

OAC Integrated Plan 2012-16

Overview

1. The Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) is a research-intensive, service oriented and inter-disciplinary College supported by exceptional faculty and staff, committed alumni and strong partners. The profile and scope of OAC's research, teaching programs and service activities underpin the University of Guelph's (U of G's) domestic and international reputation.
2. OAC's vision is that we are global leaders in research, service and education for environment, agriculture, food and communities. OAC's responsibilities also include facilitation of environmental sciences across the U of G. As a research-oriented college, OAC's priorities remain to strengthen its capacity, output and impact and the education of highly qualified personnel. In this way, the U of G will continue to improve its ranking as one of the preeminent agricultural and food universities in the world.
3. OAC established a 6-year budget management process during 2009-10 to support the U of G's Multi-Year Financial Plan. This OAC budget plan takes into consideration MTCU budget challenges as well as anticipated inflationary costs. The primary focus of the plan involves a strategy for improved efficiencies and a focus on enhanced leveraging of external funding from industry and government.
4. To meet financial targets, OAC must continue to reduce faculty numbers. The College however, also has an opportunity to attract significant external investments, renew and establish new academic positions and expand service activities which will generate new revenue streams.
5. Through the U of G's Capital Campaign, the Better Planet Project, OAC is developing several opportunities for endowed and/or limited term research/teaching chairs and other named positions as well as new scholarships. These will be the cornerstone to OAC's campaign activities with a goal to source new and significantly grow revenues through external fundraising. External partners will be sought through industry, government and other key stakeholder groups.
6. During 2012-13 priorities for the U of G's Arboretum, which is administered through OAC, will include enhancing research and instructional opportunities with faculty and students, strategic fundraising, creating meaningful external partnerships, improving signage and the installation and moving forward with the development of a new master plan.
7. OAC will continue to grow enrollment in the Associate Diploma programs at its regional campuses with a commitment to improve efficiencies, support new multi-campus learning models and also establish new models that direct resources to programs with the greatest need. During 2012-13, OAC will also continue to implement a new MTCU funding re-allocation model and an improved performance management process for all College Academic Research Group (CARG) members with a goal of supporting enhanced professional development and institutional accountability.
8. OAC will strengthen its competitive undergraduate programs, some of which are professionally accredited. Quality will be continuously improved through innovative teaching, internationalization and support from the OAC Learning Trust and enhanced student liaison and recruitment efforts.

9. At present graduate student enrollment in OAC represents 27% of the U of G's total. Over the next five years, OAC will continue to explore opportunities to enhance its commitment to graduate student training through the introduction of course-work programs that complement its strong research-based programs, develop inter-disciplinary graduate programs with other U of G colleges, and implement a strategy to support enhanced recruitment and promotion of OAC's graduate programs both internally and externally.
10. OAC faculty members generate more than 46% of the U of G's total research funding. This represents more than \$380 K per faculty member annually. Approximately 45% is achieved through the OMAFRA-U of G Partnership Agreement with the remaining funding being accessed from a broad range of other external sources. During the next five years, OAC will continue to grow its research funding base with a focus on enhancing support from these other external sources including other government agencies, the tri-councils and industry.
11. OAC will play a key leadership role in establishing the Food Institute at the U of G. This will be the first of its kind devoted solely to tackling the world's food issues along the entire agriculture and food continuum using a coordinated multidisciplinary approach. It will be distinctively designed to both broaden and deepen food knowledge, as well as, engaging the world's brightest minds in multidisciplinary teaching, training, research, and innovation.
12. Community activities and industry service and outreach by OAC faculty contribute enormously to the U of G's reputation within Ontario and internationally. OAC will further emphasize the need for relevant and sustainable service activities. These include Business Development Centres (BDC's) at the regional campuses, institutes leading service and teaching initiatives and international developmental opportunities.
13. During 2009-10, OAC established an Associate Dean of External Relations. This position has been mandated the responsibility for establishing and managing a "Strategic External Relations" for OAC including enhancing its relationship with OAC's Alumni Associations and Foundations, all of alumni and its industry and government partners. This position also oversees OAC's communications activities. During the next five years, OAC will continue to enhance its fundraising efforts with specific emphasis on supporting the creation of transformational chairs, innovative infrastructure and enhancing the educational experiences of its students.

1. Vision & Goals

Background

The Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) is central to the U of G's position as Canada's leading comprehensive research intensive university, and to its uniqueness. The U of G is one of the top ranking institutions in research productivity in agriculture and food and first among Canadian universities for research impact in agricultural sciences.

OAC is committed to providing sustainable, exceptional and relevant academic programs in food, agriculture, environment and communities from applied technical certificates to graduate programs.

In updating OAC's goals in the context of Integrated Planning, the College has again considered its external environment, in particular global trends and needs in higher education, opportunities likely to develop through provincial and federal government priorities, emerging industry challenges and opportunities for collaboration within the Canadian Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (CFAVM), partner institutions, provincial and federal government departments and other universities with strengths in OAC's communities-of-interest.

Principles and Goals

OAC's Vision: OAC is a global leader in education, service and research for the environment, agriculture, food and communities.

