

2008-2011 Academic Plan -- Examples of Progress

Priority #1: Building on a tradition of community involvement, foster a culture of civic engagement and ensure that social responsibility is recognized as a hallmark of Saint Mary's University.

Saint Mary's University is already recognized widely for its service to communities at home and abroad. This service is provided both by members of the Saint Mary's community acting on their own initiative and by the University acting formally on an institutional level. Community service occurs in a variety of spheres, ranging from the heritage sector to environmental initiatives, business and professional development, recreational programming, and the provision of facilities as a venue for community events. Faculty, students and staff all have important roles to play.

A priority for the coming years is to build on past successes to serve the community well and to establish civic engagement as a key feature of our institutional identity. To achieve this objective, the development of our academic programmes and research activities must be responsive to community needs and emerging social priorities. Institutional policies and campus renewal projects also have a crucial role to play and many opportunities exist to link our academic expertise to administrative initiatives in the pursuit of common goals. A clear and pervasive commitment to social responsibility will enrich the educational experience of current students, inspire prospective students to choose Saint Mary's University as the place to study, and contribute significantly to their development as active citizens.

Objectives

- In both our academic programmes and extra-curricular activities, ensure that students experience a high level of engagement with societal issues and ample opportunities to engage with community groups.
 - *The Faculty of Arts sustains numerous initiatives to foster student engagement including: Archaeological Field Schools; Expansion of the Community-Based Environmental Monitoring Network; the Partnership with Pathways to Education in Spryfield; a service learning course linked to tutoring component of that project; and partnerships with various cultural agencies, e.g. Irish, Chinese, Japanese, German, French; as well as collaboration in hosting events on campus.*
 - *The Faculty of Science has been a leader at the university in developing a comprehensive Community Outreach program that engages our faculty with the community, our community with the university, and our students with outside groups.*
 - *Continuing Education, in cooperation with Academic Departments, offers courses at the Halifax Public Library that are open to the public. In the last few years, courses have been in the areas of philosophy, political science, ethics, the Black community, and other subjects of general interest.*
 - *Through the Executive and Professional Development non-credit program, participants engage in discussions around issues faced in the workplace. One example is a leadership program aimed at senior officials in the Atlantic region school boards, in partnership with*

a national organization, where a number of societal issues are explored with instructors and prominent individuals experienced in such matters.

- Continue to support interdisciplinary programmes as a strength of Saint Mary's since they often focus directly on urgent social questions.
 - *Saint Mary's continues to support interdisciplinary programs in Applied Science, Atlantic Canada Studies, International Development Studies, and Women and Gender Studies.*
 - *The Faculty of Arts is developing a Ph.D. in International Development Studies and has recently introduced the minor in Latin American Studies. Arts has created a new degree program, the Bachelor of Environmental Studies. CAID assisted the academic committee that developed the five program level learning outcomes of the new BES program: effective communication, problem-solving, critical and analytical thinking, personal learning skills, and interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary approaches.*
 - *Interdisciplinary programs continue to be a key focus within the Faculty of Science. The M.Sc. in Applied Science is interdisciplinary, with involvement from all departments and programs in Science, as well as departments in the Faculty of Arts and Sobey School of Business. In addition, the Faculties of Arts and Science are working to develop a pan-faculty School of the Environment.*
 - *The extension of the major in Entrepreneurship to the B.A. program is a trans-disciplinary development.*
- Engage students, faculty and staff in promoting environmental responsibility on campus and beyond through collaborative initiatives such as the Sustainability Task Force.
 - *The introduction of the Bachelor of Environmental Studies and initial discussion on the creation of a School of the Environment contribute to this objective.*
 - *The Faculty of Science, through both faculty and students, has conducted and supported three annual BioBlitz events, and is currently working towards developing "mini" BioBlitzes for schools in the area.*
 - *The Sustainability Task Force Committee encourages efforts towards an environmentally sustainable university. Some efforts have included:*
 - *Sustainability Week – held annually in March*
 - *The development of a resource library for faculty interested in incorporating sustainability themes into their course curricula*
 - *The work of the 2010-2011 Teaching Scholar to encourage faculty to integrate sustainability into the curriculum – one day workshop for faculty in spring 2010, a half day workshop early fall 2010, A study of the experiences of faculty who work to integrate environmental themes into their courses will be disseminated to encourage further efforts (both within Saint Mary's and at other universities).*
- Promote, support and recognize scholarship and creative work that address major community concerns. Encourage the dissemination of results in accessible formats and engage the public in an open discussion of ideas.

