



Arts 2015

Strategic and Action Plan

December 2011



uOttawa

Executive Summary

The Faculty of Arts at the University of Ottawa is student centred, research intensive and globally engaged. It is the second-largest and most diverse faculty in the University, comprising eleven departments, three professional schools, three interdisciplinary institutes, and the Centre for Research in French Canadian Culture, which are grouped into three broad sectors of Humanities, Languages and Literatures, and Fine Arts. It is an internationally-recognized leader in research in several areas, offers a broad range of undergraduate and graduate programs in French, English and bilingually, as well as instruction in other languages, and has been heavily involved in experiential learning through service to the community.

The *Arts 2015* strategic plan comprises a summary of progress in the past five years, and a description of the general directions to be taken by the Faculty over the next five, together with embedded action plans designed to achieve the numerous specific objectives. *Arts 2015* was developed contemporaneously with the University's strategic plan, *Destination 20/20*, and many of its goals align with the latter. The Faculty is committed to playing its part to successfully achieve the institution's goals in the areas of student experience, research intensity, bilingualism, the *francophonie*, and internationalization.

Arts 2015 pays particular attention to elements where significant positive change is needed, and the report devotes less space to areas where success has already been achieved. The many research accomplishments in the Faculty in recent years, for example, mean that the majority of the consultative round tables set up in 2010-11 and much of this plan are focussed on the more challenging areas of undergraduate student learning and overall experience. However, it is assumed that the Faculty's strengths in research, which are the product of sustained efforts by professors and long-term investment by the Faculty and the University, will be maintained and, indeed, enhanced wherever possible. Equally, individual members of the Faculty are already heavily involved at an international level in research collaborations or international learned societies. Support to further internationalization and global engagement is therefore partially embedded within the proposals for research, teaching, and learning.

❖ ***Size and growth***

The viability of a number of proposals in the plan depends on the availability of physical and financial resources, which in turn are related to the size of the student body. Student numbers in the Faculty are targeted to grow at the same rate as the University over the next five years leading to projected head-counts of 6,940 undergraduate and 1,050 graduate students in 2015. At the graduate level, this will be accomplished through developing new Masters and doctoral programs that will permit better use of existing professorial resources. Greater numbers of students at the undergraduate level will require improving publicity and communication to attract a larger pool of highly qualified applicants, increasing retention through offering a high quality program experience, and developing several new interdisciplinary programs. Francophone percentages of the overall student population are targeted to be maintained or increased slightly over this period. Changes in the size of the professoriate in academic units will be linked to need resulting from growth in program enrolments.

❖ ***Improvement of physical space***

The visibility and cohesion of the Faculty will be enhanced through a physical regrouping of all academic units in the northwest part of the campus. This will involve constructing a new Visual Arts building, moving most of the units in the Humanities sector to the Desmarais building, and consolidating the Languages and Literatures sector in the Arts building and adjacent Simard Hall.

❖ ***Research development and support***

The research plan builds on a strong foundation whose research outputs have global reach. It is focused on three elements: improving internal and external support for researchers, enhancing the visibility of research currently underway, and organizing activities that raise awareness about and recognition of the research activities conducted by the Faculty's professors. Funding for research groups and the creation of new research centres are among the specific actions proposed.

❖ ***Undergraduate teaching and learning***

Essential competencies: The Faculty recognizes the fundamental importance of developing and strengthening the essential competencies students require at the undergraduate level, specifically the mastery of French or English skills, the ability to communicate clearly and effectively, the capacity to demonstrate critical thought, and a basic proficiency in research. To this end, the Faculty will maintain compulsory language and philosophy education components; however, their content and the means by which these objectives are to be met will be reviewed.

Modes of delivery: The Faculty encourages the development of innovative projects in instruction—whether or not these rely on technological components—that are adapted to the needs of the current student clientele. The Faculty plans to support the creation of a network of technology users, as well as to assess current developments in the field of distance education and in-class technology use.

Undergraduate student experience: The Faculty will undertake a number of steps to improve the undergraduate experience. The goals are to ease the transition between high school and university, enhance professor-student interactions, develop additional small group experiences, improve communication with students, and encourage teaching excellence. A Task Force will be constituted to examine best practices to assure the quality of in-class instruction and the comparability of multi-section courses. The richness of the student experience will also be enhanced by promoting broad participation by Faculty of Arts students in university-wide initiatives such as the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program and the Centre for Global and Community Engagement. The latter is also an important means of achieving global engagement by the Faculty.

❖ ***Graduate student experience***

The numbers of graduate programs and graduate students have grown significantly over the last five years. In response, the Faculty is committed to enhancing further the experience of students in our graduate programs. Initiatives in this area will focus especially on the provision of additional space, student funding and employment, administrative support, and improved course offerings.

❖ ***Communication, marketing, alumni and development***

The Faculty plans to implement a truly functional communication and marketing service in close collaboration with the personnel responsible for alumni relations and development. Among the priorities is the redesign of the Faculty and department websites, as well as the use of social media. Efforts to improve alumni relations will be an ongoing priority with numerous specific plans. The implementation of many of the goals in Arts 2015 will also depend on successful external fund-raising, especially for major projects such as the new Visual Arts building, research Chairs and the *Institut du monde francophone*.

❖ ***Global and Community engagement***

The Faculty will support student participation in the Centre for Global and Community Engagement in general; more specifically, through the provision of expertise in languages and cultures, the Faculty will equip students with the essential tools needed to reach out globally. We will examine broadening our relationship with Canadian International College in Cairo and of enhancing exchanges with other foreign

institutions. In the local region, we will increase our links to the community through the recruitment of Senior Fellows who will contribute to the intellectual life of departments.

In addition to plans at the Faculty level, there are numerous proposals for individual units. The most significant of these is the *Institut du monde francophone*, which is planned to be created in collaboration with the Faculty of Social Sciences and with the participation of several other faculties subsequent to the campus-wide consultation currently underway. Other important initiatives include the selection of holders for the four University Research Chairs in Bilingualism at OLBI, the development of externally funded research chairs in Inuit Studies and First Nation Studies, and the enhancement of the Aboriginal Studies program.

