



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne
Canada's university

To the entire University community,
To our partners,

I am delighted to present you with the draft copy of what could become the University of Ottawa's strategic academic plan. This document is put forward for discussion and debate. It reflects the comments made by the University community during the winter of 2004 and the deliberations held by our 12 round-table forums. It has been approved by the Academic Planning Committee of Senate and by the co-chairs of the 12 round-tables as a discussion paper.

We can now launch the public consultations needed to help us verify and refine the new vision and direction that have emerged. In theory, given the already extensive consultations held to date, the current draft should prove a good reflection of the University community's concerns and views. However, it's one thing to help shape a preliminary vision for the future, but quite another to endorse a document that lays out a plan embraced by all. Hence the need for your help and input once again at this stage.

The relevance, legitimacy and ultimate impact of the strategic plan depend on the involvement of the entire University community and of all our institution's friends. Indeed, only wide-scale participation in the planning process can guarantee that each and every one of us truly identifies with the goals of the final plan. Simply put, we are planning the future of our university, of your university. That is why this document is going out to everyone and why we hope the discussions will focus on our institution as a whole. Again, this text is designed to prompt further discussion, and its itemized format is meant to ease consultation. The final version of the plan will be shorter and more condensed, and thus all the more forceful.

An action plan will be elaborated at the same time as a final strategic plan is crafted from this discussion paper. Right now, we have 4 major directions, 16 general goals and roughly 75 strategies. From these will stem an array of specific actions or follow-ups. We promise to find the tools and resources needed to carry out the innovative work that will both highlight our competitive edge and give our institution renewed momentum. Of course, this won't prevent us from continuing to invest in what we already have and from improving our current way of doing business.

The spirit in which this entire exercise has evolved to date illustrates the new governance model the University's executive team (the Administrative Committee and the Deans) hopes to implement. Taking the full advantage of our competitive edge, welcoming and serving students more effectively, giving professors and administrative staff the means to reach their full potential as they work for the University, and listening to the concerns and interests of our external communities—so far, these are the principles that appear to be shaping our course of action for the future.

Do consult the *Vision 2010* Web site (www.uottawa.ca/vision2010/) to confirm the public-consultation dates and to comment on any aspect of the discussion paper using the questions in the *Background* section on the first page.

We need to hear what you think. Make *Vision 2010* your vision.

Gilles Patry,
Rector and Vice-Chancellor

Vision 2010

www.uottawa.ca/vision2010/

Discussion Paper

Background

Under the direction of the Academic Planning Committee of Senate, the University of Ottawa has undertaken a strategic planning exercise. The University's last strategic plan, *Vision 2000*, dates back to 1992-1993. Since then, Ontario's universities, like the whole world around them, have changed dramatically. The University of Ottawa itself is not the same place it was ten years ago. It has grown. Its direction has shifted. Its student body and teaching staff have changed. Given these transformations, it makes sense that, together, we take a fresh look at our new reality and decide what we aspire to for the future.

As you read the discussion paper, please keep the following questions in mind: Do you agree with our aim of becoming one of Canada's top five universities? Have we chosen directions and set objectives that make this aim attainable? Are we overlooking any essentials? What directions, what goals and what strategies should take priority? What courses of action will produce the best results? Now that we've identified ourselves as Canada's university, are we taking full advantage of this "brand"? What will it take to make us truly Canada's university?

With the help of your ideas and observations, we will make choices, consolidate strategies, and invest in what's needed to make the University of Ottawa unique.

Our mission

Our raison d'être

The University of Ottawa is Canada's university: a reflection, an observatory and a catalyst of the Canadian experience in all its complexity and diversity. With our unique history, dating back to 1848, our commitment to bilingualism, our location both in the heart of the national capital and at the juncture of French and English Canada, our special commitment to the promotion of French culture in Ontario, and the groundbreaking work of our professors, we are uniquely positioned among Canada's research-intensive institutions to give students a remarkable education, to enrich the intellectual and cultural life of Canada and to help the country achieve greater international prominence.

Our vision

What we aspire to

We aim to be one of Canada's five best universities. Our programs, be they graduate or undergraduate, will be driven by our passion for research and discovery. We will give our students the best possible university experience, strengthen and broaden our ties with the community, and develop the tools we need to meet our objectives. Every member of the institution will take part in our educational mission.

Our values

What defines us and drives us

1. A university that places its students at the core of its educational mission

We do our utmost to help our students expand their knowledge, enrich their culture, boost their creativity, sharpen their ability to question and analyze, and take full advantage of university life to become well-rounded, responsible citizens.