- *In 2010, FGSR introduced “Research Day” as a means of better communicating our scholarship and research both within and externally to the University. In 2011, this event is being expanded to “Research Expo” and will engage more of an external audience to the event.*
- *FGSR notifies and provides information to External Affairs on all significant awards, grants and new partnerships for publicity.*
- *The Community-Based Research and Innovation Suite in the new Atrium Building was opened in 2010. The CBRIS hosts offices and collaborative meeting space for students and staff in selected research programs that involve community-based research with direct applications to communities external to the University.*
- *The Faculty of Science has initiated the Nobel Prize Lecture Series, the goal of which is to communicate the winning ideas of Science to the public. It has also been developing external communications through the Science website and through SEEK newsletters which are being sent out to high school guidance counselors and science teachers, and which are being used for recruitment purposes. Science also is working toward developing one-page monthly updates that can be sent to prospective students.*
- *The Continuing Education partnership with the Halifax Regional Library allows 6 courses a year to be offered at the public libraries, and invites the public to participate in the first hour of the lecture. Topics chosen are based on topics identified by the Library as being of interest to their members.*
- *The Elder Learners program brings faculty together with the public in an informal setting involving presentation and discussion.*
- *The non-credit certificate in Irish Studies was introduced in 2011, a supper series allowing discussion with faculty.*
- *The Library has been instrumental in creating the Institutional Repository. This digital service holds research and teaching materials created by the Saint Mary’s University community, including archival images, theses, faculty projects, and University publications, as well as other special campus collections.*

PRIORITY #2: Increase student success by enhancing programs and services that support that goal.

Numerous steps have been taken to increase student success including increased financial aid, enhanced academic advising, experimental mentoring programs, and revisions to academic regulations governing probation and re-admission. A Career Development Centre was opened in 2007, and programs have been developed that offer extra support to selected students re-admitted on special terms of probation after their first year. Individual successes have been achieved and valuable lessons learned through these initiatives.

In January 2007, A Task Force on Student Success presented a major report to Senate outlining measures to enhance successful transitions in three key stages of student life: transition to university, transition through university, and transition to the workplace or further study. The underlying theme of the report is the need to increase student engagement in all aspects of campus life, a factor widely recognized as a key to persistence and success. The implementation of many of the recommendations of this report will be a focus for the next three years. There remains room for improving the rates of persistence and completion of students who begin degree programmes at Saint Mary's. Formal and informal surveys of students continue to indicate that they are seeking further improvement in academic advising and career development services. New resources are required to achieve these improvements.

Objectives

- Implement the key recommendations of the Task Force on Student Success, making a comprehensive first-year strategy the top priority.
 - *The Faculty of Arts introduced an early intervention strategy for first-year students facing possible failure after the first term and expanded its academic recovery program for students faced with academic dismissal.*
 - *CAID, in response to an initiative by the Senate Committee on Student Success, has developed and introduced the LEAP (Learning, Engagement, Achievement, Peer Mentors) program in which LEAP communities, composed of 30 students, take selected first year courses, participate in learning strategies workshops, and are supported by senior student mentors.*
 - *In Spring 2008, CAID led Saint Mary's participation in its first National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), one of the key recommendations in the Task Force's Report on Student Success. CAID is again leading Saint Mary's participation in the 2011 NSSE (currently underway).*
 - *Continuing Education, in partnership with Student Services, the Library and others, introduced a University Preparation Foundations Course in 2008 in an attempt to provide skills for success in university studies. For various reasons, this program was not continued.*
 - *Saint Mary's Student Services offers the STEPS (Strategies Toward Establishing Personal Success) program. This is operated in partnership with the Deans of the*

Faculties of Arts, Science and Business, and helps students develop not only effective learning strategies, but essential life skills as well.

- *The Student Services F.Y.I. 2-day boot camp offered in early September involves orientation, skills training, and opportunities to meet key people and make new friends.*
 - *The Registrars Office has instituted a number of improvements including commencing registration of continuing students in March.*
- *Work incrementally towards the establishment of a single-destination Student Success Centre, a central location where key student support services are coordinated and delivered.*
- *The Service Centre has become a reality handling transactional services and basic information, as well as financial aid and awards. Ultimately, the Success Centre concept is to embrace academic advising and services such as those offered through Student Services (first year advisor now renamed student success coordinator) and the Writing Centre.*
 - *The Faculty of Arts created the B.A. Advising Centre, a hub for advising services and is working on the development of coordination among Faculty advising services and with Enrolment Services.*
- *Invest in further improvements to academic advising and career development services to help students succeed in their current programmes and prepare for further study or transition to the workplace.*
- *In 2009 additional advising resources were added in each Faculty as well as in Career Services. These additions were in response to a report on advising submitted by SMUSA.*
 - *The Faculty of Arts has expanded advising services from one B.A. Advisor to two advisors, as well as expanding the scope of advising services. Arts has established a standing committee, the Arts Committee on Academic Advising (ACAA), with a mandate to coordinate all advising carried out in the Faculty. As well, Arts has established collaborations between B.A. Advisors, Departmental Advisors and Career Services and introduced regular workshops for students. Arts has also established a part-time position for an Education advisor with the mandate to facilitate students' transition to B.Ed. programs.*
 - *Science has completely reorganized the work of clerical support in the Faculty in an attempt to improve academic advising. New job descriptions for all departmental secretaries have been implemented, and responsibilities among the secretarial positions have been shifted. New procedures have been introduced for dealing with student inquiries.*
 - *Continuing Education plays a role in the advising of mature and part-time students, and with non-degree students. An orientation guide for students considering returning to learning in a university setting has been developed, and Continuing Education encourages them to join OPTAMUS (Organization for Part-time and Mature University Students).*
 - *Continuing Education provides university preparation courses that provide a vehicle for students to obtain the necessary qualifications for admittance into university programs.*