This summary provides the bare bones of the numerous proposals being made for what is and will remain a highly diverse, research intensive Faculty of Arts. The remainder of this document provides details of these proposals and explains the reasons for undertaking them.

CONTEXT

The Faculty of Arts at the University of Ottawa is student centred research intensive and globally engaged. It is the second-largest and most diverse faculty at the university, comprising a total of 18 academic units: 11 departments, 3 professional schools, 3 interdisciplinary institutes and the Centre for Research in French Canadian Culture. These are grouped into three broad sectors of Humanities, Languages and Literatures, and Fine Arts.

The Faculty offers 104 programs of study in French and 95 programs in English in 43 different subject areas at the undergraduate level, as well as about 30 Masters and doctoral programs. In recent years, the Faculty has experienced significant growth in student enrolment. Between 2005 and 2010, total enrolment grew from 6,889 to 7,488, representing an increase of 599 students in five years (+9 %) (Figure 1).

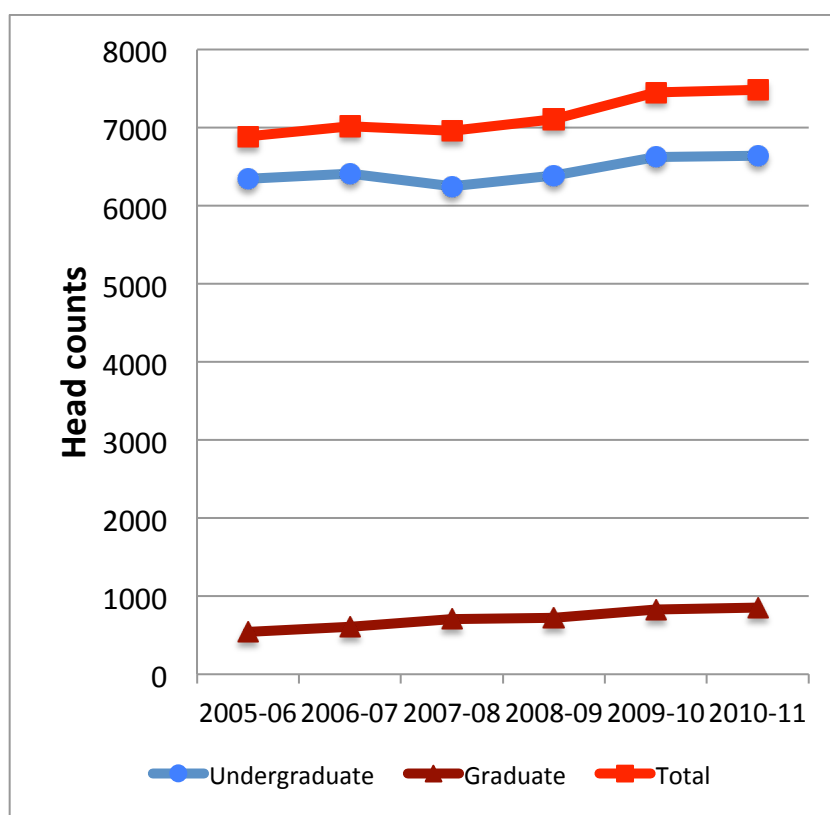


Figure 1: Head counts of undergraduate and graduate students at the Faculty of Arts, 2005-06 to 2010-11 (Source: Institutional Research and Planning - University of Ottawa Quick Facts 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010).

This overall growth represents a very significant increase in graduate student numbers from 541 to 851 (+57%) and a smaller proportional change in undergraduate student numbers (+5%). Over the same period, the numbers for the University of Ottawa as a whole at the undergraduate and graduate levels increased by 15% and 42% respectively. In response to this growth, fifty-five (55) new professor positions were added from 2005-2010 raising the total from 217 to 272. However, the percentage of the university's regular professors with a primary appointment in the Faculty of Arts remained constant at 21%. The growing number of graduate students, combined with the transfer of responsibilities from the Faculty of Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies, led to the creation of an administrative staff position (Administrator of Graduate Studies) in 2006, and the position of Vice-Dean Graduate Studies in 2010. The Faculty also created a new staff position responsible for Undergraduate Student Experience in 2009.

The number of francophone students has remained almost constant at the Faculty since 2005. There was a slight decline from 2005 to 2007, followed by a slight increase through to 2011. Students registering as francophones currently constitute 27% of undergraduate numbers, and the percentage at the graduate level is similar

The main initiatives that have come to fruition over the past five years include the creation of the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute; the Institute for Science, Society and Policy; the School of Information Studies; a range of major and minor programs in foreign languages and cultures; a Cinema Studies minor; Masters programs in Visual Arts and in Theatre; and the establishment of several internal and external Research Chairs, including those in Métis Studies and in the *Francophonie*. In addition, the Faculty has furthered its international reach through its program in Communication offered by Canadian International College in Cairo.

The Student (peer-to-peer) Mentoring Program has produced encouraging results over the same period. The Faculty plans to develop this area further in order to ensure a high quality learning experience. It therefore intends to offer all students opportunities to study in a small group format and will continue its mentoring system that pairs professors with new students as soon as they begin their university studies.

Among the many indications of the quality of the Faculty's researchers is the fact that 40% of the Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada associated with the University of Ottawa are current or retired members of the Faculty of Arts. Two of the departments in the Faculty were rated in the top 200 globally by the QS World University Rankings by Subject in 2011: Linguistics ranked between 51st to 100th and Philosophy from 101st to 150th. Numerous researchers are involved in international networks; others edit national or international

journals and head national or international learned societies. Each year, many important prizes are received by members of the Faculty in honour of their research achievements. Arts is the only Faculty on campus ever to have ever led SSHRC Major Collaborative Research Initiative (MCRI) grants. The total number of such grants held in the Faculty *alone* over the past twelve years exceeds the number held *university-wide* at all but three institutions across Canada in the same period. Two MCRI grants will remain active in the period up to 2015, one in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies and the other in the *Département de français*.

