Vision 2015. The Report of Table 5. [Draft: January 5, 2011]

The committee referred to as Table 5 was charged with examining research within the context of Vision 2015. Apart from the Town Hall meeting open to the professors of the Faculty, the committee met three times–twice in December and once in January–while exchanging numerous email communications. The following recommendations, rationales, strategies, and modes of evaluation are derived from both the Town Hall meeting and the committee deliberations.

The committee envisions the following two overarching goals for research under the rubric of Vision 2015. First, the Faculty should aim to *support research both real and potential in all its diversity*. This will be particularly important in positioning the Faculty and its considerable resources on both national and international stages, contributing thereby to a much greater visibility and credibility. One important measure in this regard will be an increase in the number and quality of students attracted to the Faculty.

Secondly, the Faculty should aim to *encourage the growth of a vibrant research culture*. This will entail in equal measure bringing research out of the closet and into the eye of both the university community and the public as a whole, and the creation of a strongly-felt desire to share and partake of research undertaken within the Faculty, a desire shared by professors, staff, and students.

Recommendations:

To these ends, the committee makes the following principal recommendations:

Recommendation 1. Optimize the number, nature, and success rate of applications for research subvention, especially to national granting agencies such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

Recommendation 2. Encourage research of an interdisciplinary and international nature.

Recommendation 3. Improve upon or where necessary create infrastructures designed to support research within the Faculty.

The report concludes with several recommendations appended as notes, these less principal in nature but of considerable importance nonetheless to the project of supporting research within the Faculty.

Rationales:

Recommendation 1. Optimize the number, nature, and success rate of applications for research subvention, especially to national granting agencies such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). With the growth of the national granting agencies, the successful application for research funding has become the gold-standard in Canadian academia – the principal measure by which both individual researchers and their universities are assessed. Optimizing Faculty applications (to SSHRC in particular) in both number and quality will no doubt lead to greater success and produce a consequent rise in the esteem with which the Faculty and University are currently held. Following the time-honoured maxim that "nothing succeeds like success itself," the effect produced in this regard cannot help but be an increase in self confidence, this leading in turn to further optimization and greater success. For these reasons, the committee sees the research subvention as the cornerstone of its report: it is the basis upon which further recommendations depend.

Recommendation 2. Encourage research of an interdisciplinary and international nature. The research strengths of individual academics and research teams within the Faculty are of an unquestionably high quality (as witnessed by our considerable successes to date in applications made to the granting councils). While these extant research strengths will no doubt continue to consolidate their successes, the most fertile areas for real growth are those that bring Faculty scholars in touch with colleagues in new and unanticipated ways. To this end, the committee believes that interdisciplinary research and research with an international aspect offer the greatest possibilities, especially in terms of research subvention as addressed in recommendation 1. In a climate of rapidly changing research perspectives, the Faculty should encourage collaborations designed to flourish in just such a climate.

Recommendation 3. Improve upon or where necessary create infrastructures designed to support research within the Faculty. Again, without question the extant infrastructure designed to support research within the Faculty has shown its considerable merits – the office of the Vice-Dean of Research in particular is responsible in large part for the Faculty's record of considerable success at SSHRC. As was acknowledged in recommendation 2, however, the nature of research is changing rapidly and such a development requires the addition of new research infrastructures, especially those designed to promote new research perspectives and to capitalize upon growing research successes.

3. Strategies for implementation:

Recommendation 1. The committee suggests the following strategies as means for optimizing Faculty applications for subventions.

A. Develop a network of expert counselors. Such a network should comprise the following:

- a formal body of grant "mentors": professors in mid or late career, who have a record of success in attracting research subventions or of service to the granting agencies, and who would be brought together with young researchers either individually or in groups with the goal of improving applications and individual research trajectories;

- an individual resource person within each department: a contact person for the Vice-Dean of Research; a designated person who will bring research matters to the attention of their departmental assemblies and individual colleagues, young researchers in particular;

- a committee to aid in the editing of grant applications before these are sent on to the granting agencies.

B. In this and other ways, encourage the growth of a permanent research expertise within the Faculty, one designed to optimize the acquisition of research subventions and the development of new research perspectives.

- encourage and support the participation of Faculty professors in the affairs of the granting councils or national scholarly organizations such as the Canadian Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences.

- encourage and support their membership in evaluating committees at the granting councils.

C. Organize workshops on all aspects of research, this under the auspices of the Vice-Dean of Research and aimed at professors, support staff, and students. Make these workshops available for wide dissemination on the internet.

D. Create a dossier of best research practices. In particular, make copies (in whole or in part) of successful grant applications available to young scholars, this after the completion of the grant project and with the permission of the researchers involved.

E. Schedule regular meetings between the Vice-Dean of Research and individual departmental assemblies, the latter including not only regular professors but also professors in part-time or other capacities.