- Carry on an active program of institutional research into key dimensions of the student experience and follow-up on results with appropriate action.

- *Recognizing the importance of assurance of learning to the process of applying for maintenance of AACSB accreditation, the Sobey School of Business has undertaken several initiatives towards improving the School's assurance of learning processes including: Familiarizing faculty with the difference between assessment and evaluation and how to include both in courses; Clarifying AACSB's requirements for reporting assurance of learning and a critical review of the processes reported in the School's five year maintenance review; Delegation of primary responsibility for management and reporting of assurance of learning to full-time program managers (BComm, MBA, EMBA, MFin) or program coordinators (PhD, MMCCU); Review of learning goals for all programs for the development of an assessment plan to ensure continuous improvement necessary for maintenance of accreditation; Preparing an assessment schedule that will allow for two full feedback cycles prior to the submission of the School's next five year maintenance review; Hiring of a part-time assessment coordinator to assist in the development of course-embedded measures upon receipt of revised learning goals for each program; and assessment of student learning in each of the School's five programs twice in the next four years.*
- *Responsibilities for institutional research have been transferred to Enrolment Services. In 2008, Saint Mary's participated in NSSE for the first time. This research complemented existing surveys by the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) and the Globe & Mail University Report Card survey. Applicant Surveys were also conducted in 2006, 2007 and 2009. Some initial research has been done on retention. Public presentations to faculty and staff have been done on the NSSE and retention data.*
- *The Dean of Science's office is actively tracking student inquiries and visits, and has begun tracking speed of response to students.*

- Increase the number and variety of opportunities for student involvement in all aspects of campus life.

- *The Library is a major employer of students, providing valuable work experience but also providing orientation to library services as well as mentoring opportunities. This has included taking advantage of the SEEP program to create diverse and interesting student employment opportunities.*
- *The Faculty of Science works diligently to involve students in various outreach activities, including judging regional science fairs, acting as mentors to Pathways students (a project targeted at students at risk in the Spryfield area), student mentoring -- especially in Chemistry, and several other initiatives.*
- *OPTAMUS is a student organization supporting mature and part-time students. They have been given a new, improved space next to the atrium that will provide easier access to support services at the library.*
- *The Centre for Academic and Instructional Development (CAID) employs students as technology assistants in the Centre for Academic Technologies (CAT). Student assistants are provided with training and coaching skills development to better assist faculty, staff*

and students with technology support for teaching and learning. Over the years, the majority of students employed in the CAT have been international students.

PRIORITY #3: Building on existing areas of strength, broaden and enrich Saint Mary's programme offerings relating to current and emerging societal priorities, and the needs and interests of new constituencies of students.

Over the past five years, Saint Mary's University has experienced significant programme renewal. New courses have been developed, changes have been made to existing programmes, and new certificates and degrees have been introduced. Change has been an iterative process, influenced by the strengths and commitments of our faculty, by the needs and interests of students, and by changes in society.

The changes that have occurred so far lay the groundwork for further improvements. New opportunities are emerging on a number of fronts. Evolving societal priorities, growing demand for highly qualified specialists, the aspirations of non-traditional students, alternative models of programme delivery and the particular strengths of newly appointed faculty all point to exciting possibilities for programme development. For such development to succeed, it must be realized in a coordinated and measured fashion, consistent with our institutional priorities and in keeping with sound financial planning.

