



Professor Sioban Nelson
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

Re: One-year Follow-Up Report to the 2015-2016 External Review of OISE

August 14, 2017

Dear Professor Nelson,

I am writing in response to your request for a one-year follow up report to the January 2016 external review of OISE and the administrative response to the review of October 3, 2016, which was discussed at the November 1, 2016 meeting of the Committee on Academic Programs and Policy (AP&P).

As indicated in your letter dated November 28, 2016, AP&P requested a follow-up report regarding the implementation of OISE's academic plan, its structural deficit, as well as further development of the Master of Teaching program. The Committee also requested an update regarding how the Institute will address the reviewers' recommendations with respect to OISE's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

➤ ***OISE's Academic Plan***

OISE's last strategic plan covered the period from 2010 to 2015—a challenging period for the Institute marked by a number of significant organizational changes. Some of these changes included restructuring that led to a shift from five academic departments to the current four. As well, a discontinuation of OISE's undergraduate teacher education programs coupled with the expansion of graduate teacher education programs (particularly the Master of Teaching) led to the repositioning of OISE as an all-graduate faculty of education, and the reduction in government funding for teacher education resulted in an administrative reorganization involving major changes in staff complement.

During the transitional 2015-2016 year and the Provostial review of OISE, it became clear that the Institute needed to engage in a new academic planning exercise that would inform the articulation of priorities for the next phase of its development. Following the completion of the external review and the appointment of a new Dean of OISE, the community engaged in an inclusive and highly participatory academic planning process. The process took the best part of 2016-2017, and represented a significant opportunity for envisioning of the future of the Institute, and for community building and renewal. The planning process began with a series of department and unit based introductory meetings that took place in September and October 2016, and additional discussion at the Faculty Council meeting on October 19, 2016. The consultation phase commenced in November 2016, and was informed by the series of planning documents which were published on the [academic planning website](#):

1. [OISE's New Reality: Trends and Analyses](#)
2. [OISE's Future Reality: Discussion Guide](#)
3. [OISE's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force Report](#)
4. [OISE's Equity and Diversity Policy](#)

The consultation phase provided a range of opportunities for participation, input and reflection that included meetings at the level of programs, departments, units, as well as constituent-based consultations such as staff-led and student-led sessions, and alumni sessions. Consultations with external stakeholders were also held, including directors of education, the Ontario Principals Council members, Ontario deputy ministers and leaders representing Ontario's colleges and universities. In addition, two working groups were established: one on International led by the Associate Dean, Research, International and Innovation; and one on Student Experience led by the Associate Dean, Programs. Consultations were also held with Deans of cognate faculties and campuses at U of T, and members of OISE's external advisory boards and committees including members of OISE's [Strategic Advisory Group](#). As part of the process, the Dean established the OISE Academic Planning Internal Advisory Group that included faculty, staff and student members from across departments and units. The group's mandate was to reflect on some of the key issues and opportunities facing the Institute, and provide advice to the Dean regarding the planning process and initiatives emerging from the consultations.

Following the conclusion of the consultation phase in February 2017, the departments, units and constituent-based groups submitted their interim planning documents. A number of ideas were submitted via e-mail to oise.planning@utoronto.ca, and using the web-based submission tool. In March 2017, the document titled: [What We've Heard So Far: OISE's Academic Planning Process](#) was developed and disseminated to the community. It included a working list of ideas that emerged from a careful review of the departmental, unit and individual submissions. In April 2017, this document was discussed with various groups including the Deans and Chairs, the OISE Leadership Team, the OISE Academic Planning Internal Advisory Group, and OISE Council, as well as at departmental meetings. Following the community members' feedback on the *What We've Heard* document, a new planning document was developed and disseminated to the community titled: [Towards Framing an Academic Plan: OISE's Planning Process](#). This brief report suggested overarching themes that have received the most attention throughout the planning process, and members of the OISE community were once again invited to review and reflect on the overarching themes, and suggest priorities that might be considered under the themes. This round of community feedback informed the refinement of the themes, the identification of objectives and initial priorities by members of OISE's Academic Leadership at a retreat held on June 14, 2017.

OISE's Academic Plan 2017-2022 combines perspectives from various departments, units, working groups, as well as individual members of our community, and reflects the themes, priorities and many constructive suggestions that emerged during extensive consultations over the past year. We are extremely pleased that we have created a plan that leverages our strengths, is embraced by the community, and will guide our decision making and major initiatives for the next five years.

