

Five Year Academic Plan 2018-2023

Phase 1: Context, Challenges and Questions

October 2017

Notes: The process underlying the creation of SFU's next Academic Plan seeks to be creative, participatory, consultative and transparent.¹ When developing the 2018-2023 Academic Plan, it was decided that, instead of preparing a first complete draft as has been past tradition, the Vice President, Academic and Provost would provide context and a number of challenges and questions to the Deans and Chairs/Directors on which they should develop their Faculty and Department plans.

The benefit of this approach is that it provides the units more flexibility and allows for increased creativity in addressing the important challenges faced without the direction and restriction of the traditional goals and objectives used in previous first drafts of SFU's academic planning.

Faculties and Departments are to give careful consideration to the content of this document and initiate planning in their units.

Following receipt of each Faculty's plan, the VPA will develop a high-level Academic Plan, which will incorporate Faculty input. This Plan will then be presented to Senate and the Board of Governors for information.

1. Introduction

Building on the SFU Vision of being ***the leading engaged university defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement***, this document starts by introducing external and internal context the SFU community must pay close attention to when developing the next Academic Plan. The document then identifies a number of challenges academic planning should explicitly focus on in the next five years, followed by a set of questions the Faculties and their academic units should ask when preparing their plans.

Therefore, this document aims to guide our thinking and actions as we advance academic programming and related matters. It is designed to inspire us always to challenge the status quo and ourselves as we seek to build on existing excellence to move forward in exciting and timely new directions. The goal is to use academic planning to advance SFU's Vision, to withstand the challenges of the future, and to be

¹ The process to be followed, together with a timeline, is attached as Appendix 1.

distinctive in providing the best services to our students, undertaking world-class research, and to maintain and grow our reputation as a national and indeed internationally recognized university.

SFU Planning Framework² identifies three pillars (core themes) and their associated goals that make up the overall SFU Vision/Mission, namely:

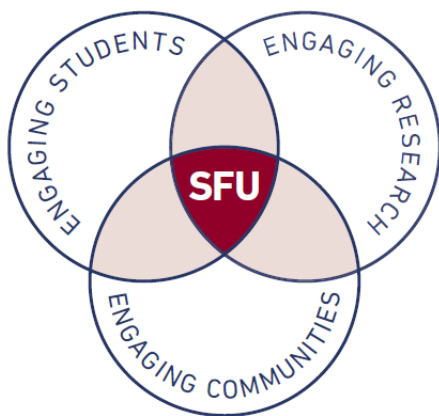
Engaging Students: *To equip students with the knowledge, skills and experiences that prepare them for life in an ever-changing and challenging world.*

Engaging Research: *To be a world leader in knowledge mobilization building on a strong foundation of fundamental research.*

Engaging Communities: *To be Canada's most community-engaged research university.*

Academic planning for the next five years will continue to recognize these three pillars. Faculties and their academic units are encouraged, however, to give explicit thought to the reality that the core themes do not stand in isolation, but can be conceived as an overlapping set as shown in Figure 1, with opportunities to be innovative and show leadership in the areas of overlap. Academic planning for 2018 to 2023 is encouraged explicitly to address opportunities in these areas of overlap.

Figure 1: The integration of SFU's core themes



The SFU Planning Framework consists of a number of plans, including the Strategic Research Plan³, the Innovation Plan and the Community Engagement Strategy. SFU's Planning Framework does not ask all plans to be created at the same time, but they are to support and to build on each other. Therefore, Faculties and their academic units should take these plans into consideration when developing their own academic plans for 2018-2023.

SFU has a number of strategic priorities, including Aboriginal Reconciliation, the Student Experience, Big Data, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Dialogue. Faculties and their academic units should seek opportunities to work with and to advance these strategic priorities in their next academic plans.

