Vision
To be leaders in innovative, community-engaged teaching and research that shape a just and sustainable world

Core Values
• Hope must accompany realism
• Both natural and built environments, past to present, matter
• Interdisciplinary means breadth and depth
• Learning means doing
• Education is life-affirming and academically rigorous
• Environmental justice includes care, respect, and equity
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Background

Benjamin Franklin famously declared that “by failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” The following pages describe how the Faculty of Environment is preparing to ensure continuing success over the next five years.

The Faculty’s planning process began when the current Dean joined SFU in 2014. At that time, consultations began with Chairs and Directors to identify a Faculty-wide vision, core values, strategic objectives and initiatives to advance those objectives.

Most notably over the last two years, consultation has proceeded more broadly to include faculty, students, staff and members of the Dean’s External Advisory Board, which includes the Mayor of Burnaby and other community leaders.

The current plan provides a high-level articulation of the Faculty’s vision, core values, strategic objectives and initiatives that have informed departmental plans. In recent months, Chairs and Directors have themselves worked with the Faculty’s draft plan, to identify specific departmental projects to advance broad objectives and initiatives. The current document is the result of both the work at the departmental level, as well as a fine-tuning of earlier versions of the plan. Detailed departmental plans, with specific projects to advance the Faculty’s objectives and initiatives are available under separate cover. They include timelines and responsibilities, as well as quantitative and qualitative measures of success to be evaluated and updated on an annual basis.

This plan was and continues to be a living document, subject to future revision and improvement. No plan is ever definitive or all-encompassing but, rather, it evolves as new priorities emerge.

Core Values

Hope Must Accompany Realism
While genuinely acknowledging environmental challenges, we recognize the power of positive thinking to enact meaningful change. Our evidenced-based research informs policy and innovative solutions to complex problems.

Both Natural and Built Environments Matter
“The environment” reflects complex relations between human beings and the natural world from deep time to the present. Since that world is presently more than 50% urbanized, sustainable city building is integral to the environmental mission.

Interdisciplinarity Means Breadth and Depth
Exemplary educational and research programs provide both deep and broad approaches to impacting positive environmental change.

Learning Means Doing
Actively engaging diverse community relationships, including Canada’s indigenous origins, is integral to our mission, as is experiential education.

Education is Life-Affirming and Academically Rigorous
Sharing the joy of learning and critical thinking across all Faculty of Environment communities is how we define the academic experience.

Environmental Justice Includes Care, Respect and Equity
As an institution of higher learning, our goal is to promote an ethic of virtue and moral integrity at all levels.
Strategic Objectives

The Faculty of Environment has identified six Strategic Objectives to frame the planning process. These objectives include the following:

**Enhance Student Experience and Success**
We are here first and foremost to support our students, each of whom deserve a rewarding set of opportunities at all levels of their learning experience.

**Improve Academic Quality and Curriculum**
Advancing learning and teaching are a priority within the Faculty. Changing environmental priorities invite both new curriculum opportunities, as well as fine-tuning current offerings.

**Support Research and Innovation**
The joy of discovery and change happens only through high-integrity research. We support world-class, leading-edge environmental innovation and research excellence.

**Engage Communities**
More than supporting ivory tower thinking, the Faculty of Environment strives to make meaningful environmental changes regionally, nationally and internationally in close communication with community partners. We engage the community in a meaningful and mutually supportive manner.

**Advance Diversity and Interdisciplinary Collaboration**
The Faculty of Environment aims to advance diversity, tolerance and respect for multiple voices, acknowledging that meaningful, interdisciplinary environmental dialogue is required to address ‘wicked’ environmental problems from a range of perspectives. We support diversity and interdisciplinary collaboration.

**Optimize Operational Management and Faculty Renewal**
Delivering educational opportunities in a way that is fiscally responsible, efficient and judicious is central to our publicly funded institution. We optimize operational management of the Faculty, as we aim to attract and retain exemplary teaching and research faculty.
Projects to Advance Objectives and Initiatives, Together with Measurable Targets

Specific projects describing how initiatives are to be implemented have been provided by Chairs and Directors to the Dean through their departmental plans.