With the first phase of the planning now complete, there is a sense that a corner has been turned, and that the OISE community is ready to move forward with a clear sense of direction and renewed enthusiasm. A renewed OISE will continue to build on its strengths in research, scholarship and graduate studies in education and related fields, initial and continuing teacher education, and continuing and professional learning, as it explores new challenges and opportunities as the only all-graduate faculty of education in Canada.

➤ *Structural Deficit*

It is important to emphasize that OISE has faced structural deficits over the past five years that have been offset using our reserve funds. In addition, the critical academic change that took place at OISE in 2014-2015 as a result of teacher education restructuring by the Ontario Government has had a substantial impact on the Institute's budget and operation.

While OISE has no accumulated deficit, in the context of a fiscal environment where our costs are increasing faster than our traditional sources of revenue, we must seek out new sources of income, direct our energies towards initiatives that matter most, and closely examine how we can do what we do more efficiently while increasing the quality of our work.

We are planning to support the objectives and priorities outlined in our new academic plan in a fiscally responsible manner, primarily through modest growth in our graduate programs (including redesigning our professional doctorates and increasing enrolment of international students in professional programs) as well as by growing revenue generating activities through continuing and professional learning offerings and major advancement activities.

With a view to building a culture of linking academic decisions with financial implications, in the fall of 2015, OISE's Chairs and Deans began working collaboratively to develop a new budget model that was intended to shift greater authority and responsibility to the academic departments over their budgets. In addition to establishing key principles that underscore the model, a shadow budget process was created and tested in 2016-2017 with the intention of fully implementing OISE's new budget model in 2017-2018. It is expected that the new budget model will enhance departmental capacity for financial planning including the ability to review the cost effectiveness of program delivery especially regarding course planning, class sizes, instructional and administrative costs.

The departments have commenced the work on redesigning our professional doctorate (EdD) programs in order to better differentiate them from the PhD programs and renew the reputation of this degree for a broad range of education professionals. In addition, our professional Master's (MEd) programs will be reviewed and revised by developing new foci, identifying related course clusters and modifying delivery using technology to enhance their relevance and improve access. It is expected that these innovations will lead to growth in enrolment of international students in professional programs resulting in financial viability and enhanced resources to support our academic goals.

The development of OISE's academic plan has highlighted the need for space planning activities. In addition to optimizing the use of space, some important considerations for space planning will include Indigenization, community building, security and safety, accessibility and environmental sustainability. It is expected that the space planning activities will result in optimal use of existing space to support our programs, research and student initiatives while directing savings to academic priorities.

OISE Continuing and Professional Learning will continue to play a significant role in supporting the Institute's mission and financial viability. While we have experienced a drop in enrolment in AQ (Additional Qualifications) courses for licensed teachers, we continue to experience revenue growth, especially in non-credit certificate programs and new international contract activities. We anticipate that new entrepreneurial directions and revenue-generating initiatives including those developed by our academic departments and other units will continue to grow over the next five years and contribute to the Institute's financial wellbeing and achievement of our academic goals.

In order to accomplish our academic priorities, we will continue to invest in our faculty and staff development, information technology and infrastructure, research support, student experience and outreach. These investments will be funded through growth in continuing and professional learning offerings, and advancement activities. To strengthen the culture of advancement within the Institute and increase long-term philanthropic support, we will develop a new strategic advancement plan that will focus on priorities outlined in our new academic plan, and articulate how philanthropic resources will assist us in advancing our programs and research, enhancing experience and success of our students, and making a difference in the communities we serve.

While there continue to be many challenges ahead, we are pleased to note that OISE had a very modest carry-forward at the conclusion of the 2016-2017 fiscal year, and that our projections for the next few years anticipate a balanced budget.

➤ *Master of Teaching Visioning*

With the centrality of teacher education to OISE's mission it was important to put in place a cycle of visioning and curriculum mapping for the Master of Teaching (MT) program to supplement the Ontario College of Teachers' accreditation review process that led to the full accreditation renewal of this program in 2016. A key component of OISE's academic planning initiatives, the [MT visioning process](#) is ongoing and will continue through the next academic year.