²

[http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/pres/pres_docs/University%20Planning%20Framework_Dec%202015%20\(a\)mended%20Mar%202016\).pdf](http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/pres/pres_docs/University%20Planning%20Framework_Dec%202015%20(a)mended%20Mar%202016).pdf)

³ <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/vpresearch/pdfs/SRP/StrategicResearchPlan2016-2020.pdf>

The foci of academic planning can be both operational and aspirational. Faculties and their academic units are encouraged to engage in planning processes that build on the past, are grounded in the realities of today, but are not afraid to leave room to be bold, visionary and inspirational looking forward. The planning process should include honest and critical review of existing practices, structures, processes, policies and procedures, recognizing that there always is room for improvement and/or opportunity for change. The next generation of academic plans should not be afraid to include elements that offer potential to be transformational even if at the risk of being disruptive of the status quo. In a five-year planning window there always should be room to consider BHAGs (Big Hairy Audacious Goals), recognizing that they are aspirational.

The expectation is for initiatives identified in the final Plan to be realized before 2023, but the implementation of the Plan will be an ongoing process, and the speed at which we will collectively achieve the objectives and activities will be dependent on the commitment and cooperation of all faculty and staff. There also is recognition that any planning is open to modification as time proceeds and the world around us changes.

SFU has performed very well in rankings in recent years, but there is consensus that we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. We must strive continually to do better, recognizing and adjusting to changing societal expectations, challenges and needs, and paying close attention to contemporary trends and transitions in post-secondary education. At the same time, we want to hold true to our traditional strengths, core values, mission and beliefs.

SFU has established a reputation as a national and international leader, complementing ongoing excellence in discovery, creativity, applied and curiosity-based research with community-based scholarship and civic engagement to advance contemporary debates and seek solutions to problems that define our times. Thus SFU has demonstrated through action capacity to help build social infrastructure and improve society's prospects while holding onto the traditional core values that define a research-intensive university and academic excellence. SFU's 2018-2023 Academic Plan seeks to consolidate and advance that position further. It aims to foster continued innovation and advancement of excellence in all areas of scholarly enquiry while looking for synergies, efficiencies and learning opportunities among the many already established initiatives of SFU's engagement strategy to advance its Vision and commitment to students and learning for life.

A key priority for this Academic Plan therefore, is to remove barriers and to seek ways for traditional academic units to learn from and collaborate with each other, and, where appropriate, to facilitate for them to team up with and capitalize on the various strategic engagement entities and initiatives established in recent years to advance SFU's Vision.

2. Context, Externalities and Internalities

Following trends, externalities and internalities must be considered by the SFU community when developing the next generation of nested academic plans:

a. Economic and Political Climate

The current economic environment is one of cautious optimism coming out of a period of stagnant growth and deficit reduction. Investment in universities to facilitate general growth is unlikely in the near future, but there may be opportunity for selective growth in strategic and government-targeted areas. SFU is uniquely positioned to argue for targeted growth on the Surrey campus, especially in engineering, health and wellness, creative technologies and innovative education, but we are facing increasing competition from other post-secondary institutions south of the Fraser.

With a government-controlled tuition fee structure that is unlikely to keep up with inflation, SFU needs to be fiscally prudent, and must seek alternative opportunities to secure some of the financial support needed to maintain and grow. Furthermore, the University will need to continue to lobby hard for government investments in deferred maintenance and capital projects to ensure a safe and competitive physical infrastructure.

b. Demographics and Enrolments

Income from tuition now makes up the largest component of SFU's operating budget. SFU has been very successful attracting highly qualified students, both domestic and international. SFU in recent years has consistently exceeded the number of government-funded domestic students, and has expanded its percentage of international students. But domestic enrolments are softening in some areas due to demographics and growing competition from other institutions, and post-secondary transfers have been declining sharply. There continues to be little anticipated growth in the 18-24 year old population in the next planning period except in isolated pockets including Surrey, which is one of the fastest growing cities in the country. International demand looks to remain consistently solid for the next few years, but there is concern that a significant percentage of these students come from a small number of countries, and international students are not distributed equally across SFU's campuses or academic units. Enrolment in graduate education remains strong but the lack of a Provincial Scholarship program impacts recruitment differentially across academic units. There is opportunity for growth especially in "professional" degrees. SFU is attracting a growing number of post-doctoral students.