The Committee for Research and Publication (CRP) oversees four internal research funding programs, whose terms of reference were updated in the fall of 2011: grants for organising conferences on campus grants, publication grants, participation in conferences grants, and seed funding. About one hundred applications per year are received for a budget of \$140 000 (\$154 000 in 2010-11). Between 2005 and 2008, the CRP recommended that 185 course releases be given to holders of external grants as well as 65 course releases to new researchers. The Faculty's professors receive significant support from funding agencies, such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), as well as other ministries and government, private, and community organizations. Total grant monies for 2010–2011 were \$6.5 million.

The Faculty adopted a new procedure for establishing professorial workloads in 2010, and a resolution was reached regarding credits that had been accumulated for graduate supervision. These changes gave professors greater predictability and flexibility regarding formal teaching loads, which meant that the CRP no longer needed to adjudicate most teaching releases for principal investigators. The new methodology continues to recognize and support research, with credits for course releases for new professors, external grants, and graduate supervision being placed directly in professorial workloads.

The Faculty has become more active in the areas of alumni relations and development over the past five years, with certain departments putting on regular activities for both past and current students. The Faculty instituted the honorific title of Pillar of the Faculty of Arts for retired professors and support staff who had been members of the Faculty for many years and who continued to contribute to the success of its students through endowed scholarships in their names. Seventeen individuals were named as Pillars of the Faculty in 2010 and 2011 and bronze plaques honouring them have been affixed to the (actual) pillars in the courtyard between the Arts building and Simard Hall.

DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF ARTS 2015

The *Arts 2015* strategic planning process began in the fall of 2010 with the formation of five co-chaired committees responsible for round tables focussed on (1) basic skills, (2) new modes of delivery, (3) undergraduate student experience, (4) graduate student experience, and (5) research support. Each of these committees was composed of professors, students and support staff (see appendix A for membership details). The committees organized one or more Town Hall meetings, requested and received written input from stakeholders, and subsequently wrote a report for the Management Committee (Dean and Vice-Deans) focussing on their particular areas. The Management Committee developed a synthesis of the round table reports and other strategic questions and presented it to the Executive Committee in spring 2011. Feedback was incorporated, and a summary of the main points of the plan was presented for comment to the Executive Committee on November 1st 2011. The current draft is being presented to Faculty Council and members of the Faculty for comment, and then to the Executive Committee for its approval, with final adoption by Faculty Council in December 2011.

Mission statement***What we are***

The Faculty of Arts educates undergraduate and graduate students across the wide range of disciplines that comprise the arts (languages and literatures, humanities and fine arts); it undertakes fundamental, applied and creative research in the same domains; and it engages society in relation to the arts at all scales from the global to the local. Essential to its mission is that the Faculty works in both French and English, creating unique intercultural perspectives for researchers and students, and an extended reach for the dissemination of its scholarship. The Faculty is at the core of the instructional and research mandates of the University of Ottawa, supporting all who seek to explore all aspects of human thought, language, culture and relation to the world. In short, the Faculty's mission is to understand what it means to be human today, in the past, and in the future.

VISION***Our objectives for 2015***

The Faculty will promote teaching excellence inside the classroom, professor-student interactions and innovative educational initiatives, including the involvement of undergraduates in research projects. In terms of faculty member research, we will build on a strong foundation to create additional subject-specific and interdisciplinary projects and groups, as well as international exchanges. We will foster a culture of individual responsibility among our administrative staff to ensure students enjoy consistently high levels of service. We will strengthen our links with alumni and donors, as well as encourage participation by students, professors and staff in community service at the local, national and international levels. In sum, we plan to live up to our goals of being student-centred, research-intensive and globally engaged.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Growth and program development

The Faculty's vision implies effort and investment on multiple fronts. The size of the Faculty and its potential for growth represent important controls on future revenues, which in turn will affect the feasibility of some of the proposals in this plan. Changes in the size of the professoriate in individual units, for example, will be closely linked to needs arising from the initiation of new programs or growth in existing program enrolments. This assumes that the current Provincial funding model and the current University budgetary model are maintained.

The University of Ottawa has chosen a modest rate of growth of 500 students per year for the next five years ([Destination 20/20](#)). The targets within this total are 40% graduate students, especially at the doctoral level, 40% francophones and 30% international students. The total growth over the five-year period is therefore planned as 1500 undergraduate students and 1000 graduate students. Over the past five years, the Faculty's relative size in the University as a whole has declined slightly from 20.5% to 18.9% of total enrollment because its rate of undergraduate growth (see Figure 1) has been lower than the University of Ottawa average. To maintain its current prominence within the University, the Faculty of Arts plans to attract 20% of the student growth, i.e. 300 undergraduate and 200 graduate students, 40% of whom should be francophones. By 2015, total head counts are therefore planned to be 6,940 undergraduate students and 1,050 graduate students for a total enrolment of almost 8,000.

Meeting our targets will be challenging in light of the decline in incoming student numbers experienced in fall 2011. Actions will be needed to publicize the Faculty's existing programs, to develop attractive new undergraduate and graduate programs (especially at the doctoral level), and to enhance existing offerings at the program level, while ensuring high quality instruction within all courses. Increasing student retention rates by improving the undergraduate student experience, as well as course and program quality, is an important part of this goal. Since the greatest control on retention is student entrance average, our strategic goal will be to raise this to the extent possible (preferably to a minimum of 75% by 2015). An associated challenge will be to maintain francophone student numbers and percentages; to this end, a significant effort will be made to advertise the zero net cost of graduate studies to strong francophone students from Québec. It is not clear that the Faculty can meet the 30% target for international students within the growth sought by the University. However, new international student numbers have increased in 2011, and the Faculty's expertise in language instruction appears particularly marketable in this context.

