Dear Sir/Madam:

I attended today’s forum on the University’s Strategic Plan and made some oral comment there. I am now sending the core of some of the ideas I presented in written form.

In my opinion, the University there has been an unfortunate decades-long shift by this University away from providing great experience and service to students (and also to staff) to emphasis on

1. running the University like a business and making income

2. unnecessary advertising and self-glorification ("top 100", "top 5 in Canada") with undue emphasis on meaningless metrics (numbers of publications, impact factors, grant $ per faculty etc.)

**Overall Problem.** This university, like most others, has a commitment to teaching, research and community service. It does accomplish this fairly effectively. However, in the opinion of many, it fails dramatically in providing a great student experience, in promoting morale among its staff and in winning the loyalty of students, staff and alumni. In brief, I believe that **this university should shift its current philosophy from maximizing its finances, improving its rankings and minimizing its risk to providing outstanding services and enhanced daily on-site experience.** I believe that the service and student/staff experience has deteriorated extensively over the last 2 decades, and especially so in the last 5-10 years. This results in alienated alumni who feel resentful and unsupportive of the university, in higher turnover of staff and in a sense of dissatisfaction for current students.

I have sent details on a few examples and how they may be remedied to Dr. David Turpin in a letter dated July 3, 2015. The main objective in this current e-mail is to encourage a (perhaps revolutionary) re-thinking of philosophy and goals.

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I thought I would share the following excerpt from a brochure that Miami University of Ohio puts out. At the start of the brochure is a letter from the President, part of which includes this paragraph (I have attached the full brochure):

"Excellent written communication skills are essential to success in all areas of our lives. Writing helps to sharpen critical thinking skills, to explore and communicate new ideas, to expose problems and analyze solutions, and to rally others to action. Good writing articulates, encourages, motivates, informs, and persuades. It effects change, promotes ideas, and creates unity. With the adoption of the new
Global Miami Plan, Miami becomes one of the few universities in the country to require an upper division writing experience, a symbol of our commitment to placing writing at the center of the learning and discovery process."

I think we need a statement or commitment in the new strategic plan that identifies writing skills as one of the key tools for students to achieve the larger goals of lifelong learning, professional career development, and contributing to building a better community. Right now the discussion document refers to critical thinking skills, creativity, and cultural sensitivity; these three capabilities often are expressed through communication and written texts. We know employers, both in the Edmonton area and throughout North America, constantly argue for the importance of communication skills for students and future employees. Our strategic plan needs to make the connection between the development of communication skills and the achievement of the larger educational goals and ambitions we set for our students and ourselves.

I want to thank you for holding the public forum meeting today on strategic planning for the University. I sense continuing this tradition, will bring about more creativity, engagement and commitment to excellence to the U of A community. I do like to share a couple of points about the discussion today:

1- I believe the number of citations if weighted with the impact factor of the journals provides a better view on how big of a heavy weight our University really is and also identifies opportunities for improvement. Another index that comes to mind: the number of patents registered through university undertakings.

2- Picking up from number 1 and speaking of patents, I think a professor of mechanical engineering today raised some good points for renewing curriculums with focus on encouraging innovation and creativity in students. Change is in the air and the collective desire to diversify the economy in Alberta is higher than ever. I think the university is poised to be able to contribute greatly in this area. By fostering a climate of innovation, encouraging start ups and small businesses and in general entrepreneurship. For example, consider the following example:

http://www.wd-deo.gc.ca/eng/18976.asp

I think U of A is one of the - if not the most - suitable environment in Alberta to take the lead on this.

3- My last point is about the capacity of our university to think and look outside the box for what I call fundamental discoveries and paradigm shifters. I recently attended an APEGA luncheon event here in Edmonton at which the presenter talked about the feasibility of implementation of fusion technology - if it ever comes to pass - in Alberta. I think dreaming big and exploring outrageous ideas is best done at university and it inspires and injects the much needed vitality to the minds of the people at the university and eventually the province and the nation.
I thought I would bring to your attention that virtually all of the visuals in the discussion paper are of males, including the three white males on the front cover. This sends the wrong message to the campus about diversity—should the visual content of the discussion paper represent, roughly, the current population of the University? I would advise that the committee/authors of the discussion paper have the next version vetted for visual content before the next draft is distributed.

It also raises a point about student demographics that is not raised in the discussion paper (page 9): we know that female/male enrollment patterns in higher education in Canada are heavily skewed in favour of female attendance, and the imbalance is widening (http://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/provincial/education/gendergap.aspx). Alberta's gender gap for tertiary education is the second worst in Canada, behind only Saskatchewan where 100 women complete tertiary education for every 60 men. In my view that demographic information should factor into our strategic plans and contribute to how we think about how the U of A can contribute to this province. President Samarasekera was shouted down when she tried to raise this issue several years ago, but I think it is an important and broad trend that has implications for the future of universities, including our own.

My initial response to the ISP Discussion Paper is that it is asking the wrong opening question. Before we can sensibly discuss any of the subsequent questions, we need to agree on what the UofA is aspiring to be.

"Uplifting the whole people" is a nice aspirational statement -- now termed a promise -- but it is an unrealistic actual goal. And it also may not be what the UofA should be trying to do anyway. First we need to decide where the UofA stands within the context of PSE in Alberta first, and Canada second; and then decide where we want it to stand in the medium- to long term.

In Alberta, we have a differentiated higher education system (colleges, universities, etc.), but a trend towards loss of that differentiation by "promotion" towards university status. Assuming that that trend continues, where does the UofA fit into this larger group of provincial universities? Do we want to be the biggest, catering to the widest range of students ("uplifting the whole people"), or do we want to be the best, by focusing on excellence in teaching and research? The same question applies nationally.