Enrolment managements is a key challenge as we have a strong reliance on tuition, the softening of our domestic enrolment, the increased competition leading to diminishing transfer student enrolment, and the vulnerability of our international student enrolment.

c. Accountability

There is a growing demand for evidence-based accountability in post-secondary education, including increased pressure from government, students and society for universities not only to address and communicate educational goals and learning outcomes at the institutional, program and course levels, but also to demonstrate how these goals and outcomes are achieved. SFU recently received accreditation from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), the only research university in Canada to do so. SFU also was one of the first post-secondary institutions in British

Columbia to undergo a provincial ministry review of its academic quality assurance through the Quality Assurance Process Audit (QAPA). While recognizing SFU's strong history and practice of quality assurance, the QAPA process recommends that SFU strengthen, even further its focus on quality in curriculum design and delivery, and evaluation of excellence in teaching. SFU recently earned designation as an ASHOKA Changemaker campus in recognition of its academic programming and practice of engagement promoting changemaking. Finally, Canada and SFU's Aboriginal Truth and Reconciliation initiatives have led to recommendations, which include calls for action that have implications for universities, that SFU has begun to address in part through the Aboriginal Reconciliation strategic initiative. SFU, therefore, is paying attention and is meeting these government, student and societal demands for accountability in a number of ways while recognizing that a lot more work needs to be done.

d. Student Experience and Support

There exists a general expectation for universities to provide a greater level of support for students, not only in academic areas, but also in relation to personal and societal factors that may impede student access and success. This includes language support, supervision, advising and counseling, mental health support, recognition and support of diversity, and a respectful and safe learning environment.

SFU has the challenge of meeting the expectations of an especially diverse student population, including one of the higher percentages of international students in Canada. SFU also has a high percentage of commuting students, some of whom find themselves taking courses on all three campuses.

SFU administers regular student satisfaction surveys, giving the University insight into what students share about their experience. A number of key areas where undergraduate students tell us we could do better include course access, course scheduling and a desire for more engagement opportunities with other students through curricular and non-curricular activities.

e. Accelerating Growth of New Knowledge and Rise of "Professionalism"

The growth of new discovery and knowledge generation is accelerating at an exponential rate. With it comes growing opportunities for interdisciplinary discovery and the emergence of new areas of thematic specialization, including academic programming that bridges the disciplines and/or meets the needs of professional bodies, and new opportunities for integration of teaching, research and learning through practice. Teaching and learning environments are focusing beyond knowledge memorization on strategies regarding how to find, evaluate and combine data, information and other evidence in a timely manner.

Focus also is on the need to give students strategies and capacities to learn for life, and on paying attention to labour market needs, with deliberate growth of opportunities for integrated learning and emphases in the curriculum delivery on developing skills in communication, teamwork, analytics and problem solving, innovation and entrepreneurship as well as fostering a strong work ethic.

There is a growing student demand for ongoing access to learning opportunities throughout the lifespan to keep up with knowledge growth and to facilitate career advancement or career changes.

f. Changing Learning Environments

The assumption that all learning must happen on a campus and in the classroom has long been debunked. Advances in technology, information packaging, communications and social media are

creating growing avenues of exciting opportunities for innovative, blended and flexible teaching and learning environments delivered on and off campus. There exists a growing expectation for choice in access to teaching and learning environments, including ubiquitous access.

g. K-12 Curriculum Change

The BC Ministry of Education has been working on modernizing the curriculum, assessment and the graduation program. The focus of this work is to provide students with an education that is flexible and innovative. Graduation assessments will concentrate on literacy and numeracy. Language and mathematics are being replaced by Numeracy and Literacy assessments. Science and social studies exams are being discontinued as these areas will now be assessed in the classroom.

h. Access and Degree Credentials

The need for post-secondary credentials has been greatly increasing in recent years. Many career opportunities that traditionally only required a high school diploma now require a bachelor's degree, and some that required a bachelor's or master's in the past now require a master's and PhD, respectively. Within this "degree creep" is also the demand for more professional and "targeted" degrees. Furthermore, there is a rise in demand for credentialing in disciplinary sub-specialization and interdisciplinary thematic areas, including minor degrees and availability of certificates and diplomas, complementing the primary degree. We also see growth in dual and joint degrees, including both domestic and international partner universities.

With these new demands and expectations comes a reassessment of admission requirements and curricula. Broad-based admission, which can offer opportunities to exceptional students who are qualified through evidence other than solely on GPA, is being considered, and so is experimentation with curricula that facilitate laddering and staking toward degree completion.

i. Dividing our Time

The traditional hard divide of the solitudes that make up the triumvirate of "teaching," "research" and "service" is eroding. There is increased emphasis on activities in areas of overlap between teaching, research and service that are not necessarily always comfortably accounted for in matters related to tenure, merit and promotion. Therefore, the traditional 40:40:20 rule no longer necessarily reflects the contemporary working reality of many of our faculty.