Programs that are currently in development or planned for development by 2015 include:

1. Francophone Studies (Major)
2. Film Studies (Major and MA)
3. Asian Studies (Major)
4. Co-op options in Aboriginal Studies, Ethics and Society, Geomatics and Spatial Analysis, and in certain MA programmes (e.g. English, Geography, Communication)
5. A Graduate Diploma in Science, Society and Policy
6. An MA in World Cultures and Literatures (approved to start in fall 2012)
7. An MA in Bilingualism Studies (in the review process)
8. An interdisciplinary MA in Aboriginal Studies
9. An MA in Environmental Studies (possibly in collaboration with the Institute of the Environment)
10. An interdisciplinary MA in Writing and media (Français and Communication).
11. A doctorate in Communication
12. An interdisciplinary doctorate focusing specifically on Faculty strengths

Some of these programs can be developed using existing resources (e.g. the planned doctoral programmes), while others would require new full-time positions (e.g. the Asian studies major).

In addition to these relatively concrete plans, the Faculty will examine the possibility of creating a Liberal Arts program.

Space needs

The growth of the Faculty over the past five years, together with changes in the kinds of research being undertaken, have made the provision of space a major challenge. There is an increasing need for laboratory space (often supported by grants from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation), but also for office space for full-time and part-time professors and graduate students, as well as study space and locations for social interchange among students at all levels.

The goal for the Faculty is to be clustered geographically in the northwest part of the main campus by 2015 in enough space of sufficiently high quality to permit further faculty expansion, any potential reorganization, and to maintain flexibility. In addition, there is a clear need for student study space that is not currently being met. Current space for the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute and the Departments of Communication and

Visual Arts, is inadequate in terms of quality, while the School of Information Studies is housed in isolation on the Lees campus.

The construction of a new building to house the Department of Visual Arts is a priority of the University's draft Five-Year Infrastructure Plan and is expected to be realized by 2015. This is also a major goal for external fund-raising. A first step for the latter is to demonstrate the commitment of the members of the Visual Arts Department to the project. Thus, a new student art gallery is being created in fall 2011 along the Faculty administration corridor in Simard Hall. As a tangible demonstration of student commitment to the project, a portion of the sale price of each work of art on display will be put into a special fund for the construction of the new building.

The planned occupation of four floors of the Desmarais building in 2012 by most of the units in the Humanities sector—the School of Information Studies, the Institute for Science, Society and Policy and the Departments of Communications, History, Philosophy, and Classics and Religious Studies—will reduce but may not eliminate space problems. These moves will allow the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute to move to the Arts building, thereby consolidating in one place the Faculty's units concerned with languages and literatures and increasing the visibility of this important sector of the Faculty. However, research space may remain in short supply even after these moves, and additional space will be sought on the third floor of the Desmarais building when it becomes available.

Research development and support

Given that there is no doubt about the excellence of the research conducted in the Faculty (see *Context* above), the strategic plan will not initiate wholesale change. Instead, it aims to improve support for researchers where needs are identified, encourage the formation of interdisciplinary groups, enhance the visibility of research underway, and promote the awareness and recognition of professors' research activities among students, administrative staff and the general public. To realize these objectives, three concrete measures are being proposed.

To enhance research visibility, the first measure seeks to promote interdisciplinary research and the creation of research teams with the help of a data-base containing the electronic CVs of all professors in the Faculty. Second, in view of our researchers' excellence, the Faculty intends to include a Research section in the Faculty's planned electronic bulletin. Third, to enable our most renowned researchers, who are invited to speak all over the world, to showcase their contributions within their own university, the

Faculty plans to implement a *Dean's Conference* series that will be open to the general public.

The Faculty currently manages four research funding programs (see *Context* above). However, these programs do not include provisions for funding research groups or research mobilization activities, such as the organization of one-day symposia or the invitation of eminent conference speakers. Not only are these types of activities becoming increasingly frequent in the Faculty, but they play a significant role in the development of research and its dissemination. Therefore, the Faculty is looking into creating a support program. It will also take this opportunity to evaluate the reach of its other funding programs to ensure their continued relevance as the best means for offering the support that our professors require so that the Faculty continues to be a locus of research excellence.

Finally, the Office of the Vice-Dean Research will develop methods to evaluate the impact of research support, taking into account funding amounts and number of grants awarded, rates of success, prizes and distinctions received, and publications resulting from research conducted in the Faculty.

Action plan

1. Creation of a section on "Research" in the electronic Bulletin of the Faculty and development of a mailing list for the Bulletin.
2. Improvement of the Faculty website for the Vice-Dean Research in order to highlight more effectively the research of professors, particularly through the development of a section devoted to "Research and Innovation in the Faculty of Arts," which will publicize work in progress. Every funded research project would be listed, with a link to the webpage of the professor.
3. Dean's conference series: The *Dean's Conference series* is expected to begin in Fall 2013. A committee chaired by the Vice-Dean Research will be in charge of its organization. Funds will be necessary to cover advertising costs. Partnerships with community organizations, such as Winterlude, will be sought.
4. Creation of an internal funding competition devoted to "Research development activities and knowledge mobilization" with an implementation date of fall 2012. Activities to receive funding support in the context of this competition will have as their objectives the development of interdisciplinary or inter-university (including international) research teams and partnerships, the testing of early research results to be used in the preparation of external funding applications, and other contributions to the development of research in the Faculty of Arts. Activities eligible for funding will include meetings between researchers, workshops, and conference series. If justified by the level of activity, the Faculty will assist

research groups in becoming formally recognized and supported as research centres. Research groups led by members of the Faculty of Arts that currently exist or are in the process of being formed include among others:

- a. Interdisciplinary Research Group in Organisational Communication
 - b. Holocaust Research Group
 - c. Aboriginal Research Group
 - d. Arab Canadian Studies Research Group
5. Develop methods to evaluate the positive repercussions of research support: implementation date: fall 2012.

Undergraduate teaching and learning

Teaching and learning at the undergraduate level were considered by three of the Faculty of Arts round tables: Table 1 focussed on essential (basic) skills, Table 2 on new modes of teaching delivery and Table 3 on the undergraduate experience.

