OISE Strategic Plan Progress Report

September 2013
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Contents
Background ........................................................................................................................................... 2
Values, Goals & Strategies ....................................................................................................................... 3
  Values ................................................................................................................................................ 3
  Goals ............................................................................................................................................... 3
  Strategies ....................................................................................................................................... 3
Innovative and Integrated Programs ........................................................................................................ 4
Stellar Student and Alumni Experience .................................................................................................... 6
Research and Innovation .......................................................................................................................... 8
Internationalization ................................................................................................................................. 9
Continuing and Professional Learning ..................................................................................................... 10
Equity and Accessibility ........................................................................................................................... 11
Aboriginal Education ................................................................................................................................. 12
Resources and Renewal ............................................................................................................................ 13
Advancement and Strategic Communications .......................................................................................... 15
Implementation ..................................................................................................................................... 16
BACKGROUND

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto (Institut d'études pédagogiques de l'Ontario de l'Université de Toronto) has, for more than a century, made a major contribution to advancing education, human development and professional practice around the world.

Standing on the shoulders of one of the world's greatest universities, OISE is the largest and most research-intensive faculty of education in Canada and one of the largest in North America. A unique academic environment supporting a scholarly community second-to-none, OISE addresses today’s challenges with intellectual freedom, academic excellence and collaborative energy that few institutions in the world can claim.

Guided by the highest standards of scholarship and a commitment to equity and social justice, we examine major issues in education, human development and professional practice considering not only how they are now, but how they might be. We translate our work into actions brought to life by the thousands of teachers, researchers, professionals, policy makers, leaders and influencers who are part of our community worldwide. To that end, we:

- Generate new knowledge through research.
- Prepare academic and professional leaders in Education, Applied Psychology, Leadership and Community Development.
- Provide ongoing professional learning opportunities.
- Contribute to public debate and policy.
- Work with communities and partner organizations in support of their goals.
- Consult and conduct commissioned research consistent with our mission and vision.
VALUES, GOALS & STRATEGIES

Values
- Creation of New Knowledge
- Critical Perspectives
- Excellence
- Equity and Social Justice
- Inclusive Community
- Students
- Life-Long Learning
- Participatory Decision-Making
- Supportive Infrastructure

Goals
- Effective Organization Design
- Innovative and Integrated Programs
- Engaged Research and Teaching Community
- Innovative Technologies for Learning and Leading
- Supportive Physical Environment
- Social and Ecological Responsibility
- Stellar Student Experience
- Recognized as an Innovative World Leader

Strategies
- Enhance Collaboration
- Rethink the Organization
- Support Faculty and Staff
- Address Student Needs
- Reinvent Space
- Enhance Transparency and Engagement
- Promote OISE around the Globe
- Diversify Resource Base
- Sustain the Strategic Process
INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

Goal: To strengthen and build on OISE’s world-renowned programs in graduate education and initial teacher education.

General Objectives

1. Enhance OISE's reputation as a world leader in graduate and initial teacher education.
2. Realign graduate and initial teacher education.
3. Fulfill the recommendations outlined in the graduate program reviews concluded in 2011-2012.
4. Capitalize on the University of Toronto’s resources and initiatives to support and promote programs.

Specific Actions: Graduate Education

Completed Actions

- Restructured OISE’s academic departments to support the Strategic Plan;
- Completed external review of programs to ensure that they remain relevant to students, and are in the forefront of their fields;
- Increased participation of graduate faculty in undergraduate teaching in the Arts and Science through participation in the Provost’s Undergraduate Course Development Fund (UCDF);
- Introduced inter-departmental collaboration in program planning and development through collaborative review of macro and micro issues such as faculty student ratios, degree options (e.g. academic masters compared to professional masters), and delivery options (e.g. in-class vs. online).

In Progress

- Clearly differentiate between degree programs in terms of degree requirements and learning outcomes (e.g. MA and M.Ed.), and consolidate programs where appropriate;
- Develop a core curriculum for every program (i.e. required courses);
- Ensure that all graduate students receive a solid foundation in research methodology including quantitative and qualitative methodology by significantly increasing the number of quantitative research methods courses, and consolidating the number of qualitative methods courses;
- Establish 3-year course planning to ensure student access to courses and the teaching capacity of departments;
- Continually update the calendar to accurately reflect available courses to potential applicants.