Assuming the latter goal, then this is not necessarily achieved by growth (which has been the hallmark of the UofA for the last decade), but by raising academic standards in admission, by strengthening the ability to recruit excellent academic staff across the board (not just select superstars) by making a career at the UofA more attractive, and by supporting academic staff (including those already present) to achieve their full potential. Presently, the University provides little direct support, other than basic infrastructure, to the majority of academic staff, and moreover chooses to focus the bulk of infrastructure support on a few, select superstars. At the same time, federal and provincial support for research is either shrinking or becoming highly targeted towards "applied" research, leaving many excellent researchers seriously short of research money, and therefore unable to conduct valuable research or to recruit graduate students and post-docs. In contrast, many other universities in Canada and globally have internal research funds available to their academic staff. Suggestions: (1) Provide
matching or proportional grants to recipients of Tri-Council basic grants, and provide other open-
competition research grants. Lobby the GoA to allow some of its base grant to be earmarked for such
purposes, or use endowment income to support such a fund (in the same way as many scholarships are
funded). (2) Provide internal research grants matched to merit increments at FEC. (3) Greatly increase
the number of full graduate scholarships, particularly for Canadian students.

The President in a recent meeting suggested that we need to figure out how to excel despite shrinking
budgets. Well the answer is not by continuing to grow, but by refocusing and doubling-down on what
we already have. What we do is already excellent, but we are not achieving our full potential due to lack
of support.

The 2014-2015 Annual Report of the University of Alberta to the GoA states on page 45 that: “An
institution that aspires to be among the top research-intensive universities in the world can only achieve
that goal through the recruitment of internationally renowned faculty.” I disagree with this statement
inasmuch as the University also needs to support the excellent faculty it already has, many of whom are
performing well below their potential because of this lack of institutional support.
I will no doubt have more to say as this ISP discussion process continues.

I wanted to highlight a few points which might be considered for discussion as part of the Institutional
Strategic Planning. I have six suggestions that relate especially to the faculty of engineering:

1. We should consider building up two interdisciplinary centers within the Faculty of Engineering:
Aerospace and Nuclear. No engineering program today can claim itself to be world class without these
two. In Canada, only a few schools offer undergraduate programs in Aerospace: Carleton, Montreal
Polytechnic, RMC, Ryerson and York. Clearly, the bigger schools (those we compare ourselves with:
Toronto, UBC, McGill, Waterloo, Queen’s) don’t appear in this list. Nonetheless, many of them have
strong graduate programs in Aerospace/aeronautical, which must be noted. We can definitely start with
a small center, which offers MSc and PhD degrees in aerospace just utilizing the in-
house expertise and infrastructure. It’d grow slowly in depth and width.

The U of A also has a long history of excellence in nuclear research. The Faculty can easily leverage this
and the existing talent to start a small center of nuclear engineering research quite similar to the one
above. We can collaborate extensively with the Faculties of science, medicine and dent-pharm to offer
small programs leading to MSc and PhD. Since there is not a single program of this nature in Canada,
we’d easily attract the top talent with significantly less competition. The U of A would be definitely
playing a leadership role within a decade in this area.

2. We don’t have an architecture program either. This is especially critical in the light of new and
emerging interdisciplinary concepts like sustainable city planning and green engineering, which have
been coming up in the recent years. All of our competitors, even Calgary, Manitoba, Laval and Dalhousie
have architecture schools. Once again, a smaller center of excellence with collaborations from the
Faculties of Arts (Industrial Design) and Business is not difficult to establish given a little planning and
funding. It need not offer undergraduate degrees to begin with.

3. We have a fantastic campus press in the U of A Press. If one glances at their catalogue for the list of
publications over the last decade, there has been just one title from engineering (Dr. Gray’s specialized
book on oilsands). Coming from an international student perspective, I can tell that almost all undergraduates don’t understand much about research. One of their primary sources for gauging the reputation of a foreign university comes in the form of textbooks. For example, in Mechanical Engineering, a couple of public universities in the US (Purdue and Wisconsin-Madison) have gained a lot of fame and reputation by their systematic encouragement towards textbook authorship by faculty members. Very recently, MIT adopted a controversial but undoubtedly effective policy of not letting faculty members publish textbooks from elsewhere but the MIT Press. We can do much better in terms of promoting the scholarly works of our engineering professors (many have published advanced textbooks recently with OUP, CUP, Wiley and Springer) through the U of A Press. We might also think about including undergraduate textbook publication as a parameter in evaluation procedures leading to tenure/promotion. With the fast-changing landscape of undergraduate engineering education, even a lot of so-called classical areas are facing acute shortages of quality textbooks with updated and relevant content.

4. The Faculty of engineering has almost nil Level 7 courses. It’s definitely possible to design small but intensive 1-0-0 courses styled along reading courses which would act as pace-setters for PhD students. The Ivy Leagues have extremely rigorous Level 7 courses, which go a great way in helping graduate students maximize productivity from the very beginning. The course notes might also help the associated faculty members consider publications in the form of advanced textbooks.

5. We have done phenomenally well with MOOCs in the past two years. The Faculty should consider recording specialized graduate-level lectures somewhat along the lines of the MIT Open Course Ware. Especially, some real gems are getting lost with senior academics retiring or leaving the university.

6. The Faculty does very little in terms of promoting itself abroad across university campuses in other countries. Even smaller or less resourceful programs like the University of Melbourne have gained massively through their aggressive and intensive marketing tactics throughout major universities in India, China, the Middle East and South America. Not surprisingly, this has reflected ridiculously across the several global university rankings. Even larger public universities in the US (Minnesota and Michigan for example) have been doing this quite seriously since 2010 or so.