As part of its mandate, OAC has responsibilities that include facilitation of environmental science programs across the university, the delivery of programs at each of OAC's regional campuses (Ridgetown, Kemptville and Alfred) and administration of the U of G's Arboretum. OAC's goals in the context of Integrated Planning include:

- *to raise OAC's world standing among institutions for research and graduate education in agriculture, the environment, food and communities, particularly through its contribution to Ontario's global leadership in these areas.*
- *to build cross-university capacity and reputation in environmental sciences, food, agriculture and communities.*
- *to grow and promote the educational, research and outreach opportunities of the U of G's Arboretum and in particular its unique role within the university and the community.*

OAC is a research-intensive, graduate student rich, outreach-oriented college that is a cornerstone of the U of G's reputation. Added to these strengths are OAC's strong alumni and clients/stakeholders who it serves through a range of education (from skills training to postdoctoral), research (applied to basic), outreach and innovation. The profile and complexity of OAC's research underpins the U of G's domestic and international reputation and distinctiveness. OAC therefore has a responsibility to guide its strategic decision-making through integration and balancing of historical strengths, emergent opportunities and considered risk, to maintain and expand the U of G's distinctive reputation.

Proposal

- OAC will maintain its effective balance among teaching, research and service to strengthen U of G's distinctive position among Canadian universities, and provide opportunities for international partnerships with some of the world's leading agriculture and food institutions and organizations.
- OAC has established a budget management process for dealing with its fiscal challenges as part of multi-year planning. During 2012-13, all academic units will continue to refine their specific budget plans and strategies to manage their individual unit commitments and meet their financial targets.
- OAC will continue to strengthen its graduate teaching leadership. Strategies will include keeping average graduate student times-to-completion low and introducing new graduate programs which complement existing programs in light of reduced faculty numbers.
- OAC will adjust associate diploma numbers according to government priorities and industry demand, grow its undergraduate student numbers in programs accredited by professional bodies, and continue to increase undergraduate enrollment, increase its undergraduate teaching intensities and further establish professionally-oriented graduate programs.
- The Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics Department (FARE) will continue to provide provincial, national and international leadership in supporting policy that enhances the viability and the effectiveness of the agriculture and food industries.
- OAC will continue to strategically grow its regional campuses to position them for efficient delivery of academic programs and applied research that meets OMAFRA priorities and also includes a strong "return on investment". In doing so, OAC will avoid duplication in expertise across campuses and allowing for distinctive expertise and capacity to exist within each campus.
- OAC will continue to expand external revenue sources for research, teaching and service activities through greater alumni, industry and government partnerships.
- OAC has identified opportunities for endowed and/or limited term research/teaching chairs and other named positions. These opportunities align closely with the overall U of G's Better Planet Project and will be the cornerstone of OAC's priorities. For example during 2012-13, OAC will identify opportunities and continue to work with Alumni Affairs & Development (AA&D) in the creation of transformational Chairs in program areas of greatest need.
- To improve the delivery and sustainability of academic programs, OAC will continue to explore new delivery mechanisms, more effective academic structures and multi-disciplinary programs. For example, during 2011-12, OAC re-organized the academic disciplines within the School of Environmental Design & Rural Development (SEDRD) to maintain professional accreditation requirements in rural planning and more effectively position the School for the future.
- OAC will continue to lead strategic liaison activities focused on target student groups to support future enrolments at all levels throughout the College. The delivery of these activities will be primarily achieved through external funding support by industry, alumni and other key stakeholders. For example in 2011, OAC coordinated 10 "Reach Ahead" events that attracted over 600 Specialized High Skills Major (SHSM) students and involved direct contact with 370 secondary school teachers.

During 2012-13, additional “Reach Ahead” events will provide opportunities for high school students (in agricultural and other high skills programs) and high school teachers and guidance counselors to gain a better understanding of the career opportunities that exist following an OAC education.

- In 2011, OAC commissioned an externally funded “Planning for Tomorrow” study to assess current and future employment needs of Ontario’s agriculture and food industries. Findings indicated that demand for OAC graduates greatly exceed the current supply with this demand expected to increase by 20% over the next few years. In response to this identified demand, OAC will attempt to grow overall undergraduate enrollment by approximately 35% over the next 4-5 years.
- OAC is recognized for the passionate engagement of its 22,000+ alumni. During 2012-13, OAC will continue to develop a strong and vibrant relationship with its Alumni Associations and Foundations (at all of its campuses). The need for alumni to play significant roles in supporting OAC’s current and future challenges is a priority. This support will be through their investments including volunteering their time in everything from new program opportunities to championing campaign initiatives.
- During 2012-13, OAC will work with the other U of G colleges in defining how we can collectively play a greater and strategically aligned role in fostering civil society at both the local and global levels.
- OAC will continue to work with the AA&D, its Alumni Associations, the Alumni Foundations, OAC Classes and other donors to identify future giving opportunities and attempt to effectively balance expendable and endowed gifts to better meet current priorities. During 2012-13, OAC will work to identify new recognition opportunities for individual, class and industry donors and also partner with AA&D in enhancing OAC’s commitment to the management and coordination of planned gifts to OAC priority areas.
- During 2011-12, OAC in partnership with AA&D utilized the services of Legacy Leaders to contact over 7000 OAC alumni to explore interest in planned giving to the U of G. This initiative has yielded nearly 1700 individuals who have expressed a desire to consider a gift to the U of G in the near future. Therefore during 2012-13, OAC and AA&D will develop a strategy to re-connect with these individuals and explore both short and long-term planned gifts.
- To better communicate issues and activities with its alumni, partners and government, OAC will implement an enhanced communication plan during 2012-13. This plan will improve communication efficiency, accuracy and consistency by working more collaboratively with University wide and AA&D communications. The plan will include mechanisms to more strategically promote to a wider and more diverse audience OAC’s programs, successes, partnerships, research outcomes and to better recognize its faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors and partners.
- During 2012-13, OAC will begin a comprehensive review process to revise recruitment materials, enhance the impact of its websites including those supporting program promotion (diploma, undergraduate and graduate) as well as the regional campus and academic unit websites.