Specific Actions: Teacher Education

Completed Actions

- Revised the decanal structure to support the alignment between initial teacher education and graduate studies;
- Established a task force to investigate models for the realignment of teacher education and its integration within our academic departments;
- The Task Force developed three structural-organizational models for the realignment of teacher education and graduate education, which were presented at various community forums during the winter term of 2012-2013.
In Progress

- Finalize a structural-organizational model for the realignment of teacher education and graduate education;
- Reflect OISE’s research strengths more clearly in teacher education;
- Redefine and invigorate school-university partnerships;
- Build on the unique strengths of each department and promote synergies to ensure institute-wide involvement in teacher education.
**STELLAR STUDENT AND ALUMNI EXPERIENCE**

**Goal:** Outstanding student experience from recruitment through graduation to alumni.

**General Objectives**

1. Foster a safe and welcoming environment for all students.
2. Enhance supports for undergraduate and graduate students in teaching, research and publishing.
3. Attend to unique needs of part-time and distance education students.
4. Foster a community of true intellectual freedom where students are comfortable to express their views and opinions freely.
5. Strengthen relationship between the Institute and its alumni.
6. Capitalize on the University’s resources and initiatives to support and engage students and alumni.

**Specific Actions: Students**

**Completed Actions**

- Developed and implemented tools to improve communications with students through:
  - Listservs (i.e. students have been included in all communications regarding the process of organizational change such as departmental restructuring and realignment of teacher education and graduate education);
  - Regular meetings of the Dean with the executives of the Student Teachers Union and Graduate Student Association;
- Established practices to encourage greater participation of students in governance, and other initiatives such as:
  - Transitional Councils;
  - Program Reviews;
  - Teaching and Staff award selection committees;
  - Advisory committees for appointment of new faculty and department chairs, etc.;
- Established membership for OISE in the Jackman Humanities Institute opening opportunities for students.

**In Progress**

- Building on the recent accomplishments in the B.Ed. admissions, establish processes to enhance diversity of our student population in all programs;
- Establish mechanisms to enhance the quality of teaching for a world-class educational experience by recognizing the importance and value of excellent teaching (e.g. through professional development for faculty, technology infusion in teaching, teaching awards, etc.);
- Establish capacity in the Registrar’s Office for providing information and advisement to international applicants;
- Work with undergraduate and graduate students in teaching, scholarship, research and publishing.
Specific Actions: Alumni

Completed Actions

- Created and filled the position of Associate Director, Alumni Relations;
- Developed a strategic plan with clear priorities for alumni engagement including targets, timelines and metrics;
- Launched a campaign to identify and locate alumni starting with recent graduate years (i.e. contact information updated for over 1,000 alumni to date);
- Established systems and practices to communicate effectively with alumni around the world (i.e. improved Alumni & Friends website, quarterly Newsletter, Facebook and LinkedIn pages, and established OISE Alumni page on Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Google +);
- Connected with and hosted events for OISE alumni coordinated with Dean and senior leadership team travel (i.e. London UK, Beijing, China, San Francisco, and Newfoundland);
- Supported the OISE Alumni Association with their plans (e.g. organized a successful Spring Reunion, Arbor Awards nominations, etc.);
- Established involvement of Alumni Office at student events such as orientations, convocations, award ceremonies, information fairs, career events, etc.

In Progress

- Establish the program of activities for alumni engagement;
- Develop mechanisms to foster a culture of participation among students and alumni;
- Host events and initiatives to promote OISE alumni brand;
- Work with the OISE Alumni Association to establish the process and criteria for student financial aid awards;
- Develop and implement effective stewardship strategies to engage and recognize alumni & student volunteers.
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Goal: Promote excellence and innovation in research and knowledge mobilization, opening new opportunities to expand the reach of OISE’s research and its uptake in policy and practice globally.

General Objectives

1. Support the creation and mobilization of new knowledge that contributes to public debate and education policy.
2. Establish mechanisms to support new and emerging interdisciplinary/interdepartmental and international research ideas and groups.
3. Achieve greater success in research grants, awards and contracts by creating a strong system of equal support for faculty across OISE.
4. Increase the impact of OISE research domestically and internationally by strengthening our knowledge mobilization and external communications efforts.
5. Capitalize on the University of Toronto’s resources and initiatives to support and promote research.