To whom it may concern,

I am submitting this input for consideration for inclusion in the Strategic Plan of our University:

My first comment has to do with what will set us apart from other post secondary institutions in Alberta and in Canada. Other than excellence, we need to dig deeper to explore what will be our strategic advantage as an institution moving forward. To address this issue, I explored some issues regarding Canada's recent evolution in trade and commerce. I chose that as a measure of one of Canada’s advancement in the global community. This is also relevant to our graduates as it is within that environment that our graduates enter the Canadian workforce fabric.

A review of Canada's recent history of trade and commerce shows that trade and commerce has been decreasing with the US and increasing with other international countries. So our graduates will face an increase in dealing with cultural diversity. The trade and commerce is being done with companies that are increasingly international. Therefore, our graduates will increasingly be facing issues where they
need to learn how to be culturally sensitive, where they have to demonstrate an ability to work collaboratively with diverse colleagues and/or where they may be engaged in work requiring job sharing with someone in another location around the globe.

Therefore, I propose that as part of our a strategic plan we aim to have one third of our graduates over the next 5 years gain "Global Competency" (GC). GC means that the students need to have spent a course or an internship or a project overseas. Such a goal sets our Institution apart from others in Canada and builds on our excellence and contacts in UAI as well as giving us a strategic advantage over our competition while greatly enhancing the quality of the education of our students.

A second element of our strategic plan should be the promotion of interdisciplinary and collaborative research. A recent study from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development identifies an very interesting trend with respect to Scientists. It states that "Collaboration and mobility are on the rise". It also states that "Scientist mobility are complex and ties to student mobility. In today's science system, authors engaged in international mobility and collaboration tend to have higher citation impacts.". Therefore, we need policies, resources, infrastructure and strategies in our upcoming plan to encourage and promote international collaborations.

I am happy to further discuss these issues as needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

Reconciliation with Aboriginal Peoples needs to be central to the strategic plan. Adoption must go beyond encouraging others to implement the recommendations to meaningful and deep reflection on the role of the University in the colonial process and to take steps to address discrimination throughout the institution.

While the TRC sets out the goals of reconciliation, I recommend the university consider adopting the Touchstones of Hope process for reconciliation. Originally developed by 220 First Nations, Metis, Inuit, Native American and non-Aboriginal peoples in child welfare it has been adapted to other environments such as labour unions and more recently but the Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Touchstones set out five constitutional and inter-related principles: self-determination, holistic response, respect for culture and language, structural interventions and non-discrimination. These principles are to be interpreted within the context of diverse settings so they aptly reflect cultural and contextual differences. The principles are then set in a four phase process of reconciliation: truth-telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating. The key to success is that Touchstones must be a university wide philosophy and fails if it is vanquished to event or to a piece meal or segmented strategy.

The Touchstones framework is simple and practical and thus can be easily infused throughout large organizations with diverse interests and activities such as U Alberta. I also think this activity must by university-wide non-discrimination policies and enforcement mechanisms given the recent examples of vandalism at the Aboriginal Student's Centre which specifically includes a statement by the President that such conduct is not tolerated at U Alberta. The effort should also be accompanied by mandatory training of all faculty and staff and students on the histories and contributions of Aboriginal
peoples. While the Government of Alberta announced it would make education on these topics mandatory for all K-12 students, few administrators, faculty and staff at U Alberta benefited from similar education and thus pro-active efforts must be made to ensure they have the knowledge needed to embody and implement reconciliation at the University.

Finally, I recommend that the Chancellor, President, Provost and Members of the Board of Governors attend training on the TRC.

Here is a link to the Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences page on the Touchstones of Hope for your information: http://www.ideas-idees.ca/issues/reconciliation

As you go about preparing for the new ISP, I wanted to share the draft Sustainability Plan with you. This plan was developed with a very broad-based consultation akin to what is being done for the ISP. This plan is undergoing review so some of the goals/strategies may be adjusted in the coming months - as we move towards a final version I will share it with you.

Leadership support was identified during our extensive consultation as the most important key to success in moving our institution forward. We need our institutional strategic plan to properly position sustainability as a key value/pillar, to demonstrate the alignment required across the organization and ensure buy-in at all levels in management, and within the academy.

With that in mind, here are a few bullets that you may find beneficial reference as you move forward with the ISP:

- We are well positioned to be one of the very best institutions for sustainability in Canada, but we have not yet included it or promoted it as something of institutional value. There is risk of losing ground if we don't officially state it in the ISP.
- In 2008 the University of Alberta's BOG and PEC endorsed a sustainability commitment and guiding principles
- The consultation process for the sustainability plan involved hundreds of members of the campus community
- The most major keys to success for UAlberta to build a sustainable future were connected to leadership support, accountability, collaboration, communication and monitoring & measurement (page 9), with leadership support being most important. It states "In order to achieve our sustainability goals, support and direction from senior leadership is critical. Leaders are essential in establishing sustainability as a priority for our institution and ensuring that sustainability is integrated into business planning and staff roles.
- The themes of the sustainability plan and the short version of the vision statement for each theme area are outlined below:
  - Our leadership will take action on our commitment and guiding principles by ensuring sustainability is embedded into our institution’s vision, mission, academic plans and business plans.
  - Our education & research efforts will integrate sustainability into the advancement of the university’s mission.
• Our **operations & infrastructure** will continuously seek solutions that embody sustainability principles.
• Our **community & culture** will strive to build connections that model and advance sustainability in our day-to-day activities.
• Our **health & well-being** will create a safer, inclusive, diverse, and respectful environment that meets the needs of the whole person.

