



Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Institutional Vision, Proposed Mandate Statement and Priority Objectives

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

To:

Minister Glen Murray
The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

From:

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Peterborough and Oshawa



Trent University – Proposed Strategic Mandate

Trent University prepares students to make significant contributions to an increasingly complex world by providing them with a **distinctive liberal arts, science or professionally focused education**, enhanced by **global perspectives, experiential learning and interdisciplinary approaches** to personal and professional development. Celebrating our 50th anniversary in 2014, Trent University was founded on, and remains committed to, excellence and innovation in teaching and research to offer an unparalleled individual student experience. Built on a residential college model, Trent's Peterborough campus boasts a highly engaged community of undergraduate, graduate and international students who are leaders on campus and in the community. With a 38 year presence in the Durham region, moving into our own purpose-built facilities at the Oshawa Thornton Road Campus in 2010, we have offered the benefits of Trent's quality teaching philosophy in small classes and close student- faculty contact to a region of growing demand and opportunity.

Sometimes underestimated, Trent has a strong national and international reputation based on an impressive record of accomplishment in teaching excellence, research productivity and student satisfaction. We have a strong sense of place guided by a commitment to social justice, inclusivity and community service.

Teaching: Trent has long been recognized across Canada as one of the best universities in which to receive an undergraduate education. Nineteen faculty members have received national or provincial distinguished teaching awards including six 3M Teaching Fellows, and Trent was recognized in 2009 by The Learning Partnership with a National Teaching Innovation Award. From the innovative use of clicker technology to the practice of small tutorials and group discussions, Trent continues to place a primary focus on excellence in teaching and innovative pedagogy.

Research: Trent University has always attracted faculty members who have enjoyed national and international reputations in their fields of research. This summer, Higher Education Strategy Associates' national survey ranked Trent's research 12th among 55 Canadian universities in impact for both Sciences and Social Sciences and Humanities, noting we have "by far best publication record of any small-ish school in the country across all disciplines". Our undergraduate students benefit from hands-on research experience early in their academic career and our graduate students have unparalleled access to leading-edge faculty mentors and direct training on state-of-the-art infrastructure.

Community Development: The strongly held value that Trent faculty, staff and students ought to be engaged within the local and global community is based upon a history of support for Trent by the local community. This commitment to community service extends to our indigenous and global communities, with Trent's International Development Studies and Indigenous Studies programs the first of their kind in Canada. Our unique model for community based education and service learning benefits students and the community. Trent will develop our extensive Endowment Lands to contribute to community building and experiential learning for our students, and drive revenue to support innovation, invest in physical and information technology infrastructure, advance our strategic priorities and reduce our debt.

Student Satisfaction: Trent's intimate learning environment sets us apart from other universities. Our focus on the individual student experience and college-based living and learning communities, with a high degree of faculty-student interaction, are recognized in the most recent annual National Survey of Student Engagement and Satisfaction (NSSE) where Trent scored higher than the provincial average on *all* measures of student satisfaction.

Trent University's recently approved **Academic Plan "Radical Recovery"** includes many goals relevant to the MTCU call to transform the sector. For example, Trent will:

- Continue to have a number of classes deemed "small" when compared to national standards; growing to 7,800 undergraduate FTEs and 439 graduate FTEs by 2015 on both campuses;
- Review current academic offerings with the aim of eliminating unsustainable undergraduate and graduate programming activities;

- Continue to develop as a research-focused institution at both undergraduate and graduate levels while recognizing that engagement in both research and community are prime retention motivators for both students and faculty;
- Develop a limited number of new undergraduate programs (primarily in Health Sciences and the Environment) and new signature graduate programs (primarily, though not exclusively, in the Sciences);
- Expand summer offerings and online course delivery in order to enhance student and faculty flexibility and facilitate timely completion of our students' programs of study;