Specific Actions

Completed Actions

- Completed a review of OISE investments in research to ensure that these investments are targeted in ways that increase the creation of new knowledge, support collaboration and internationalization, and extend our research impact;
- Created benchmarks of our research performance to use in assessing the effectiveness of our research investments;
- Established a formal research mentorship program, and a range of research workshops and supports for faculty at early, mid and late career;
- Provided targeted editorial and budget review and other supports to faculty to increase overall funding from Tri-Council and community, federal, provincial and international sources;
- Created a suite of online resources to support researchers from proposal to implementation phases (e.g. budget templates, exemplars of successful proposals, how-to videos, etc.).

In Progress

- Conduct a full review of our research centres, their productivity, visibility and functioning to ensure they are sustainable and current (Note: Academic Review of Centres is underway);
- Create new opportunities for students and faculty research associated with OISE’s lead in the University of Toronto’s Fraser Mustard Institute for Human Development (FMIHD). OISE has already secured faculty co-leads in three of the FMIHD thematic working groups, and is participating in the planning and development of interdisciplinary activities in the FMIHD;
- Push OISE research out through new social media and wider engagement with communities and partners through special events and online resources (Note: OISE research knowledge mobilization plan is under development);
- Establish principles to guide divisional nominations of Canada Research Chairs at OISE.
INTERNATIONALIZATION

Goal: International leadership in graduate and teacher education, research, and lifelong learning.

General Objectives

1. Establish an explicit internationalization strategy for OISE in all areas including recruitment and retention, teaching and research, continuing and professional learning.
2. Establish guidelines and principles to inform decisions about internationalization (what we will do, who we will work with, and why).
3. Establish new and enhance international partnerships and agreements in support of our institutional goals.
4. Facilitate mobility of students and scholars.
5. Capitalize on the University of Toronto resources and initiatives related to Internationalization.

Specific Actions

Completed Actions

- Contributed to the University of Toronto’s International Recruitment Strategy through the Dean’s membership on the Provost’s International Committee;
- Established a strategy for OISE’s work in China as a first step and foundation for OISE’s broader institutional Internationalization strategy;
- Created a clear protocol and “single door” entry for international institutions and organizations interested in visiting and working with OISE;
- Hosted scholars from around the world by building on our newly established Visiting Scholars Program to enhance research opportunities.

In Progress

- Establish shared courses and joint programs with international universities to support collaborative research and professional graduate studies (Note: shared courses in development with the Institute of Education, London, Graduate School of Education, Melbourne, University of Wisconsin-Madison and University of Glasgow);
- Facilitate a systematic approach to international student recruitment and retention;
- Establish academically sound opportunities for student exchanges and experiences abroad;
- Establish the appropriate academic and cultural supports to ensure the success of international students;
- Foster an environment where experiences and expertise from international students is welcomed and valued;
- Establish mechanisms to strengthen partnerships for research and international commissioned consultancies.
CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Goal: Expand the reach and excellence of OISE’s continuing education programs and professional development offerings.

General Objectives

1. Create a business strategy for OISE’s Continuing and Professional Learning unit ensuring it is widely communicated to the University and within OISE. The strategy should:
   - Set out guiding principles;
   - Clearly identify areas of OISE expertise;
   - Benchmark our programs and offerings against other similar units;
   - Assess changes in external demand and new business opportunities both internationally and domestically;
   - Set growth and revenue targets;
   - Set out a three to five year plan to meet these targets which includes plans for program development, marketing, and human resources.
2. Ensure that all of OISE’s professional development programs in the following areas are of world class standing:
   - Additional Qualifications for teachers;
   - Training and development for professionals in education;
   - International programs for educators, education leaders and policy makers.
3. Expand the domestic and international reach of OISE’s continuing education offerings.
4. Establish clear and transparent policies, contracting and operating procedures that are fully aligned to University of Toronto policies and practices.

Specific Actions

Completed Actions

- Continued to offer professional development programs of excellent quality that met emerging needs;
- Piloted new programs for Chinese students in undergraduate education programs, and established three main professional development offerings for Chinese and other international educators in the fields of school leadership, content based second language instruction, instructional practices, and higher education;
- Established new certificate programs with policy and procedures for revenue sharing in departmentally sponsored certificate programs.

In Progress

- Establish clear and transparent policies and procedures;
- Create a three to five year business plan;
- Contribute to the University of Toronto Continuing Education Strategy through the Dean’s membership on the Provostial Working Group on Continuing and Professional Education.
**EQUITY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

*Goal:* Improve equity and accessibility within OISE.