Objectives

- Explore innovative approaches to curriculum, including where appropriate new ways to define existing programmes and the possibility of new certificate and degree programmes.
 - *New programs include:*
 - *Certificate in Financial Instrument Analysis*
 - *Minor in Latin American Studies*
 - *Major in Entrepreneurship within the B.A.*
 - *Bachelor of Environmental Studies*
 - *Master of Arts in Theology and Religion*
 - *An initiative of the Faculty of Arts, the University is now the only university in Canada offering a Bachelor of Arts with a major in entrepreneurship (major in economics and minor in business already exist). The Dean of the Sobey School of Business, supported by professors of entrepreneurship, has been working with the Faculties of Arts and Science for several years to make entrepreneurship/business more accessible to their students.*
 - *The Faculties of Arts and Science are working to develop a pan-Faculty School of the Environment.*
 - *Continuing Education has been promoting the offering of new certificate programs as a means of providing new alternatives for people who cannot study full time nor undertake the length of time required to complete a degree part time.*

- In developing such approaches, include programmes that appeal to both traditional and non-traditional students and/or are delivered in innovative formats.

- *All new programs are still delivered primarily in a traditional format.*
- *The Deans of the Faculties of Arts and GSR, and the Director of Continuing Education have worked extensively to develop a Master in Liberal Studies, which would appeal to mature learners, in a very accessible format. It is hoped that this initiative may gain new momentum as the proposal for the new Centre for the Study of Culture develops.*
- *Continuing Education encourages Chairs to consider online courses in topics related to Certificates, and which might have special appeal to people in the workforce. An example is one of the new courses developed for the Certificate in Financial Instruments in an online format, which should be undertaken in the next few months.*
- *The Faculty of Science is working to increase its online offerings, as well as courses offered to the community, and also on innovative ways to offer its first year courses (i.e. with labs) over the web.*

- Retain and strengthen our commitment to lifelong learning through Continuing Education programming as a key means of responding to current educational needs.

- *Support for Continuing Education continues as budgets have been maintained. Continuing Education continues to be included where appropriate on Senate Committees, i.e. Academic Planning, Academic Regulations, Curriculum, Library, Literacy Strategy, Quality of Teaching, Student Success, Service Excellence Council. In addition, there is a Senate Committee on Continuing Education, which has representation from all of the Faculties, and for which attendance is strong.*

- Develop guidelines for the development and resourcing of new programs.

- *While not directly related to the development/resourcing of new programs, the revised Senate Policy for the Review of Undergraduate and Graduate Programs provides an opportunity for departments/programs to build on existing strengths and to broaden and enrich Saint Mary's current program offerings.*
- *CAID has developed a procedures handbook to support program reviews (in progress) and is providing support and guidance to programs in the development of their self-study reports and with the process overall.*
- *In 2009, the Dean of the FGSR developed Guiding Principles in Proposing New Graduate Programs to supplement the existing Procedures for Proposing New Graduate Programs (http://fgsr.smu.ca/grad_fs_pp.html). These were discussed by the FGSR Graduate Studies Committee in February 2009 but have not yet been formally implemented.*

- Develop a strategy, supported by a clear business plan, for the selective use of web-based courses as an element in our delivery of extension programming. Integrate this strategy with a plan for web-enhanced course delivery on campus.

- *A business case has been put forward to increase resources to support online courses and a strategy has recently been proposed to focus on certificates and concentrated study*

themes. The strategy embraces extension and evening courses as well, and aims to increase enrollment for non-degree study and for certificates that would not otherwise occur. The strategy also puts forward the concept of a new hybrid delivery which is two-thirds online, and one-third face-to-face, as a means of building on Saint Mary's strength in face-to-face and community, while increasing flexibility for students managing multiple responsibilities.

- Pursue additional institutional partnerships as one way of developing high quality, innovative programmes and of broadening the opportunities open to our students.
- *The Faculty of Arts has established a partnership with Pathways to Education – the Spryfield-based site of a federal project for enhancing high-school completion among disadvantaged youth; launched a service-learning course in Sociology which has B.A. students provide tutoring services to students in the Pathways program.*
- *Building on the existing partnership with Peaceful Schools International, the Faculty of Arts has introduced a course in Peace Education through the Faculty of Education, and, in turn, linked this with annual Northern Ireland field trip on conflict resolution.*
- *In partnership with the University of Zacatecas/Mexico, Arts has developed a Ph.D. in International Development Studies.*
- *Through an established partnership with University of Giessen/Germany, work is underway to develop a joint interdisciplinary M.A. in the study of culture.*
- *The Faculty of Arts has also established an Advanced Standing arrangement whereby graduates of specified diploma programs at community colleges can get one year's credit toward a B.A. degree.*
- *The Faculty of Science is currently pursuing linkages with the University of Windsor's Engineering Faculty for them to automatically accept our Engineering Division students after their second year, substantially increasing our students' choices for completing their degree programs in their preferred specialties.*
- *In June 2010 the Sobey School of Business and CGA Nova Scotia signed a partnership agreement formalizing transfer credit arrangements between the two organizations. This will create a predictable path for Sobey BComm graduates pursuing the CGA designation, as well as an accelerated program of study for CGAs interested in the Sobey BComm or MBA.*
- *Saint Mary's University has arranged Articulation agreements with NSCC for Business 2+2 transfer and innovative, outcomes-based, credit recognition for numerous other college diploma programs.*

PRIORITY #4: Through a process of continuous improvement, maintain quality teaching and learning a hallmark of Saint Mary's University.