3. Key Challenges for the Next Five Years

Faculties and academic units are asked to address key challenges identified as priorities in the next academic planning cycle while being free to identify any other challenges as judged and justified as appropriate in their plans. Below challenges will not resonate equally in all academic units given disciplinary diversity, unique histories, culture, needs and wishes. But all units should give these challenges explicit consideration. The challenges are not ranked and should be seen to be of equal importance.

- Student Life, Learning and Success

- Academic Quality/Curriculum
- Engagement
- Working Across Boundaries/Interdisciplinarity
- Faculty Renewal

Student Life, Learning and Success

Challenge: *Fostering a supportive curricular and co-curricular learning environment that empowers students for life while ensuring timely degree completion.*

Academic and non-academic student support must be reflective of the changing expectations of students and society. SFU's aim in addressing this challenge is to further enhance an already inclusive and effective learning community by embracing diversity and ensuring all students have the support and resources needed to succeed. This must include the highest standards of undergraduate and graduate supervision, mentoring and tutoring. Language and diversity should not be barriers to learning, participation and engagement for undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty and staff. We should grow further opportunities at SFU that foster communities of learning, practice and common interest through both curricular and extracurricular activities.

Effective learning can only happen in a respectful and safe learning environment. SFU must ensure that its policies and training are in place and provide additional support and education so that all of its students feel supported, heard and safe throughout their academic careers.

A quality and relevant learning environment plays an important part in a successful student experience. SFU must always seek to improve its future learning environment by providing the infrastructure and technological backbone necessary for contemporary teaching and learning.

Academic Quality/Curriculum

Challenge: *Embracing a coherent curriculum review with focus on innovating curriculum design and delivery.*

Our curriculum is defined by the courses we offer, what we teach in them and how the courses combine to lead to degree completion. SFU's curriculum has been built by sequential growth over a 50-year history. Over time, it has become vast and complex. Built with the best of intentions and excellence in mind, and by a culture focused on individual courses as much as program needs, the curriculum represents continued strengths and remains relevant and valid. But times change, knowledge advances, and there is turnover in faculty.

To facilitate students' demand for knowing exactly what knowledge and skills they will learn by completing their degree, SFU needs to continue progress in defining institutional, program and course level educational goals and learning outcomes, evaluate the effectiveness of SFU's WQB (general education) requirements in meeting the goals and objectives that led to their creation and make progress indigenizing the curriculum.

An innovative and progressive curriculum should be packaged and delivered in a manner that is easy to navigate and understand, including intuitive and published paths to degree completion. SFU's practice of allocating variable credit for courses may not be intuitive to all students, and may no longer meet intended purpose.

Ongoing thought needs to be dedicated to diversity of pedagogy and flexible course delivery to meet existing and anticipated societal demands. Access to diverse and integrated learning opportunities for all students in all Faculties is encouraged.

Timely completion of a relevant and meaningful degree is important. Course access and scheduling are not to be impediments for students.

Curriculum redesign needs to pay close attention to the right balance of realistic enrolments, unit level content, opportunities for access to unique and transformative learning experiences, and the fostering of learning communities.

Engagement

Challenge: *Strengthening the connection and collaborations between SFU and the world.*

Community engagement at SFU should have a strong focus on creating a doorway to deeper enquiry and meaningful dialogue. Building on its traditional strengths, SFU has the capacity to lead the call to action to accelerate and scale up the modern university's role to help build social infrastructure and improve society's prospects.

Increasing opportunities for experiential learning, work integrated learning, non-credit and international experiences should be a priority to help students, faculty and staff become even more community and globally engaged.

SFU should grow opportunities for all our students to access academic programming and experience advancing skills in innovation and entrepreneurship to position them to be changemakers of tomorrow.

Bridging Divides/Interdisciplinarity

Challenge: *Seeking opportunities for research and teaching collaboration to advance defining themes of our times and to offer innovative academic credentialing.*

Today's societal needs and expectations demand interdisciplinary scholarship and innovative degrees.