**General Objectives**

1. Ensure appropriate admissions, recruitment and retention policies.
2. Increase diversity among students, faculty and staff.
3. Expand online education offerings to facilitate access to our programs and expertise for domestic and international students.
4. Capitalize on the University of Toronto’s resources and initiatives to improve equity and access.

**Specific Actions**

**Completed Actions**

- Appointed Special Advisor to the Dean on Equity and Accessibility;
- Established an Advisory Committee on Equity and Accessibility;
- Developed and offered a massive open online course to extend our reach and impact in education;
- In the B.Ed. program, enhanced recruitment and admissions process to diversify the incoming cohort (i.e. the class of 2014);
- Designated funds and established principles to expand online learning so as to increase access to our programs and expertise for domestic and international students;
- Introduced strategies to ensure increasing diversity is given consideration in both the principles and process of faculty renewal (e.g. through professional development for search committees).

**In Progress**

- Develop recruitment, admissions and retention guidelines designed to increase the diversity of our student population and improve participation of students from underrepresented populations;
- Building on the approach used in the B.Ed. admissions develop mechanisms to monitor diversity among the applicant pool in all programs;
- Expand opportunities for students to access programs through distance education;
- Develop new “big ideas in education” courses for undergraduates in Arts and Science at the University of Toronto so as to enhance their understanding of education and what it can mean to individuals, communities and nations;
- Publicize and open departmental research seminars (e.g. brown bag events) and symposia to the community;
- Introduce strategies to ensure increasing diversity is given consideration in both the principles and process for hiring staff;
- Offer professional development for faculty and staff around equity, diversity and access.
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

Goal: Realize our responsibility to lead in Aboriginal education.

General Objectives

1. Honour OISE’s signature and commitment to the Accord on Indigenous Education; aspire to its vision, principles, and goals in programs and research.
2. Ensure that all programs at OISE reflect and respect Aboriginal perspectives and history.
3. Engage all departments in Aboriginal Education.
4. Increase recruitment and retention of Aboriginal students in all programs.
5. Increase the profile of Aboriginal issues in education and research within OISE.
6. Create and sustain a respectful and welcoming learning environment for Aboriginal peoples.
7. Ensure institutional policies, practices and programs reflect and respect the interests and needs of Aboriginal communities.

Specific Actions

Completed Actions

- Appointed Special Advisor to the Dean on Aboriginal Education;
- Established a community-based OISE Aboriginal Council;
- Hosted R.W.B. Jackson Lecture on First Nations’ Education in Canada with the Right Honourable Paul Martin and Shawn Atleo, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations in Canada;
- Established Aboriginal education as a fundraising priority;
- Guided OISE group tour of Sakhan – Indigenous Art Exhibit in the National Gallery in Ottawa to enhance knowledge about Aboriginal art among faculty, students, staff and alumni;
- Established a faculty position in Aboriginal Education.

In Progress

- Establish methods to monitor the number of Aboriginal students in all programs;
- Host focus groups to ascertain Aboriginal student recommendations for cultural and academic supports needed at OISE to support their success;
- Establish adequate academic and cultural supports and resources for Aboriginal students and scholars;
- Document all Aboriginal initiatives underway at OISE;
- Establish principles, protocol and process to facilitate advice and implement recommendations of OISE’s Aboriginal Council regarding Aboriginal initiatives in all areas at OISE;
- Host a symposium on the Tri-council funding focus on research with Aboriginal communities and academics across the country;
- Create culturally responsive, respectful and inclusive curricula to infuse Aboriginal content and ways of knowing into all programs.
RESOURCES AND RENEWAL

Goal: Ensure that we have human, financial and other (e.g. structural, technological) resources to support our mandate and vision.

General Objectives

1. Ensure equitable distribution of resources across departments/units.
2. Sustain fiscally-responsible academic operations.
3. Establish systems and processes for effective planning and administration of programs and services.
4. Capitalize on the University of Toronto’s services and resources.

Specific Actions: Faculty & Staff

Completed Actions

- Established principles for faculty renewal;
- Departments established 5-year faculty renewal plans that are reviewed annually;
- Established faculty workload policies in all departments;
- Defined career development strategies for staff, and encouraged professional growth and team building through Working Together and similar initiatives;
- Strengthened the existing and established two new staff excellence award categories to celebrate the accomplishments of OISE administrative staff;
- Encouraged the use of Information Technology in business process to improve operation efficiencies and reporting capacity such as the development and implementation of the TA/TEPA database system.