2. Curriculum Plan

(a) Non-degree teaching

Background

OAC delivers two-year Associate Diploma programs in Agriculture; Horticulture; Veterinary Technology; Food, Nutrition & Risk Management; Environmental Management; and Turfgrass Management. Associate Diploma enrolments are approximately 900 students across OAC's campuses (Guelph, Alfred, Kemptville and Ridgetown). A recent study has found that current industry needs for HQP greatly exceeds the number of diploma program graduates in OAC. As a result strategies are being developed and implemented to support associate diploma program growth.

OAC also offers a wide range of certificates, technical programs, apprenticeship programs, short courses, skills training, professional development and continuing education, through face-to-face, blended and distance delivery, to approximately 650 FTE students.

Principles and Goals

OAC is dedicated to retaining its distinctive, high quality diploma programs and broadening its offerings in technical certificates, apprenticeships and stand-alone courses. Expansion will depend on either an increased financial commitment from the government, or program-based external funding.

During 2012-17, OAC plans to: (i) maintain strong and vibrant diploma education programs; (ii) rationalize resources to enhance teaching efficiency and use advanced teaching technologies to allow for more effective diploma education delivery; (iii) increase participation in distance learning activities through open courses and hybrid delivery to on-campus students; and (iv) increase the number of highly qualified applicants to all of OAC's associate diploma programs.

Proposal

- Over the past four years, OAC has witnessed considerable growth in its Associate Diploma enrollment. This was particularly significant at the Ridgetown Campus with overall enrollment more than 30% higher than in 2008-09. During 2012-13, OAC will further promote career opportunities that exist with an Associate Diploma education to further increase enrollment across all of OAC's campuses.
- During 2012-13, OAC will implement a multi-campus review process with the goal of modernizing and upgrading the delivery of the associate diploma programs. This will involve a complete review of all associate diploma programs and making thorough revisions, including rationalization of course offerings and updating academic calendars, regulations and by-laws across all of OAC's campuses.
- Over the next few years, OAC will develop courses for pooled, inter-campus delivery and explore new diploma programs that take advantage of emerging opportunities (i.e. agricultural bio-economy, bio-energy). OAC will also continue to eliminate low enrollment courses and programs to improve overall efficiencies.
- During 2012-13, OAC will attempt to leverage business development opportunities through its regional campus BDC's to better support teaching programs. This will include (i) developing a

common set of objectives for the BDC operations at OAC's regional campuses; (ii) developing common criteria for BDC project approval; (iii) identifying opportunities for coordinated BDC program delivery; and (iv) working with COLES to develop laddering and transfer models for the BDC's.

- Over the next few years, OAC will continue to grow and enhance its apprenticeship training and various certificate programs at the regional campuses. Emphasis will be placed on effective and sustainable delivery in program areas that complement existing strengths and infrastructure capacity primarily in relation to food, and agriculture.
- During 2012-13, OAC will document learning outcomes for all diploma courses and programs of study in conjunction with more aggressive annual content and skills review. OAC will also expand experiential learning, internship and co-op opportunities within its associate diploma programs.
- OAC will further investigate additional opportunities for shared delivery and synchronous distance delivery. For example 2012 marks the first time that courses have been offered jointly (via video conferencing) between the Kemptville and Ridgetown campuses. This LEF supported initiative includes joint delivery of a DAGR 4100 (Commodity Marketing) and DAGR 4150 (Renewable Energy and Agriculture). Additional courses will be identified for shared delivery during 2012-13.
- During 2012-13, OAC will lead MTCU funded credit transfer projects for environmental technician and technology and biotechnology to support for multi-lateral transfer opportunities from community college diploma programs to various university receptor degrees. As part of this initiative, OAC will also establish an improved credit transfer process for students wishing to move from certificate to diploma and from diploma to degree programs at the U of G.
- During 2012-13, OAC will begin to develop a standardized SHSM from Ontario secondary schools to Associate Diploma articulation agreements.
- During 2012-13, OAC will continue to implement a model for allocation of MTCU funding that is utilized for Associate Diploma programs with the goal of: (i) developing more sustainable and appropriate grant allocation models for each campus; (ii) developing criteria for improving the delivery of Associate Diploma programs; (iii) avoiding redundancy of current programs; and (iv) developing strategies to support new innovative Associate Diploma programs.
- During 2011-12, OAC and the College Academic Research Group (CARG) members initiated a thorough review and begin the development of a new College Evaluation Committee (CEC) model for goal setting and performance management of CARG members. This new performance management model will be implemented to establish an enhanced accountability framework for the delivery of associate diploma programs as well as research and outreach.
- During 2012-13, OAC will also review admission requirements and standards within the programs across all campuses as well as coordinate academic oversight and standardize academic regulations across campuses.

- During 2012-13, the Kemptville Campus will establish a new Associate Diploma Program in Equine Management that will complement existing certificate and BBRM (Equine Management) degree programs.
- To serve the expanding market of students who are looking for programs which serve part-time schedules, professional development or personal interest, OAC will continue to support and grow its range of certificate offerings. These certificates are developed and offered both through collaborations with COLES and through the BDC's at the regional campuses.