2. A university whose programs are research driven

We design a wide range of nationally and internationally recognized undergraduate, graduate and professional programs known for their quality and for their focus on interdisciplinarity. We conduct first-class research, most notably in each of our strategic areas of development; this in turn enriches what and how we teach.

3. A bilingual university that values cultural diversity

We promote bilingualism, acknowledge the contribution of the many communities that helped build our country, support Canada's cultural diversity and, through our programs and research, work to bring Canada's challenges as a country into sharper focus.

4. A university committed to promoting Francophone communities

We design outstanding programs and services for Ontario's French-speaking population, and we provide leadership for Francophone communities across Canada and around the world.

5. A university that builds strong partnerships to fulfill its social responsibilities

We strengthen our programs and perform our social, political and community-outreach roles thanks to productive ties with other universities, government agencies, research councils, the private sector, embassies, and both national and international organizations in the nation's capital.

6. A university that offers equal opportunities to its staff

We adhere to the principles of openness and of fair and equal representation. We eliminate all barriers to professional development. We also play a leading role in the advancement of women.

7. A university that values its community

We encourage freedom of speech, through frank and open discussions that allow critical thought to flourish, based on intellectual integrity and ethical judgment. Collegiality, transparency and accountability are the fabric of our university governance.

Our major directions

What will guide our actions over the next five years

1. Taking advantage of our competitive edge
2. Creating knowledge, inventing and discovering
3. Caring for our university community
4. Establishing ties with our external communities

Major direction 1: Taking advantage of our competitive edge to attract the best students, to highlight proudly our strengths, to instill a strong sense of belonging... in sum, to crystallize our identity as Canada's university.

Goal 1: Play a leadership role in promoting Canada's official languages, to consolidate our identity as Canada's university and to emphasize the advantages that this gives us over other universities.

1. We will create an Institute of Official Languages that will lead the way in language-sciences, in first- and second-language development, as well as promote bilingualism.
2. We will encourage our professors and our administrative staff to improve their language skills so that the institution can continue to offer a wide array of quality programs and services in both official languages; to this end, we will set attainable bilingualism objectives and provide staff with both the tools and progression paths they need.
3. We will set clear targets for the number and minimum proportion of Francophone registrations; to reach these targets, we will step up recruitment among Francophones, specifically targeting French-immersion schools.
4. We will create an elite bilingual college for the humanities.
5. We will promote bilingualism among our students by offering a number of tangible benefits and opportunities: more bilingual programs, second-language proficiency certificates, immersion diplomas, diplomas highlighting that courses were taken in both languages, and official federal-government recognition of students' proficiency in their second language.
6. We will launch a language-mentors network for students and will officially recognize the commitment involved.

Goal 2: Raise our profile with the federal government, so that we can create even stronger ties and take mutual advantage of our shared location in the capital; add depth and breadth to our students' experience; continue offering the federal government the best possible graduates year after year, and convince each student that we can provide a sure and steady path to a career in the public service.

1. We will not only strengthen our role as specialty advisors to the government and its institutions but also establish more research partnerships.
2. We will adapt some of our programs to the needs of government, including the higher echelons of the public service, while recognizing that other career paths are open to our graduates; we will also increase the number of co-op work terms at the federal government.
3. We will invite more government officials and public personalities to make special contributions to learning, for instance through joint appointments, executive-in-residence appointments and researcher-in-residence positions.

Goal 3: Move onto the international stage, so that our staff and students can expand their cultural and scientific backgrounds, and so that our partner countries can both tap into our specialties and acquaint themselves with Canadian values. We also want to be recognized internationally as an essential reference on the Canadian perspective.

1. We will design joint programs with major universities outside Canada and especially in national capitals, taking advantage of distance-education technologies.
2. We will increase the number of study sessions, fieldwork sessions and research terms abroad, with a special focus on the world's developing countries; we will also introduce new international co-op programs.

3. We will establish research chairs that have an international component.
4. We will "internationalize" our programs wherever possible.
5. We will ensure that international students make up a significant portion of our student body, which will heighten diversity and enrich the University community as a whole, while keeping watch over linguistic balance in the process; we will establish a mentoring program between Canadian and international students.

Goal 4: Consolidate our Strategic Areas of Development to build on our strengths, to invest where our potential for distinction lies, to nurture interdisciplinarity and to become best in well-defined areas (Canada, health, information technology, molecular science).