In addition, we will expand **collaboration with partner Colleges and Universities** to increase accessibility, reduce barriers and drive productivity. Currently approximately 21% of our incoming students are transfer students – we aim to increase this by 25% over the next five years. We have developed our SMA with colleagues at Fleming College and in consultation with Durham College, UOIT, Loyalist and Algonquin Colleges. Together we have agreed to expand transfer pathways (e.g., building on our innovative University Transfer Program with Fleming), develop joint credential options and supplements (e.g., the new joint Journalism diploma-degree with Loyalist), collaborate on community development and research initiatives (e.g., the new DLAB initiative with Durham College), and seek administrative efficiencies (e.g., the new Trent-UOIT Synergy Project in Oshawa).

Strategic Priorities:

While Trent is pursuing many initiatives as outlined in the Endowment Lands Master Plan (January 2006), Trent University's Strategic Directions (June 2010), Integrated Plan (June 2011) and Academic Plan (April 2012), there are three specific areas of focus that will build upon our strengths and values, meet student demand, respond to the needs of the Ontario economy and achieve innovation, accessibility and accountability goals outlined in the MTCU discussion paper:

1. Create an interdisciplinary **School of Environment, Sustainability and Enterprise based on a triple-bottom-line philosophy**, aimed at developing solutions to local and global challenges while preparing students for a growing and crucial sector of the economy.
2. Become a **Community Catalyst** to achieve increased and shared prosperity in our local communities based on integrated approaches to teaching and research.
3. Introduce a new **Collaborative Model for Leadership and Learning in Community Health** to develop learning and research on healthy and vibrant communities in Ontario and around the world.

Trent University Vision (Approved by Trent's Board and Senate, June 2010):

We create vibrant, engaged and sustainable communities of learning, teaching and research committed to free enquiry and expression. We encourage the dynamic interplay of research, teaching and learning, which enhance and energize each other in the classroom and beyond. We strive to make valued and socially responsible contributions to our local communities, to Canada, and to the world. We support a diversity of faculty, staff and students who share a commitment to the learning experience and are responsive to its challenges. We foster an environment where Indigenous knowledges are respected and recognized as a valid means by which to understand the world. We offer an enriched learning environment that encourages a passion for all knowledge, the exploration of the creative links between fields of study and a critical engagement with the world. We create opportunities for students, staff and faculty to flourish and develop as individuals and as global citizens. We affirm our commitment to excellence, to innovation and to leadership in research, academic programmes and community partnerships. We commit to building an inclusive intellectual and social community that values the collaboration of all of its individual members.

PRIORITY INITIATIVE # 1:

Interdisciplinary School of Environment, Sustainability and Enterprise

Developing solutions and leaders to respond to local and global issues

Trent University will establish an interdisciplinary School of Environment, Sustainability and Enterprise (TSESE) which expands Trent's international reputation for research and teaching in environmental science and sustainability, integrated with economic, social and cultural considerations. This new School will develop innovative approaches to local, provincial and global issues, will leverage unique partnerships and collaborations in our regional community and expand experiential learning for students. Particular areas of focus include water quality, resource scarcity, indigenous environmental studies, biomaterials and green chemistry, alternative energy, sustainable agriculture, natural resources and wildlife conservation. The idea for the new School includes: 1) design and construction of a leading edge sustainably-developed village on campus to generate revenue and provide on-site research and teaching opportunities and 2) expanded relationships with Fleming College, municipal, private and institutional partners.

Why Trent?

