

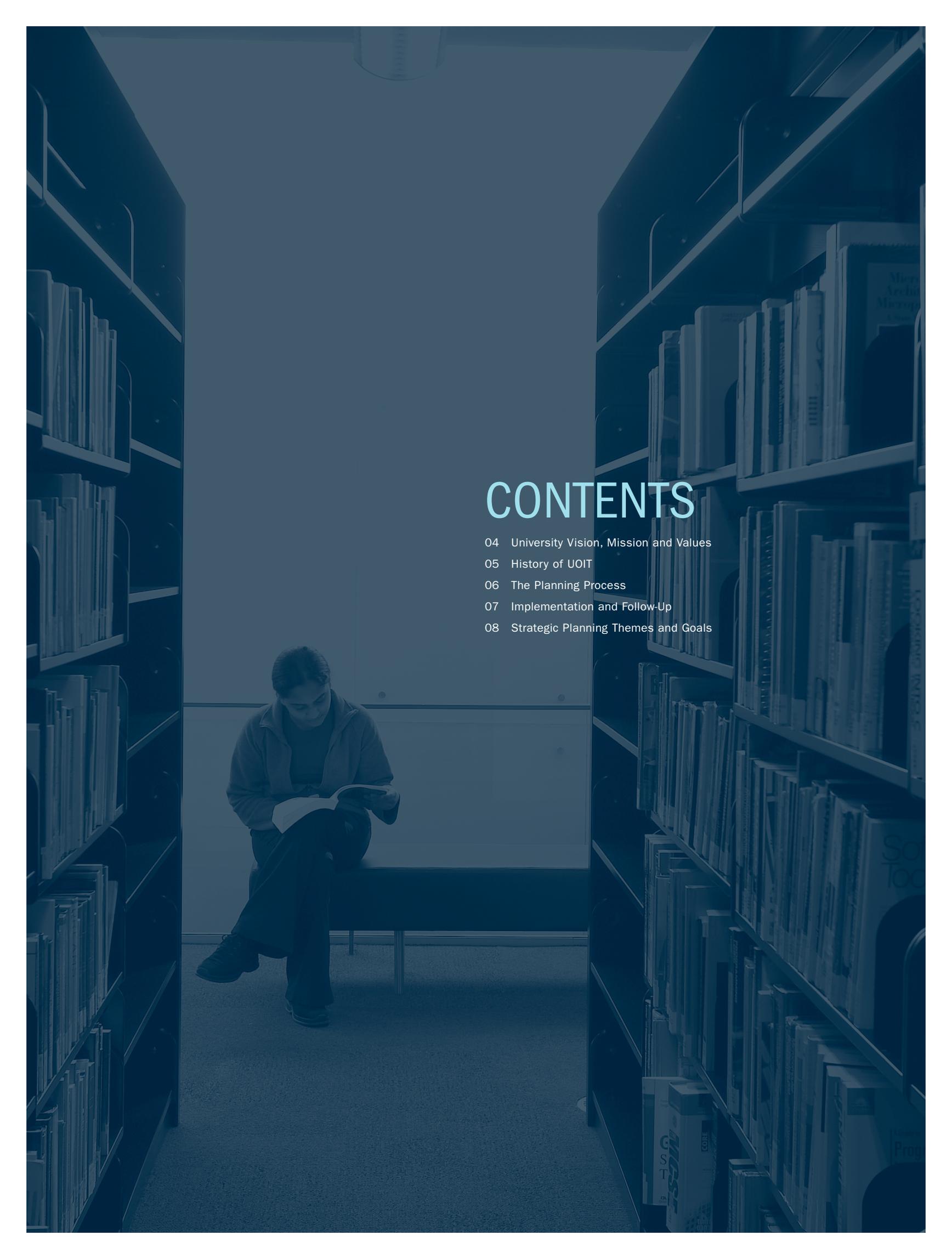


University of Ontario
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Strategic Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2005-2010



A photograph of a person sitting on a bench in a library aisle, reading a book. The aisle is lined with tall bookshelves filled with books. The entire image has a blue tint. The person is in the lower-left quadrant, looking down at the book. The bookshelves extend from the foreground into the background, creating a sense of depth.