1. We will conduct a formal peer review of our Strategic Areas of Development to determine their impact and to see if they have improved our position.
2. We will clarify the role of these areas in the institution's continued development (creation of research chairs, centres and institutes, and development of graduate and undergraduate programs); we will also explain the criteria for selecting strategic areas.
3. We will consult the University community periodically to review and fine-tune our Strategic Areas of Development, and to assess their relevance.
4. We will ask faculties and departments to identify the priorities driving not only their research efforts but also their recruitment and their graduate programs. In addition, we will encourage them to launch interfaculty and interdisciplinary initiatives.

Goal 5: Nurture interdisciplinarity to help uncover the knowledge that often takes shape where disciplines intersect.

1. We will review the structure and roles of departments and faculties to open disciplinary boundaries, and we will consider amalgamating some of our smallest academic units in an effort to stimulate knowledge transfer and consolidate their teams.
2. We will structure learning more around programs than around units.
3. We will make sure that many professors have multiple appointments, meanwhile easing hiring and performance appraisals.
4. We will bring researchers together for exchanges and idea-sharing that can in turn spawn interdisciplinary and interfaculty projects.
5. We will design a system that allows students to combine minors and majors in different disciplines and thus graduate with a multidisciplinary degree.

Major Direction 2: Creating knowledge, inventing and discovering, so that we become one of Canada's best universities at providing research-based learning. Our commitment to knowledge creation and our passion for knowledge-sharing will be core elements of life on campus.

Goal 6: Focus on learning that is driven by excellence and innovation, so that our students maintain their thirst for knowledge—the strongest asset they have in their quest for success.

1. We will support and recognize initiatives designed to introduce a range of new learning and evaluation strategies for students.
2. We will place greater emphasis on the role of instructor training in effective learning and we will rely more heavily on teaching evaluations in the granting of tenure and promotions.

3. We will create specialized master teacher positions in certain areas, with a clearly defined career path that includes research in discipline-specific teaching.
4. We will ensure that teaching can become part of every postdoctoral trainee's experience.

Goal 7: Create knowledge through research-based learning, and thus build the intellectual capital that will allow our students and our institution as a whole to play a prominent role nationally and internationally.

1. We will integrate research-based learning into our undergraduate programs.
2. We will ensure that graduate and postdoctoral enrolment accounts for 20 percent of our entire student population, especially in research programs; in the process, we will target both the best possible students and maintain a healthy balance in linguistic representation.
3. We will emphasize good-quality supervision as a key component of research training.
4. We will encourage all initiatives designed to improve our overall position with respect to research funding.
5. We will market the results of both our research and our knowledge-related activities.

Major direction 3: Caring for our university community, so that our students, our postdoctoral researchers, our professors and our support staff are at the core of our educational mission and are able to live in a setting that is at once welcoming and stimulating. In addition, our alumni and our retired staff will become key partners in our development.

Goal 8: Offer students an unparalleled university experience, one that makes their stay at the University a critical factor in their future as responsible citizens, well attuned to the challenges facing their community.

1. We will rely on a selection of non-discipline courses, on the co-op program and on the service-learning program to go beyond simple discipline-specific instruction; to do so, we will emphasize the acquisition of new skills. We will also recognize that students' involvement in various aspects of social life on campus and in the community is an integral part of a comprehensive education.
2. We will promote intellectual integrity from first year onwards and we will foster quality learning through clear communications and relations with professors; to this end, we will revise our guidelines and individual responsibilities as they apply to intellectual property and to student contributions to professors' work.
3. We will appoint a single person accountable for all student services, in order to develop and promote quality standards. For instance, we will do everything possible to ensure that the services and tools we make available to foster student retention achieve the desired objectives, especially at the graduate-studies level.
4. We will launch a scholarship program based on a balance between excellence and financial need.
5. We will also ensure that the salaries offered to students working on campus outside of a collective agreement actually reflect the requirements of their positions.

Goal 9: Provide sound academic and administrative leadership, so that our professors reach their full potential and that efficiency is the standard at every level.

1. We will attract and retain the best professors by offering them the support they need, especially in relation to their families.
2. We will establish a Leadership Centre whose programs are tailored to specific career paths.
3. We will invite Deans to play a more prominent role in the development of professors, for instance through rigorous feedback on annual reports.
4. We will ensure that our employees have the tools they need to perform their duties.
5. We will periodically review the structure of all academic and research units to assess their continued relevance.
6. We will implement a biennial evaluation process for all senior executives, those individuals responsible for conveying the institution's principal directions.

