colleagues for Implementation on Measuring Research." The project asks that Faculties and units embark on a three-step process that involves:

- disciplinary and interdisciplinary (or unit-level) articulation of the ways that we can
- measure the quantity, quality and impact of our research
- the collection of data in line with these indicators
- reflections on best practices and other actions that will help us to achieve the goals of the UAP.

Spring – Summer

Discussions sponsored by the Vice-President Academic begin on the future of the Liberal Arts on the Keele Campus.

September

A discussion paper on options for the Humanities and Social Sciences ("Restructuring on the Keele Campus of York University") is released by the Vice-President Academic and the Deans of Atkinson and Arts. The report is an early step in the creation of the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies from a merger of Arts and Atkinson.

2007

January

The Vice-President Academic and the Deans of Atkinson and Arts release a paper setting out options for the Liberal Arts and Professional Studies at the University. From this point until the start-up of the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies in 2009, APPC (and other Senate committees) are involved in the legislative and planning processes that concerning the assessment of options and approval of recommendations.

May

The planning forum this year covers the topic of "Involving Students Actively in Enhancing the Student Experience." Plenary presentations included "York University and Student Surveys," "Integrating Research, Teaching and Learning," an "Educating Democratic Citizens." Breakout groups explored these dimensions:

Student Engagement and Libraries: Promoting the Academic Dialogue
Students as Engaged Participants in Planning Processes
Mentoring and Experiential Learning
Enhancing the York Community Experience for Students
Curriculum Reform / Integrating Research, Teaching and Learning

May

APPC submits a UAP progress report to Senate documenting achievements – and challenges – in the implementation of academic planning goals. The format of the report was intended as a template that could be used for annual updates, but was considered somewhat unwieldy.

September

APPC and the Vice-President Academic launch a process whereby planners are required to submit an early notice of intentions to develop (major) curriculum proposals – at a stage when consultations and resource analysis have not yet been undertaken. Intentions are communicated to Deans / Principal, and to the University Secretariat / Office of the Vice-President Academic. (In the first year, and although it is indicated that proposals will be delayed or not considered unless the process is followed, many proposals work their way to Senate without notice having been given).

October

Five year plans are due in 2008, but APPC determines that a variety of factors – including major structural transitions – argue in favour of a one-year delay in calling for 2009-2014 plans. It is expected that Faculty submissions will provide a key input into the UAP 2010-2015. As an alternative, in its questions for planners, APPC posed the following questions:

What specific measures have been taken by your Faculty to enhance research cultures and what additional measures are planned for the coming years? How is the planning of faculty appointments and faculty hiring being used to advance research priorities (including interdisciplinarity, organized research units and graduate needs)? How does the Faculty measure its progress toward achieving its research objectives?

What specific measures have been taken by your Faculty to enhance the student experience and what additional measures are planned for the coming years? How are students involved in the planning for an improved student experience? What measures are planned to enhance the experience of part-time, mature and non-traditional students in your Faculty? How does your Faculty measure its progress toward achieving its student experience objectives?

2008

January

The annual academic planning forum is devoted to the topic “Advancing University Academic Plan Objectives in the Context of Demographic Trends and Public Policy.” Participants are asked to consider the future of the University in a number of areas, including enrolment growth, campus facilities and program development.

May

SCOR and APPC sponsor a workshop for unit and Faculty planners on “Integrating Research Priorities into Academic Planning: A Research Planning Workshop.” The interactive sessions focus on “Research and Academic Planning at York,” “University Priorities, Opportunities and Resources,” and “Engaging in Research Planning”

May

A UAP monitoring report is prepared in a format different from previous attempts to document UAP progress. APPC also notes that preliminary efforts are underway to develop an Integrated Resource Planning mechanism to invest resources in defined academic planning priorities. This is also intended to better coordinate and rationalize myriad planning processes.

October

APPC issues a call for five year Faculty plans. Faculties and the York University Libraries were asked to address themes in the current UAP and also to take account of these contexts;

- delivery of curriculum in multiple modes – day, evening, Fall / Winter / Summer – throughout the University, together with access
- implications for all Faculties of the new Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, the possibility of expansion in the sciences, and plans for medical and engineering proposals
- demographic trends resulting in growth pressures and how York and its Faculties should respond
- internationalization.

Some Faculties submitted their most recent strategic plan rather than create a new document for the purpose of responding to the Call

2009

May

APPC comments on five year plans submitted by Faculties and in doing so notes that more must be done to realize UAP goals and in particular to:

- preserve and whenever possible improve quality
- know ourselves, and look outward in doing so
- define the student experience, especially in academic terms, and create both a vocabulary and set of inclusive indicators of enrichment
- identify and tackle the tough choices that need to be made, in a strategic mode
- define progress and just as importantly measure progress
- build on a meaningful conversation about research cultures in order to make real inroads
- ensure that we have the appropriate kind and array of structures
- make connections across Faculty boundaries.