Essential competencies

The Bachelor of Arts degrees conferred by the Faculty include compulsory education components in the areas of students' first language (English or French) and philosophy. These educational objectives seek to strengthen the competencies considered to be essential for future university graduates (see Mission statement above), namely,

- mastery of English or French
- effective oral and written communication;
- critical thinking
- basic ability in research (especially in searching for information)

To ensure that students acquire these competencies, six first-language credits and six philosophy credits are mandatory requirements for all students registered in the Faculty of Arts.

The importance of these essential competencies and the identification of specific courses to enable their acquisition or reinforcement were unanimously recognized within the Faculty. However, the issues of the number of credits to be assigned for the acquisition of these competencies, the administration of a first language diagnostic test, and the possible exemption from a language course for students demonstrating mastery of the required competencies gave rise to considerable debate and differences of opinion at the round table discussions, in the town hall meetings, and in the feedback from the academic units. As a result, some of the points covered in the round table discussions were adopted, while others require further reflection and consultation.

Action plan

1. Maintain the 6 first language credit requirement, but re-examine the nature and content of the courses.
2. Maintain the *PHI 1101/1501* course requirement – *Reasoning and Critical Thinking / Raisonement et pensée critique* but re-examine its content and ensure greater uniformity among sections.
3. Require students in the Faculty of Arts to take their essential competency courses during the first 45 credits in their program (essentially by the middle of second year).
4. Mandate the Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Studies Committee to continue its reflections concerning these and other points raised in the round table discussions and to submit the results of these reflections to the Faculty Executive Committee by March 31, 2012. The points for consideration, among others, include a second philosophy course, the French diagnostic test, first language reinforcement and the need for measures in this regard, writing education for academic purposes, the establishment of a linguistic excellence certificate, and ensuring basic training in research.

Modes of delivery

The Faculty of Arts recognizes that the range of subjects and courses taught means that there exists a concomitant range in modes of teaching and learning. The multiplicity of learning situations cannot be addressed with a single, universal formula. Some professors are at the cutting edge of advanced technology use, while others excel using traditional teaching methods. The Faculty of Arts is committed to supporting both teaching methods, while offering a professional development framework that recognizes individual needs. Whether with or without the use of specific technologies, the Faculty encourages the development of innovative projects adapted to the current student body. Furthermore, by paying careful and focused attention to technological changes, the Faculty is committed to keeping interested professors well-informed about the uses of technology in education and their potential impact on learning outcomes.

Action plan

In order to accomplish these objectives, the Faculty plans to appoint a mixed working group (composed of professors, technicians and students) in 2011–2012 with the following mandate:

1. to assess and evaluate existing efforts in the Faculty in the area of distance education and in-class use of technology.
2. to establish a network of professor-users interested in sharing their experiences through various information and promotion channels for the benefit of the whole community.
3. to evaluate and promote innovative projects in partnership with uOttawa's Teaching and Learning Support Service.
4. to contribute to the creation of distance education courses in partnership with the Teaching and Learning Support Service, and the Vice-President Academic and Provost.
5. to develop and put in place a code of conduct for the use of computers and other mobile devices in class (note: there is already a project underway on this subject at the Council on Undergraduate Studies in association with legal services at the University).
6. to implement a series of brown bag lunch meetings for those interested in sharing their educational experiences (with or without technology use).
7. to identify two courses with enrolments of 30 students, one given in English and the other *en français*, that could be used to test the usefulness of moving to iPads or equivalent tablets as a common platform for teaching and learning. The goal is to examine if it would be advantageous to make the purchase/rental of tablets mandatory for students in courses at the Faculty of Arts. Potential savings for students relate to use of the tablet to replace printed material, including textbooks and course-packs, as well as the environmental gain associated with a lesser use of paper. There are numerous educational applications available, and a common highly portable platform could enable innovative modes of teaching and learning.

Undergraduate Student Experience

Major surveys of student satisfaction such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC), reveal that the University of Ottawa is languishing near or at the bottom of its list of comparators. In the 2010 NSSE survey, the University was significantly lower than its comparators in the US (US-Doctoral and a subset of US-Doctoral universities) for first-year and fourth-year students in the areas of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, an enriching educational experience, and a supportive campus environment. This lagging performance is similar to that of many large Canadian universities in the medical-doctoral category.

For the Faculty of Arts, a more useful survey for planning purposes is the University of Ottawa detailed exit survey of undergraduate students undertaken for the first time in 2010 (see summary of selected results in Appendix B). This shows that the Faculty averages were higher than those of the University as a whole and those of our traditional faculty comparator, Social Sciences, for, among others, overall experience, academic experience, program satisfaction, small group instruction, initiatives to create a sense of belonging, teaching quality, and academic advising. The Faculty scored worse than the University and Social Sciences in terms of the choice of available courses, views of career prospects, and the perception of an administrative “run-around” when seeking information.

The round table on student experience made numerous suggestions in its report but not all are feasible given the resources available. The list of actions below contains those which are the priorities for the Faculty as a whole. Individual units may wish to put in place some of the other recommendations of the round table.

Quantitative measures to evaluate the success of these initiatives will include the rate of retention between the end of registration and the date of the official enrolment statistics in November, and the rate of retention between Years 1 and 2. The student opinion exit survey will be a vital tool in future years to evaluate the impacts of these actions over the long run.

Action plan

1. Improve the High School to University transition

The younger age of incoming students has resulted in greater concerns about their adaptation to university on the part of the students themselves and, in some cases, their parents. Programs that have proven successful in other faculties will be examined for possible implementation in 2012-2013 and subsequent years. These include summer orientation days for students and their parents (tried by the Faculty of Social Sciences in 2011) and a week-long preparatory interdisciplinary non-credit course (tried by the Faculty of Science in 2011).

2. Enhance professor-student interactions

A successful pilot project to enhance interchange between first year students and full-time professors in the Department of Communication was undertaken in 2010-2011. Professors were allocated 10-12 students each and met with them as a group

on Welcome Day. Faculty members became a point of contact if the students had particular questions or problems during the fall or winter terms. In 2011-2012, no fewer than 125 professors across the Faculty volunteered to participate in a similar project. In addition, a co-ordinator and two mentors were appointed for the General BA program to manage and advise this numerically large group of students, who show lower rates of satisfaction in the exit survey. These initiatives will be evaluated in order to determine whether they result in an improvement of the student learning experience.

