

York University Strategic Research Plan Summary

March, 2003

York University was established forty years ago to be a first-rate institution of higher education. Our mission was to develop the best teaching for our students and the best research to contribute to scientific discovery and to the social and economic development of our country. We hold to these commitments.

York's Research Objectives

Our major objectives in the near future are:

- To consolidate and build on the excellence of York's liberal arts research in disciplines where there are established international reputations and active international collaborations.
- To consolidate and build on York's national and international stature in specific science research programs.
- To further develop and diversify interdisciplinary research initiatives consonant with York's strategic academic plan, where there will be an increased profile in professional programmes and a greater accent on internationalization.
- To diversify and establish strengths in new areas identified through academic planning (e.g., health policy and management).

Research Clusters

Holders of Canada Research Chairs will be expected to be leaders in their research field, based on international standards, and role models in training the next generation of academics. Overall, the CRC program will serve to enhance the faculty complement and provide the opportunity to consolidate and build areas of research strengths around the chair holders.

York expects to make its CRC appointments in the following research clusters. As this program gets underway, further strategic planning will result in some adjustments and reshaping of the current constellation of research clusters. It must be emphasized that these nodes or research clusters are not exclusive of one another; nor will research chairs be distributed equally among them. They can be linked in different ways and units are encouraged to propose linkages that will serve their needs and at the same time advance the international stature of our research enterprise. Nonetheless this configuration of nodes does demarcate the broad fields of research endeavour upon which York wishes to concentrate: in liberal arts; in the life and physical sciences; and in professionally-related, interdisciplinary and international programmes.

LIBERAL ARTS DISCIPLINES

Political Science, building on established strengths in comparative political economy, and linkages to international research programs in various organized research centers (e.g., the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies, the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean, Refugee Studies, the York Centre for International and Security Studies).

History, where York has forged strong research programs in three areas: social identities and interactions; the state, labour and migration; history and its publics. Chair appointments will build on successful SSHRC grants and a recent CFI award for a Canadian Institute for Research on African Diaspora, and plans for developing an Historical Institute of Social and Cultural History.

Psychology, where York is a leader in the fields of adult clinical and developmental psychology and very prominent in the theory and history of psychology and statistics and methodology.

SCIENCE DISCIPLINES

Biology and Chemistry, where research strengths have been demonstrated in biological structure and materials science, combinatorial chemistry, genomics and proteomics with linkages to the new Centre for Research in Mass Spectrometry; and to areas with significant recent CFI and ORDCF funding and emerging initiatives (e.g., biotechnology).

Earth and Atmospheric Science, where active research has been established in the Centres for Research in Earth and Space Sciences (CRESS) and Atmospheric Chemistry (CAC), with on-going links to external agencies such as the Canadian Space Agency, the Meteorological Service of Canada and the new Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences.

Physics and Astronomy, especially in the light of York's role in the National Centre of Excellence in Photonics and research related to telecommunications and optical physics.

Mathematics, in the fields of applied algebra, computational mathematics, and in applied statistics, and linked to research endeavours at the Institute for Social Research and in Psychology.

Vision Research, which brings together psychologists, computer scientists and natural scientists, linked to our internationally renowned Centre for Vision Research.

HEALTH: POLICY AND HEALTH SCIENCE

Health policy and management, which would draw on the expertise and resources of the York Centre for Health Studies, National Network for Environment and Women's Health, and on the diversification into new programs in the Schools of Nursing and Health Policy and Management.

Kinesiology and Health Science which will consolidate our research programs in the biological and behavioral aspects of health with linkages to kinesiology, biology and psychology.

INTERDISCIPLINARY SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Language and Cultural Studies, a vibrant area in which York can build upon research and graduate programming in the fine arts, social and political thought, communication and culture, anthropology; and in languages, linguistics and literature.

Law and Society, which builds on research ventures in law, philosophy, social science, and organized research centres (e.g., Canadian Studies, Public Law and Policy, Work and Society).

Sustainability, includes work in human sustainability, linked to the Centre for Applied Sustainability, and to CIDA programs on environmental management, as well as research strengths in ecology and conservation biology.

Women's Studies, where existing strengths lie in the fields of women and work, women and diversity, women and language, and women and the law and the Institute of Feminist Legal Studies.

RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONALIZATION

Appointments here would lead the development of research programs which are synergistic and cross traditional borders between disciplines, area studies (e.g., organized research centres in German and European Studies, Canadian Studies, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia Pacific Studies, Jewish Studies) programmes in languages, literature and culture, (e.g., liberal and fine arts, education) and thematic studies (e.g., Centre for International and Security Studies, Refugee Studies, Organized Crime and Corruption).

RESEARCH IN APPLIED PROFESSIONS

Engineering, consonant with the development of new programs in computer engineering, geomatics engineering, space engineering, and engineering physics.