Trent University has been an international leader in the field of interdisciplinary environmental and resource science since its inception. The Environmental and Resource Science/Studies (ERS) Program began at Trent in 1974 and was one of the first interdisciplinary environmental programs at a Canadian university. In 2010 Trent's ERS B.Sc. degree was the first university environmental program to be accredited by the Canadian Environmental Accreditation Commission (CEAC) and Environmental Careers Organization (ECO) Canada. In 2010 Trent introduced a Master of Arts in Sustainability Studies, the first such program in Canada. Our Natural Resources DNA Profiling and Forensics Centre (NRDPFC) is a partnership between Trent University and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources conducting leading edge research as a premier international resource in tracking viability of wildlife populations. Internationally recognized as one of the top water analytics laboratories in the world, the Trent Water Quality Centre is unique because of its range of analytical capabilities to address virtually any water quality issue related to contaminants. The Trent Centre for Biomaterials Research has regional, national and international partnerships to conduct cutting edge research from crop seed to the development of bio-based products. Trent University and Fleming College are co-signatories in a unique regional water cluster agreement with four regional municipalities - the City of Peterborough, the County of Peterborough, the City of Kawartha Lakes, and the County of Haliburton; all parties agreeing to co-operate in economic development opportunities around water technologies. Trent's unique location on the banks of the Otonabee River with 1460 acres of land including diverse ecosystems has always provided for unparalleled experiential field-based learning. This new School builds on our historical strengths, increasing student interest in environmental studies, and our extensive land assets.

Concept:

To effect real change, social, political, cultural and historical factors must be analyzed and understood alongside the scientific perspective. Trent is strongly positioned to bring this comprehensive interdisciplinary lens to the most challenging environmental problems. TSESE will bring together and enhance existing undergraduate and graduate degree programs including Environmental Science, Environmental and Life Sciences Graduate program, Geography, Indigenous Environmental Studies, Sustainability Studies and Environmental Chemistry in partnership with programs in humanities and social sciences including History, Cultural Studies, Philosophy and Psychology.

The new School will encompass and enhance several existing Research Centres, including the nationally renowned Water Quality Centre, the Institute for Watershed Sciences and the Centre for Biomaterials Research. Our partnerships with the OMNR in wildlife research and Fleming College for water research will be expanded, and new international partnerships will be formed to provide a global perspective and a global market for our talent and ideas. New credentials, undergraduate and graduate programs will be introduced in water science, geospatial analysis, and a unique combination of enterprise, environment and sustainability studies. As part of the five year Trent University Oshawa business plan we will introduce full environmental studies programming to complement our existing humanities and social science offerings.

A key differentiating feature of this initiative is the construction of a leading edge Sustainable Community on Trent's Endowment Lands. This development will serve as a **"living laboratory" of emerging technologies** to provide experiential learning for students. It will anchor Trent's leadership in sustainability and provide learning that can be applied to the development of sustainable communities throughout the province. The Sustainable Community will be developed in collaboration with area Municipal governments, the private sector and donors, and will be largely funded by revenue from the sale and/or leasing of Trent's Endowment land through residential and appropriate commercial developments.

Implementation:

Trent is well positioned to proceed with creation of a new School anchored by the Sustainable Community consistent with Trent's recently approved Academic Plan. Funds from the sale of portions of our endowed lands and new hydro-electric developments on Trent land have allowed us to undertake initial conceptual work. Community consultations are now underway. We have signed cooperation agreements with Brazil, India, Barbados and Guyana in areas relevant to the new School, and a new relationship with Nanjing University in China is supported by a major philanthropic gift.

We anticipate establishing and launching the new School in phases over the next five years. In addition to the anticipated private sector investments, a number of donors have an interest in supporting the development of the School including professorships, additional teaching and research facilities and international partnerships. **This process could be accelerated should the Province provide repayable bridge financing, access to provincial capital funding and timely new program approval.**

Results:

- Development of new programming in areas of student and employer demand. We estimate as much as 30% of our projected enrolment increases in the next five years will be in programs (current and new) related to environmental science and sustainability
- Increased accessibility and new pathways for students through expanded agreements with Fleming College and Algonquin College
- Enhanced experiential learning and research opportunities for students preparing them for entry to many public and private sector opportunities within the workforce
- Contribution to and advancement of the City and County's Sustainability Plan, contributing to quality of life and shared prosperity in the region
- Enhanced productivity through the creation of multiple revenue streams
- Additional private sector investment in new research
- Increased profile for Trent and the province due to expanded international partnerships and projects
- New partnerships with local non-government organizations

PRIORITY INITIATIVE # 2:

Community Catalyst for Shared Prosperity and Innovation

A multi-faceted partnership model to engage our students, faculty and land assets in regional transformation.