(b) Degree Programs

Background

OAC responded to declining student numbers in traditional undergraduate and diploma programs in the early 1990's by differentiating its programs. Nonetheless there has been a decline in numbers in the BSc (Agr), which is a universal phenomenon, despite continuing strong employment demand for graduates. This decline has been more than offset by the increasing popularity of animal biology, environmental sciences and landscape architecture programs. Over the past 3 years however, there have been substantive signs of increased interest and demand in agriculture and food related programs. Additionally a recent study found that Ontario-based industries require approximately 330 new hires a year in agriculture and nearly 90 in food processing which represent 2-3 x the current number of graduates. A demonstrated market need therefore exists which justifies growth in these programs.

Currently undergraduate programs offered by OAC are distributed among seven degrees. In the coming year transformational changes that have been made to most of these degrees will be implemented in the context of continuing faculty attrition, resource reallocations and responses to the recommendations of the 21st Century White Paper recommendations. Specifically, the respective academic units, as well as program and curriculum committees will implement these changes for delivery starting in 2012-13.

Principles and Goals

OAC will continue to provide excellent quality undergraduate programs at all levels and continue to maintain and make every effort to provide exceptional new opportunities and innovations in OAC's distinctive professionally oriented degrees, for which we are either sole provider or pre-eminent in Ontario.

Proposal

- OAC will continue to annually assess and eliminate courses with low enrollment and those with limited demand while also continually evaluating the relevance and requirements for all of its undergraduate programs.
- Since 2005-06, OAC has increased its undergraduate teaching intensity (class enrolments per MTCU faculty) by approximately 88% while also initiating a comprehensive series of activities to rebalance enrolment distributions across all of its programs. OAC will continue to improve this intensity over the next 5 years to exceed the U of G average and be comparable with other science-based colleges (ie College of Biological Sciences and College of Physical and Engineering Science).

- Over the next 5 years, OAC anticipates enrollment growth of all of its currently-offered undergraduate majors. This includes the following:

Degree (major)	2010-11 Enrollment	2015-16 Enrollment	Percentage Increase (%)
BBRM	139	280	101%
BSc (An Bio)	524	550	5%
BSc (Env Bio)	56	80	43%
BSc (Food Sci)	119	180	50%
BSc (Plant Sci)	25	50	100%
BLA	214	240	12%
BSc Agr	289	480	66%
BSc Env (OAC majors)	326	400	22%
BComm + BA	122	180	48%
Total	1814	2440	35%

- For the BSc majors in OAC, a significant implementation issue during 2012-13 will be the adoption of the revised first-year. The Departments of Food Science, Plant Agriculture and Animal & Poultry Science will implement new consolidated keystone courses and rationalized prerequisite requirements. These changes will require close institutional collaboration with the OAC Dean's Office.
- Enrollment in the BSc major in Animal Biology has grown to exceed 150 students per year. Students are largely driven by individuals seeking careers in veterinary or biomedical science. The Department of Animal & Poultry Science is exploring new approaches to facilitate student entry into alternative career paths including animal wellness, welfare and nutrition.
- During 2012-13, OAC will begin preparation for quality assurance reviews of all of its programs in the next 4 years. This will include the comprehensive identification of learning outcomes and assessment tools for all of OAC's undergraduate programs.
- In 2012-13, OAC will complete implementation of changes to the BSc (Agr) which has included a revised first-year program core incorporating two 1.0 credit courses in agricultural science during the first year and enhanced opportunities for experiential learning and research at the 3000- and 4000-level. The latter will require substantial renewal of the senior project, seminar and independent research courses. Beyond improving the sustainability of the program these changes must maintain the quality, appeal and relevance of the BSc (Agr) for its traditional recruitment base and facilitate promotion of the degree in non-traditional markets.
- The formation of the School of Environmental Sciences (SES) precipitated a review of the BSc (Env) including course offerings, the structure and composition of the core program and the consolidation of majors. The rationalization of undergraduate programs in the former Departments of Land Resource Science and Environmental Biology has led to the offering of fewer majors in the BSc (Env). During 2012-13, many of the U of G approved changes to the BSc (Env) will be implemented through SES as have also been identified with the BSc (Agr) and the BSc.

- The majors currently offered in the Bachelor of Bio-Resource Management (BBRM) degree are facing challenges resulting from funding constraints and undergraduate programming changes at the Guelph campus. In particular implementation of the new first-year biology curriculum at the regional campuses needs to be implemented as well as academic ownership of this degree by academic units in OAC. During 2012-13, we will implement changes to the delivery of the BBRM at the Ridgeway Campus and Kemptville Campus as well as the final two years at the Guelph Campus.
- The BBRM Equine Management major, through the Kemptville Campus, has demonstrated considerable growth suggesting that a yearly intake of approximately 50 students is viable. The program however, is currently limited by physical and instructional resource requirements. In addition, the final two years offered at the Guelph campus need to be reviewed with respect to appropriate equine management content. During 2012-13, OAC will implement changes to the curriculum of this major.
- During 2012-13, OAC (through the Department of Food, Agriculture & Resource Economics) with the College of Management and Economics will implement revisions to the current BComm (Food and Ag Business) with a goal to enhance enrollment and reflect the evolving and growing business training needs of the expanding regional, national and international agriculture and food sectors.
- OAC will continue to encourage international experiences, semesters abroad and national exchanges through structuring flexible semesters to all majors so that students may study elsewhere while also taking Distance Education courses from the U of G. This is a priority for all OAC majors going forward.
- During 2012-13, OAC will continue to work with CFAVM members from across Canada to: (i) share faculty/courses in distance education; (ii) at higher undergraduate and graduate levels encourage students to move for senior-year study through a pan-Canadian exchange agreement, initiated by OAC; and (iii) share international short-courses through allocating student places across all Canadian faculties, so that OAC can collectively resource a suite of international experiences in several countries.
- OAC will continue to seek support for the OAC Learning Trust and other student experiential learning programs (eg OAC 59 Legacy Project) which will significantly help to maintain and improve the quality of the undergraduate training and experiential learning opportunities for all OAC students.
- During 2012-13, OAC will begin to implement and improve the delivery of key skills development courses in the BSc (Agr) including leadership, research methods, entrepreneurship and communications. Students and prospective employers have identified these “soft skills” as highly desirable to undergraduate education. OAC will also review and upgrade the experiential learning components of all courses in the BSc (Agr) during 2012-13.
- During 2012-13, OAC will develop new models for enhancing pathways opportunities for students transitioning from community college diploma programs (throughout Ontario) to OAC’s undergraduate programs. The key objective involves facilitating entry from multiple programs and reducing or eliminating its current dependence on course-specific articulation arrangements. An approach that OAC will explore is the use of single semester "portal/gateway courses" that