• The President’s cover letter for the draft plan states, "This is a path we can take. It is a path we must take".
• We are a Gold-rated institution in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (we would like to retain/enhance our performance)
• UAlberta has been recognized as one of Canada’s Greenest Employers every year since 2009.
• Our university is a signatory to the Statement of Action, G8 University Summit (2010) and Torino Declaration on Education and Research for Sustainable and Responsible Development, G8 University Summit (2009), and Sapporo Sustainability Declaration, G8 University Summit (2008) but we have yet to articulate our goals in sustainability in our institutional strategic documents
• Sustainability is embedded into the institutional plans of competitors
• A focus on sustainability is:
  o well-aligned with "uplifting of the whole people" as it is connected to "the higher ground"
  o enhances our image, reputation and brand (which can be leveraged by our city/province and beyond)
  o enhances employee engagement and retention
  o adds a positive spin to recruitment of students and staff
  o helps us focus on cost reduction/avoidance
  o risk can be managed/reduced through sustainable practices
  o a unique angle for philanthropic fundraising

Just a quick note to say that, at least in the Faculty of Science, there is very little enthusiasm for this Institutional Strategic Planning. We have been bashed down with 7 years of cuts, threatened with nasty outcomes of the "Renaissance Committee", and sucked of so much energy directed to just maintaining our core structures in the face of a continued onslaught of cuts from above. The Department Chair of Chemistry deserves a huge medal for protecting the core of Chemistry from what could have been truly destructive instructions from above. It has been exhausting, and emotionally draining for all of us. No one has anything left to give you. There was truly a sense that the former upper administration was displeased with Science’s administration (understatement - vindictive is closer to the truth), and the people who suffered were the faculty and researchers.

There is discussion of making a bit of a fuss to boycott this planning, in a public way, but in light of how drained most of your active researchers are, at least in Science, this won’t happen as it’s just easier to not participate. I would suggest instead that you come to us, that you sit down and listen, and let us recover. Let us know that you care, because it’s been a long ride of exactly the opposite. I sound like I am using artsy-fartsy language and sentiment, which for a scientist seems odd, but it is true.
And a piece of advice - best avoid using the word "Renaissance" for at least 10 years, and maybe longer. Talk about a hot poker of a word, which was the pointy tip of the completely opaque and poorly communicated committee of the same name.

You inherited the aftermath of a particularly nasty period of history of this university. Please recognize that generating any enthusiasm is going to take time, and I would suggest that you go to each department, individually, and take the time to talk and listen. Doing this will serve you much more effectively than this more haphazard and random approach. We will turn things around, but don’t expect happy faces, or any faces, right away. Shell-shocked.

A couple of issues I would like to follow up re this week’s meetings.

1. Several people have mentioned to me (and I had also noticed) how little research and research excellence was mentioned in your discussions about the process of developing the new institutional strategy. There seems to be an emphasis on teaching and learning and the student experience, but little on developing and enhancing our research performance. For example, will the new plan consider tilting the shape of the University towards research based graduate programmes and activity and away from junior undergraduate courses? Can the University do more to help improve researchers' success in securing Tri-Council funding?

2. Again, it has now been mentioned to me that the role of academic faculty in ensuring this is a great University has not been highlighted as much as many faculty would like and hope. We seem to be identified more as a source of problems (wage increases, not retiring, too few junior faculty) than as a core and important part of the continued and future success of the University.

3. On a more personal note, while you responded to my question at the Board about how we help incoming refugee students, I would like to urge you to consider whether we can make further pledges to enable more such students to benefit from studying at the University of Alberta. For example, could enhancement make a special appeal for donations towards a new fund for refugees in general.

Dear all,

Just a quick note following up on the discussion this morning about mobilizing FEC to help curate/nominate candidates for various awards including:
- Community service (eg the Community Connections awards)
- Royal Society of Canada
- Royal Society of Canada’s College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists
- etc

One idea might be to have one member of the FEC committee delegated to watch for candidates for various types of awards.
Another might be to ask each Faculty to submit a Community service/connection candidate.

The main point is that the FEC committees have a unique opportunity to look at the breadth of engagement by their staff, and get a very good perspective of who would be the leaders. If the request came from an executive level (perhaps President/Vice-President & Chancellor?) to the Deans/FEC committees we might generate more attention to community engagement?

1) We need stability, above all else. The boom/bust cycles of the last few years has wasted an enormous amount of time, money, and energy, as we have been constantly focused on implementing one reorganization after another, rather than focusing on research and teaching.

2) Investment in support staff is the most cost-effective way to spend additional funding. Because Arts was cut to the bone, we had to fire far more support staff than is reasonable--because professors can't be laid off. But this didn't mean clerical work disappeared; instead, it was shifted onto faculty members, who now sometimes spend 20-30% of our time doing work that could be done by someone working for one-half or even one-third of our salaries.

3) Building general capacity of the university should be done patiently. The previous administration had an addiction to hiring research stars who would stay for 1-2 years before leaving, and to throwing money at high-priced business consultants in the hope of coming up with a master plan that would enable the university to make a great leap forward. However, a university's reputation is not built in a few years, but over decades or centuries. Slow and steady investment is preferable to flashy headlines that don't build up anything lasting.

4) The university needs to diversify its incoming international student streams away from China-only. It is bad for everyone, including the Chinese students, to have such a huge percentage of our international admissions come from one country. Moreover, the English language abilities of the average Chinese applicant will start declining as of next year's cycle, because the Chinese state educational bureaucracy has taken strong steps to de-emphasize English language education, beginning with the nationwide high school graduating class of 2017. Unless the university is prepared to further lower its standards for English competency, we should expect to see fewer and fewer qualified applications from China every year.