In Progress

- Strengthen faculty complement by recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty;
- Ensure process and expectations for career development and progression are fair, transparent and clearly communicated to faculty;
- Review the annual PTR process by conducting an assessment of the current practices and procedures to ensure equity and transparency for faculty;
- Establish clear staff roles and responsibilities that meet the needs of a modern university;
- Continue to strengthen administrative staff structure and capacity for the most effective operation and administration of academic programs and services;
- Diversify administrative staff.

Specific Actions: Financial Resources

Completed Actions

- Conducted budget education sessions in OISE’s departments and units to link financial implications with academic decisions;
- Established and implemented Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s) for consistent, sustainable and efficient academic operations and planning;
- Created program and degree information and budget for planning purposes;
Instituted processes and regular meetings with departments and programs to monitor admissions and recruitment to ensure we meet our domestic enrolment target, and encourage international recruitment for our professional programs;

Established the profit sharing model in certificate and professional development programs between departments and Continuing and Professional Learning to provide incentives and directions for revenue generating non-credit professional programs.

**In Progress**

- Develop strategies to achieve balanced budget and eliminate structural deficit;
- Finalize a departmental budget model that aligns accountabilities with responsibilities and fits the needs of OISE academic operations;
- Ensure systems and processes are in place to achieve enrolment targets and improve retention;
- Establish new revenue generating initiatives through national and international consultancies, online programing, professional development programs, and commissioned research.

**Specific Actions: Space & Technology**

**Completed Actions**

- Conducted accessibility audit of OISE buildings to ensure our spaces are accessible, safe and welcoming for our students, faculty, staff, and visitors;
- Reviewed Information Technology services at OISE to ensure they are best positioned to support OISE’s institutional mandate and mission;
- Cleaned up and returned the basement space to the University, consequently saving up resources for OISE’s academic priorities;
- Renewed community spaces, and created “smart” spaces through the use of technology (i.e. Nexus, Tech Lounge, renovated classroom and community spaces, etc.).

**In Progress**

- Increase the awareness of the existing level of accessibility, and continue to improve accessibility and safety at OISE (Note: the following projects are underway: installing more visible signage, conducting routine inspections in hallways to ensure they are barrier-free, working with the University Facilities and Services to ensure sufficient lighting outside the building, etc.);
- Explore different ways to use and share physical space more efficiently and effectively;
- Strengthen the delivery of Information Technology services to support teaching, learning, research and administration.
ADVANCEMENT AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Goal: Raise profile and enhance reputation of OISE as a world leader in education.

General Objectives

1. Establish a successful and sustainable advancement program in support of OISE's mandate and vision.
2. Develop strategic communications plan with key communication objectives, key audiences and communications tools.
3. Establish the infrastructure to support communications goals and objectives.
4. Enhance the impact of OISE's research and its uptake in policy and practice.
5. Capitalize on the University of Toronto's resources and initiatives related to strategic communications and advancement.

Specific Actions

Completed Actions

- Appointed founding members to OISE's Development Board;
- In 2012, completed the capital campaign for Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Expansion project;
- Since 2011, raised close to 3 million as part of OISE's contribution to the Boundless campaign;
- Since 2011, donations attributed to OISE for the Fraser Mustard Institute for Human Development exceed 1.5 million;
- Established and expanded leadership positions in the areas of Strategic Communications and Advancement;
- Redesigned the OISE homepage to showcase OISE’s new brand idea, tag-line and visual identity;
- Increased the promotion of OISE in new international markets and within Canada by leveraging our research news through social media channels and web content;
- Launched an integrated multimedia marketing communications and digital ad campaign to support student recruitment and reputational goals.

In Progress

- Finalize fundraising priorities for OISE that are aligned with the Strategic Plan;
- Encourage training in advancement for departmental/non-academic unit administrators;
- Build capacity of and strengthen OISE’s advancement team;
- Build capacity of and strengthen OISE’s communications team;
- Finalize and implement the Strategic Communications Plan;
- Ensure OISE's visibility in University of Toronto publications regularly and frequently;
- Build on successful internal communications practices over the past two years to continue improvement of inter-OISE communications with students, faculty and staff.
IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Strategic Plan includes ongoing assessment of progress and reflection on achievements to date. OISE’s leadership team—including leaders of academic and non-academic units—is responsible for achieving the strategic goals relevant to their areas of responsibility, as well as for establishing annual objectives and plans for the Institute, departments, and units. The Dean will report annually to the community on progress.