

Ministry of Training, Colleges  
and Universities

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# Institutional Vision, Proposed Mandate Statement and Priority Objectives

A submission to begin the process of developing  
strategic mandate agreements (SMAs):

To: Hon. Glen Murray, MPP  
Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

From: Allan Rock, President and Vice-Chancellor  
University of Ottawa



uOttawa.ca

# Mandate Statement and Vision for the University of Ottawa

The University of Ottawa's mandate and vision are best expressed in our strategic plan, *Destination 20/20*, as follows:<sup>1</sup>

**Our vision:** The University of Ottawa will offer an unparalleled university experience and, through outstanding teaching and research, play a vital role in defining the world of tomorrow. We will instil in each of our graduates an ethic of service, a culture of engagement and an awareness of shared responsibility that will prepare them for global citizenship. Through our education and our research, we transfer knowledge and learning that improves and transforms lives, communities and nations.



**Our mission:** We are unique because of our location in the heart of the nation's capital, our bilingualism and commitment to the promotion of French culture in Ontario, and the excellence of our scholarship. As a research-intensive university, we provide our students with an outstanding education and enrich the intellectual, economic and cultural life of Ontario.

## Three key objectives

As requested by the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, we will identify in this Strategic Mandate Agreement three differentiating, strategic and value-added dimensions in which we will grow uOttawa in the coming years in order to enhance our capacity to serve the public interest, provide an enriched and rewarding experience for our students, build upon our existing differential strengths, make better and more productive use of public funds,<sup>2</sup> and achieve better learning outcomes.

While the three objectives we propose reflect the Minister's stated areas of special interest, they are also closely aligned with uOttawa's own strategic plan, *Destination 20/20*, and involve priorities that we are already pursuing, and in which we are already investing. What is more, we are already measuring our progress in those very areas, using our detailed, Board-approved *Scorecard*, a document we believe is unique in all of Canada.<sup>3</sup>

**DESTINATION**  
**2020** ➤

<sup>1</sup> We have included [Destination 20/20](#) as an appendix to this document.

<sup>2</sup> uOttawa already has the second-lowest administrative costs as a percentage of operational budget of any university in the Ontario subgroup of the U15.

<sup>3</sup> We have included our [Scorecard](#) as an appendix to this document.

## Objective one: Innovation in teaching and learning

(Aligned with *Destination 20/20: Quality of Student Experience*)

The quality of each student's experience is the first priority in *Destination 20/20*, our strategy for the decade. Teaching and learning are central to that experience and core to our mission. It follows that focusing on the best ways to teach our students, and for them to learn, is the first of our three objectives in this document.

### (i) Experiential learning

In pursuing our first objective, we shall implement a number of steps that will build on the important progress we have made in *experiential learning*. We will consolidate and broaden the trend at uOttawa in recent years to link classroom instruction with a variety of learning opportunities that involve *doing*.

In 2010, one third of our students participated in at least one experiential activity. By 2016, that number will be 60%, and by 2020, 100%.<sup>4</sup>

The learning experience at uOttawa increasingly involves providing students with hands-on education. This approach has a number of advantages:

- students use knowledge to accomplish tasks and solve problems, deepening their understanding and making it more likely that they will retain what they have learned;
- the approach fosters the skills needed to be creative and entrepreneurial;
- many of the learning experiences benefit not only the student but also the community and thereby serve more than one purpose;

- students derive personal satisfaction from doing, and are more likely to pursue their studies to completion; and
- they also prepare themselves for their future, discovering their interests, developing new skills and making themselves more attractive to employers.



At uOttawa, experiential learning takes a number of forms: work-study programs, CO-OP placements (we have the second-largest CO-OP program in Ontario and the fourth-largest nationally), supervised internships, student entrepreneurship, undergraduate research projects and the learning-while-doing programs (including Community Service Learning) offered by the Centre for Global and Community Engagement.<sup>5</sup> These activities either result in academic credit or are eligible for inclusion in the student's Co-Curricular Record.

A differentiating characteristic of experiential learning at uOttawa is the extent to which we partner with the federal government, its departments and agencies, and the national institutions that are clustered around the national capital region. Many of our students are thereby exposed in very practical ways to a pan-Canadian perspective, to public administration and to national government.

<sup>4</sup> Our progress will be measured and reported publicly through the *Scorecard*, Item 1.9.

<sup>5</sup> A full listing of eligible activities will be made available on our website.

## (ii) Mobility

We will also enable greater student mobility as a means of enriching the learning experience, both through domestic transfer and international exchange.



uOttawa already admits almost 2,000 students annually through student mobility and credit transfer agreements with other postsecondary institutions in Ontario, in Canada and around the world.