I am attaching a number of web links for further examination. The first few is from Waterloo and the University of Waterloo. The last is about MaRs Centre in Toronto. The University of Waterloo is the best and most successful to date, MaRs has unfortunately lost it's vision over the past number of years. Waterloo in more oriented to technical development however as you may note it is also a part of their aboriginal centre.

I hope that this gives you more information as to what I am talking about. Also most recently I saw an advertisement for a position at McGill which I believe ventures down this avenue. I am attaching a job description.
I also would like to emphasize that this is all about students, their engagement at the university and also when they leave the university.

We could also garner some significant funding from the government to establish something like this. Perhaps we can start small and establish something like they have done at the University's Waterloo Velocity Garage.

CSL is definitely a good beginning - I have engaged CSL students with community organizations I work with, however the IP Neutral Zone is slightly different from this idea. Having said this, the humanities students can definitely benefit greatly by having their own IP Neutral Zone and come up with solutions for society as a whole, this would also include the law students as well.

Overall it would engage all the students and the business students could be of great value to all the IP Zones on campus.

The idea is to create teams of students from various faculties whereby they can then continue into the working world as a team. Once a start-up is established it would have team of students from let's say engineering, business, law, sociology, etc. These become to depend on each other in the working world as a team.

Job description (mentioned above):

**Associate Vice-Principal (Innovation and Partnerships)**

[Apply Now](#)

**Company:** McGill University  
**Location** Montreal, QC  
**Date Posted:** November 25, 2015  
**Source:** Recruit.net

Position Context:
McGill University is seeking an Associate Vice-Principal to lead the University’s innovation and partnership strategy, agenda, and operations. Reporting to the Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations), the Associate Vice-Principal, Innovation and Partnerships, will build on McGill’s strengths in research, knowledge exchange, and commercialization to further develop an ambitious, focused, and dynamic strategy for realizing McGill’s goal to become a first-choice collaborator for industry, investors, social enterprises, community organizations, and peer institutions. As an inspiring ambassador for McGill, the Associate Vice-Principal, Innovation and Partnerships, will be instrumental in promoting the University’s innovation agenda among internal and external stakeholders.

Primary Responsibilities:
McGill is undergoing a process of transformation to become a more open and active partner in the global innovation ecosystem. We are focused on developing channels for broader translation of path-breaking research and novel ideas into solutions benefitting local, national, and global society. As a catalyst for this transformation, the Associate Vice-Principal, Innovation and Partnerships, will:
- Consolidate an integrated vision for innovation at McGill and develop an implementation plan, enhancing pan-University collaborations, and ensuring buy-in across the institution.
- Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship among professors, students, staff, and external partners – including private sector, community groups, and social enterprises – by strengthening support and recommending appropriate incentives across the University.
- Work cooperatively across portfolios to facilitate the establishment of programs and initiatives that enrich the student experience by providing access to specialized training, service learning initiatives, mentorship programs, and hands-on entrepreneurship opportunities.
- Ensure all McGill objectives related to industry partnerships, spin-off creation, knowledge exchange, and commercialization are met.
- Provide strategic guidance to the VP-RIR and other members of McGill’s senior administration, on subjects related to innovation, partnerships, and knowledge exchange.
- Serve spokesperson for innovation and partnerships, both within the McGill and with external partners on committees and at events related to the innovation and partnerships portfolio.
- In close collaboration with University Advancement, engage with external stakeholders in the Montreal region and beyond to develop opportunities for mentorship, investment, volunteer opportunities, and philanthropy.
- Lead the completion of the efficient integration of three existing University units into the Office of Innovation and Partnerships:
  - Invention Development and Entrepreneurship Assistance (IDEA), McGill University Business Engagement Centre (MUBEC), and Innovation in Practice.

Experience:
The successful candidate for the Associate Vice-Principal, Innovation and Partnerships, will likely have:
- An advanced university degree and 5 to 10 years of relevant industry or business experience, including a strong track record of entrepreneurship (i.e. as the founder of a successful start-up company or social venture, or other innovation roles) and a passion for furthering innovation and knowledge translation.
- Strong collaborative leadership in developing and maintaining strategic, collaborative relationships that have translated into revenue-generating or knowledge exchange opportunities.
- Proven operational skills with a good working knowledge of the academic environment and an ability to collaborate successfully with academics, students, volunteers, or community members.
- Familiarity with corporate development, venture capital, and the Quebec innovation ecosystem.
- Knowledge of university, college, or hospital research, including research applications, agreements, intellectual property protection, license agreements, and technology commercialization.
- Fluency in written and spoken English and spoken French.

Other Qualifying Skills and/or Experience:
Abilities:
Proven track record of applied research and knowledge exchange as a leader in industry or the public or non-profit sector Demonstrated excellence at creative, strategic and “bold” thinking, and success in business development, “intrapreneurship,” start-ups, social enterprise, and/or entrepreneurship Excellent presentation and communications skills with the ability to engage with a dynamic and diverse group of students, alumni, faculty, staff, volunteers, and external stakeholders Ability to create strong positioning for McGill’s innovation agenda locally, nationally, and internationally Working knowledge of emerging intellectual property ownership models

Apply:
Please submit your curriculum vitae and cover letter, clearly indicating the reference number: McGill AVP [at] lavernesmith [dot] com. McGill University is committed to equity in employment and diversity. It welcomes applications from indigenous peoples, visible minorities, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, women, persons of minority sexual orientations and gender identities, and others who may contribute to further diversification. Faculty/

Unit:
Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations)

Duration:
3 years

Reporting To:
Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations)

I would like to provide my modest contribution to the discussion on the strategic plan of the U of A. When President Turpin and Provost Dew came to the FSJ to discuss about the strategic plan, and how our Faculty can integrate into it, two things struck me in the comments from colleagues and students:

1) There was a lot of comparison between the U of A (that includes a Francophone Faculty, physically separated from the main University) and the University of Ottawa (which is a real bilingual university, offering no physical separation between languages of education);

2) It was pointed out that more money is needed at the Faculty Saint-Jean for the management and services, because of the need to offer services in French.