F. Encourage senior and late-career professors to sustain a programme of research, in particular to embark upon large research projects that build upon the accomplishments of their research careers.

Recommendation 2. The committee suggests the following strategies as means for encouraging research of an interdisciplinary and international nature within the Faculty.

A. Visiting professors. Develop a culture and infrastructure that welcomes visiting professors.
- allocate office space, give library cards and lending privileges, give access to fitness facilities and health services, where appropriate,
- organize lectures and presentations to promote the research of these professors,
- invite visiting professors into our classrooms to present their research.

B. Interdisciplinary teams. Encourage the creation of teams of researchers both within the university and with researchers from other universities and other countries.
- create a database that lists all the professors of the Faculty, their areas of research, projects underway and completed (in the last seven years)
- develop and encourage interdepartmental exchanges by creating interdisciplinary courses (with multiple course codes) and by supporting teaching (made possible by the new means of calculating teaching loads in terms of credits rather than courses),
- facilitate the creation of cross-appointments for professors,
- create a space reserved solely for professors (a *salon des professeurs*) where they can meet in informal fashion (over lunch) or more formally, and where the work of professors can be promoted (with book launches, displays of recent publications, works of art, music concerts).

Recommendation 3. The committee suggests the following strategies as means for improving and creating infrastructures designed to support research within the Faculty.

A. Create a database (as noted above) readily accessible online that shows the expertise of each professor, their research projects (including those that have been subvented, this on a voluntary basis), and teams of researchers.

B. The Faculty websites devoted to research should be revamped and made to respond more rapidly to developments within the Faculty research community.

C. Create research "snapshots" for each professor in which their research is presented in a lively and interesting manner. The goal of this strategy is to introduce the professor's research to the student body in a dynamic, visual manner. These snapshots should be

- put online, on or linked to the webpage of the professor,
- sent to students automatically when they register to a course given by the professor.

D. Enlarge the mandate of the Faculty Bulletin so as to note professorial visits (both visitors to the Faculty and when our faculty goes outside), grants, research activities and trips on the part of individual professors, and publications (especially those resulting from research grants). The goal of this strategy is to introduce researchers to other researchers in the faculty, and in particular to stimulate research of a collaborative nature.

4. Modes of evaluation:

Given the two overarching goals envisioned by the committee, to *support research both real and potential in all its diversity* and to *encourage the growth of a vibrant research culture*, the modes of evaluation will necessarily be both quantitative and qualitative.

A. Quantitative modes of evaluation. The success of this initiative will be measured primarily in terms of an increase in applications to subventing agencies such as SSHRC and in the success rate of these applications. One measure of success in this regard will be a growth in the amount of research funding brought to the Faculty, and in the amount of research funds leveraged or matched by agencies such as the Federal Government. Another will be the growth of research dependent programmes, especially at the graduate level, with an increase in the number of student applications and acceptances. Growth in this regard should be measured on national and international scales, especially in light of our neighbouring universities, our competitors. Less tangible, but important nonetheless, the Faculty should be able to discern growth in research both "real and potential," applied and pure, immediately applicable and exploratory. In the latter regard, growth in the number of interdisciplinary and team research projects should be seen as essential.

B. Qualitative modes of evaluation. More difficult to discern, qualitative measures will perhaps be more important to the continued growth of research in the Faculty, since they indicate the health of the organism from which grant subventions and

research programmes arise. Given the difficulties of measuring this aspect, the committee recommends continued consultation on the part of the Dean and the Vice-Dean of Research with a committee-like structure, either formal or informal. The modes of evaluation in this regard must necessarily be subjective. They will include the degree to which a culture of research grows within the Faculty, for example the growth of interest in research exchanges between professors, the growth in awareness on the part of students and support staff. To this end, the vehicle of evaluation should continue the process of consultation undertaken by the Dean in Vision 2015, with the collaboration of the professoriate on a regular and timely basis.

Appendix. As noted above, the committee arrived at several strategies not directly related to its three principal recommendations. These are now described in the following appended notes.

Recommendation 4. Evaluate the opportunities for research publication in the French language in Canada and elsewhere, this in comparison with publication in English. Take steps to address inequalities. In particular,

- encourage professors who might otherwise publish in English to translate and find French-language venues for their work,
- offer publication subventions in support of French-language research publications,
- encourage the growth of French-language periodicals with editorial offices located in the Faculty,
- encourage the University of Ottawa Press to expand its catalog of French-language publications.

Recommendation 5. Create more opportunities for students and the community outside the university to engage with Faculty research.

- offer more advanced seminars designed to engage directly with a professor's research,
- offer lectures designed for the general public (like the annual Science Lectures) given by Faculty researchers, which introduce research in a manner accessible to the layperson,
- create an information service, with press releases aimed at local and international media, these reaching out especially to the Francophone public.