Trent will engage the business, social and cultural communities surrounding our two campuses to increase collaboration, generate and share new knowledge, drive economic development and improve quality of life. Rooted in community-based experiential education, locally focussed research, extensive University-College partnerships and knowledge transfer systems, we will be the **catalyst for regional transformation**.

Why Trent?

Almost fifty years ago Trent was created from the vision, commitment and generosity of the Peterborough community, who believed that investing in education for the community's youth was key to the region's prosperity. Today Trent is one of the region's largest employers with campuses in both Peterborough and Oshawa. Our faculty and students have helped create and grow cultural, social and non-profit organizations that have contributed significantly to the quality of life in the region. In Peterborough, recent economic roundtables identified partnerships between the community, Trent University and Fleming College as the most important way to increase prosperity. The City of Oshawa is building its aggressive economic development agenda around its post-secondary sector, including Trent. Many of our faculty anchor their research in local issues. The University is poised to take community engagement to the next level.

Concept:

Trent University will be a catalyst in the development of an integrated, active and evolving approach to regional community development designed to drive economic growth, enhance quality of life and increase our communities' standards of living. We will engage the business, social and cultural communities in new ways to maximize the effectiveness of technical, cultural and social innovation in our region. This **innovation ecosystem** will create a continuous cycle of basic and applied research focused on local issues, generation and dissemination of knowledge in partnership with local agencies, technology transfer and commercialization partnerships with local firms, and develop out students to meet the needs and demands of the local workforce and creative economy.

Experiential learning anchored in Community Development:

The Trent Centre for Community Based Education (TCCBE – Peterborough County), University-Links Centre for Community-Based Research (U-Links Haliburton County) and Community Links Centre for Community Based Projects and Social Mapping (C-Links City of Kawartha Lakes) are unique community-university partnerships that connect students and faculty with local organizations to create community-based research, service learning and experiential education opportunities – learning that has been helping solve local problems since the late 1980s. Over the years this model of an independent equitable facilitator of community/post-secondary partnerships and projects has attracted attention from communities and educational institutions from around the world. We will expand the role and impact of the TCCBE, U-Links and C-Links to have a greater impact on the region and include more programs and students.

Community Development through development of Trent Endowment Lands:

Trent will engage the Peterborough community to develop its extensive endowment lands to meet recreational, economic, cultural and social needs. Community consultation begins this Fall to gather input and shape the vision and potential. As a recent example, Trent recently concluded a partnership agreement with Peterborough Utilities Corp (PUC) to expand capacity of the Trent-owned Stanley Adamson Powerhouse to meet energy needs of the University *and* the community. Resulting developments will rely upon collaboration with area Municipal governments, the private sector and donors. In addition to the development of lands on the Symons campus in Peterborough we will work within our City-University liaison committees to explore how Trent can increase its contribution to the downtown development plans of Peterborough and Oshawa.

Economic Transformation through Innovation:

Trent University and Fleming College are founding partners of the Regional Innovation Cluster, which includes a regional economic development agency, a partnership with the Ontario Centres of Excellence, an active angel investor network and several private companies. Many potential projects are in development based on research innovations nurtured at Trent and Fleming. A self-serviced (energy, water and waste-water restored) Research and Innovation Park is a key pillar of our Endowment Lands development project. In partnership with the community, private sector and all three levels of government, we can offer students and local businesses the opportunity to partner in new research, business development and commercialization.