The process is based on the University of Toronto [Curriculum Renewal process](#), built upon processes at University College Dublin. It is noteworthy that OISE is breaking new ground as these processes are adapted for a graduate professional program. The MT visioning process aims to build upon the existing effective accredited program, draw on OISE's varied strengths in research and practice, and maximize our current position as the only graduate level entry-to-practice provider in Ontario. The guiding principles underpinning this work are:

- Ensuring transparency, openness and communication
- Demonstrating commitment to equity and diversity
- Ensuring inclusion and participation
- Encouraging innovation, specialization and depth
- Sustaining and building current emphases on excellence through Research and 'Masterliness'
- Developing broad institutional understanding and commitment

The [MT Visioning Advisory Committee](#) was established in December 2016 and is comprised of members from all departments and many institutional units. The mandate of the Committee is to contribute expertise and to engage in two-way communication, seeking input from and providing information to colleagues in departments and units and those on the Committee. The Committee engaged in six meetings from January to June 2017 in which members deepened knowledge of the existing program and recent program changes through input by the MT leadership team. Throughout this period, the Committee provided feedback to the leadership team as they reviewed and refined the program vision. Three meetings focused on the program level learning outcomes as they relate to both the U of T's Graduate Degree Level Expectations and the Ontario College of Teachers' mandatory core content areas for programs of professional education. These outcomes were analyzed and reviewed, particularly in connection to priorities identified through the OISE-wide academic planning process. Additionally, the Committee's discussions included topics such as the role of research and relationship to 'graduate level' teacher education, the bodies of knowledge involved in the program and elements that can contribute to coherence-making, student experience, and exploring program innovation across departments.

In the fall term of 2017, the MT visioning process will focus on a curriculum mapping exercise in which outcomes within courses and across the program will be studied. This process will help to identify overlaps, gaps, and ways in which key program elements can be revisited and deepened in the five semester program. The curriculum mapping process will entail extensive consultations with departments, programs and units, as well as with external stakeholders, and may result in program modifications that will follow the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process principles, and appropriate governance approval protocols.

➤ *Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*

The reviewers' recommendation that OISE should assume an active leadership role in Indigeneity, including playing a central role in the University's response to the challenges raised by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, is very much aligned with OISE's commitment to Indigenization, which has emerged as a major priority outlined in the Institute's new academic plan.

The final report of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission \(TRC\)](#) notes the devastating consequences of the residential school program, a colonizing travesty that was committed in the name of "education". At the same

time, OISE needs to come to grips with its own history as a Canadian educational institution, including the effects of both past and ongoing practices that, by omission or commission, have contributed to the entrenchment of anti-Indigenous biases regarding academic disciplines, curricula, and pedagogical and professional practices such as the assessment, recruitment and retention of students, staff and faculty.

Going forward, OISE is committed to being a truly welcoming gathering place and space that inspires the infusion of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives into the fabric of our Institute, and ensures a positive experience for Indigenous peoples. Building on the initiatives past and present, OISE will implement an Indigenous Reconciliation process through developing and sustaining Indigenous initiatives in the following key areas: (1) programs and curricula; (2) research and scholarship; (3) Indigenous faculty, staff and students; (4) Indigenizing community spaces; and (5) deepening the understanding and responsibility of our faculty, staff and students. Initial priorities that will help the Institute accomplish this important objective include:

- Continuing to strengthen OISE's Indigenous education activities through establishing an Indigenous Education liaison staff position to provide support for Indigenous activities including events and programs, student recruitment and support, alumni and advancement.
- Reviewing programs with a view to decolonizing curricula, pedagogy and approaches to research infusing Indigenous worldviews and ways of knowing through, for example, introducing an understanding of Indigenous-settler relations in teacher education; developing new collaborative specialization in Indigenous education, and increasing access and visibility of Indigenous courses in all programs.
- Strengthening the support for OISE's Elders in Residence program in order to continue to center educational practices in Indigenous knowledges.
- Increasing administrative and financial support for Indigenous research and scholarship.
- Committing attention and resources to recruitment and retention of Indigenous students, faculty and staff.
- Increasing academic, administrative, cultural and social supports for Indigenous faculty, staff and students.
- Providing development and training for all students, faculty, and staff at OISE on Indigenous worldviews, culture and research methodologies.
- Creating dedicated Indigenous spaces that honour and reflect Indigenous identities and cultures.
- Establishing Indigenization and Indigenous Education as a major fundraising priority.

I trust that this addresses the issues raised in your letter dated November 28, 2016. Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen A. Jones', written in a cursive style.

Glen A. Jones, PhD
Professor and Dean
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education