3. Small group experience.

Students in the Faculty of Arts should be guaranteed at least one small group upper-level learning experience during their program. Since many programs in the languages and fine arts sectors already incorporate instruction to relatively small groups, this goal is likely most relevant to certain programs in the Humanities sector. However, the situation is different in first year when retention is most problematic and students in many programs take only large, anonymous classes. The Faculty will therefore examine the possibility of setting up discussion groups led by teaching assistants for all students taking PHI 1101/1501, as part of the review of these courses outlined under Basic Skills (above).

4. Improve communication with students

Improved communication must address many fronts simultaneously: making students aware of the numerous opportunities to attend academic events going on at the Faculty; advertising programs such as COOP, community service learning and the University Research Opportunity Program, more effectively; directing students to the right people who can deal with their specific problems; and celebrating the achievements and promoting the skills of students, professors, and support staff. Actions to be taken include redesigning the Faculty web-pages, engaging in social media, reorganizing the Marketing and Communication team, installing information screens at the entrances of the main buildings (Simard, Arts and Desmarais), and forging links between Alumni relations and Marketing and Communications. Specific possibilities include a lunch-time reception for students on the Dean honour's list, events for students in second, third and fourth years that mirror Welcome Day events, and fostering better interaction at Convocation.

5. Encouragement of teaching excellence

Part-time and full-time professors and teaching assistants may start their careers with little or no teacher training or experience on how to teach effectively in the current university setting. The Faculty of Arts plans to work with the Centre for University Teaching to ensure that all professors and teaching assistants are given support to excel as lecturers and instructors. Subject to the relevant collective agreements, this may include the insertion of mandatory training clauses into contracts.

Excellent part-time teaching is already recognized in the Faculty through the Part-time Teacher of the Year Award, but there is no equivalent recognition for full-time professors. Rather than institute a new single award, however, the Faculty proposes to name ten professors annually for the quality of their teaching assessments and their engagement with students. The recognition of numerous persons will be a visible sign of the widespread excellence and dedication of professors in the Faculty. These “Top 10 Teachers” will be named for the first time with the other faculty awards in winter 2012.

6. Task Force on Faculty standards regarding course content and evaluation

Undergraduate programs undergo periodic review under the university’s Institutional Quality Assurance Program (IQAP) and major changes or new programs must also be approved at multiple levels, including the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. Among departments, however, oversight of the content of courses is variable. Some provide training and handbooks with best practices, while others may not even check if course plans conform to the Senate’s rules. Consequently, the multiple sections in some required courses may differ significantly from each other in terms of content, presentation and evaluatory methods. In turn, this may affect whether the learning objectives of a program are being fully met for all students. These are complex issues, touching on program quality control, individual academic freedom, and collective agreements.

The Faculty will set up a Task Force in 2011-12 to develop standards and to share best-practices for courses. Among the questions to be examined will be how to accomplish oversight of course outlines, whether such oversight should be limited to required courses and/or those with multiple sections, how to ensure equivalency among multiple section courses, whether 6 credit courses should be eliminated to reduce risk for students and make scheduling easier, and how to accomplish posting of course offerings over a three-year cycle.

7. Staff prize

A prize will be created to recognize the contributions made by support personnel to the quality of the student and professor experiences. Support staff often represent the first or major point-of-contact for students and can have a strong influence on the student experience. In addition to creating this prize, the Faculty must provide the training needed and foster an atmosphere of personal responsibility among support staff for resolving student problems in order to provide an unparalleled level of service.

Graduate Student Experience

The Faculty of Arts will focus on four main areas in order to enhance the experience of its students at the Master's and Doctoral levels: (1) space; (2) administration and orientation; (3) graduate course offerings; and (4) funding.

1. Space

The Faculty is committed to developing appropriate space for graduate students that will address their needs as teaching assistants, for social interchange with other graduate students, for quiet working conditions, and for the storage of their personal belongings. Space will be organized according to clusters of certain disciplines within individual buildings (e.g. Arts and Desmarais). Storage lockers and cabinets will be placed in social spaces, as well as quiet workspaces.

2. Administration and Orientation

In order to sustain a decentralized system of academic advising, while at the same time recognizing the need to balance the workload of the academic assistants, the Faculty of Arts will regroup some assistants who advise at the graduate level, in order to create local clusters and assure reliable support for the students.

3. Course Offerings

Graduate students express a keen interest in interdisciplinary exchange, especially as it could occur in the form of cross-disciplinary course selection.

4. Funding

The Faculty has identified two significant concerns with respect to the financial support of graduate students: (i) the ten-hour cap on employment, and (ii) the restrictions on the attribution of teaching assistantships to students who are already externally funded. The former is beyond control of the Faculty as it is the subject of University and Provincial regulations but the latter will be examined further. Some other faculties allow students to obtain TA-ships or RA-ships while holding external scholarships. One possibility is to place an envelope of funding under the control of the Vice-Dean for Graduate Studies to use to attract incoming students who hold external scholarships. This could help to attract the best students and increase overall student enrolments.

5. Francophone students

There are concerns that the number of francophone graduate students has been dropping across the Faculty. This makes it challenging to offer a suitably rich program of courses *en français*, which in turn makes it harder still to recruit students. The Faculty believes that two key messages can improve francophone recruitment: (i) that students can complete our programs entirely *en français* and (ii) that the higher cost of student fees in Ontario compared to Québec is irrelevant for strong students who have an A- average and would therefore be eligible for scholarship support. It is important to note that just as a decline in enrolments may lead to fewer courses being timetabled, an increase in numbers makes more course offerings possible, which in turn creates a positive feedback for attracting more graduate students.

Action plan

1. Consult with departmental graduate student associations to discuss appropriate space assignments as part of the planning process for the moves to Arts and Desmarais. Consultation should also take place with students who will remain in Simard, Perez, and elsewhere to ensure that they have access to appropriate spaces.
2. Assign academic assistants specifically to graduate programs, balance their workloads, and locate them in departments or in building-based clusters.
3. Develop a regular schedule of orientation and training sessions for graduate students offered by the departments and the Faculty of Arts.

