

Trent University Presidential Mandate: 2019-2024 (Approved by BOG – February 2, 2018)

Background

As required by SR III.2 approximately 18 months prior to the conclusion of the President's term, in the fall of 2017, the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors established an Advisory Committee comprised of external, staff, faculty and student members of the Board along with faculty & student Senators to conduct a review of the presidency and develop an updated presidential mandate for the next 5 years.

Advisory Committee Membership

- Suzanne Bailey
- Hilary Stafford
- Connie Bonello
- Sara Pieper
- Robyn Jacobson
- Tom Miller
- Gillian Balfour
- Graeme Bishop
- Sue Graham Parker (Chair)
- Carol Gray
- Leslie Kerr
- Stephen Kylie

Approach

Conduct comprehensive internal and external stakeholder outreach to determine priorities, while building on existing Board of Governors strategic objectives and the current presidential mandate.

Outcome

Over a 2-month period, a substantial amount of stakeholder feedback was generated through an online survey; group sessions; and one-on-one meetings held by various Committee members. The feedback was then extrapolated, with commentary grouped by theme and importance. The Committee reviewed the information in depth both individually and as a group and presents the following for consideration.

The New Mandate 2019-2024

In view of the diversity of backgrounds and perspectives represented by the stakeholder respondents, it is heartening to see a very high degree of commonality in proposed priorities for the University over the next 5 years. In addition, a strong sense of pride in the direction and accomplishments of the University under the current mandate is evident. Based on this input and the Board of Governors Strategic Objectives (2016-2022) **Sustainability, Stewardship and Innovation** are the key overarching themes of the new mandate within which we have identified 5 priority areas of focus.

It is to be stressed that none of these priorities stands alone and they are listed alphabetically, NOT in order of importance. These priorities are necessarily interdependent and have many crossover items. The examples we have highlighted under each priority are meant to be representative, not wholly comprehensive and most importantly, while many are well under way under the current administration, this mandate is meant to highlight and emphasize those

priorities our stakeholders believe are most crucial to the University's current and future success.

Sustainability, Stewardship, Innovation

Sustainability refers to ensuring the University meets the needs of the present without compromising its ability to meet future requirements. Stewardship is the careful and responsible management of the University's valuable assets and strengths. Innovation refers to the necessity for adaptability, change management, and transformation to keep the University not just current, but ahead of, educational trends and expectations.

The Five Priorities

Academic

The support, integration and enhancement of excellent programs across the arts and sciences; high-quality research and exemplary teaching through:

- Innovative programming and delivery methods
- Experiential/hands on learning
- Evolution of library services
- Integration/differentiation between Durham & Symons campuses
- Continued emphasis on teaching excellence
- Renewed focus on research
- Long term hiring plans to address attrition of expertise
- Communication and consultation with academic stakeholders

Cultural

The protection and furthering of the University's unique identity by enhancing and embedding the following in the organizational framework and campus environment:

- Diversity, respect and inclusion infrastructure
- Manageable class sizes with accessibility to faculty
- Sense of community, including Colleges
- Ensuring capacity meets requirements
- Open and transparent internal consultation and communication processes
- Workplace satisfaction and people development – faculty, administration & staff □
Alumni engagement

Environmental

The development of a comprehensive vision and approach to environmental stewardship that encompasses the University's commitment to:

- Visible leadership
- General awareness
- Academic programming
- Capital infrastructure
- Trent lands conservation considerations
- Well-defined consultation processes
- Recognition of Indigenous heritage

- Research

Operational (Financial and Management)

Management of a process of change, including the establishment of a long-term integrated financial plan that includes, but is not exclusive to:

- Operational excellence through supporting and implementing sustainability and innovation in strategic change
- Community partnerships
- Multi-year budget planning (including buffers for potential fluctuations, e.g. enrolment)
- Government relations and advocacy (including contingencies for changes in political environment)
- Student attraction and retention strategies
- Durham campus expansion
- Pension plan transition
- Endowment lands stewardship
- Philanthropy development
- Creative financing and revenue opportunities

Reputational

The preparation and maintenance of a fluid and comprehensive communications plan that ensures:

- Active risk management
- Forward thinking and preparation for potential issues
- An effective social media platform
- Alignment of marketing to the student experience
- Research, expert and leadership visibility
- Capitalization on the University’s existing standing as a prestigious yet approachable liberal arts and science school

LEADERSHIP

The President is accountable to the Board of Governors and provides operational leadership for all aspects of university affairs, both internal and external, to ensure the performance, societal contribution, and vitality of the institution. Working with many different stakeholders the President is also the main spokesperson and face of the university. The President is accountable for the University’s reputation, partnerships, academic and senior administration, resources, the student experience and academic programming.

Referencing the 2014-2019 Mandate, a President needs “to be highly engaged both externally and internally” to lead the University successfully. With the expectations outlined in the new proposed mandate, a President also requires the support of **a highly skilled, diverse and inspiring leadership team who are willing and capable delegates.**

Mandate – cont'd.

In today's climate the President and leadership team must engage in a multi-stakeholder partnership that includes **administration/community/students/faculty-staff/alumni** operating in an environment of transparency and openness.

The ideal leader will exhibit excellence in:

Vision

An inspiring trailblazer who can combine the goals, priorities and values of the University into a compelling vision of present and future success that engages all stakeholders.

Communication

An empathetic, inclusive, collaborative and articulate community builder who is approachable, accessible and able to build relationships with diverse audiences.

Integrity

A credible, self-motivated and passionate advocate, who exhibits self-awareness, high personal standards and a commitment to community service.

Management

The ability to: make decisions in an environment of diverse opinions and uncertainty while exercising sound judgement; maintain accountability while delegating authority and; coach and mentor a diverse, highly-skilled team.

Perseverance

A confident, calm, optimistic and determined individual who continues to persevere in a stressful environment and can withstand the physical and mental demands of the job, including domestic and international travel and routinely long hours.

Flexibility

An adaptable, open-minded, creative thinker who thrives in an environment of constantly evolving issues, influences and uncontrollable external forces.