These two points are completely related to each other to me, and it seems obvious that if there is more integration (and less physical separation) between the FSJ and the rest of the University, there will be also less money spent on doubling services. In addition, there will be the possibility to better develop the French education within the U of A. The French language is not exclusive at the FSJ, and a not negligible amount of professors, students, administrative staffs are speaking French and working at U of A (outside of the FSJ). In fact, two of my collaborators at the North Campus are having French as a first language.
My arguments here are divided into two points, which both show the advantage of removing a large part (if not all) of the physical and administrative separation between the language of education. This is particularly suitable for the Science sector, as you would see in the following arguments.

Point 1: A large amount of money can be saved by removing some (if not all) the separation. Here are a few examples:

a. The teaching laboratory at the FSJ (biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics) are prepared and managed completely separately from the Faculty of Science. This means that we need laboratory staff (technicians and coordinators) specialized for each discipline whereas the only additional need, if the labs were offered on the North Campus, would be to prepare a few more sections of the same labs in a different language, and to translate in French the little changes that are made every year in the manual. In addition of that, we are having a FSO position (Science laboratory Manager) that supervises the technician and coordinators, and manage the budget specifically for the teaching lab. Our lab structure is extremely expensive and not efficient at all.

b. We now need major renovations of the laboratories because of the lack of space and the outdated status of the laboratory, but if we would offer the laboratory at the north campus, it would probably be possible to avoid any renovation as our number of students are negligible compared to what is covered for the same class at the North campus. For example, BIOL107 has about 1500 students every year at the North Campus compared to about 60 students at the FSJ. So it would be probably possible to include 4 French lab sections (with the about 75 sections in English) without the need of a major renovation.

c. If we offer science courses in French at the north campus, this would also offer large advantages for the student (less time spent traveling between the faculties) and we would most likely increase the French education to the students that prefer to stay at the North Campus (because of numerous opportunities such as Honors degree, services, etc.). This would be achieved while reducing the costs for the university and without building new laboratories or classes (because we also lack larger classroom space at the FSJ). A better correspondence between the same courses and laboratories offered in the two languages would also be assured.

d. Because all the professors in Science at the Faculty Saint-Jean are performing their research in English, there is no need of administrative services for research at the FSJ. The administrative service are often doubling what is already available at the North Campus, in a more confusing and time consuming structure. For example, student hiring at the North Campus involve much less paperwork (contract simpler to fill, no timesheets, etc.) compared to our procedures at the FSJ. The management of our research grants does not need to be performed in French. In fact, all our faculty members in Science at the FSJ are actively collaborating with professors of the North campus, and doing most of their research there (ex. The 3 biology professors are performing most of their lab at the North Campus). It would save a large amount of time traveling between faculties, which is one of the several challenges that are facing the professor at the FSJ (other challenges include are large teaching load, lack of graduate programs, the lack of core facilities).
Point 2: The excellence of the education would be largely improved by considering discipline and competence first in the decision making processes, not the language or the attachment to a specific faculty.

a. Process to hire employees, including professors could definitively be greatly improved by being managed within the appropriate departments. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the FSJ, the process to hire involved people of very different disciplines. For example, a committee to select a biology professor is typically composed of only one biology professor from the FSJ, one biology professor from another faculty, and three FSJ professors from other disciplines (mathematics, humanities or education) without any basic knowledge in biology. So as biology expert are in minority on the committee, it makes it very difficult to then evaluate the candidate properly in term of achievements, scientific scope, and potential of developing a successful research program. A management of the selection process by the appropriate faculty would be much more appropriate and in agreement with the very high quality standard of the U of A. And I am sure it would be possible to find at least one French speaking professor in about all the Departments. Biology is an example, but it is the same for all disciplines. As a biologist, I don't feel qualified to select a new university professor in physics, mathematics, and even less in education or arts.

b. The evaluations of the faculty members are also done by a large scope committee that has no knowledge of the discipline and the rules associated with the specific discipline. It would be much more accurate that the performance of an academic staff member would be evaluated by colleagues in the same discipline.

There would be several more examples to be given, but the fact I want to bring here, is that I think we should be increasing the link between the U of A and the FSJ, rather than doubling everything in a French faculty. This is particularly relevant for the Science section, and it could be different when we talk about education, for which the immersion of student is important in the learning process. But if the Science division would be moved to the North Campus, the problem of space (laboratories and classes) would be solve and the FSJ could be renovated (at much less cost) to be suitable for the education and art program.
21 December 2015

President Turpin, Provost Dew, and
University of Alberta’s Strategic Planning Committee

Dear Colleagues,

Unfortunately, I missed the town-hall meeting at the Faculté St Jean (FSJ) on December 3rd. But I was later informed by a colleague that many students said that they would like to see more resources in French at the U of A, a little like the bilingual University of Ottawa, and also that our colleague Denis Fontaine stated (the obvious) that maintaining a French-speaking campus should require more funding and resources from the U of A. Hereafter I suggest a solution to address both issues.

