



MEMORANDUM, DCD #8, 2010-11

To: Department Chairs

From: Rick Halpern, Dean and Vice-Principal (Academic)

Date: 15 November 2010

Re: Academic Planning

Many thanks for the hard work that you have put into the updating of your departmental plans. My office has commented on each of the ones that were submitted last month, and I am pleased to say that the overall academic plan is developing nicely and on time.

In my upcoming standing meetings with each of you we will have the opportunity to discuss your plan and how best to move it forward to completion over the next few months (please refer to DCD #6 and the framework attachment that accompanied it). Also, at our next group meeting I will address the overall planning process, particularly as it relates to this spring's budget allocation exercise and ongoing discussions around enrolment growth.

For now, I want to make a few important observations that I hope will shape your departmental level discussions and your redrafting.

1. Complement Planning

Almost all plans include refined, updated, or overhauled complement lists. This will be most helpful if they are clearly staged and prioritized (obviously we lose clarity the farther out in time we go, but please devote special care and attention to the next three hiring cycles). Let me also remind you that these complement lists should be regarded as proposals – approvals will come on a year-by-year basis, usually in the spring following the executives' budget allocation retreat.

2. Growth Calculations

Several plans very helpfully calculated current "spare capacity," if only to note that the department had none! We accept that the campus still has some ways to go to make up the deficit in faculty and support staff, and that our project of erecting a sustainable platform for the academic enterprise is not yet complete. Nevertheless, I ask all of you, as you move forward with your plans, to insure that you include two sets of calculations: first, an indication of how many additional students you could absorb, and in what

programs, *without additional resources*; and second, a sense of how you might begin to expand, and where, with the provision of extra complement. The first set of figures will assist us as we move to a strategic enrolment model (even if overall numbers stay the same); the second set will help us model different growth scenarios devoting critical attention to resourcing.

3. Advancement Priorities

The planning process with regard to the University wide campaign and the refinement of our own divisional advancement priorities continues. Some departmental plans included abbreviated discussion of the advancement priorities developed for, or elaborated after, the September retreat. I ask that each of you provide a section in your department plan that, at the very least, lists the major advancement priorities you have identified and fed into ongoing discussions around campus priorities.

4. Vision, Research Strength, Differentiation

This one really does not need to be mentioned, but it is so important that I want to underscore it for everyone: each department plan must project a compelling vision for the department, one that indicates where you are today, what sort of trajectory you hope to follow, and where you wish to be in 5-7 years time. This vision must include not only undergraduate program strength and curricular innovation but also research clustering and intensiveness (in some cases the development of new masters or doctoral programs will form the bulk of this section, but please devote focused attention to areas of existing research strength, how these might be augmented, and how complementary fields might emerge). Please note that over the coming weeks and months the Office of the Vice-Principal, Research, will be taking guidance from department chairs to develop a UTSC-specific strategic research plan that speaks to research differentiation. Along similar lines, bear in mind that an important overall goal for our campus is to differentiate, where possible and feasible, our academic mission from not just the two other U of T campuses but other Ontario universities.

You may find it helpful to align as many departmental initiatives as possible with the five strategic directions developed in 2008-09 through various consultations and town hall meetings:

- UTSC will create an environment to house and support the growth of new and emerging fields of scholarship.
- UTSC is committed to expanding its onsite graduate training at the Masters and PhD levels to 10+ percent of the total student population.
- UTSC will become an international hub for learning and partnership within the University of Toronto system.
- UTSC will be a leader in experiential learning by offering curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students.
- UTSC will ensure that the best people, appropriate resources, and excellent facilities and programs are in place to provide an exceptional place to work and learn.

Needless to say, I am happy to elaborate upon any of these points or comment more specifically on the draft plans of individual units. We are very much on track in this exercise, and I am confident that we will have a splendid set of completed academic plans by mid-February.