emphasize fundamental skills at the undergraduate level as entry points. Development of pathway options from multiple institutions will initially focus on transfer into the BBRM program but will also be explored for other OAC programs.

- During 2012-13, OAC will begin implementation for a clear and consistent credit transfer pathway between Associate Diploma in Agriculture and BSc (Agr). Additionally OAC will, implement credit transfer pathway between new Equine Associate Diploma and BBRM (Equine Management).
- During 2012-13, OAC will continue to work with Associate Vice President (Academic) to develop a consistent set of institutional criteria for establishing articulation agreements with School Boards and establish an institutional standard for granting academic credit to High Skills applicants. It is likely that by the middle of the decade the majority of high school graduates will have High Skills accreditation. It is important that we ensure that these agreements serve the interests of the University, the School Boards and the students entering OAC's undergraduate programs.
- During 2012-13, OAC will begin to integrate sustainability themes across all programs including exploring opportunities for enhanced sustainability learning in all courses.
- During 2012-13, OAC will pursue linkages and specific program opportunities between Aboriginal Resource Management and the BBRM (Environmental Management major) at the Ridgeway Campus.
- During 2012-13, OAC will assess the BA in Agricultural Economics that is presently delivered through FARE in relation to its long-term enrolment potential, viability and delivery.
- During 2012-13, OAC will address a series of undergraduate program internationalization opportunities including: (i) reviewing all existing OAC international field courses with the goal to provide opportunities for international development studies options for its students as well as providing enhanced delivery of these courses to students from other disciplines; (ii) exploring opportunities for exchange opportunities based on course/credit bundles with other institutions; (iii) creating synchronized international project courses; and (iv) improving recruitment into exchange programs.

(c) Graduate students

Background

OAC has a strong commitment to graduate student training in supporting agriculture, food, the environment and rural communities. Opportunities exist for growing OAC graduate student to faculty ratios in some departments as well as increasing the presence and role of graduate students at OAC's regional campuses. Additionally excellence in research and graduate student training are driven by opportunities for research operating funds. OAC has a strong record of attracting research operating funds and of being the primary college within U of G training research-based graduate students. This will continue to be a priority for the College.

With anticipated faculty reductions, over the next 5 years, OAC will need to establish additional alternate graduate programs that can be delivered more efficiently than research-based graduate programs and compliment OAC's existing course-based graduate programs within the college.

Principles and Goals

OAC will continue to provide excellent quality graduate education at all levels, increase the efficient use of available resources and, while emphasizing service to the domestic market, with University support, continue to aggressively address the U of G's goal of internationalization through OAC's graduate education.

OAC identifies four areas for growth: (i) new programs that allow for more efficient delivery of graduate student training; (ii) the development of improved strategies for recruiting graduate students to all programs; (iii) international student recruitment, in both new programs and targeted existing programs; and (iv) reducing time-to-completion.

Proposal

- At present, graduate students in OAC represent approximately 27% of the U of G's total graduate student enrollment. Over the past 5 years, the College has witnessed a 17% increase in graduate student growth. With a reduced faculty complement, OAC will continue to explore non-traditional approaches to growing the graduate student enterprise. Current eligible graduate students represent a student to faculty ratio of 3:1. During the next five years, OAC will attempt to increase this to 4:1.
- OAC will continue to increase graduate growth, in OAC's existing research-based programs, during 2012-13 by leveraging opportunities available through the U of G/OMAFRA Partnership Agreement including the HQP Program and also MITACS Accelerate Program, new GTA support for OAC's regional campuses as well as new externally funded graduate scholarships.
- OAC will increase the graduate student presence at its regional campuses through supporting GTA opportunities as well as covering certain mobility costs of these students. At present, the graduate student to faculty ratio at the regional campuses is 1.5:1. During the next five years, OAC will attempt to increase this to 3:1.
- During 2012-13 OAC will establish a college wide strategy and invest additional resources in supporting enhanced recruiting opportunities for high quality domestic graduate students both internally and externally for all of OAC's graduate programs.
- OAC will continue to lead in working with other colleges to support the development of interdisciplinary graduate opportunities in environmental sciences, agriculture, food & health, environmental education, alternative energy, rural policy, bio-product innovation and the bio-economy.
- When there are opportunities, through fundraising, for the creation of new scholarships OAC will encourage the creation of graduate level scholarships to aid in graduate student recruitment and retention.