The President and Vice-President Academic and Provost announce a Provostial White Paper initiative with the aim of developing a long-term guiding vision for the University.

November

The Annual Academic Planning Forum is devoted to discussion of green papers issued under the Provostial White Paper process with particular emphasis on defining key priorities under the seven themes addressed by the green papers:

Student Experience
Teaching Innovation and Student Learning
Strategic Expansion of Research Activity
Strategic Enrolment and Program Planning
Internationalization
Community Engagement
York's Overall Reputation

2010

March

APPRC and the Provost jointly sponsor a special planning forum devoted to discussion of a draft Provostial White Paper.

April

Senate endorses a companion (shorter) document to the Provostial White Paper, which becomes a primary input into the next University Academic Plan.

2011

February

Senate approves the University Academic Plan 2010-2015. The plan's overarching themes were academic quality, student success, and engagement and outreach. The priority areas in an integrated plan were

Research Intensification
Enhancing Teaching and Learning
Enriching the Student Experience
Building Community and Extending our Global Reach
Strengthening Interdisciplinarity and Comprehensiveness
Promoting Effective Governance

The concluding sections cover the means by which to execute the plan and the key commitments.

June

The year's planning forum, sponsored by APPRC and the Provost, looks at "Teaching Focussed Appointments at Ontario Universities." Speakers from York, other universities, and the Canadian Association of University Teachers opened discussion. The forum was designed to illuminate perspectives on the implications of York expanding the range of disciplines and number of faculty members teaching in the alternate stream.

2012

May

APPRC reported on its annual discussions with the Deans, Principal and University Plan pivoting around the question:” With respect to the *University Academic Plan 2010-2015*, what objectives have you prioritized, how are you pursuing them, and what impediments, if any, are you encountering in implementing them?” The Committee also probed strategies for dealing with enrolment challenges. Examples of support that could be provided by Senate to planners included the following:

- provide leadership in streamlining processes and provide more information to Faculties about major initiatives
- continue to support worthy initiatives and provide constructive feedback on proposals so that future ones will be better
- continue to promote collegiality
- join with Faculties in urging greater attention to infrastructure (expansion, renovation) in support of academic planning priorities
- share perspectives on governance with Faculties and units
- continue to work at the current pace consider (restoring) a separate research committee to help manage and focus the mandate
- keep the new role of the Libraries in mind – a resource and partner in teaching, learning, research (including a great deal of research infrastructure in terms of storing, organizing and sharing) – and be sensitive to the fact that students place a high value on libraries and space within them
- support the decentralization of graduate studies
- support improvements in undergraduate recruitment such that programs are better profiled rather than York as a whole (highlight recent grads and the interesting jobs they've landed as a result of the specific educational opportunities they found at York, identify for students and parents specific opportunities and potential outcomes, give more prominence to the outstanding teaching done at York, with specific examples.

2013

April

Senate approves a new Strategic Research Plan: Building on Strengths following an intensive collegial consultation process. The SRP is the first of its kind for York since the year 2001. Six research themes described fundamental research strengths.

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

Five areas “where there is the greatest opportunity to meaningfully develop research” were identified as:

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

May

Following important presentations at the May meeting Senate by the Provost and Vice-President Finance and Administration on the University's financial challenges and their potential to thwart UAP objectives, APPR sponsors a planning forum (billed as a "community consultation") on the genesis, nature, extent and risk involved with budget problems.

Autumn

APPRC advises the administration on collegial aspects of the Academic and Administration Program Review process set in motion in the summer. Senate becomes more engaged in the process and an election process leads to the nomination of two Senators to join two members of APPRC on the Academic Sub-Committee of AAPR Steering Committee (December). APPRC itself was also involved providing advice on the Program Assessment Forms or PIFs.

2014

January – June

Senate receives regular reports on significant developments. Often facilitated by APPRC, the President and Provost bring updates on a Strategic Mandate Agreement with the provincial government and the opportunity to bid for a new campus (ultimately in York Region on the Markham Centre site that will host Pan-American and Parapan American games events).

February

The Senate meeting this month constituted the last stage in the consultations leading to the development of Program Information Forms used by programs in the AAPR process.

April

Senate endorses the University's engagement in a process leading to a bid for a new campus in York Region under the Major Capacity Expansion Policy Framework on the recommendation of APPRC.

May

APPRC reports to Senate on Faculty responses to its invitation to "identify for us the key planning challenges you and your colleagues face and the approaches that are being taken. We would also be grateful if you would highlight specific accomplishments with regard to UAP goals. It may be helpful to know that members of APPRC are particularly interested in the themes of quality (as always) and reputation." APPRC also invited respondents to identify impediments to fulfilling objectives and to suggest assistance the Committee and Senate can provide in support of Faculty and YUL planners. The Committee presented a series of recommendations and undertakings that will help shape its own agenda.