I strongly believed that the research and courses of the FSJ’s Science Division should be better integrated within the U of A; that is, they should (at least partly) be moved to the North Campus. Then the (FSJ as well as non-FSJ) students would have access to courses in French on the North Campus, and it would be more cost-effective since this would reduce duplicating administrative services by exploiting those already in place on the North Campus (e.g. ancillary labs in the Fac of Science). Clearly, this is possible since one of our biology (208?) labs was offered on the North Campus for many years, up to 4 or 5 years ago.

My initial motivation (about 15 years ago) for this move was the retention of students, many of which transfer to other U of A faculties after one or two years at FSJ. Nowadays, in addition to this, I think this reorganization would be more cost-effective and it would greatly facilitate the performance and engagement of our science professors. I am writing this to your committee because, clearly, our local administrators will oppose this idea since they want to hold on to their little (and incompetent, as far as sciences are concerned) power. While I think it may not be appropriate (or cost-effective) to move the whole faculty, I am convinced that it is relevant for the Science Division especially that FSJ appears more and more oriented toward the Arts. Two years ago, the Renaissance Committee had recommended a reorganization of the faculties that would have integrated FSJ within larger faculties, in order to avoid redundancies and duplication of administrative services.

Arguments in favor include the following:

• More francophones and francophiles would benefit from science courses offered in French at the North Campus than if these courses were confined to our small campus, away from the U of A central services. Many French-speaking students (including international students), who would not study at FSJ otherwise, would take courses offered in French at the North Campus.
• The FSJ-Science Division could greatly expand its course offering if French-speaking professors from the Faculties of Science, Medicine, ALES, etc. were encouraged to teach science courses in French at the North Campus.
• Canadian bilingualism, and the U of A’s position in supporting it, would benefit from having a French presence on the North Campus, rather than being restricted by an old-fashioned
ghetto-style mentality of isolating the French-speaking resources in one location. Moreover, that could help attract international students.

- It is a pity to deprive the FSJ students of all the material and human resources already available on the North Campus (bookstore, SUB, libraries, recreational services, SSDS, health services, seminars, etc.). It is a detriment that should no longer be imposed on the students (and their parents) who choose to pursue their post-secondary studies in French. Clearly, those resources would benefit our faculty members as well.
- The U of A would have to invest in some services in French at the North Campus, but that should cost considerably less than duplicating all the levels of services. For instance, there would be no need to construct or renovate labs at FSJ, and the current lab spaces could be refurbished for other purposes.
- The FSJ likely has higher relative administrative costs than other units. In my opinion, not only are there additional, unavoidable, costs intrinsically incurred by the current organization, I am certain that many expenses are superfluous and should be avoided as they represent a waste of resources. An instance is our FSO position of undergraduate lab director, which was created despite the opposition of our science professors and which is not only useless, but hinder the work of those involved in labs. As an example of the current non-sense related to our lab management, I was prevented from using the university-supported eUSRI assessment system for my lab TAs in Physics!!! The reason is that our lab director decided to create an independent assessment system on eClass. Not only is it not at arms-length, but one of our technology assistants is also a chemistry TA. At FSJ, it seems that such situations are not viewed as potential conflicts of interest. Our Science Division is already more costly than our Arts and Education Divisions mainly because of the labs; redundant positions such as the lab director make a bad financial situation even worse.
- Our local administrators are not familiar with the sciences and often go beyond their call of duty to increase our paperwork and add redundant procedures compared to other faculties (e.g. research students time sheets). Much of that redundancy would be avoided by moving our science profs to North Campus, labs and all.
- The Physics labs at the Faculty of Science already accommodate many hundred of students in first-year courses; what would it be to insert some 50-60 more students in those groups? We would just need to translate the lab manuals in French (already done, actually) and hire French-speaking TAs.
- All our current tenured & tenure-track science faculty members have collaborators, labs or offices on the North Campus. Many FSJ students already come to my office in CCIS to ask me questions. With more or all the courses offered on the North Campus, we would not have to transit constantly between the two campuses, which would facilitate our participation in academic and administrative activities with our scientific colleagues (colloquia, research collaborations, committees, conference organizations, etc.).
- With more science courses offered on the North Campus, it would be easier to involve French-speaking students in our research.
- Whether I am right or not can only be determined by gradually offering courses in French on the North Campus. Perhaps starting with level 300 and 400 courses.

In parallel with a closer relationship with the North Campus, I am of the opinion that the FSJ should departmentalize its current divisions, just like most faculties. Any argument against it can be countered with the current reality at Augustana: they are a small faculty, yet they work remarkably well together on various interdisciplinary projects (e.g. recent TLEF), and they are admittedly excellent at what they do: training undergraduate students. FSJ should follow Augustana’s example in many respects.
The leadership at FSJ is simply not competent to hire and evaluate (through FEC) science profs, manage labs, etc. These tasks should be all transferred to the faculties with science components or to an FSJ science department. Such a department could include our current FSJ profs as well as adjunct French-speaking profs from the faculties of Science, ALES, Medicine, etc. So, for instance, when we hire a professor of biology, the selection committee should consist of biologists and scientists. In our current structure, such a selection committee comprises two biologists, one other scientist, one Arts prof and one Education prof, which dilute the expertise. Our Arts, Education and Science Divisions are the fundamental units and grass roots of our faculty, and I observed repeatedly that they are too often sidelined in order to fast-track some crucial decisions. Just to give one example, the decision to fire all the contract lecturers and rehire only certain ones had rather catastrophic consequences in one of our mathematics courses. While such decisions may be up to our Dean, it would be more conducive to a healthy work environment if the divisions were more involved in the decision-making. The best way to achieve this would be to create departments of Arts, Education and Science.
When I think about our next institutional strategic plan, I envision a document that clearly defines our goals and strategies. A document that is courageous enough to define what makes us excellent, to define our next direction as an institution in a very clear and direct manner.