The University Credit Transfer Consortium (McMaster, Queen's, Guelph, uOttawa, Toronto and Waterloo) will widen access further by enabling greater transfer within Ontario. Consortium members have agreed that any first-year Arts and Science-type course offered for degree credit by a member of the Consortium will be accepted for general credit by all member institutions providing the student has achieved a minimum course grade of 60%. Consortium members have further agreed to specific equivalency for a set of 20 high-enrolment foundational courses. These courses will be accepted for specific first-year credit by all member institutions. The Consortium is committed to expanding our credit transfer agreements to undergraduate professional programs and to upper-year courses over the coming year. As with all pilot projects, evaluation will be critical. This evaluation will include consideration of opportunities to broaden the scope of the project to include other institutions.

Our mobility and accessibility principles apply locally as well. All of our graduate programs in science, engineering and economics are offered jointly with Carleton University. We will explore the possibility of creating other joint programs in the years to come.

We have also developed collaborative agreements with La Cité collégiale and Algonquin College to offer programs jointly (including the bachelor's degree in nursing) or through the "2+2 system," whereby students spend two years at uOttawa and two years in college (for example, in journalism and public relations).

We will maintain our momentum by working with our partners, including the University Credit Transfer Consortium and local institutions, to further develop the areas of credit transfer and joint programs. Internationally, we aim to increase both the number of exchange opportunities for uOttawa students and the number of international students on our campus.<sup>6</sup>

## (iii) Time to completion

uOttawa supports strategies to increase the productivity of our postsecondary sector and to enable those undergraduate students who wish to do so to graduate sooner. We will explore three-session academic programming and three-year undergraduate degrees, determine the demand for these innovations and evaluate the best means to meet that demand.

We will also enhance graduate students' experience by providing the support needed to enable them to complete their master's and doctoral programs within reasonable, stipulated time periods.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> From the present 5.6% to 9% by 2020. See *Scorecard*, Item 4.1.

<sup>7</sup> See *Scorecard*, Item 1.8.

#### (iv) The Importance of teaching

uOttawa is proud of the strength of our faculty and their deep commitment to our students. That commitment, and their skill as teachers, is crucial to the fulfillment of our mandate. For that reason, we encourage and reward excellence in teaching in a number of ways.



We shall now take additional measures to build upon what is in place. These include creating Chairs in pedagogy and teaching methods as well as funding new prizes and merit pay for teaching achievement. In short, we shall further strengthen an academic environment in which outstanding teaching is enabled, valued and rewarded.

#### (v) Technology-assisted learning

Advances in technology have allowed us to diversify the means by which information is conveyed, while communicating that information effectively and memorably. The University of Ottawa currently offers 131 courses fully online, 45 via audio conference and 113 via video-conference. In hundreds more, technology is used to simplify instruction, illustrate lessons or supplement lectures.

uOttawa is determined to put to use the most recent technology and the opportunities it offers to innovate in the fulfillment of our mandate. We intend to take full advantage of the new Online Institute, created on the initiative of the Ontario government.

We have created a *Working Group on Technology-Assisted Learning* to find ways to produce better learning outcomes, increase productivity, reduce cost, increase revenues and allow us to make different and better use of space. It will also determine how best to make French-language online programming broadly available, answering an unmet need (particularly in Ontario) and putting to use one of our important differentiating advantages. Once the *Working Group* reports later this academic year, we shall put a full strategy before our Board of Governors for discussion.

#### (vi) French immersion

There are other ways in which we will innovate in order to enrich the learning experience at uOttawa. One of them involves a unique and differentiating feature of our university: our bilingualism.

Alone among Canadian universities, uOttawa offers French immersion programs. This enables the many graduates of French immersion secondary schools from across Canada (and indeed North America) to continue their studies in their second language.<sup>8</sup> Their learning experience is enriched by this additional dimension. The fact that uOttawa provides them with experiential learning opportunities in the French language makes the program all the more extraordinary. As a result, we produce fully bilingual graduates each year, ready to contribute to the life of our nation, in either the public or the private sector, with a deep understanding of our linguistic and cultural duality.

Our immersion program has been growing rapidly in recent years, and this year we enrolled 620 new students for a total of 1,500 students in 74 French immersion programs. We aim to accelerate that growth, and by 2016 to have 3,500 students enrolled in immersion.

<sup>8</sup> Our French immersion students generally enter with academic averages that are higher than the mean and have a second-year retention rate of over 90%.