4. Enhance the diversity of relevant course offerings for graduate students by identifying courses with interdisciplinary components that could be incorporated into several graduate programs.
5. Investigate the costs and benefits of providing assistantships to graduate students holding external scholarships, especially in relation to doctoral student recruitment.
6. Develop promotional materials aimed specifically at the francophone student market in Québec in order to increase the number of francophone students at the MA and PhD levels.
7. Offer assistantships at the MA level to francophone students with an average between 7.5 and 8.0 (conditional on receiving funding).

Communication, marketing, alumni and development

The Web is now the primary means for the Faculty to reach out to current and prospective students, their parents, alumni and donors, its own members, and the broader community, including the media. Given the importance of this medium, the Faculty must ensure that both the content and the operation of its web-site meet its multiple and ever growing needs.

The creation of a marketing and communication service that can collaborate effectively with the staff responsible for alumni and development will require the addition of a management position, as well as the pooling of existing resources and the redefinition of certain positions.. The service will be responsible to the Vice-Dean Governance and Secretary of the Faculty.

Improving alumni relations has two strategic goals: to raise the external reputation of the Faculty and University by instilling a sense of pride and, over the long-term, to facilitate fund-raising for projects that otherwise would not be able to be realized. The recent appointment of a full-time Alumni Relations Officer and a half-time Faculty Development Officer is leading to progress in these directions. However, it is recognized that long-term, sustained efforts will be needed to engage the Faculty in these goals and to overcome the relatively low level of activity in these sectors in recent years.

In collaboration with the Alumni Relations Office, the Faculty of Arts will develop an alumni relations program of ongoing communications and events,, The primary purpose will be to establish a strong culture of pride, loyalty, and engagement among uOttawa Arts alumni, future alumni, parents, and friends. In collaboration with the Alumni Relations Office and the Development Office, the Faculty of Arts will engage in fundraising and donor-related

activities, in order to support students, research, and the ongoing mission of the Faculty of Arts and the University of Ottawa as a teaching and research-intensive institution.

Action plan

1. *Communications* : internal and external information (promotion, public relations, special activities and recruitment).
 - a. administrative reorganization of marketing and communications within the Faculty
 - b. updating and improvement of the Faculty and departmental websites
 - c. creation of a Faculty of Arts electronic bulletin
 - d. social media use
2. *Marketing*: position the Faculty of Arts' branding image through a greater emphasis on the three sectors (Languages and literatures, Humanities, Fine Arts) and the three characteristics (student centred, research intensive and globally engaged).
3. *Alumni Relations*: develop an annual work plan for Alumni Relations that will include ongoing e-mailed alumni communications, market research, a program of alumni relations and engagement activities, regional alumni engagement,, and progress reporting. The purpose is to lead to a high rate of participation in Alumni targeted events such as Spring Alumni Weekend; Arts and uOttawa programs (co-op, mentoring, etc...).
4. *Development*: develop an annual work plan for Development for the Faculty of Arts that will include specific donor-related activities, participation in university fundraising activities and the ongoing campaign, and annual giving and other opportunities. The long-term goal is to enhance the network of stakeholder relationships and partnerships, and increase the donation revenue base.

The major projects for fund-raising up to 2015 are planned to be: (1) the new Visual Arts building (tentatively entitled the Arts Heritage Precinct); (2) research chairs in First Nations Studies, Inuit Studies and Environmental Studies; (3) *Institut du monde francophone*; and (4) scholarship support in all fields. It is planned to form a Dean's Advisory Council before the middle of 2012 specifically to assist with fund-raising for the new building.

Global and Community engagement

The Faculty already has numerous external (local, regional, national and international) connections through the impact of its research and the international nature of individual research collaborations, as well as the placement of many professors on executive committees of national and international learned societies at all levels.

In terms of programs, several majors in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures require immersion semesters to expose students to foreign cultures and help the learning of Arabic, Italian, German or Russian. The Faculty provides special financial support for students participating in these foreign exchanges.

Experiential learning was introduced at the University by a professor of the Faculty of Arts and is used in many courses, allowing students to contribute to the external community. The experiential learning service has now been incorporated into the Centre for Global and Community Engagement, an important element of Destination 20/20. Students in many courses can find valuable volunteer activities in the community.

The Faculty wants to support the service component of education and its commitment to the teaching of foreign language and culture makes this particularly appropriate.

The Faculty oversees its own program in Communication that is run out of Canadian International College (CIC) in Cairo, Egypt. Students are following the uOttawa curriculum and some will complete a uOttawa degree.

Finally, language training at OLBI is vital to the University's goal of attracting more international students, particularly in the Faculty of Engineering and the Telfer School of Management.

Action plan

Enhancement of the Faculty's commitment to global engagement will involve:

1. Incorporation of experiential learning wherever possible in courses within the Faculty of Arts.
2. Examination of the possibility of short-course language training for students who wish to participate in programs offered by the Centre for Global and Community Engagement.
3. Development of effective exchange agreements with universities in key locations for our students and researchers..
4. Enhancement of the Faculty's links with the professional world by recruiting leading candidates as Senior Fellows within specific academic units. The proximity of

ministries, government agencies and other scientific and cultural organizations represents a rich pool of experts capable of contributing significantly to the quality of our programs and enhancing our prestige. Senior Fellows will enrich the intellectual life of the Faculty through an annual interdisciplinary colloquium and through regular interactions with the departments.

5. Examination of the development of further links with CIC in Egypt in order to offer language programs at campuses in Egypt and possibly elsewhere in the Middle East.

Initiatives in individual units

About half of the units of the Faculty will be subject to periodic review by 2015 as part of the university's new Institutional Quality Assurance Program (IQAP), with the remainder being reviewed over the following three years of the 8-year cycle. Self-evaluation documents are expected to refer to the *Arts 2015* strategic plan and to indicate how the individual units are aligning with the Faculty's strategic goals.