A document that stakes a claim and makes a bold statement: We are ready to tackle the big issues in the world. Right now. Send us your best and brightest, and they will have an amazing four years living on campus, making connections, researching and turning their ideas into real solutions.

Who are our students? They are pragmatic idealists. They are civic-minded. They have a strong sense of local and global community. They are extensively socially networked. The research suggests that they will not stick with one job during their careers; instead, they want innovative work environments. The current generation has been coined the “global generation”. Their photos, stories and experiences are shared across the world through multiple platforms. If they feel strongly about something, word spreads, in an instant.


Who else is going to educate people to face these overwhelming challenges? The answer is the University of Alberta. Our answer should be swift and loud: We see the challenges, we are ready to act. This is OUR role. This is what we do best. We are ready for those who want to learn with us, who want to solve these issues. We are NOW U. Forget the challenges of tomorrow – the world needs us now. And we are ready.

Alberta, both geographically and culturally, is truly unique. We are the perfect place to study water. We are the perfect place to study agriculture. We have a diverse population. Edmonton is a “smart city” and a “learning city”. It’s a “festival city”. It’s an international destination for concerts, theater and music. The University of Alberta’s engineers, physicians and scientists are already leaders in their fields. Their research and innovations are truly remarkable, on a global scale. UAlberta North is ahead of its time in its mandate.

My suggestion is a focus on what makes the University of Alberta truly excellent – through these specific pillars:

**Climate**: Water, Human Ecology, Agricultural, Food and Nutrition Science, Pollution, Bio-Energy, Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology, Biological Sciences, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences
**People:** Anthropology, History, Education, Economics, Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, Communication, Drama, Music, Political Science, Indigenous Knowledge and Perspectives, Legislative Processes, Religion and Theology, Literature, Design, Film Studies, Philosophy, Social Justice

**Health and Wellness:** Immunology, Geriatric Medicine, Prevention, Radiology and Diagnostic Technology, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Multi-Disciplinary Disease Management, Psychiatry, Neurology, Cardiology, Cell Biology, Nursing, Pharmacology, Oral Health and Dentistry, Public Health, Global Health, Occupational Health, Health Policy, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Pharmaceutical Care

**Engineering and Science:** Biomedical, Chemical and Materials, Civil and Environment, Electrical and Computer, Nanotechnology, Computing Science, Physics, Mathematics

**Finance:** Accounting, Operations and Information Systems, Marketing, Property Law, Estate Law, Taxation, Corporate Law, Commerce, Business Economics, Strategic Management, Mathematical and Statistical Science

If we focus on these pillars (or market ourselves similarly), we demonstrate the ability to solve today's problems, as well as our commitment to uplift the whole people. We directly help:

- Industry
- Government
- People - Albertans, Canadians – from our youngest to oldest
- Our students

I think it's time to get specific about what we deliver. The rhetoric of the past doesn't work anymore. We need a new approach. There's no shame in bridging a liberal arts education with career preparation; in fact, this is what Albertans expect. Name one dad over the age of 55 who didn't attend university to get a better job. Albertans expect graduates to leave this institution with marketable, relevant skills, direction, and a desire to serve.

The truth is, we can reasonably expect the people and Province of Alberta to continually and predictably invest in the University of Alberta if we can educate students to solve the world's most pressing problems, right now. This is about providing students with a truly unique educational experience, tailored to their values, expectations and traits, in concert with the talented teachers and researchers who are already well established at this institution. It is revolutionary and risky, but worth a shot.
We started with the Question: "What is important to you about the University of Alberta? What would you like to see as part of the UA-SP"?

Four themes emerged from the conversation:

- **Accountability / Integrity**
  - Ensure that the UA credential means something
    - UA reputation and student’s experience is discussed by students
    - Reputation is everything and it impacts recruiting and expectations
  - Records must be complete and accurate
    - There are areas of duplication and gaps caused by shadow systems in use
  - UA is accountable to the people of Alberta - needs to serve those people throughout their levels of educational need
  - Do the right things for the right reasons

- **Student Experience**
  - The student experience should be consistent, youth through to CPE and Lifelong learning
    - The student progression at the UA starts with youth camps on to undergraduate degrees, then graduate studies and Alumni to CPE
  - International student experiences are important to attract other international students (the communities in the home countries are tight and positive experiences influence choices)
  - More access for the non-traditional learner
  - The educational experience should be creative and leading edge
    - Equivalent to other local post-secondaries is not good enough.
    - Proactively integrate quality learning
  - Better sharing of student information - knowing who the student is can help improve the experience they have

- **UA Brand / Reputation**
  - Excellence in all aspects of what we do
  - The impact of student success is perceived to be undervalued when it comes to UA reputation.

- **Collaboration / Understanding of each other and each other’s work**
  - Sharing information increases opportunities, reduces overlaps and leads to more opportunities
    - Utilizing common IT tools can mean shared information, administrative saving through avoiding duplication - making resources available for other purposes.
    - Better understanding of each other’s work provides opportunities for better problem solving
  - Assists with providing students their best options
  - Avoid duplication of programs / services; collaborate to create better outcomes
  - Opportunities for support staff to develop skills
    - Targeted secondments
    - Networking sessions
    - Ability (financial support) to attend relevant conferences
    - Mentorship (formalized and supported) opportunities
    - Time built into workload to support professional development