

President's Monthly Report November 2009

Vision and Renewal of Planning Processes

A second *Vision Renewal Information Session* was held on 16 November, followed by a Faculty Council meeting and earlier presentations at Senate, the Board, and various other meetings and committee venues. A number of Vision Renewal Workshops have now been held focused on six main themes:

1. The Trent Experience
2. Trent's primary purpose
3. Trent differences
4. Challenges we face (10 years)
5. Trent's core values
6. Trent big picture – what does success look like?

Additional workshops are planned in early December, including a virtual workshop, leading to a full-day Vision Renewal Review Committee Retreat on 15 December to consider the input and materials received. These review activities are expected to lead in the coming months to a recommended structure, renewed vision statement and strategic directions that will then be available in a number of settings for further discussion and improvement. The goal is to have these reviews completed prior to beginning intensive unit-level planning in March 2010 based on a template to be developed by the Provost's Planning Group. More details on all the review activities are found at the following website locations:

1. [A Trent University Vision Renewal Review Committee](#)
2. [A Strategic Directions Advisory Committee](#)
3. [A Special Advisory Committee on Changing Academic Structures](#)

President's Office Hours for Students

One *President's Office Hours for Students* was held on 4 November in Otonabee College, and a second was held at Trent-in-Oshawa on 25 November. Discussion with interested students focused on pedagogical issues, residence and college issues, and the planning and importance of the new facility in Oshawa.

President's Community Tours

Two *President's Community Tours* were held in November; the first, in Ottawa, was highlighted by an alumni reception hosted by Board of Governors member Harvey McCue. The second, in Oshawa, featured meetings with students and faculty at Trent-in-Oshawa, and an alumni event at the Oshawa Golf and Curling Club. Topics of interest included Trent's impact on the communities, recruitment and enrolment challenges and opportunities, Trent's growing reputation, the vision renewal process, and possible new partnership activities. In the spring, the *President's Community Tours* are planned to include communities in York Region (e.g., Aurora/Barrie), Belleville, and the Haliburton Highlands.

Administrative Organization

Senior administrative searches continued for the following positions: Dean of Graduate Studies and Head of Traill College, Provost and Vice-President Academic, Registrar, and Director of Institutional Planning. A new search procedure was discussed for the Director of Information Technology.

Journal of Canadian Studies Board Meeting

The Trent University President is an *ex officio* member of the Journal of Canadian Studies Editorial Board. The annual board meeting was held this year at McGill University, and editorial leadership and a number of interesting theme issues were discussed. Dr Margaret Steffler, a Trent faculty member in English Literature, was named as co-chair of the board with Dr Jane Koustas of Brock University. The outstanding editorial management provided by Kerry Cannon of Trent University was recognized.

Major Consultative and Administrative Activities

The Trent University Faculty Association (TUFA) and Trent University Board of Governors ratified a settlement on a new three-year collective agreement retroactive to July 1, 2009.

Provincial Activities

On 26 November, as part of the COU University Day at Queen's Park, Ontario universities pledged a commitment to "Going Greener" initiatives that cover nine key areas: policy and administration; integrating sustainability concepts into curriculum and research; buildings and green space; recycling and waste management; energy management; water management; transportation and fleet; purchasing and procurement; and partnerships and other initiatives. A full report of environmental and sustainability activities underway at 20 Ontario universities (including Trent) was presented to the Ontario Government by the Council of Ontario Universities.

University Ratings in Media Surveys

There have been a number of conversations on campus in the past few weeks about Trent's position in media rankings and surveys such as those published by Research Infosource Inc., Maclean's annual universities issue, and the Globe and Mail's survey on Canadian universities. Such surveys are based on problematic methods, but are sometimes thought to be useful by those considering universities in Canada. The survey results may provide a sense of community perception at a particular snapshot in time, and can be a resource in monitoring and assessing the quality, reputation, and competitiveness of our institution. Recent results include:

- Research Infosource Inc. ranked Trent number one, as the *Research University of the Year*, based on data that suggest Trent faculty outperform 'similar-sized' universities in a number of areas including: total sponsored research income; faculty research intensity; total number of publications; publication intensity in leading journals; and publication impact.
- In Maclean's, Trent received an overall ranking of 7th (of 22) among primarily undergraduate universities; last year Trent was ranked 6th, and in recent years has been ranked as high as 4th.

- In the Globe survey, which is based on undergraduate student responses to on-line survey questions, Trent was typically ranked highly in “quality of education”, “teaching”, and “campus atmosphere”. Trent received one of the highest rankings for “environmental commitment”, and lower rankings for “libraries”, “campus technology”, “student services” and “recreation and athletics”.

Overall, Trent University is committed to the highest standards of quality in academic performance and business processes, which are benchmarked against industry standards. For example, in March 2009, the university adopted key indicators for monitoring performance and reputation in a number of areas, including the widely-respected National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE). This important standardized survey is conducted every two years with the next major reporting cycle scheduled for Fall 2010.

Internal and External Relations (November 1 – 30, 2009)

Internal Meetings

Trent University staff and faculty meetings (21)
Trent University students and student groups (8)
Trent University Board members and committees/subcommittees (8)
Trent University senior administrators (8)
Trent University alumni (2)
Academic and administrative department/unit meetings (11)
Integrated Planning Committees, Information Sessions, and Workshops (4)
Senate & Senate Executive
Faculty Council Steering Committee (2)
Faculty Council (18 November)
Honours Committee of Senate (2)
Students interested in leadership/administration (2)
Students interested in remote sensing research (4)
Trent University Chancellor
Former senior administration (2)

External Meetings

President's Community Tours (Ottawa, Oshawa)
Post-secondary presidents (Grant MacEwan University, UOIT, Durham College)
Journal of Canadian Studies Annual General Meeting (November 5-7)
Visiting scholars (2)
TCCBE and U-Links (Minden)
Tour of Trent's Oliver Centre and Windy Pine facilities
Board of Education officials (2)
Regional health care official
Speaker of the House
Teleconference participation (as co-supervisor) on PhD Committee at University of Saskatchewan (2)
Federal government department
Local media
Local business leader
Local Community Groups (3)

Events

Alan Wilson Graduate Scholarship Dinner and Announcement

Tea in the Trend

Introduction of Gwynne Dyer at Showplace Lecture on Climate Wars

Kiwanas Club Luncheon Address

Remembrance Day Ceremony, Champlain College Great Hall

Events hosted at the President's residence (2)

Peterborough Professionals Breakfast (Planned Giving Advisory Committee)

The President's Monthly Report is available on the *Office of the President's Website* at http://www.trentu.ca/administration/presidentsoffice_reports.php. Questions or comments are welcome (sfranklin@trentu.ca).