November

On November 13 the Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee sponsored an open forum on “Academic Priorities: Contexts, Planning and Implementation” following on the release of Academic and Administrative Program review task force reports.

2015

February

APPRC files its final report on its own engagement with the AAPR process in February.

May

APPRC finalizes and forwards a report to Senate on academic planning following discussions with the Deans, Principal and University Librarian which were framed by two questions:

What collegial processes and strategies have you utilized that are helping you to pursue the quality imperatives of the current University Academic Plan?
What priorities should the next UAP articulate?

The report contained a series of observations and recommendations which will be reviewed by the Committee as it begins the 2014-2015 governance cycle, which will focus at the outset on renewal of the University Academic Plan and developing programs for the Markham Centre campus.

September

A summative report on UAP 2010-2015 is submitted to Senate.

October

Consultations on the next University Academic Plan open when APPRC seeks Faculty Council input and advice from the collegium.

2016

April

Senate approves University Academic Plan 2015-2020. Constituent objectives are organized around seven priority areas:

Innovative, Quality Programs for Academic Excellence
Advancing Exploration, Innovation and Achievement in Scholarship, Research and related Creative Activities
Enhanced Quality in Teaching and Student Learning
A Student-Centred Approach
Enhanced Campus Experience
Enhanced Community Engagement

Enabling the Plan

October

APPRC sponsors a series of forum on recommendations contained in the Institutional Integrated Resource Plan working group reports.

2017

January - June

Senate meetings in the winter and spring feature segments of a “University Academic Plan” spotlight series in which members of the committee and senior academic administrators facilitate discussion of 6 key priority areas of the University Academic Plan.

January

The Acting Chair of APPRC and the Chair of Senate correspond with Faculty Councils asking them to respond to two questions set against University Academic Plan objectives:

How can York improve its tracking of progress and how can it use indicators to greatest advantage?

What specific indicators do you employ or should be employed to create the most inclusive possible set of indicators across the spectrum of scholarly, research and creative activities? Please provide concrete examples.

May

APPRC filed a report on its discussions with the Deans, Principal and University Librarian entitled “Perspectives on Planning in 2017.”

September – November

As a follow up to questions about indicators, APPRC began to consider how it might contribute to a University Academic Plan objective of better documenting and projecting academic activities in both quantitative and qualitative ways. This thinking evolved into an engagement with Senate on the development of “incomparable metrics,” encompassing the utilization of available platforms (or new ones) to compile information about teaching, research and a full range of scholarly activities. This initiative was also grounded in a collegial conversation geared toward influencing system-wide indicators and York-specific ones in anticipation of Strategic Mandate Agreement III negotiations.

2018

March

APPRC received responses to a pair of questions posed of the Deans and Principal:

Question 1:

“Innovative, Quality Programs for Academic Excellence” form Priority 1 of the University Academic Plan. At the *unit or program level* specifically, which initiatives are being undertaken in pursuit of Priority 1? How and why did you identify, prioritize and develop these initiatives?

Please note that Senators are interested in understanding

- how “academic excellence” is understood by programs and the collegial processes undertaken to create that understanding
- how the pursuit of academic excellence will be measured internally and externally
- the factors contributing to, hampering, or preventing success in these undertakings

Question 2:

Which of the other priorities and objectives of the UAP are commanding the greatest attention in 2017-2018, and why?

Senators are interested in understanding

- the factors that have promoted these objectives to the forefront
- what research objectives are being pursued and how in the context of promoting quality and academic excellence?

The responses were translated into a mind map intended to depict priorities, show interconnections and help identify future actions by the Committee.

February

APPRC partnered with Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy to sponsor a “Forum of Ideas” featuring posters from ten programs and the Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis on the support it provides to planners. Contributors included programs from Arts, Media, Performance and Design, Environmental Studies, Health, Lassonde, Schulich and Science. The Chair of Senate moderated a panel discussion as part of the event to explore what motivated innovations, how they were pursued and what support was instrumental.

May

Senate approved Strategic Research Plan 2018-2013: Towards New Heights. The plan pointed to a series of intersecting themes that define York’s broad strengths:

Advancing Fundamental Inquiry and Critical Knowledge;
Analyzing Cultures and Mobilizing Creativity;
Building Healthy Lives, Communities and Environments;
Exploring and Interrogating the Frontiers of Science and Technology;
Forging a Just and Equitable World; and
Integrating Entrepreneurial Innovation and the Public Good.

The areas of opportunity identified were the following:

Digital Cultures

Healthy Individuals, Health Communities and Global Health

Indigenous Futurities

Integration of Artificial Intelligence into Society and

Public Engagement for a Just and Sustainable World.

Robert Everett, University Secretariat

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