- OAC will continue to encourage rationalization and improved delivery of all graduate courses offered throughout the College. This will include making more graduate courses offered, where possible, available to students in different programs of study.
- During 2012-13, FARE will implement a new coursework option in their MSc graduate program.
- OAC will continue to place a priority on the creation of new and innovative inter-disciplinary graduate programs that build on the collective strengths across the entire U of G. For this to occur however, allocation models must be designed and implemented that reflect resource needs. For example the graduate program in animal welfare and behaviour involves an important partnership with the Ontario Veterinary College. During 2012-13 a resource allocation model will be implemented that reflects a equitable distribution of funding for its delivery.
- During 2012-13, SES will begin delivery of a coursework Masters of Environmental Sciences (MES) as well as a Graduate Diploma in Environmental Sciences (GDip-ES). These coursework programs will service two communities. The MES will serve individuals who completed an undergraduate degree in disciplines other than environmental sciences, seeking to transition into this field. It will also service those who have a first degree in environmental sciences, and are looking to obtain an advanced degree, but who are not interested in a research oriented career. The GDip will be offered over a eight week period during the summer.
- During 2012-13, the internationalization of the MSc in Food Safety and Quality Assurance will be further implemented. Courses are currently available through Distance Education, and preliminary market research suggests that this program would have wide international appeal and few competitors. The market barrier is the differential tuition for non-domestic students. OAC will prepare, with AA&D, an approach to multinational food companies for student support.

3. Research Plan

Background

OAC is research-intensive which underpins OAC's international reputation and the distinctive character and reputation of the U of G. Research productivity of OAC faculty is the highest at the University and among the high-performing colleges of agriculture and environmental science in Canada. OAC's partners are substantial and influential in provincial, national and international contexts. They are embedded in OAC's four "communities of interest": agriculture, food, environment and communities. In addition to externally funded research projects, a number of faculty positions are funded by industry, CRC and other government programs. In general, the industry-funded positions reflect the confidence of the food processing industry and of the animal-based sectors in the research capability of OAC. As well, the environmental and plant-based sectors are contributing, and along with the emerging bio-economy, present new opportunities. This breadth and depth of industry involvement reflects OAC's reputation for providing discernible public benefits and supporting effective policy, while the extensive faculty engagement in such areas as planning and landscape architecture reflect its contribution to community and rural development.

Principles and Goals

OAC aims to strengthen its capacity for discovery, innovation and application in research. In doing so OAC will continue to support the research needs and priorities of its traditional partners, while developing new uses and applications to maintain the competitiveness and well-being of Ontario and its people. Increasingly, these new research opportunities must be based on faculty initiatives and innovations, involving multidisciplinary synergistic teams cutting across traditional disciplines. Therefore the leadership for moving forward must come through the U of G's Office of Research working in partnerships with all of the College's.

Proposal

- A priority in OAC involves increasing tri-council support for faculty as chairs co-funded with industry, and for research conducted collaboratively with industrial partners. Among the academic units in OAC, the proportion of faculty holding tri-council funding varies widely. A shift among faculty needs to occur including mentoring of early career faculty on the importance of being awarded tri-council support, in balance with support from other funding bodies.
- OAC has considerable applied research capacity at its regional campuses. Historically however, the research links among OAC's campuses have been partially limited. OAC will attempt to strengthen these links, with the goal of enhanced training of HQP, professional development of early-stage faculty, and increasing research activities in the agricultural bio-economy, plant breeding, sustainable production systems, managing the impacts of climate change, nutrient management and life cycle analysis.
- OAC will continue to attract research chairs funded from industry, government and the tri-councils to supplement base-funding. Several opportunities for externally supported Chairs are currently being explored, within OAC for existing faculty or to bridge anticipated retiring faculty. These include: (i) Poultry Nutrition; (ii) Life Cycle Analysis; (iii) Pollinator Conservation; (iv) Poultry Welfare & Behaviour; (v) Dairy Genetics; and (vi) Food Innovation. These opportunities and others will be advanced throughout 2012-13.
- OAC will continue to create innovative new research centres and institutes and lead strategic networks in priority areas. These initiatives must however, attract sufficient resources and critical mass for their effective performance.
- OAC has established a strategy to replace vacant CRC's with both internal and external candidates in high priority areas that are consistent with our institutional strengths in food, agriculture, environment and communities. Prior to positions becoming vacant, OAC will attempt to leverage industrial and additional government support for these replacements. The College will also attempt to provide key leadership in creating a Canada Excellence Research Chair in Food Innovation at the U of G.
- OAC will work closely with a number of federal agencies (e.g. AAFC) in joint planning initiatives that will focus on future resource sharing and collaborations in research, training, outreach and leadership.

- OAC is globally recognized a leader in crop breeding. During 2012-13, OAC will work with various industry partners and AAFC to develop approaches to enhance its present research capacity in plant breeding including soybean and wheat breeding.
- OAC will continue to work with government partners (OMAFRA, AAFC, Environment Canada, etc.) to establish effective research institutes (e.g. Vineland Research and Innovation Centre), clusters and capacity. For example during 2011-12, OAC partnered with the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre in the creation of a term-limited faculty appoint in Environmental Horticulture through SES.
- During 2012-13, OAC will further develop strategies for securing major infrastructure in priority areas including: (i) Agricultural Genomics, Metabolomics and Biotechnology; (ii) Predicting and Managing Impacts of Climate Change in Natural and Agricultural Ecosystems of Canada; (iii) Biomaterials; and (iv) Food and Health Innovation. This will include proposals to the Canada Foundation for Innovation as well as other federal and provincial funding sources.
- OAC has a longstanding history of supporting a wide range of priorities within the dairy industry in areas that include nutrition, dairy genetics, dairy health, policy, food safety, product development and environmental management. With the recent announcement of plans for the establishment of a state of the art dairy research facility (Mission 2050), OAC will continue to work with the sector to ensure that research needs are being addressed in supporting the future of Ontario's dairy industry.
- During 2012-13, OAC will continue to work with the Ontario Turfgrass industry and OMAFRA in developing a long-term research infrastructure transition plan for the Guelph Turfgrass Institute.
- OAC and the Agriculture Development Branch of OMAFRA have implemented a 3-year student experiential learning pilot project. This project involves third year OAC student summer placements at OMAFRA offices across Ontario. During the summer placement students work under the direction and guidance of an OMAFRA Specialist in consultation with an OAC faculty member. Activities during the placement focus on leadership development, enhanced communication skills development, an opportunity to address a priority research project and further develop project management skills.