Information Technology, e-business and Markets; appointments here would develop synergy between scholars from our professional schools (Schulich, Osgoode, Education), arts, fine arts and science departments (e.g., economics, computing science, design) and centres who have emerging research programs in areas such as e-business, e-learning, applied micro-economics and intellectual property.

Focus of CRCs: Year I (2000 – 2001)

SSHRC Tier I (2 Chairs)

1. History, African Diaspora
2. Social Science, Law, Communication and Culture

SSHRC Tier II (2 Chairs)

1. Political Science, Feminist Political Economy
2. t.b.a.

NSERC Tier I (1 Chair): Chemistry, Chemical Mass Spectrometry

NSERC Tier II (1 Chair): Physics, Atomic Physics

MRC (2 Chairs): Tier I – t.b.a.; Tier II – t.b.a.

As new strategic planning is undertaken within the university (see following section) the focus of the CRCs among research clusters for subsequent years will be further developed.

Research Support & Planning

- The Office of the Vice President (Research & Innovation) was established July 1, 2000 to assume leadership for all research-related activities at York. The Office is responsible for developing strategic research plans, including CRCs, and for strengthening and promoting a pervasive and sustainable research environment, internally and externally.
- Overall, faculty complement will be enhanced in areas in which CRCs are awarded.
- New organized research units have been recently established in research clusters identified in the SRP, e.g., the Centre for Mass Spectrometry.
- New graduate (Ph.D.) programs have been recently established to provide training in research clusters identified in the SRP, e.g., Communication & Culture (joint with Ryerson University).
- Renovations to laboratories, other infrastructure support, and new buildings have been approved which will house new research units, e.g., TEL Building.

Inter-Institutional and Intra-Sectoral Collaboration

(Will be unique to, and therefore, addressed in the individual CRC submission).

How Success in Meeting Objectives Will Be Measured

Baseline indicators will be established from which reliable data will be collected to determine success in meeting both York and Tri-Council objectives established for the CRCs (e.g., indicators could include: performance in research grants; awards and international recognition received by faculty members in the research clusters; employment, scholarship and awards for graduate students).

Approval and Planning Process

A Letter of Agreement was signed between the administration and the York University Faculty Association providing for a collegial selection process that will as far as possible work within the existing guidelines of the collective agreement while recognizing that aspects of this federal research program are outside the control of the parties. The nominations will be post-audited by the joint affirmative action committee.

Units (departments, divisions, schools or research centres) make recommendations for CRCs to the appropriate Deans.

The Deans submit ranked recommendations to the University Selection Committee, established specifically for the CRCs.

The Selection Committee's composition: Vice-President Academic; Vice-President Research & Innovation (Chair); Associate Vice-President Research; Affirmative Action Director; Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies; Chair, Academic Policy and Planning Committee of Senate (APPC); Chair, Senate Committee on Research (SCOR).

The Committee established the criteria for reviewing nominees based on a consideration of three main factors: the Tri-Council criteria and guidelines; the fit to the university's Strategic Research Plan, and key university academic planning documents.

The University Selection Committee forwarded its nominations to the President for approval.

Addendum Plans to Appoint Women CRCs

York University has a strong commitment to equity and affirmative action in all of its appointment procedures; and in keeping with this commitment is undertaking several measures to increase the numbers of women among its Canada Research Chair nominees:

1. The commitment to affirmative action is included in York's agreement with the York University Faculty Association regarding CRC appointments. Specifically, the University's internal selection committee is expected to "seek to respect the principles of affirmative action that are contained in the collective agreement;" and "the recommendations of the Selection Committee will be post-audited by the joint affirmative action committee, which will make recommendations to the parties for further affirmative action goals."
2. The Affirmative Action Director (or designate) sits as a voting member of the internal CRC Selection Committee.
3. The internal CRC Selection Committee continues to judge nominations on the basis of the quality of the research and the fit to the Strategic Research Plan, but is also attentive to equity issues such as career interruptions experienced by women candidates, which may have had an impact on their research records.
4. The Vice-President Academic and the Vice-President Research & Innovation regularly discuss with Deans the importance of nominating women for Canada Research Chairs, and in all their Calls for Nominations strongly encourage Deans to take proactive measures to attract outstanding women candidates.
5. York has been relatively successful thus far in its appointment of women candidates to CRC positions. In total, of the 22 CRCs approved, our performance to date is summarized below:
 - i) overall, 22.7% of CRC candidates to date have been women,

- ii) **at the Tier 2 level, 30.8% of CRC candidates have been women,**
- iii) at the Tier 1 level, 11.1% of CRC candidates have been women.

By comparison, recent statistics reported by the CRC Secretariat record a total of 15% women appointed in both Tiers, with 11% in Tier 1 and 20% in Tier 2 (November 2002).

6. York has not set any formal quotas for nominations, but will continue to monitor carefully its progress towards the objective of increasing the number of women appointed to CRCs.

Of the 7 nominations expected to be forwarded to Ottawa for the April 14, 2003 round, 28.6% are women.