Certain other units are either developing their plans or are reviewing them:

1. The Institute of Canadian Studies is in the process of developing a strategic plan outside of the periodic review cycle and this may impact the programs in Aboriginal Studies and Jewish Canadian Studies, both of which are housed in and/or associated with the Institute.
2. The Institute for Science, Society and Policy, the newest unit of the Faculty of Arts, is in the process of developing its own strategic plan.
3. The Faculty plans to develop the *Institut du monde francophone* in collaboration with the Faculty of Social Sciences and this will impact the *Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française* as well as the potential to develop a major in *Études de la francophonie* and on the possibility of new *chaires de la francophonie*. A campus-wide and external stakeholder consultation regarding the new institute is taking place in fall 2011.
4. Four new University Research Chairs focused on bilingualism will be created at OLBI between 2012 and 2015. These will be used to strengthen the research thrust of the Institute and to engage researchers from across the campus in the study of bilingualism. The first two chairs are expected to be filled in 2011-12.
5. Research chairs are planned in First Nation Studies and in Inuit Studies as a means to enhance research and teaching in the Aboriginal Studies program. These chairs are among the priorities for Faculty external fund-raising from private donors and government sources. Initially these chairs may be housed in the Institute of Canadian Studies with the development of an Aboriginal Studies Research Centre

and eventually an Institute of Aboriginal Studies and an MA in Aboriginal Studies as longer-term strategic goals (likely after 2015).

6. A research chair in Environmental Studies is planned for development using external fund-raising and potentially linked to the development of an MA in Environmental Studies and a possible name change for the Department of Geography to the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. Collaboration with the Institute of the Environment will be essential.
7. The Department of Communication and the School of Information Studies will be co-located when the two academic units are moved to the Desmarais Building in 2012. The possibility of merging the units to create a tentatively-titled School of Communication and Information will be examined. Such a decision would have to be supported by a majority of the members in both units and would have to take into account the goal of the Department of Communication to develop a new PhD program and the goal of the School of Information Studies to have its professional Masters program become fully accredited by the American Library Association.

A Final Word

The *Arts 2015* plan is regarded as a living document. It is intended to be removed from the shelf and consulted frequently to provide the directions and specific actions for the Faculty over the next five years. Inevitably, both opportunities and challenges will emerge due to unforeseen externalities and these may necessitate its update, especially with regard to the specific actions proposed. Nevertheless, it is expected that the broad strokes outlined here, because they were based on a wide consultation of the stakeholders in the Faculty, will remain relevant through to 2015 and beyond. Progress towards meeting these goals will be reported annually by dean at the last Faculty Council of the year.

By 2015 we expect the Faculty of Arts: (1) to be consolidated in high quality space in the northwest of the main campus in order to meet the needs of all of its stakeholders; (2) to be larger than it is in 2011 especially in terms of graduate students, but with the same or a greater percentage of francophones; (3) to have maintained or increased its success in external research funding; (4) to have formed a number of successful interdisciplinary research groups and possibly new research centres; (5) to have implemented several new undergraduate and graduate programs and to have assured high quality instruction in the courses that comprise those programs; (6) to offer an improved undergraduate student experience in English and *en français* both inside and outside the classroom; (7) to be publicly recognising teaching excellence in the Faculty including through the use of new methodologies where appropriate; (8) to be using electronic communication as the primary means of contact with prospective and existing students and all external stakeholders; (9) to be using new technologies, including distance education, to meet its

teaching mandate; (10) to be publicly recognising administrative staff and stellar professors for their contributions; (11) to be active and successful in alumni relations and external fund-raising; (12) to have furthered its international and global engagement in multiple ways through course instruction, research impacts and service activities; and (13) continue to maintain its commitment to bilingualism by offering its programs in both official languages, and by promoting bilingualism amongst the administrative staff, professoriate, and student body—in particular through support of the [immersion program](#). Individually, these changes are incremental, as is appropriate for a Faculty that has existed for well over a century. Taken together, however, they are expected to have strong, positive impacts for all members of the Faculty of Arts – undergraduate and graduate students, professors and support staff. The Faculty has been at the heart of the University of Ottawa since its beginnings. This plan will ensure that it continues to play its central role for the decades to come.

Appendix A
Composition of the 5 round tables

Table #1 : Formation fondamentale /Basic Skills

Co-chairs: Marc Brosseau, Pierluigi Piovanelli
 Professors : Frans De Bruyn, Ian Mackay, Christian Milat, Sonia Sikka, Vincent Bergeron
 Management committee: Geneviève Mareschal
 Administrative staff: Isabelle Mayrand
 Students: Josh Burrill, David Gick.

Table #2 : Modes de livraison / Modes of Delivery

Co-chairs: Lynn Bowker, Eric Crighton
 Professors: Marie-Josée Hamel, Bertrand Labasse, Rocci Luppicini
 Management committee: Denis Bachand
 Administrative staff: Fernand Aubin, Alain Erdmer, Nabil Miguel, Richard Pinet

Table #3: Expérience étudiante au premier cycle /Undergraduate Student Experience

Co-chairs : Jennepher Lennox Terrion et Jeff Keshen
 Professors : Damien-Claude Bélanger, Lucie Joubert, Sylvie Lamoureux
 Management committee: Antoni Lewkowicz
 Administrative staff : Jacynthe Pouliot, Véronika Bernard
 Students: Joanna Kaleniecka, Casey Perreault

Table #4 : Expérience étudiante aux études supérieures /Graduate Student Experience

Co-chairs : Juana Muñoz-Liceras, Daniel J. Paré
 Professors: Mary Cavanagh, Roxane Prevost, Theodore De Bruyn
 Management committee: Lori Burns
 Administrative staff: Rachel Fontaine-Azzi, Danielle O'Connor
 Students: Alexandre Gauthier, S. Kate Ploeger

Table #5 : Appui à la recherche /Support for Research

Co- chairs : Luise von Flotow, Murray Dineen
 Professors: Florian Grandena, Anne Gilbert, France Martineau
 Management committee: Lucie Hotte
 Administrative staff: Lesley Strutt

Appendix B

Summary of 2010 Selected Exit Survey Results