

UAP Consultation Submission – Osgoode

November 24, 2015

The following responses reflect Osgoode's established planning priorities through its Strategic Plan and other related planning initiatives that shed light on the questions posed below.

1. What sets York apart from other universities and how is this advantageous?

- York is distinguished by a cluster of distinct dynamics, including:
 - interdisciplinary focus to research and teaching
 - global reach embedded in Toronto and Canadian networks
 - outward focus on how the University can build and be enriched by the communities around it
 - focus on social justice and how knowledge can improve society
 - charting new frontiers of pedagogy, research and ideas
 - shaping the public debate

2. What should be York's academic priorities for the next five years? Please rank your priorities if possible.

- deepen the connections between research and teaching (develop new courses around collaborative research in each faculty, have our best researchers teach "study groups" on their cutting edge projects, etc.)
- broaden opportunities for community engagement through experiential learning and social innovation
- extend opportunities for joint and collaborative degrees/programs
- enrich the student experience, including advising and academic success supports
- extend opportunities for York students and faculty to go abroad, for others from around the world to come to York, and for York to play a leading role in global academic networks
- prioritize accessibility and inclusion as critical to the academic mission of the University

3. What are the most pressing challenges facing York now and in the next five years that should be addressed in the next UAP?

- York needs to respond to rapidly changing dynamics throughout society, including digital transformation, the shift in economic activity and employment structures both locally and globally, as well as demographic and social change. For example, Osgoode has introduced new courses on Legal Information Technology, Starting up a Solo Practice and Community Organizing to reflect the changing priorities in law and lawyers' roles.
- York needs to focus on innovation in its academic programs. Introducing new ways to harness digital resources in the learning environment (for example, open access digital commons for text books, hybrid and digital courses, etc.)

- York's budget pressures require prioritization and focus in how best to thrive. Osgoode has approached this question as a Faculty both by attempting to grow revenues (both through OPD and external fundraising opportunities), and by establishing transparent areas of expenditures to implement our strategic plan (new funds for initiatives in research intensification, experiential learning, digital initiatives, and accessibility).

4. What are the most compelling opportunities for York now and in the next five years?

- reinvent the role of a University in the community and the student experience with a once in a generation opportunity to build the Markham Campus
- position York as the most inclusive, innovative and interdisciplinary University in the country - turn York's size and diversity in each of these aspects into its strength!

5. Do you have any other advice about the University Academic Plan 2015-2020 in terms of its organization and structure, specificity of objectives, indicators of progress and the like?

- We don't know what will come in 5 years - keeping a directional focus but with sufficient flexibility for course-corrections and to seize opportunities will be key.