Goal 10: Tap into the potential of the support staff, by providing these employees with the tools they need to establish and maintain clear, effective and harmonious relations with students.

1. We will design an integrated, made-to-measure training program, based on the current and future requirements of each position.
2. We will implement a team approach that guarantees seamless service.
3. We will decentralize decision-making for exceptional circumstances to allow each faculty to take direct action and contribute to quick problem-solving according to the student's situation, rather than have to recommend options to a central unit.
4. We will identify service objectives, in the light of efforts to strengthen service excellence.
5. We will review our recruitment methods, set targets for the representation of designated groups, and design an implementation plan that will allow students to identify with our staff.
6. We will compare the working conditions of contract employees with those of regular staff, in an effort to guarantee equity.

Goal 11: Involve our alumni and our retired staff, so that their experience can help further the University's development.

1. We will provide support services to make sure that our alumni, our retired professors and our retired support staff employees remain involved in the life of faculties and departments.
2. We will consult them, give them formal mandates, and give them a definite role to play in every facet of the University's development.
3. We will invite them to sit on various advisory committees.
4. We will ask them to become spokespersons in our student-recruitment efforts, and we will ask them to mentor both students and new professors.
5. We will strive to allow retired professors to pursue their academic work, wherever possible.

Goal 12: Improve quality of life on campus, in order to provide a pleasant and welcoming environment that fosters interaction, because the university experience extends beyond classrooms and offices.

1. We will increase the number of multipurpose spaces for reading, study and discussion in both new and existing buildings and, especially, in the library.
2. We will allocate more space to students of all levels, in addition to providing them with wireless Internet access where they do assignments and homework.
3. We will restore the University Centre's role as a service provider and gathering place by making it once again the home of InfoService and by equipping it with a designated meeting place for the University community.

4. We will adopt a policy for the protection of natural and architectural heritage sites.

Goal 13: Adopt a modern governance model, to involve the University community more heavily in our decision-making, to inform it quickly of decisions affecting our future, and to instill the team spirit we need to fulfill our mission. By also prompting us constantly to re-examine our work methods, this governance model will help us improve how we operate overall.

1. We will take the necessary steps to ensure that our university community takes part more directly in the decision-making process.
2. We will make agendas and minutes of faculty and University committees public where confidentiality is not an issue.
3. We will post the strategic plans of all faculties and services on the Web.
4. We will invite the internal and external communities to a joint public session of the Board of Governors and the Senate to release the annual *Report to the community*.
5. We will create a one-stop service point that receives all complaints, refers them to the proper authority for follow-up, and explains policies and procedures.

Major direction 4: Establishing ties with our external communities, so that we play an active role in cultural, community and economic development and consolidate our place in the community through choice partnerships based on the transfer of knowledge among others.

Goal 14: Form partnerships, so that our students can do co-op placements or enter stimulating jobs upon graduation, to keep up-to-date on issues and knowledge, and so that our skills and expertise can be highlighted, without undermining our independence and autonomy.

1. We will forge closer ties with our partners and we will build new partnerships, especially in the high-tech and communications sectors.
2. We will work to provide our faculty with more research placements in outside work settings.
3. We will offer the public and private sectors, and especially small and medium-sized businesses, more consulting and advisory services, as well as more tangible services tied to our mission.

Goal 15: Define our social and community role, to gain a stronger foothold in local community and social organizations.

1. We will encourage joint projects and activities revolving around knowledge and culture, and, in the process, honour our commitment to provide tangible services.
2. We will target community and social organizations for the service-learning program, among others.
3. We will recognize the social and community work of our employees and students.
4. We will strengthen ties with high schools, both to support students' learning and to improve how we welcome these students to the University.
5. We will draft a plan to ensure that our institution is recognized for its involvement in and contribution to the community; we will make a strong media presence a key component of this plan.

Goal 16: Invest in continuing education and distance education, to fulfill our mandate and to meet the needs of today's learning society. Continuing education and distance education will be

prime levers in our efforts to establish a strong presence in Francophone communities, in the Outaouais and in Canadian professional circles.

1. We will open a one-stop service point to better accommodate adult learners interested in continuing-education and professional-development services.
2. We will establish a prior-learning assessment system.
3. We will establish new links and partnerships with government agencies, professional associations, businesses and Francophone target groups to both better gauge their needs and determine how to meet them.