Saint Mary's University continues to enjoy a well-deserved reputation for providing quality education in a friendly and supportive environment. Students enjoy frequent direct contact with faculty, and have increased opportunities for experiential learning and involvement in faculty research. Individual faculty have been recognized internally and externally for excellence in teaching at all levels. Institutional support for instructional development has been strengthened, and programs have been put in place to allow faculty champions to develop and disseminate innovative pedagogical approaches.

There is a need for continuous renewal to maintain and improve teaching and learning at the University. New courses have been developed and changes have been made to existing programmes that lay the groundwork for further innovations in curricula and potential new programme development. The campus-wide literacy strategy, approved by Senate in 2002, has been partly implemented, but needs further development. We have been successful in maintaining an environment where faculty and students are closely engaged with one another in the process of learning, both inside and outside the classroom. We need to ensure that we continue this engagement, and be open to new opportunities to enhance faculty-student interaction. Teaching and research are complementary, and Saint Mary's takes pride in its ability to integrate the two; the University community must continue to develop innovative approaches to this on-going challenge.

Objectives

- Highlight and develop the ways in which our curriculum supports our vision to be “the University of choice for aspiring citizens of the world.”
 - *International content of the curriculum has been increased in the Faculty of Arts. Across the disciplines there have been faculty hirings that expand which regions of the world are addressed, e.g. Latin America, Mediterranean regions, Middle East, South Asia, China;*
- Support initiatives that enhance student/faculty interaction and foster student engagement and a culture of inquiry.
 - *The Library is rapidly developing large data and statistical collections, as well as expertise, to support data-based research. It provides instructional support to faculty and students who use our many data resources in their teaching and learning. It also maintains a relationship with Statistics Canada. Canadian social data, specialized business data, international financial data, and materials to support geographical information systems are particular areas of focus. The availability of these resources helps to foster a culture of inquiry.*

- *The Faculty of Arts has expanded student assistantships for B.A. students thereby creating increased opportunities for students to work with faculty on teaching and research projects.*
- Ensure that processes and resources are in place that support effective teaching and its continuous improvement.
- *Within the Sobey School of Business, faculty have formed two working groups as a result of faculty-wide discussions about student engagement in particular and student learning more broadly, one on the quality of teaching/engagement and the other on academic integrity.*
 - *Graduate Programs are now under the regular schedule of program reviews as all other academic programs.*
 - *FGSR works with CAID and APC to develop and implement the Senate Policy on the Review of Graduate Programs.*
 - *In April 2009, the Faculty Council adopted the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies' "Guiding Principles for Graduate Student Supervision" as guiding principles on graduate student supervision for the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research.*
 - *The Library offers individual assistance by appointment and workshops to support the teaching, learning, and research needs of faculty. Several of the librarians have provided sessions as part of the CAID Seminars and Workshops series. Information Literacy Librarians have collaborated with faculty on designing effective research-based assignments. Librarians participate on university teaching and learning related committees and initiatives.*
 - *Over the past four years Science has implemented a master timetable that efficiently and effectively uses assigned FCEs to provide all required courses for students with few time conflicts. Science is now moving to a 12-month schedule by including summer courses in that planning to help students who need to retake courses or get ahead more quickly.*
 - *Continuing Education has introduced a check up with participants of its Executive and Professional Development program three months after they have completed a seminar, in addition to the evaluation sheet completed at the end of the seminar. The check up is to identify what has worked, or not worked for the participant, and the comments are provided to the instructor for action. An annual workshop with instructors has been introduced to share goals and to seek feedback on improvements.*
 - *CAID partners with other departments on campus to regularly offer workshops to enhance teaching and learning, as well as workshops on the effective use of technology for teaching and learning through the Centre for Academic Technology (CAT).*
 - *CAID also provides other programs and services which support teaching and continuous improvement including: working with the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Research on monthly meetings of Department Chairs; Teaching Scholar Program; Individual, confidential consultations with faculty related to: teaching dossiers, effective teaching, responding to low student evaluation of teaching (ICE) scores, problem-based learning, incorporating active learning into the classroom, course design, assignment design, assessment, conflict with students and/or faculty and staff; the New Faculty Network monthly luncheon meetings; a Faculty Newsletter on Teaching and Learning at Saint Mary's; the Support for Quality of Teaching Committee – Instructional Grants*

Program; (Co)Hosting Conferences such as the AAU Teaching Showcase, Symposium on the National Survey of Student Engagement, the national E-Learning pre-conference 2011, the national Educational Developers' Conference 2012; working with faculty to build strong portfolios for regional and national awards for teaching and educational leadership; Collaboration with other Global Learning Commons student support services providers

- *The Centre for Academic Technologies offers technology training and support services to faculty, staff and students, including: Academic scanning; Scanning of multiple choice tests and exams (providing timely feedback to students); Support for Senate Office – scanning of all ICE forms.*

- Continue to strive for an appropriate balance between teaching and research and for ways of integrating the two.