PSE Partnerships:

Three initiatives demonstrate how Trent will increase its contribution to the regions in which it operates through expanded partnerships with other PSE institutions. 1) Fleming College and Trent University have a shared commitment to collaboration and development of regional prosperity and community development. We will expand our research partnerships, develop three new degree completion programs with coordinated admission procedures and collaborate on development of our Community Health Collaborative. 2) We will support the Durham College-led Durham Learning and Business Park (DLAB) that will transform the regional post-secondary landscape and drive economic growth in concert with new prestige-industrial development related to PSE growth. 3) The Trent-UOIT Synergy Project in Oshawa is an innovative new partnership model that will see Trent and UOIT build on our existing Memorandum of Understanding and collaborate in multiple ways to provide students with an unmatched blend of critical thinking, technical and entrepreneurial skills that can only be achieved through the complementary strengths of these institutions.

Knowledge Sharing and Cultural Enhancement:

Through its many (philanthropically) public endowed lectures, Trent provides a forum for sharing and learning across a variety of disciplines and subject areas. Through the creation of our new Community Relations portfolio, we will work proactively with local organizations and the public to shape this discourse around local issues. A recent event sponsored by the philanthropically-endowed Schindler Professorship stimulated a new research relationship between Trent faculty and graduate students and the Kawartha Lakes Stewards Association to address local water quality issues. We are also poised to re-introduce Continuing Education and expand our distance learning programs to meet the growing demand of our local residents and the broader community.

Meeting the Needs of our local Workforce

Trent University, Fleming College, the Workforce Development Board, Peterborough Chamber of Commerce and the Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) are working on a number of initiatives to meet local employment needs and foster entrepreneurship through local graduating students, or by upgrading the talent of current employees. One example is a new initiative to develop a mentor network connecting employers and students throughout the community.

Implementation:

One of the greatest barriers to expanding these efforts is the time required by faculty and staff to build and develop these community level partnerships. Policy or funding tools that can support this allocation of time will accelerate our success. At the same time we are pursuing partnerships, collaboration, grants and private funding.

Results:

- Enhanced experiential learning and research opportunities for students
- Advancement of the regions' economic development, quality of life and shared prosperity
- Enhanced productivity through the creation of partnerships and new revenue streams
- Increased profile for Trent and the province due to expanded international partnerships and projects
- Increased student mobility through new pathways and partnerships
- Greater employability, especially locally, for our students

PRIORITY INITIATIVE # 3:

Collaborative Model for Leadership and Learning in Community Health

A new approach to develop vibrant and healthy local, indigenous and global communities.

Trent will establish an interdisciplinary and multi-partner collaborative model for teaching, research and learning on the many aspects that influence vibrant and healthy communities. Examining cultural, historical, systemic and social issues alongside economic and health factors, we will bring together multiple partners to develop solutions, and the capacity of our students to implement them, on issues such as the societal impacts of an aging population, challenges of Canada's indigenous communities and the development of communities in the third world.

Why Trent?

Community based, community level transformation is not only a goal of Trent, but also a subject of study. There is a strong and growing focus across many of our programs to research and teach about the cultural, social and political mechanisms that drive community-based innovation, community health, cultural and social vitality, and economic development. A number of our graduate programs have a distinct emphasis on community-based research and study. Social justice and community development are foundational to Trent University. Our School of Education is known for its focus on social justice and using education to open doors, to deal with issues of poverty, homophobia and literacy in our communities.

Concept:

Development of a Centre for Aging & Society

Trent will establish an interdisciplinary Centre for Aging and Society that examines the social, economic, cultural and health impacts of aging on society at large, and individual communities in particular. In the absence of a medical school, our focus will differ from other centres with an aging focus that is more medically and health oriented. Research and teaching in this area spans departments including Sociology, Psychology, Nursing, Geography, Biology, History, Anthropology, Canadian Studies, Women's Studies, Cultural Studies, Economics and Philosophy. Our approach to aging considers the psychological, social and cultural factors that play significant roles in human functioning in the context of disease or illness, as well as how an aging population affects society, community and the economy, individuals and their families. The new Centre will emphasize the development of regional and provincial solutions to issues such as poverty, access to services, use of technology and economic challenges of an aging society, as well as explore cultural and social influences and impacts that may be considered in policy and service development. We will utilize our region's eldercare infrastructure and develop stronger associations with Fleming College in the areas of applied skills, UOIT in the healthy-aging research and teaching, and key support organizations to explore the economic, cultural and social dimensions of aging. Building on Trent's extensive experience in many of its programs, the new Institute will provide online learning opportunities and direct outreach to marginalized communities, including the LGBT community and those living in rural areas and aboriginal communities. This Centre will establish our position as a leader in how our region and the province can address the many challenges and opportunities presented by an aging population through public policy, social programs, cultural outreach and funding priorities.