Interdisciplinary scholarship can be supported by incentivizing and rewarding teaching and research collaboration across disciplines, and by growing opportunities for students to access interdisciplinary clusters of scholars and programming to understand and advance contemporary challenges that define our times.

Academic planning over the next five years should explore how academic units can partner with thematic research centres and institutes to offer undergraduate and graduate courses and

programming, implying a rethink of the role of research centres and institutes to augment programming in creative ways.

The opportunity is timely to consider offering innovative degree credentials with special foci on thematic minors addressing important contemporary questions, joint and dual degrees, and laddering and stacking leading to degree completion.

Faculty Renewal

Challenge: *Academic hiring and career incentives that advance fundamental knowledge, improve the lives of the world's citizens and bring research to our students.*

SFU is anticipating a growing number of academic vacancies in the years ahead. Strategic development of longer term Faculty Renewal Plans is mission critical to advancing competitive scholarly excellence, the undergraduate and graduate student experience, and SFU's Vision. Faculty Renewal Plans and academic planning must align, and should explicitly acknowledge that research and teaching are not two co-existing solitudes, but overlap significantly. Academic planning for the next five years at the unit level should address and guide the right balance of present and anticipated future academic appointments, paying close attention to equity, diversity and indigenization. Units are encouraged to explore the possibility of cross- and joint appointments, grant-tenured faculty and professors of professional practice to support the teaching, research and engagement missions, as should the possibility of endowed chairs recognizing advancement opportunities. Academic hiring should align with unit level research strengths, seek to help build university-wide areas of research strength and especially those aligned with the priorities of SFU's Strategic Research Plan, and the fulfill the needs of a curriculum taking into account the "Academic Quality/Curriculum" challenge noted earlier.

SFU is not securing the share of prestigious external faculty awards one might expect given rankings and underlying metrics. A committee has been struck to increase nominations. But award laddering is a prerequisite to success. Faculties and their academic units are encouraged to seek in-house awards as well as strategically nominating their faculty, staff and students for disciplinary awards to help build the strongest possible cases.

Unit level academic planning also should explicitly address how it will advance SFU's ongoing efforts to continue to build opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in research, and for graduate and post-doctoral students to have the best possible supervisory experience.

4. Summary

These challenges and the response to them by the Faculties and Departments/Schools leading to the Academic Plan 2018-2023 aim to maintain, as an overriding academic outcome, a supportive environment consistent with the highest academic standards that allow students to acquire knowledge, skills and experience relevant to their aspirations and needs.

The process challenges all of us to focus our attention in the next five years primarily on our curriculum and academic programming options, with an eye to critical self-reflection and a quest to be strategic,

bold and innovative. Such reflection requires thinking broadly and in an expanded time horizon, and a willingness to address difficult or uncomfortable questions, to make tough decisions and to embrace change. Taking planning to action then requires capacity for timely, decisive and nimble action.

The 2018-2023 Academic Plan will be a social contract between the stakeholders and the shareholders, between ourselves, our students, civil society and government. Designed correctly, it will be a road map to guide our way forward. It does not seek change overnight. It recognizes that progress often is incremental and evolutionary, although it can on occasion be revolutionary.

The 2018-2023 Plan acknowledges that there is strength and inherent excellence in our diversity and difference in thought and approach across campus, that this requires understanding, respect and tolerance of divergent points of view, that calculated risk taking is encouraged, that leadership should be rewarded, and that there must be a mechanism and commitment to allow good ideas and innovations to be moved from pilot to steady-state, accepting that there will be ongoing activities, initiatives and efforts that should not be expected to last forever.

Appendix 1

Process and Timeline

The process underlying the creation of this Academic Plan follows SFU's *Senate Guidelines for Academic Plans*. The process seeks to be participatory, consultative and transparent. The different steps and timeline in the process are as follows:

1. Initial brainstorming at a Deans' retreat (June 15/16, 2017)
2. Creation of a 'Contexts, Challenges and Questions' document by the Vice-President Academic and Provost (September 2017)
3. Discussion of the 'Contexts, Challenges and Questions' document with the Deans (October 2017)
4. Revision of the 'Contexts, Challenges and Questions' document (October 2017)
5. Consultation with Chairs/Directors/faculty (November 2017)
6. Faculty and departmental planning (November 2017 to March 2018) - Faculties are expected to have draft plans ready by the end of April 2018, and final plans submitted to the VPA by the end of May 2018. Faculties that have started their plans should review them and ensure the challenges in this document are addressed.
7. Development of the Academic Plan 2018-2023 will reflect Faculty and Department Plans/initiatives (June 2018). The Academic Plan to Senate, etc. for discussion, and approval will take place in summer 2018.