- Re-assess the campus wide literacy strategy, amend it as necessary, and take steps to implement all of its provisions.
 - *To address the issues that came to light following the re-assessment, Senate restructured governance, committee mandates, and working arrangements. The relationship between the Senate literacy strategy and the Writing Centre was redefined. Implementation began in the 2010-2011 academic year.*

- Investigate the potential of recent innovations in communications technology to enhance learning and to facilitate the creation of communities of learners.
 - *The Sobey School of Business increased the number of terminals (Bloomberg Professional) on campus which are being used at an increasing rate as enrollments grow in two specialist finance courses and a larger number of faculty are familiar with the product.*
 - *The team in Continuing Education involved with e-Learning has led the introduction of several technologies to enhance teaching and learning for distance education. Some of these technologies have been supported and adopted by the Center for Academic and Instructional Development and faculty members teaching classroom-based courses. A report on these technological advances has been provided under a separate button on the Academic Plan Renewal web page titled “CAID Supported Technologies”.*
 - *The Library has a presence on Facebook and has recently created mobile access, available at <http://library.smu.ca/mobile/>. From there users can search the catalogue and some of the most popular journal databases or get information on hours, contacts and document delivery.*

PRIORITY #5: Build on the international character of Saint Mary's as a distinctive strength of the University.

Saint Mary's University is among the most international of Canada's smaller universities. The strong international character of the University is rooted deeply in its history and currently consists of the high proportion of full-time students who come from outside Canada, the extensive involvement of Saint Mary's in international projects and partnerships, and the offering of niche programmes with a specific international focus. Saint Mary's Centre for Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) brings hundreds of additional international students on campus each year and serves as a stepping-stone for many into our degree programmes. The number of students taking advantage of international field trips and study abroad opportunities has increased sharply.

Changing circumstances at home and abroad call for creative adaptation if this international strength is to be maintained and developed. The number of international students coming from traditional source countries may decline as those countries expand their own capacity in higher education. Competition among Atlantic Canadian universities for international students is increasing, partly in an attempt to compensate for declining domestic enrolments. Shifting priorities and reduced support from the federal government makes it more challenging to obtain funding for international projects and placements. International programmes in our curriculum must compete with the urgent needs of other programmes, and are in some cases under-resourced. Attempts to "internationalize" the curriculum beyond programmes with a specific international focus are a work in progress.

Objectives

- Continue to internationalize the curriculum as a way of engaging global issues and of linking global issues to local, social, and economic realities.
 - *International content of the curriculum has been increased in the Faculty of Arts. Across the disciplines there have been faculty hirings that expand the regions of the world that are addressed.*
 - *Visiting faculty from Viet Nam have participated in the Executive and Professional Development program, which has provided participants in these courses a new awareness of some of the international issues.*
- Explore new markets and new strategies to recruit international students, including attractive programming for both visiting and full-time international students, greater integration between TESL and credit programmes, and more seamless articulation agreements with international institutions.
 - *All Faculties are engaged in the continued expansion of articulation agreements, particularly in business.*
 - *In June 2010 the Sobey School of Business launched a new preparatory program for its Master of Finance program. Open to students from any country, this program allows for students to be conditionally admitted into the MFin program upon successful completion*

of three modules of instruction, each containing courses in business communications, economics, accounting and quantitative methods.