Indigenous Studies and Community Development

Trent established the first Indigenous Studies program in Canada in 1969 and remains at the forefront of Indigenous education; now offering MA and PhD programs as well as Indigenous Management and Economic Development Program in conjunction with the Business Administration Program. This past summer Trent University was the recipient of \$2.5 million grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Council (SSHRC) to explore successful models of Aboriginal people building and living fulfilling lives in urban settings. The project's research activities are focused around four broad themes -- human development, social cohesion, economic development, and civic engagement. Along with our expertise and research programs in language and performance art, water science and study abroad programs, Trent will continue to expand its leadership in indigenous community development.

International Development Studies, Trent International Program and Global Community Development

Trent attracts students locally and internationally whose goals are to contribute to the development of communities in the third world. With study abroad programs in 35 countries, international scholarships and an active volunteer program, graduates are uniquely qualified to work within Canada and around the world.

Implementation:

The proposed Centre for Aging and Society has two primary approaches. The first is research and teaching around the psychological, cultural and social determinants of aging. This will involve interdisciplinary programming both within Trent and between Trent and its University and College partners, including new and specialized degree offerings (such as a jointly developed BSW in Social Work, Kinesiology and BA options in Human Services). It will include experiential learning opportunities provided by our community care partners. Programming will, in part, be shaped by initiatives delivered by the Local Health Integration Network designed to assist seniors to live at home longer, including the development of community supports, transitional programs from acute care facilities and specialized geriatric services. The second approach involves shaping applied training for allied health occupations including nursing, personal support workers and other allied occupations. It is proposed that this approach be a collaborative effort among Durham College, Fleming College, UOIT and Trent University. Our approach will provide an integrated cross-institutional methodology which will reduce administrative overhead, maximize the use of available infrastructure and provide students with a more comprehensive set of programming available throughout East Central Ontario. Recognizing that many potential students will already be engaged in the work force or pursuing second careers, significant portions of course content will be provided using innovative online and social media technologies. Trent is currently developing a proposal for a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) with a focus on community development and social justice, including transfer pathway options from a number of college diploma programs such as early childhood education, social service worker and child and youth worker; and a proposal for a Master of Education with a focus on social justice and literacy.

Results:

- Increase student enrolment through unique programming and experiential learning opportunities
- Improved productivity through leveraging and pooling institutional resources amongst Trent University, UOIT, Fleming and Durham Colleges
- Provide early attachment to the work force in a rapidly expanding field
- Increased student mobility through new pathways and partnerships
- Increased differentiation for Trent University

Conclusion

Trent University's Proposed Strategic Mandate Agreement builds on our commitment to foster our role as a university that offers high-quality, challenging and distinctive academic programming; to continue to develop our national and international research record and reputation; to be financially stable; and to be organizationally and administratively responsive to changes in external and internal climates. Our goal is to continue producing high quality graduates with an emphasis on critical thinking skills and judgement, the ability to assess the relative worth of ideas and approaches to problem-solving, and the high demand practical skills necessary in the emerging innovation economy. Trent is committed to innovation, community engagement, and accessibility to help meet the public policy goals of the Province. In the coming decade we will ensure enrolment growth, productivity gains and educational excellence consistent with the values of Trent's founding vision of interdisciplinarity, experiential learning, and the centrality of the individual student experience.