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INTRODUCTION

Since its official creation in 2002, the faculty, management and students of the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) have risen to the formidable challenge of giving life to a new university in Ontario for the first time in over forty years. In the short time since 2002, six Faculties have been created, more than 70 professors have been hired, some 20 programs have come on line and some 3,100 students are presently building their dreams within our walls! Though much has been achieved, much remains to be done to fulfill the expectations of our students, personnel and community, to realize our own special mission and to build a truly world-class university and its attendant environment.

In such a complex environment as an institution of higher learning, how do we proceed to build a plan? Of course the primary focus of a strategic plan is to realize the institutional mission in accordance with institutional values. Additionally, must never lose sight of the primary focus of the university: the student! Indeed, our ultimate objective is to respond to our students' career aspirations while contributing to the evolution of society. However, should plans be constructed on a program or disciplinary basis? Should emphasis be given to areas which are already supported or, to the contrary, should such emphasis apply to those areas that some would prefer to develop? Should plans primarily reflect individual unit (Faculties, Services, Departments, etc.) concerns and be compiled while eliminating redundancies? Or is there some way of embracing the overall institutional environment, establishing an integrated diagnosis and thereby identifying the appropriate types of actions which might logically follow? Ideally, the strategic planning process should embrace all of UOIT's strategic environment while providing a mechanism for each unit to build a plan that contributes organically to the whole.

In order to achieve this objective, we began with a conceptually simple process: a Strengths - Challenges - Opportunities - Threats (SCOT) analysis. Having mapped the strategic environment through these elements, the strategic response then aimed to:

- » Maintain and build the strengths
- » Respond to the challenges
- » Seize the opportunities
- » Counter the threats

Each administrative unit then constructed its own strategic plan by contributing specific actions to the institution's desired high-level response in a way that was consistent with the institutional vision, mission and values, and its own mandate. In this way, fundamental decisions were made locally which will ultimately shape the kind of University we want UOIT to become globally.

As you will see in the following sections, the strategic themes and goals that have resulted from this exercise are carefully crafted and far reaching. Some of them call upon new attitudes and visions. Others require limited resources and can be realized in a short period of time. Others yet will require a significant commitment of either time, funds or both, and are broad in scope. However, all are intended to be transformational in the hope that UOIT be someday recognized as a university of great distinction.

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to the University's Strategic Plan and participated in our various planning sessions. The Plan has come together in a remarkably short time and the individual unit contributions are teeming with creativity and ambition. We have been able to come to strong consensus in support of the strategic themes we identified following our March Planning Forum and of the proposed time-line: five years with a review in three years. We were also able to secure general agreement on a set of goals under each theme. Thanks again for all your work so far on this important initiative. I am very proud of the constructive spirit that our team has adopted throughout and grateful for your commitment towards our institution.

As a final note, let me say that a strategic plan is not an end, it is only a beginning. It does not represent an objective, it is a journey. The quality of the journey is the only end that is meaningful, and the strategic plan is a means toward this end. As UOIT realizes its mission as an institution, it is my hope that we – both individually and collectively – experience and share an exciting and meaningful journey.



Richard Marceau
Provost
September 2005



UNIVERSITY VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Vision

The University of Ontario Institute of Technology is an innovative and market-oriented institution, pursuing inquiry, discovery and application through excellence in teaching and learning, value-added research and vibrant student life.

Mission

- » Provide career-oriented undergraduate and graduate university programs with a primary focus on those programs that are innovative and responsive to the needs of students and employers.
- » Advance the highest quality of research.
- » Advance the highest quality of learning, teaching, and professional practice in a technologically enabled environment.
- » Contribute to the advancement of Ontario and Canada in the global context with particular focus on Durham Region and Northumberland County.
- » Foster a fulfilling student experience and a rewarding educational (work) environment.
- » Offer programs with a view to creating opportunities for college graduates to complete a university degree.

Values

Integrity and Respect

We will treat each other with dignity, including those with challenges.

Honesty and Accountability

Our actions reflect our values, and we are accountable for both.

Intellectual Rigour

We strive for excellence and challenge convention.