4. Outreach and Industry Service Plan

Background

OAC is distinguished from many other colleges by its significant commitment to directly engage its diverse industry sectors through innovative extension and service programs. All campuses and academic units have significant outreach activities, both by individual faculty and through coordinated programs, institutes and centres. OAC's strong emphasis on engagement includes a focus on working with OAC's exceptional alumni, partnering with industry and working together with government at all levels in supporting current priorities.

Principles and Goals

The OAC BDC's (located at each of its regional campuses), research centres and institutes are essential vehicles for OAC's outreach priorities. Large-scale outreach programs, such as regional/county contracts in Ontario and CIDA development projects (e.g. Africa, Vietnam and Afghanistan) provide effective

vehicles for distributing research, knowledge and the expertise of faculty. OAC anticipates increased outreach activities to support the evolving needs of its partners and also to support the Knowledge Transfer and Translation (KTT) Program as part of the U of G/OMAFRA Partnership Agreement. Future service activities must attempt to more effectively recover sufficient overheads or revenues that compensate academic units for these activities.

Proposal

- During 2012-13 the U of G's Arboretum will continue to provide exceptional community outreach activities that support the priorities of the Master Plan and Operational Plan.
- OAC faculty will continue to collaborate extensively with OMAFRA to offer industry-wide educational programs and extension support (South-West Ag Conference, Diagnostic Days, the Outdoor Farm Show, FarmSmart, etc.) which will enhance the dissemination of research outcomes. This will be further enhanced by the recently established KTT program as well as a priority for OAC to further connect with traditional partners.
- Partnering with other Colleges including the College of Management and Economics (CME), OAC will work to establish the Food Institute in 2012-13. This will be the first institute in the world devoted to tackling food issues along the entire agriculture and food continuum. It will be distinctively designed to both broaden and deepen food knowledge, as well as supporting teaching, training, research, and innovation. The mission is to be the world's best access to food knowledge and expertise to drive understanding of, innovation towards, and action on the world's food issues. Support will be invested in people who will be a portal to knowledge, research infrastructure, and leaders of action.
- Through the leadership of FARE the U of G will establish the Institute for the Advanced Study of Food and Agricultural Policy in 2012-13. Its mission is to provide independent, credible, and timely policy analysis with respect to socially significant food and agricultural issues.
- During 2012-13, the School of Environmental Sciences hopes to re-launch the Guelph Institute of the Environment (GIE) as a service institute that will support new revenue streams for SES, create opportunities for student experiential learning and create valuable new research partnerships and opportunities.
- During 2012-13, the Department of Plant Agriculture will establish the Gosling Research Institute for Plant Preservation. Its mission will be to preserve important plant species through research and education that leads to the development of strategies, tactics, techniques and technologies for plant species preservation, conservation and multiplication.
- During 2012-13, OAC will implement a strategic planning process involving each of its BDC's in an attempt to improve future efficiencies, define clear mandates, identify partnership opportunities across the regional campuses, assess new business initiatives and develop clear operational guidelines for each of these Centres.
- During 2012-13, OAC will continue to improve the coordination of international activities throughout the College including its regional campuses. This will ultimately support the

development of improved education and training opportunities, and reinforce the U of G's commitment to global leadership.

- During 2012-13, to more directly serve its communities of interest in supporting the increasing need for service, OAC faculty will be provided opportunities to allocate a portion of their service efforts to engage in institute activities. Increasing the service and training function of OAC will leverage the College's expertise by creating stronger linkages with groups, including industry groups, outside the U of G. It will also allow the community outside of the University an opportunity to make more use of the University's expertise and resources.
- During 2012-13, OAC will fully implement the central administration, communication and stewardship of all OAC Awards including those on the regional campuses as well as those provided through the OAC Alumni Foundation.
- During 2012-13, OAC will launch the GTI Solutions Group as a service activity through the Guelph Turfgrass Institute (GTI). The GTI Solutions Group will provide consulting and professional development services to the turfgrass industry throughout Ontario and beyond and support the long-term financial sustainability of the GTI.

5. Resource Allocation Plan

a) Staffing

Background

OAC has identified four communities of interest (food, agriculture, environment and rural communities), and sought to "re-balance" – move faculty and marginal operating funds – to those areas where demand is greatest and which show long-term potential for sustained growth.

Principles and Goals

OAC will retain its commitment to strategic appointments and the expectation that the vast majority of faculty positions will have a balanced distribution of effort among teaching, research and service/outreach. It is anticipated that OAC faculty numbers overall will continue to be reduced to support its multi-year budget planning. With new appointments in strategic areas of high priority, attempts will be made to further leverage external support to maximize the benefits of these human resource investments.