Appendix 2

Questions for Faculty and Departmental Academic Planning

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CLIMATE

- Is the plan taking into consideration needs and growth opportunities at the Surrey campus?
- Has financial prudence, efficiencies and sustainability been given consideration?
- Are anticipated resource requirements to meet stated planning objectives and associated activities realistically aligned with contemporary financial and operational reality?

DEMOGRAPHICS AND ENROLMENTS

- Do the plans address potential for decline in traditional domestic demand, strategic growth opportunities in demand by diverse populations and international students, and opportunity for enrolment growth in international markets currently underrepresented?
- Has the balance of undergraduate to graduate students been given explicit consideration?
- Is the unit level plan aligned with SFU Strategic Enrolment Planning and associated recruitment and retention strategies?

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Has the planning process identified and challenged historical assumptions and established practice? Has it explicitly addressed a changing world and ongoing relevance, excellence and quality in curriculum design and delivery?
- Did the planning explicitly take into consideration calls for action arising from Aboriginal Truth and Reconciliation initiatives? Does the programming acknowledge different ways of knowing and learning, including Indigenous perspectives?
- Does the plan address equity and diversity?
- Is there a plan on how educational goals and learning outcomes at the program and course levels will explicitly address and communicate how courses connect to build an academic program, and how learning will prepare for life and today's job market as well as, of course, program specific expertise? Does the plan address how the unit knows that educational goals and learning outcomes are addressed in the curriculum, measured and achieved?
- Is the path to degree completion intuitive and achievable in a timely manner?

STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND SUPPORT

- Did planning explicitly consider evidence from student satisfaction surveys?
- Has the plan explicitly addressed students' needs and expectations?
- How does the plan take into consideration the multiple dimensions of student support and how does it seek ways to team up with support for students offered elsewhere on campus?

- How does the plan address SFU's diverse student body and associated opportunities and challenges, including international students?
- Has the plan explicitly explored possibility of establish vibrant learning communities and extra-curricular communities of common interest or practice?

ACCELERATING GROWTH OF NEW KNOWLEDGE AND RISE OF "PROFESSIONALISM"

- Has the planning explicitly addressed opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary academic programming?
- How does the plan seek to bridge the historical divide between "teaching" and "research"?
- How does the plan seek opportunities to grow work-integrated learning and community-engaged learning opportunities?
- Does academic program delivery develop skills to learn for life and participate in the labour market?
- As appropriate, does the programming engage with civil society, the economy and governance at large?

CHANGING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- How does the plan capitalize on the opportunities as well as manage the challenges of a physical multi-campus environment?
- How does the plan advance transition towards growing opportunities for our students to access learning in a flexible, blended environment accessible both on and off campus?
- Does the plan explore ways to build learning communities and communities of shared interest and practice?
- What are the priorities for changes to our physical and virtual environments to enable excellence in teaching and learning?

K-12 CURRICULUM CHANGE

- Has the plan explicitly addressed implications of K-12 curriculum changes?

ACCESS AND DEGREE CREDENTIALS

- Have possibilities of leading or participating in thematic minor degree options, joint degrees and dual degrees been considered?
- Is programmatic laddering or stacking leading to degree completion of potential relevance and interest?
- Are there missed opportunities to explore professional degree options, especially at the master's level?
- Are there ongoing efforts to work with the Registrar on advancing the information about curricular and other relevant achievements communicated on transcripts and parchments?

DIVIDING OUR TIME

- Do the unit's workload and criteria documents explicitly address overlap in activities between teaching, research and service, and non-traditional scholarship as defined in the Collective Agreement?

- Has the plan explicitly addressed the composition of its academic community and especially the roles, opportunities and challenges of grant-tenured faculty, endowed chairs and professors of professional practice?