HISTORY OF UOIT

As a rapidly growing centre of industry and innovation, Durham Region long cherished the dream of establishing its own university. The number of residents in the region is expected to reach nearly 1 million by 2021. Yet for years, Durham was the only high-population area in the province without its own university.

For more than 10 years, prominent figures in the community worked to realize their vision for a student-focused institution dedicated to great teaching, groundbreaking research, and the use of leading-edge learning technology. By initially preparing students for critically needed, knowledge-intensive careers, the university would ensure bright futures for its graduates, and generate economic growth for Durham Region, Northumberland County, and the entire province.

In one of the earliest efforts in Ontario to combine university and college studies in one location, the Durham University Centre was created in 1996 on the campus that the university now shares with Durham College. The university courses offered at the centre were taught by professors from both Trent University and York University. But the community never abandoned its desire for a made-in-Durham university.

On a historic day for Durham Region and Northumberland County - May 9, 2001 - the government announced plans for the first brand new university in Ontario in 40 years, and earmarked \$60 million in start-up funds through Ontario SuperBuild Corporation.

An operations centre was set up next to the president's office, where 11 teams, working seven days a week, produced a to-do list of 856 tasks and hundreds of sub-tasks. Team members toured top institutions across North America to study best practices.

The university officially came into being on June 27, 2002, with the legislature's passage of Bill 109, Schedule O, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology Act, 2002. It welcomed its first class of 947 students in September 2003. As Ontario's only laptop-based university, UOIT uses the latest technology to enhance learning and give students a competitive edge in tomorrow's workplace.

The university's short history is already marked by tremendous accomplishment, and an exciting future lies ahead. Full-time enrolment is expected to reach about 6,500 by 2010. The university's first two academic buildings and a beautiful new library - all designed by the award-winning firm of Diamond and Schmitt Architects Inc. - were completed by the fall of 2004. An engineering building is slated to open by 2006.

The university will eventually expand across Conlin Road on to land donated by the estate of industrialist E.P Taylor. The gently rolling farmland once nurtured world-class, champion horses, like Northern Dancer. In the years ahead, it will give rise to the leaders of tomorrow.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Strategic Plan was constructed using a Strengths - Challenges - Opportunities - Threats (SCOT) approach. According to such an approach, a strategic plan is built in the following way:

- 1) Performing an initial SCOT analysis to circumscribe the strategic environment
- 2) Proposing a response to each element of the SCOT analysis aiming to:
 - » Maintain and build the strengths;
 - » Respond to the challenges;
 - » Seize the opportunities;
 - » Counter the threats.
- 3) Validating and updating, as required, the initial SCOT analysis and corresponding response to include unit-specific issues
- 4) Determining actions in specific units that give meaning to the strategic response, including who (i.e., champions) should be doing what (i.e., strategies), with whom (i.e., partners and stakeholders) and within what time frame



This approach is neither top-down nor bottom-up: it is an integrated process for constructing a plan. The methodology is particularly attractive because it provides a mechanism for encouraging the participation of a maximum number of people. It also ensures an organic connection between:

- a) the institutional vision, mission and values;
- b) the desired institutional response and;
- c) each individual unit's actions.

Indeed, a unit's individual plan is primarily composed of its contributions to each of the themes and goals of the UOIT Strategic Plan, though it may also include actions which address unit-specific issues not included in the latter.

The process was initiated in February by a series of presentations by the Provost to the Deans, Academic Council and the entire faculty on strategic planning. A background paper from the Office of the Provost proposing an initial SCOT analysis was widely circulated and formed the basis for a University-wide planning forum in March. From that forum arose a set of strategic responses which served to identify a series of planning themes which, in turn, were fed back to the Faculties and service areas to inform their particular SCOT analyses, and to align their action plans. The resulting Faculty and service areas submissions informed the creation of goals within each theme area. Next year and in later years, institutional and unit priorities will have greater impact on budget construction which, in turn, will strengthen the strategic response.

Over the coming months, the Plan will be presented to stakeholders and external partners in addition to Academic Council and the Board of Governors and reviewed thereafter every six months: such reviews are essential to the Plan's success and will include both University-wide and individual unit plan reviews. Though the Plan's horizon is five years, there will be a comprehensive review at the three-year mark.



IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The completion of a strategic plan marks an important milestone but it is only the beginning. The objective is to embark upon a journey of transformation and accomplishment, and to do so requires the plan's implementation. Achieving the established goals will require effort and attention from every part of the institution. It also requires considerable management and coordination.

The Office of the Provost will take the lead role in implementing the Strategic Plan, including monitoring and enhancing the list of required actions over time, devising implementation steps, and assuring accountability. At the broadest level, implementation will include:

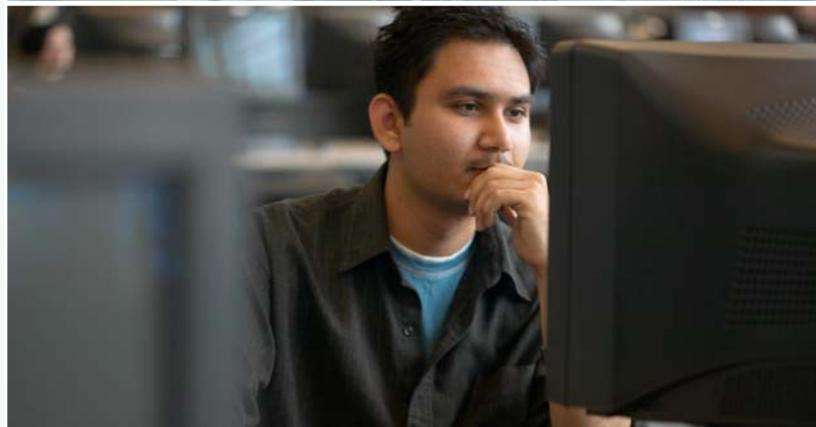
- » Introduction of metrics to measure the success of meeting stated goals;
- » Assignment of responsibility for collecting, analyzing and reporting progress;
- » Assessment of the activities of each unit in addressing each of the goals of the Strategic Plan;
- » Periodic - at least annually - reports to the President and the University community on the progress made in implementing the Strategic Plan;
- » Recommendations for future actions for continual improvement.

The regular reviews of the Plan will include:

- » Adjusting (i.e. expanding, enhancing or refining) the list of actions for each goal in response to changes in the strategic environment or unexpected outcomes;
- » Coordinating the activities of those assigned to implement particular actions;
- » Working with the Faculties and Vice-Presidential offices' units to tie area plans to the University Plan;
- » Where feasible, developing measurable outcomes and timetables for each required action;
- » Assessing, evaluating and documenting the success in accomplishing the desired outcomes;
- » Periodically reporting to Academic Council and the Board of Governors on the progress made in implementing the strategic Plan or on problems encountered;
- » Prescribing future actions for continual improvement.

As can be seen from the above, strategic follow-up is not simply an issue of checking items off a list. Indeed, the strategic environment evolves over time: strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats can either rise or fall. If the strategic environment changes incrementally, the impact on the plan – and its associated actions – will be small. However, if large variations occur, changes of appropriate scale must necessarily be considered. Strategic follow-up therefore requires that the strategic environment be monitored in addition to individual goals and actions and that strategic thinking be introduced at every review and at every organizational level. The Plan therefore becomes a “living process” and nurtures a strategic state of mind among participants. Continuous refinement and improvement of the University's Strategic Plan will complement similar ongoing refinement of area plans as well.

As a final note, such a follow-up process is not a blueprint for centralized planning. It assumes a decentralized mode in which each area has responsibility for charting its own course in the light of its own mandate and strategic environment, and submitting priorities and budgets which follow the Plan. It also assumes that budget areas will be supported in their plans to the extent that their plans are supportive of these major University-wide strategic goals.



STRATEGIC PLANNING THEMES AND GOALS

(Detailed actions corresponding to each goal are included in the full plan.)