### (vii) Learning outcome assessment

Measuring learning outcomes is a key priority for the University of Ottawa. The uOttawa *Scorecard* focuses on this challenge in indicators 1.1 (undergraduate learning experience) and 1.6 (graduate). In addition, with the help of our School of Psychology, we have also undertaken to perform the standardized Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) for the first time in 2012 to formally assess our students' gain in critical thinking and analytic reasoning skills. HEQCO recommends this tool, and if the experience is conclusive, we would continue to use it in the future.

## Objective two: Highly qualified people and new knowledge translation to secure Ontario's future

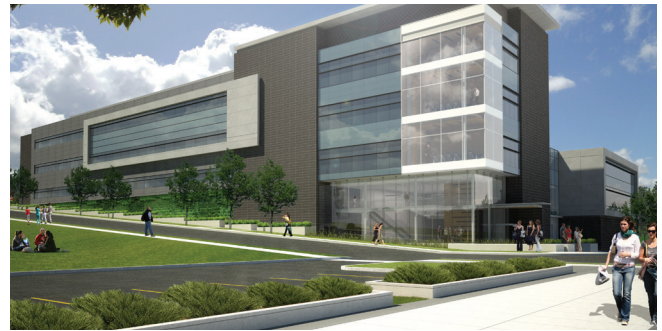
(Aligned with *Destination 20/20: Research*)

uOttawa is already a major contributor to innovation and investment for the national capital region and for Ontario generally. A recent economic impact study<sup>9</sup> demonstrated that uOttawa research delivers over \$1.27 billion annually in productivity gains to the Ontario economy, and that economic activity linked to uOttawa's presence in the Ottawa-Gatineau region is estimated at \$4.12 billion. Both elements of our mandate—learning and discovery—are clearly central to the prosperity of our region and our province.

Our achievements are reflected not only in our economic impact, but also in peer rankings. Year after year, the University of Ottawa ranks among the top 10 research universities in Canada for research intensity and the global nature of its research.<sup>10</sup> The *Times Higher Education* ranking system places uOttawa among the world's 200 leading universities,<sup>11</sup> one of only nine Canadian universities in that coveted category.

In *Destination 20/20*, we have committed to becoming one of Canada's five most research-intensive universities by the end of this decade. In order to achieve that ambitious goal, and in order to create new knowledge and translate it into economic growth, uOttawa will focus on our areas of comparative advantage. Our differentiated strength is found particularly in these areas:

- health, especially in the fields of cardiovascular research, stem cells, and the brain and mind;<sup>12</sup>
- science and engineering, particularly photonics,<sup>13</sup> and green chemistry and processes; and



- public policy, including governance and public administration.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See [www.uOttawa.ca/services/irp/eng/research/Economic\\_Impact.html](http://www.uOttawa.ca/services/irp/eng/research/Economic_Impact.html).

<sup>10</sup> See RESEARCH InfoSource annual rankings.

<sup>11</sup> See [www.timeshighereducation.co.uk](http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk).

<sup>12</sup> The Medical Devices Innovation Institute offers an opportunity to introduce innovation in all of these areas, while drawing upon interdisciplinary expertise.

<sup>13</sup> uOttawa has already started the construction of our Advanced Research Complex, a \$59-million building that will house our photonics cluster and our geosciences group. The five-story building, for which uOttawa received \$15 million in CFI and provincially matched funding, will open in March 2014.

<sup>14</sup> Generators of fresh and innovative public policy in these and related areas include such multi-disciplinary entities as our Institute of Population Health, our Institute on Science and Society, our Institute on the Environment (whose Sustainable Prosperity Initiative has already received some \$5 million in provincial funding), and our emerging School of Government.

To support these efforts, and to produce the highly qualified people that Ontario will need to build its economy of the future, we shall increase by 2020 the size of our graduate cohort across the University from the present 14% to 18%, with particular attention to the differentiated areas of our comparative strength. Within that number, we shall:

- grow our doctoral student cohort by 50%;
- double the number of graduate students in our areas of differentiated strength noted above;
- create interdisciplinary graduate programs in key sectors of the Ontario economy;<sup>15</sup> and
- launch Canada's first School of Government, to prepare the next generation of leadership, foster dialogue and discussion about Canada's key challenges, and conduct leading-edge research in key issues of public policy—all in a bilingual environment in the heart of our nation's capital.

In short, uOttawa proposes to build on its particular and differentiated advantages in a way that aligns with the Ontario government's vision of the province's economic future, based on innovation and world-class achievement.