Proposal

- OAC will continue to explore strategic opportunities for improved non-faculty staff efficiencies in the delivery of its teaching, research and service programs and activities.
- OAC will continue to rationalize and identify mechanisms for other external support for the technical and administrative research resources that are provided through the OMAFRA/U of G Research Partnership.

- OAC will continue to work with many of its longstanding partners, especially those within the agri-food industry to identify opportunities in supporting renewed faculty capacity especially in those areas where current capacity has been reduced by the downsizing that has taken place in the College over the past 4 years.
- To successfully complete the multi-year plan, additional faculty and staff reductions in most of OAC's academic units are still necessary. OAC will therefore continue to promote voluntary retirements to reduce MTCU-funded faculty numbers in strategic areas. OAC has begun, and will continue, to prioritize disciplines where these retirements/resignations will have least impact.
- In 2012-13, OAC will continue to explore opportunities for externally supported Chairs, either with existing faculty or new hires to bridge anticipated retiring faculty. This will help to mitigate the impact of the losses through the multi-year plan.
- OMAFRA inflationary pressures and anticipated funding challenges, combined with the administrative support reductions, will also lead to significant changes with staff. During 2012-13, strategies with all OAC units will be developed to identify most effective long-term solutions for these financial issues.

b) Administrative Structures and Processes

Background

The multi-campus structure, diversity of programs, research intensiveness, and OMAFRA-U of G Partnership Agreement all create administrative challenges which are both unique and complex in OAC. No other College at the U of G has the administrative complexities and breadth of activities and programs.

Proposal

- OAC has established a budget management process for all OAC units. This plan takes into consideration anticipated retirements, MTCU structural deficit management as well as anticipated inflationary costs. The focus involves a strategy for revenue generation and a focus on enhanced leveraging of external funding from industry, alumni and government. Throughout 2012-13, all U of G units will continue to implement their plans with a greater focus on the on-going challenges of balancing the University of Guelph's Multi-Year Plan 1 over the next 2-3 years.
- During 2012-13, OAC will implement the second year of a three year financial planning process for the regional campuses (Kemptville, Alfred and Ridgetown) that will emphasize the need for increased enrolment, improved teachings efficiencies and external support for human resources. This financial management plan involves moving to a MTCU Fund 104 re-allocation model based on claimable diploma students.
- In 2011-12, the OAC Dean's Office was downsized by 2.5 FTE to reflect its fiscal reality and re-organized to improve its overall efficiency of services. During 2012-13, all academic and administrative units in OAC will continue to explore opportunities for improved administrative

efficiencies and also new ways of doing business while also maintaining its exceptional teaching programs and leading research.

- During 2012-13, OAC will explore opportunities for centralized administration and oversight of information technology including desktop management for all of OAC's Guelph-based academic units as well as improved coordination with its regional campuses.
- During 2012-13, OAC will identify information and database management systems to improve planning, coordination and information access for all of its regional campuses.
- OAC will work with various external partners to continue to increase the number of appropriate, qualified applicants to all OAC academic programs. During 2012-13, OAC will continue to implement a liaison strategy specifically addressing each academic program with respect to message content, target audience and resource requirements. This will include formation of a Coordinating Committee with representation from the OAC Dean's Office, the Office of Registrarial Services (Admissions), Departmental Liaison Committees, OAC Alumni and SFOAC/ESSE to oversee development of recruitment and liaison message content, extracurricular liaison opportunities, development of resource materials and identification of spokespersons/ambassadors for programs.
- During 2012-13, OAC will further investigate opportunities for increasing MTCU 104 allocation to support the growing enrolment and demands of its Associate Diploma programs.
- During 2012-13, OAC will implement a consistent approach across all of its regional campuses in relation to clearly separating Fund 104 and Fund 110 expenditures.
- Starting in 2012-13, the Alfred Campus will work with the OAC Dean's Office to develop an annual framework for utilization of Heritage Canada Funding for the campus.
- During 2012-13 The OAC Dean's office will continue to network and communicate extensively within the college to keep faculty staff and students engaged in OAC's initiatives and to aid in evolving the culture of the college (including the regional campuses) to facilitate meeting current and future challenges including internal fiscal challenges.

6. Space Plan

Background

OAC occupies 28 buildings on the Guelph Campus, of varying ages and states. OAC's space allocation is currently at 114% of COU standard for administrative space and 126% of COU standard for research space. With projected faculty and staff losses due to the Multi-Year Plan and taking into account faculty additions from externally generated funds, there should be sufficient administrative space for faculty and staff, as well as laboratory space over the integrated planning period.

One area of concern is graduate student space, which on average across OAC is at 84% of COU standard. This is a significant issue in SEDRD who are at 36% of COU standard and require additional space to

house their current graduate student contingent. The Department of Food Science (82%) and SES (84%) will also require more space if they are to maintain and grow their graduate numbers.

Proposals

- During 2012-13, OAC will initiate major renovations of the current REEK Building to establish a new Student Resource Centre for the Ridgetown Campus. Financial support for project has been accessed through MTCU, the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario, and significant donor funding managed through the Ridgetown Agri-Food Foundation.
- In 2012-13, OAC will continue to work with key external partners in establishing possible co-location opportunities which will provide opportunities to enhance OAC's educational programs, research and service leadership. For example discussions with Dodo Lab, OMAFRA, AAFC, the Rural Ontario Institute and Environment Canada will take place in 2012-13.
- During 2012-13, OAC will initiate discussions with the Office of Research and OMAFRA to initiate space analysis planning for academic program delivery at each of the regional campuses.
- In 2012-13, OAC will initiate a long-term facility re-investment strategy for the U of G's Arboretum Centre.