1 Recruit and Retain Excellent Students

- 1.1 Create a comprehensive student financial aid strategy
- 1.2 Develop innovative and effective undergraduate student recruitment strategies
- 1.3 Develop unit-specific graduate recruitment strategies
- 1.4 Make greater use of Faculty Web sites as a recruitment tool
- 1.5 Package unique program alternatives of interest to students
- 1.6 Expand international recruitment
- 1.7 Create further opportunities for college graduates to complete degrees

2 Attract and Retain Outstanding Faculty and Staff

- 2.1 Identify proactive measures to attract and retain outstanding faculty and staff
- 2.2 Take aggressive measures to recruit qualified female faculty
- 2.3 Develop multi-year staffing plans in each Faculty
- 2.4 Strive to make UOIT a truly special place in terms of how colleagues manifest their values
- 2.5 Work with each faculty member to provide appropriate support for the facilitation of learning, the development of grantsmanship, and their involvement in the community at large

3 Deliver a Quality Learning Experience

- 3.1 Enhance teaching development support, including mentoring
- 3.2 Explore means to enhance interdisciplinary and greater cross-Faculty rationalization and sharing of resources
- 3.3 Encourage responsiveness to students and student evaluations
- 3.4 Intensify efforts to improve means of scholarly communication
- 3.5 Aim for quality as an institutional differentiator
- 3.6 Ensure career success for our graduates

4 Create a Vibrant Student and University Life on Campus

- 4.1 Build a sense of community spirit on campus
- 4.2 Focus on the first year experience
- 4.3 Enhance student academic and non-academic mentorship programs
- 4.4 Enrich overall student extracurricular experience
- 4.5 Celebrate and promote ethnic diversity

5 Make Technology a True Differentiator for Our Academic Programs

- 5.1 Seek to have the UOIT Mobile Learning program recognized as the leading example of its kind in Canada
- 5.2 Encourage greater integration of technology in course delivery
- 5.3 Develop blended and hybrid courses with a view to reducing the number of classroom contact hours and easing pressure on classrooms
- 5.4 Enhance IT infrastructure, especially wireless
- 5.5 Make greater use of online student services

6 Launch Graduate Programs in All Faculties

- 6.1 Ensure that every Faculty and School has a graduate program running by the end of the planning cycle
- 6.2 Develop infrastructure to support graduate studies
- 6.3 Begin the development of innovative PhD programs by the end of the planning cycle
- 6.4 Collaborate with other universities on graduate programs



7 Build Research Intensiveness

- 7.1 Nurture a research culture
- 7.2 Develop mentorship programs
- 7.3 Identify niche research areas
- 7.4 Actively pursue research chair appointments
- 7.5 Develop research centres/centres of excellence where appropriate
- 7.6 Explore interdisciplinary approaches to research endeavours

8 Enhance our Partnership with Durham College

- 8.1 Maximize facilities sharing opportunities
- 8.2 Reinforce our leadership role in degree completion, articulation and bridging options
- 8.3 Identify DC diploma options for graduates
- 8.4 Integrate DC faculty and students into research projects where appropriate
- 8.5 Develop new partnership opportunities with DC

9 Develop a Higher External Profile (Local, Provincial, National, International)

- 9.1 Celebrate research success
- 9.2 Develop a more significant media profile for the University
- 9.3 Identify and solidify friendships with key external players on a unit-by-unit basis
- 9.4 Host more high profile public events on campus

10 Establish and Improve Community/Industry Alliances

- 10.1 Target key industrial, provincial and federal partners for each unit
- 10.2 Develop outreach strategies specific to its mandate in the Durham region for each unit
- 10.3 Bring more industrial leaders on to campus
- 10.4 Enhance use of advisory committees



11 Seek Equitable Funding for UOIT Compared to Other Ontario Universities

- 11.1 Achieve fairness for UOIT students in government funding, including: a) return of the 15% BIU discount used towards debenture repayment, b) additional support for debenture repayment, c) access to additional funding envelopes, and d) obtaining an appropriate share of the funding recommended by the Rae Review
- 11.2 Lead a team to develop a multi-year budget for the institution. The purpose is to allow for better long-term planning. In addition, we will attempt to maximize funding for teaching, and use this as a tool for negotiations with Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for additional funding

12 Ensure the Availability of Adequate Space on Campus Especially for Teaching, Research and Students

- 12.1 Secure government financial support, possibly on a matching fund basis, to build sufficient space for classrooms, labs, offices, student life space and student residence
- 12.2 Build and maintain an inspiring campus