Rather than repeating those plans here, included below are examples of how a priority “initiative” under each Strategic Objective translates into priority projects and measurable targets.

01 Enhance Student Experience and Success

Sample Priority Initiative: Provide optimal physical space and educational environments

Projects include:

• The Department of Geography plans to provide improved teaching and research labs that will accommodate students, inviting meeting and study spaces for students, a department meeting/seminar room, lounge/informal meeting room, safe and efficient storage spaces and healthful offices. The plan is proceeding in a phased approach, with two teaching labs being renovated in summer 2018. FENV will continue to submit project proposals to Capital Planning Committee twice a year to further improve condition of the facilities in RCB, recognizing that the building has limited capacity to accommodate modern Geography departmental needs in the long term.

• Renovations are planned for TASC2, to provide an advising area for students enrolled in the Environmental Science undergraduate and graduate Master’s of Ecological Restoration programs. Projects have been approved by the Capital Planning Steering Committee; target dates yet to be set by Facilities and Services.

• The Department of Archaeology has been undergoing renovations since December 2016, following a significant flood in the central offices, labs and meeting rooms. Current targeted completion aims for complete re-occupancy by September 2018, in the hopes that students can again locate their instructors and meet with them uninterrupted by construction noise.
02 Improve Academic Quality and Curriculum
Sample Priority Initiative: Explore new interdisciplinary programs/units
Projects include:
• Develop new School of Environmental Science to house the successful undergraduate program as well as the joint SFU/BCIT Master’s in Ecological Restoration. The proposal was submitted to SCUP for May meeting and June Senate approval. Regular, bi-annual discussions around life sciences curriculum planning with Deans of Science and Health Science will continue beyond School approval.
• Prepare proposal for a new Bachelor of Environment in Planning, to be developed in Surrey. Target date for proposal approval by Senate: spring 2019. This project constitutes an important element of raising the urban profile of FENV.
• Two earlier programs ("Sustainable Community Development" and "Development and Sustainability") have now become a single program in Sustainable Development. The aim is to increase enrolments in this new program by 10% annually.

03 Enhance Interdisciplinary Research
Sample Priority Initiative: Enhance interdisciplinary research
Projects include:
• The Department of Archaeology plans to develop a Speakers’ Series, and to co-host international meetings to foster research collaborations. Measures of success include increased number of research gatherings (min. of two) and partnerships.
• The faculty will hire a full-time grants facilitator to support faculty research applications. Target for hire is summer 2018. Measure of success: increase success rate of grant applications by 10%.

04 Engage Communities
Sample Priority Initiative: Increase engagement with First Nations communities
Projects include:
• Appoint Dean’s Special Advisor on Indigenous Issues to advise on how to engage Indigenous worldviews in all aspects of FENV governance and curriculum. Target date: September 1, 2018.
• Offer one-two more courses integrating First Nations communities, modeled on Archaeology’s successful field course in Burrard Marine Park, summer 2017.
• Support continuing repatriation of Indigenous remains to First Nations Communities. 200 skeletal remains have been repatriated; another 600 remain at SFU in the Department of Archaeology.
• Develop new access and repatriation policies for departmental collections, resulting in new policies and transparency by spring 2019.
Many, specific projects have been identified with target dates, responsibilities and measures of success within individual departmental plans.

The Department of Geography has designed a full strategic plan, including a vision statement and core values outlined, aligning their own initiatives with the Faculty’s and articulating projects to ensure implementation of these initiatives. The Department of Archaeology has followed a template provided as a guide to the departments, so that specific projects again indicate, through measurable targets, how the Faculty’s objectives and initiatives are to be advanced. Finally, the School of Resource and Environmental Management has similarly prepared a plan that includes elements of a self-study, with objectives, initiatives and specific projects outlined.

The Faculty’s departments, therefore, have measurable targets that can be evaluated internally within the units themselves as well as by the Dean’s office, on an annual basis.

It has been said that life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving. Our planning process within the Faculty of Environment continues to be an ongoing exercise, at the same time as it provides a useful structure for annual evaluations of progress.

Conclusion

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