Appendix 3

Ongoing Operational Activities of Relevance to Academic Planning

There are a number of ongoing and planned activities and strategic planning issues of relevance to the 2018-2023 Academic Plan, including:

- **VPA Office Restructuring to add an Associate Vice-President, Teaching and Learning**

Following the recommendation of the 2015 Task Force on Flexible Education, SFU's Board of Governors has approved the creation of a new position of Associate Vice-President, Teaching and Learning to add capacity to the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost. Consequential restructuring is being planned and a search for the new position has commenced for appointment in 2018.

- **Student Recruitment, Retention and SEM**

Attracting and retaining the most qualified and capable students, creating opportunity to allow historically marginalized communities to gain better access to post-secondary education, meeting our program FTE targets, the ratio of undergraduate to graduate students, and being strategic about enrolment management remain ongoing priorities for the Vice-President, Academic. This includes exploration of broad-based admission policies, further investments in pathways and bridging programs, and strategic thinking about student retention, how to meet the needs and be attractive to potential students especially from south of the Fraser, and continuing to attract and retain highly qualified international students from all corners of the planet.

- **Faculty and Staff Recruitment**

The Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost is working closely with the Faculties on transitioning to a three-year Faculty Hiring Plan and associated planning framework.

- **Resources**

It remains a priority for the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost to continue to refine the current performance-based budget process to align resource allocation to reward performance and to incentivize new strategic initiatives that align with our academic priorities.

It remains an ongoing priority to work with the Faculties and academic units as well as the Offices of the President, Advancement, Research and International, External Relations and Finance to seek opportunities for additional resources in a challenging fiscal environment.

- **Strategic Priorities**

SFU has committed to investing in a number of strategic priorities, including Aboriginal Reconciliation, the Student Experience, Big Data, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Dialogue. These priorities, by

default, also are priorities for our academic planning, and already are directly and/or indirectly embedded in the previous pages.

- **Partnerships**

SFU is in ongoing conversations with other local, national and international post-secondary institutions to advance common goals. This includes facilitation of pathways and bridging of students into academic programs, shared academic programming through joint and dual degrees, student exchanges, etc.

- **Continuing Studies/Lifelong Learning**

The last few years have seen SFU's Continuing Studies/Lifelong Learning under revolving acting leadership. Securing steady, new leadership for Continuing Studies and facilitating Continuing Studies to develop its next strategic plan in close consultation with SFU and our communities are a priority.

- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity and a Respectful Working Environment**

Efforts are ongoing to invest in added capacity and support to ensure that academic practices and processes at SFU are respectful and supportive of equity, diversity and inclusivity, and that SFU offers a safe and respectful working environment.

- **Multi-Campus Environment**

SFU has invested opportunistically and strategically in a multi-campus environment. Understanding and managing the priorities, missions and relationship between the three physical locations of Burnaby, Surrey and Vancouver require ongoing reminder, attention and tweaking, especially as we see turnover in academic administrative leadership. There is recognition that not one model fits all and that each Faculty takes advantage of the multi-campus environment in a unique way. Facilitating ongoing conversation with administration, Faculties and Departments to ensure that all three physical locations remain vibrant and successful operations, meeting the needs of their communities and advancing strategic goals, remains a priority. The virtual environment is SFU's fourth campus. Recognizing and supporting infrastructure and programming to allow SFU to deliver a vibrant and timely virtual presence are another priority.

- **Information and IT Support**

Ongoing efforts to advance SFU's information management capacity to ensure access to timely, consistent and relevant data in support of planning and decision making remain a top priority, as does access to an IT infrastructure that seamlessly supports blended and online learning, the needs of scholarship, and participation and survival in a modern electronic world.

- **Review of Policies and Procedures**

Policies and procedures require periodic review to ensure that they maintain relevance and align with changing times. A systematic process to ensure that all academic and related policies and procedures are up-to-date will become a priority for the Vice-President, Academic over the next five years.

- **Working Groups and Reviews**

Two working groups have been established in recent months, one to develop workable strategies to further integrate undergraduate educational goals and learning outcomes in the fabric of SFU's teaching and learning environment, another to advance awareness of alternative methods of teaching and learning evaluation. A report has been initiated to advance on recommendations on how SFU can best support flexible education in the years ahead.