- *FGSR has worked with the MFIN and MBA Programs, the TESL Centre, and Continuing Education to introduce masters' preparatory programs for MFIN students and MBA students.*
 - *Continuing Education, Sobey School of Business, Grad Studies and TESL have developed a pre-MBA program aimed at international students who wish to be admitted to the MBA program, but who require additional language training.*
- While keeping the percentage of international students at or above current levels, work to achieve greater balance and diversity in the international student body.
- *Saint Mary's University has increased its recruitment focus on markets in addition to China with significant success in South Asia, particularly Bangladesh and India.*
 - *FGSR has been working with the IAO to diversify our graduate students from Asia to include Vietnam. These activities have included: Participating in an Education and Trade Mission lead by ACOA and the Premier of Nova Scotia to Ho Chi Min City and Hanoi in 2009.*
 - *MOUs have been developed with several Vietnam government sponsored graduate scholarship programs to send students to Saint Mary's.*
 - *FGSR has also developed a much closer working relationship with Recruitment Services on international graduate student recruitment.*
- In keeping with the student success agenda, consider the special needs of international students. Seek additional ways to assist and support second-language students as they progress through degree programmes.
- *The Faculty of Arts introduced a for-credit content-based ESL course for international students; pilot-tested in 2010-2011 with a view to expanding the concept in subsequent years.*
 - *EGSL 1100, a credit ESL course, has been revived. The Writing Centre has extended services for ESL students with the assistance of the TESL Centre.*
 - *The library provides information literacy instruction sessions to students enrolled at the TESL Centre. Instruction sessions offered by our librarians are a regular component of the TESL Level 6 and University Bridging Program courses.*
 - *As part of the outreach effort, this past year the Library provided information literacy orientation sessions to students studying at the East Coast School of Languages, and they are interested in making the SMU Library visit a regular part of their curriculum. There is potential here for recruitment, as many of the students in these sessions are planning to attend university.*
 - *The Library has established an International Students Committee to look at ways the Library can strengthen library services to international students.*
 - *The Library has developed specific online resources to assist International Students (e.g. the International Students Guide and the Library Glossary).*

- Develop strategies for adjusting to changes in federal priorities for international assistance programs, and pursue alternative sources of support for international projects.
- Building on our experience of cultural diversity, engage newcomers in our community through research, academic programmes, and services.
 - *Continuing Education offered a special program for GMAT preparation to students in the international language schools.*

PRIORITY #6: Capitalize on the momentum in research, scholarship and graduate studies at Saint Mary's to further develop our University as a dynamic research institution, and to gain full recognition as such.

The creation and dissemination of new knowledge is an essential function of a University, and Saint Mary's University has a long tradition of fulfilling this mission by means of original research and scholarship. Through a combination of circumstances and individual effort, our level of scholarly activity has reached new heights in recent years. Institutional support for research has been greatly strengthened and significantly more external funding has become available. Saint Mary's has invested in strategic areas where it has distinguished itself regionally, nationally and internationally, entered into fruitful partnerships with other universities, and increased support for individual scholars. Growth in graduate studies has been a crucial factor in supporting research activity. The number of scholarly publications by Saint Mary's faculty and their students has increased exponentially, and external research funding obtained through grant competitions has more than quadrupled in five years. Saint Mary's commitment to the research enterprise has been a significant factor in attracting high caliber new faculty to our ranks.

Success brings with it new challenges. In keeping with our commitment to community engagement, many of our research initiatives focus on issues and opportunities faced by the wider community. However, transferring the results of academic research effectively to non-academic audiences poses many challenges for both researchers and members of the community. On a practical level, our campus must contend with the problem of properly accommodating classrooms and research facilities with limited space and resources. Finally, while the reputation of Saint Mary's as a research-active university has grown in academic circles and in some parts of the wider community, public perception of our University still lags well behind our accomplishments.

Objectives

- Define a plan for the further development of graduate programmes as a key ingredient in our promotion of research.
- *In 2009, the Dean of the FGSR developed Guiding Principles in Proposing New Graduate Programs to supplement the existing Procedures for Proposing New Graduate Programs (http://fgsr.smu.ca/grad_fs_pp.html).*
- *The Faculty of Arts, in collaboration with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, is developing a proposal to establish the Centre for the Interdisciplinary Study of Culture (CISC) as a venue for carrying out and promoting interdisciplinary scholarship related to culture.*
- *The MSc in Applied Science underwent an academic review and, consistent with the outcomes of that review, a proposal to modify the Program was approved by Senate in February of 2011 and is currently being reviewed by the MPHEC.*
- *A new MA program in Theology and Religious Studies (joint with the Atlantic School of Theology) began in 2009.*