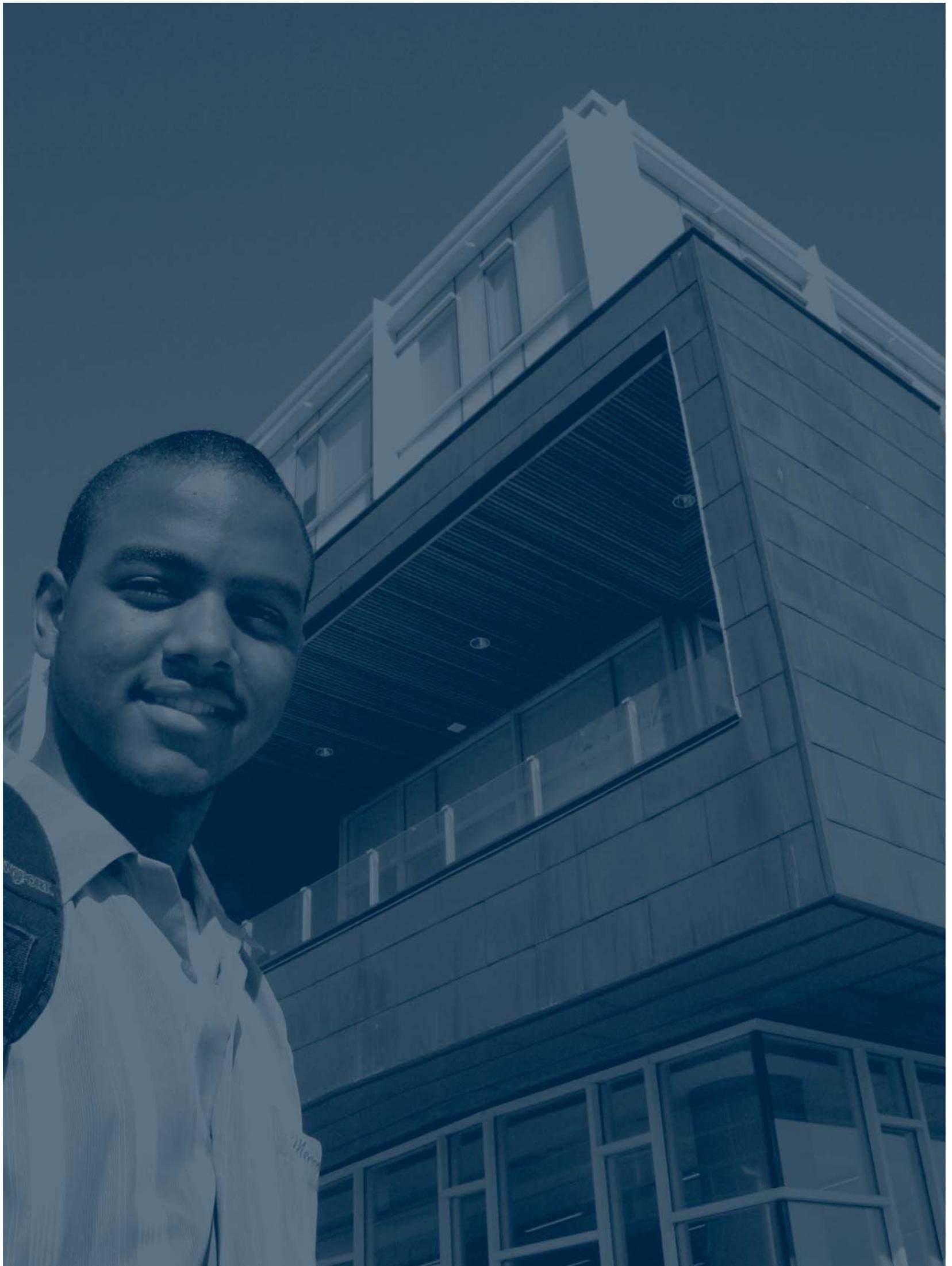
13 Address Governance Issues that Emerge from the Next Phase of the University's Development

- 13.1 Consider refinements in institutional governance as new priorities emerge

14 Adapt the University's Organizational Structure to the Introduction of a University President Not Shared With Durham College

- 14.1 Provide support for the new president as UOIT and Durham College implement the new "two president model"
- 14.2 Identify solution to new operational challenges such as a new organizational chart and office relocation







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