## Objective three: Bilingualism and *la Francophonie*

(Aligned with *Destination 20/20: Bilingualism and la Francophonie*)

Since its founding in 1848, uOttawa has been set apart from all other institutions of higher education in Ontario (and indeed in Canada) by its singular commitment to bilingualism and *la Francophonie*. History, geography and demographics have conferred upon us the extraordinary privilege—and the important responsibility—of meeting the needs of Ontario's Francophone population and the Franco-Ontarian community. Our request for designation under Law 8 has reconfirmed our unique role that was codified in the statute adopted by the Ontario Legislature in 1965 in these terms: "to further bilingualism and biculturalism and to preserve and develop French culture in Ontario."<sup>16</sup>

We have fulfilled that mandate through decades of focused effort that has differentiated us in fundamental and unmistakable ways. Simply stated, we do everything that other universities do, but we do it in two languages. Nowhere else in Canada (and in few places world-wide) is it possible to say, as we do: "*Study in English, in French, or in both languages. The choice is yours!*"

In 2010, fully 74% of our courses were offered in both French and English. By 2020, we aim to make that 85%.<sup>17</sup> We are thereby attracting Francophones from across the country and around the world. In September 2012, the number of Francophone students crossed the 13,000 threshold, positioning uOttawa as Canada's leader in French-language studies outside Quebec.

<sup>15</sup> Such as MSc and PhD programs in environmental sustainability, and collaborative programs in extreme photonics and industrial processes with low environmental impact.

<sup>16</sup> The *University of Ottawa Act, 1965*, Statutes of Ontario, Section 4.

<sup>17</sup> It is not possible to achieve 100% because of language courses that must be taught unilingually and certain other courses that are funded for delivery in a single language. See *Scorecard*, Item 3.3.

In 2006, we established the first university-level immersion program for French as a second language and, as of September 2012, some 1,500 students are enrolled in French Immersion Studies.<sup>18</sup>

Our bilingualism enables us to make a specific, differentiated and highly productive contribution to Ontario in the realm of health, where we are the largest partner in the *Consortium national de formation en santé*. The *Consortium* trains health care professionals to provide service to the Francophone minority in Ontario in their own mother tongue. Almost one third of our 165 students in first-year medicine this year will complete their four-year program, including their clinical training, in French. We also offer fully bilingual programs in nursing and human kinetics. Some of our French-language programs in nursing science are already available entirely through distance education, either online, by videoconference or in an innovative hybrid format.



Building on this unique strength, we will seek to establish a French-language pharmacy program by September 2014, since there currently is no French-language pharmacy program outside Quebec.<sup>19</sup> This will enhance our unique strength in French-language instruction in high-demand health professions such as occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language pathology.

Health care is not the only area where our proficiency in both official languages confers unique and differentiated strength. Law and education are two other faculties where we also provide bilingual education.<sup>20</sup> The capacity of our institution to educate students and conduct research in two languages is a competitive strength in an increasingly global marketplace not only for uOttawa, but also for the province of Ontario.

With this in mind, we are examining the possibility of creating a satellite campus in South-Western Ontario, where the growth in the Francophone community is strongest and French-language postsecondary education is unavailable.

We will continue to work with the MTCU to implement the *Politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL)*. We will also continue to create an environment where Francophones from Ontario can complete their studies in French.

We are active in postsecondary education in *la Francophonie* around the world, whether in capacity building (Haiti), mathematics (AIMS in Senegal), education (Morocco and Tunisia) or business management (France).

We are uniquely equipped both technologically and pedagogically among Ontario universities to contribute meaningfully to the store of French-language and bilingual content online, available for distance education or as an open resource.

Our Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute is a recognized and respected source of professional advice, here and abroad, on language rights and on second language acquisition.

<sup>18</sup> As noted above (see page 4), we aim to increase that number to 3,500 by 2016.

<sup>19</sup> The Government of Ontario identified the pharmacy program as a shortcoming in its study on the differences between postsecondary programs offered in English and French. This program would also attract foreign students and provide pharmacy qualifications for new Canadians.

<sup>20</sup> While labour market surveys demonstrate a surplus of teachers in English-speaking schools, Ontario still suffers from an acute shortage in French-speaking schools and immersion programs. Both of these K-12 streams are strategically important to the province, and uOttawa remains the largest Faculty of Education with French-language instruction in Ontario, utilizing an innovative blend of classroom instruction, practicums, online learning and distance education.

## Conclusion

The University of Ottawa has based our Strategic Mandate Agreement on *Destination 20/20*, the ambitious new strategic plan we adopted just last year. Indeed, *Destination 20/20* was developed through a broad consultation designed to solicit and encompass the ideas, the ambitions and the support of our students, our faculty, our Board and the University community at large.

uOttawa looks forward to realizing the vision that the Minister and his officials have set out for the future of Ontario's postsecondary sector as a highly productive, innovative and financially sustainable sector. We share that vision, and we sincerely believe that by pursuing the directions and commitments set out in our SMA, we can contribute meaningfully toward its achievement.