- *A new Ph.D. in International Development Studies was approved by Senate in January 2011 and is currently being reviewed by the MPHEC.*
 - *New graduate programs currently under development include a Master of Applied Economics, an M.A. in Geography, and a Ph.D. in Applied Science.*
 - *The Masters in Applied Science has recently gone through a review, which has led to several improvements and changes. Science hopes to have a Ph.D. program in place in the near future, building on our successes here.*
- Work to develop more effective methods of knowledge transfer so that the full social and economic benefits of our research can be realized.
- *In 2010, The Maritimes Centre for Green Chemistry was established at Saint Mary's University. The main purpose of the centre is to advance basic and applied research in the area of Green Chemistry that will in turn contribute to the application of chemical products and processes that use benign substances, reduce waste and energy consumption and make the most efficient use of non-renewable resources, offers industry a clean sustainable alternative to traditional chemical and manufacturing processes. The Centre will advocate the benefits to industry and the public.*
 - *In 2010, the Centre for the Study of Sport and Health was established at Saint Mary's University that includes objectives focused on encouraging interdisciplinary research on issues relating to sport, physical activity and healthful living, community-based health research, enhanced communication between researchers, the community and government and the dissemination of research on sport and health issues.*
 - *Begun in 2010 and expanding in 2011, FGSR organizes a Research Expo to better communicate research activities and outcomes both within the Universities and to partners in research external to the University.*
 - *In 2011, a new Canada Research Chair in Finance was established at Saint Mary's that will serve as a resource to the community, especially in the area of accounting ethics and responsible corporate governance, and reach out to the regional, national and international community by cooperating with businesses, government agencies, and other academic institutions.*
 - *The Industry Liaison Office, as part of the regional commercialization network, Springboard Inc., has facilitated knowledge and technology transfer to external partners on innovations at Saint Mary's in applications including:*
 - *Green chemistry*
 - *Bioethanol feedstocks from agricultural*
 - *Green roof technology*
 - *Environmental water monitoring*
 - *Offshore petroleum resources*
 - *Economic geology*
- Seek improved strategies for integrating research with teaching and learning, drawing on best practices inside and outside Saint Mary's.
- *Through a custom program for an Atlantic Canada based company, a senior faculty member provided timely consulting services and developed a custom leadership training*

program with Continuing Education's Executive and Professional Development unit, based on the research of employees views in the company, and on-going research of organizational leadership.

- Within the framework of the Campus Master Plan, devise a space allocation scheme that reconciles the need for research facilities and dedicated graduate student space with other space requirements.
 - *The Faculty of Science is currently undergoing a complete review of space, focusing on shared research space in order to maximize efficiency and output, and place a priority on space for students to congregate.*
 - *It is clear that the Atrium and Global Learning Commons space are well used by students. The new Atrium Building includes the following features:*
 - *New office and research space for the Department of Astronomy and Physics.*
 - *Dedicated offices for graduate students in Astronomy.*
 - *The Community-Based Research and Innovation Suite, hosting office and collaborative meeting*
 - *space for students and staff in selected research programs that involve community-based research with direct applications to communities external to the University.*
 - *The existing Library has gone through a carefully planned transition of space use in response to the adjacent new Atrium.*
 - *The Faculty of Arts has focused on renewing its infrastructure in ways that support the activity envisaged in the Academic Plan. Key accomplishments include:*
 - *Global Commons whose design was significantly influenced by the Faculty of Arts;*
 - *Creating spaces that support research and discursive activity as required in the disciplines of the Arts;*
 - *Creating classrooms that support pedagogies of various disciplines in the Arts*
 - *Arts Commons as an extension of the Global Commons, but specifically geared to needs of the Faculty of Arts;*
 - *Creation of new study space for graduate students and students in interdisciplinary studies;*
 - *Creation of the Gutenberg Lab – a facility for editorial / text production work;*
 - *Creation of two dedicated seminar rooms for the Faculty of Arts;*
 - *Creation of the B.A. Advising Centre;*
 - *Renewal of the Archaeology lab;*
 - *Renewal of the Physical Anthropology lab;*
 - *Renewal of the Communications lab;*
 - *Creation of the new Sociocultural Anthropology lab;*
 - *Renewal of Geography labs.*

- Devise a consistent communications plan to gain public recognition of Saint Mary's contributions to research and scholarship.
 - *While no "consistent communications plan" has been put in place to help gain public recognition of Saint Mary's contributions to research and scholarship, the following have been accomplished:*
 - *The Faculty of Science has established a new position of the Science Communications Officer.*
 - *The Faculties of Science and Graduate Studies & Research aggressively provide Public Affairs with stories and notification of awards and other major accomplishments for publicity purposes.*
 - *Started in 2010 and expanding in 2011, FGSR organizes a Research Expo to better communicate research activities and outcomes both within the Universities and to partners in research external to the University.*

- Ensure that growth in access to scholarly resources keeps pace with our accomplishments in research.
 - *The Library actively participates in the Canadian Research Knowledge Network and Council of Atlantic University Libraries Consortia initiatives, thus providing electronic access to thousands of full text journals.*
 - *The Library is expanding collections in many areas with tens of thousands of new e-books. E-books are a cost effective way of supplementing the collections with the most timely and topical materials. They cover both popular and scholarly works and are available 24/7 on and off campus.*
 - *The new, powerful and easy to use SMU-WorldCat search tool is a central feature of the Library's website. It is tied to our expansive e-journal collection and to regional and worldwide document delivery. This gives our researchers a user-friendly search for full texts and fast, reliable document delivery.*