Faculty of Arts Academic Plan 2011-2015: Outcomes

Arts Faculty Council approved a five year Academic Plan in 2011. This plan was designed to move the Faculty forward, aligning with the four cornerstones articulated in the University of Alberta’s Strategic Plan, Dare to Discover. The overarching goal of this Academic Plan was to make the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta a destination of choice for faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students.

Four strategic areas of focus, as specified in the plan, are noted in bold below for which supporting goals were identified and agreed to by the Faculty. Actions taken by the Faculty are listed below each goal.

1. **Talented People: Engaged people (students, staff and faculty) are the key to a great Faculty.**
   Aligning with the University’s first cornerstone, people were the focus of this Academic Plan.

   Four goals were identified for this area of focus:

   a) **Celebration of Success: Recognize, promote and enhance our existing areas of excellence.**

      - Expanded and enhanced annual recognition events including Arts Staff Awards Night, Celebration of Research and A Festive Affair (event for retired faculty members).
      - Unveiled Teaching Wall in its current format in 2013.
      - Launched annual staff recognition barbeque.
      - Increased efforts to nominate Arts people for university and national awards.

   b) **Create a communications strategy articulating the vital roles and contributions of Arts education, creative work and scholarship across the University and beyond.**

      - Created the Community Affairs & Development Advisory Committee (CADAC) to develop a vision, mission and key messages for the Faculty.
      - Expanded and diversified Faculty communications channels to provide more opportunities to share the achievements of faculty, staff, students and alumni. This included establishing a bi-weekly internal newsletter for faculty and staff (Anthology), a monthly e-newsletter for alumni and friends (WOA Express), two blogs for alumni and supporters (WOA and Curious Arts) and a significant social media presence. The printed Faculty alumni magazine, *WOA (Work of Arts)* was
cancelled in order to provide resources and capacity for the new communications channels.

- Developed and distributed a Report to the Community in 2015; this was a new communications piece that had not been offered before.
- Reorganized Faculty of Arts intranet.
- Began to refocus Faculty and department websites on student recruitment.

\[c\) Increase collaboration with each other and involvement in our communities: local, national and international.\]

- Launched the Kule Institute for Advanced Study (KIAS) in 2010-11 to support collaborative and interdisciplinary research in the social sciences, humanities and fine arts. KIAS focuses on research with potential national and international recognition through initiatives such as dialogue, team and cluster grants; Kule Connect Cafés; and Around the World Conferences (which have now taken place four times).

- Expanded the breadth and depth of Community Service-Learning (CSL) opportunities for students, instructors and community partners to engage in mutually beneficial projects. The Humanities Program, both on campus and at Wings women’s shelter, increased its capacity to make post-secondary education accessible to a larger and more diverse range of adult learners.

  CSL created a Pathways program, which progresses students through CSL coursework, equips them with Not-for-Profit Board governance experience, enables students to achieve a Certificate in Community Engagement and Service-Learning, and offers paid internships with community organizations.

- Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) conducted courses leading to the Community Linguist Certificate (CLC) at Ermineskin First Nation and Alexis Nakota Sioux First Nation, bringing many of the Faculty’s summer school courses to these communities. These efforts have led to a total of 11 new CLC graduates so far. These courses were funded by support from Enbridge.

\[d\) Enhance and strengthen our commitment to diversity and inclusivity.\]

- Increased commitment to international students. Added an additional staff member to the international student team, and expanded the 2+2 articulation agreements. International student numbers increased from 1,253 in 2011/12 (18% of student
body) to 1,496 in 2015/16 (23% of student body). There remains much to do in attempting to diversify both the country of origin and the subject of study of our international students.

- Increased focus on Aboriginal student recruitment and Indigenous relations by hiring the Faculty’s first Aboriginal Student Advisor in 2012 and forming a Truth & Reconciliation Action Committee to address the recommendations of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Aboriginal student registrations increased from 132 in 2011/12 to 169 in 2015/16.

- It was difficult to increase diversity among tenure-stream faculty or staff with limited hires in the 2011-15 timeframe. This remains an area of concern, and needs to be addressed in the Faculty’s next academic plan.

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2. Educating engaged citizens, leaders and scholars.

Five goals were identified for this area of focus.

a) Review and reform the curriculum to ensure that our graduates are prepared as citizens, leaders and scholars for future challenges and opportunities.

- Launched the BA Renewal process in 2012, with the goal of developing a simpler, more flexible and sustainable BA program that provides Arts students with an exemplary undergraduate degree. Over the course of this academic plan, extensive stakeholder consultations, working groups, round table discussions and town hall meetings were conducted. The BA Renewal proposal was approved by Arts Faculty Council in 2016, and will continue on the governance pathway toward implementation in fall 2018.

b) Develop an enhanced and consistent international strategy.

- Implemented the international student engagement plan. One of the key outcomes of the engagement plan is the hiring of an AWE student, and the establishment of outreach activities to international students, faculty and staff. The AWE position is funded through the Economics Market Modifier and is co-supervised by International and AWE. International student engagement will continue to be a key area of focus for the international team over the next five years.

- Capped international student numbers at 20%, and aimed to diversify students’ countries of origin and their areas of study. Although diversification has not been achieved to the degree hoped (Arts is currently at 85% Chinese international students, compared to 70% for the UAlberta average), the number of institutions in China from which Arts students originate has been increased. Work has also been undertaken to encourage international students to focus on majors other than economics.

- Increased the GPA required to continue in economics, which has resulted in some international students starting to select other majors.

- Worked towards the development of a Canadian Studies program. Due to lack of interest from international students, this has not been pursued further.

- Grew international student numbers through the increase of the 2+2 articulation agreements from two to four agreements. Students from these cohorts now represent 30-40% of incoming international students and provide a stable and reliable source of international students for the Faculty.
• Added two successful Education Abroad summer programs to the existing roster (Harbin, China with 40 students per year for the last two years; and Belgrade, Serbia with 12 students per year for the past two years).

• Introduced a spring term at the School in Cortona in 2012, which has proven to be the most popular term for students, surpassing both fall and winter enrolments. A total of 225 students were sent out on spring terms since 2012, which is nearly on par with the cumulative winter enrolments since 2010.

• Worked to improve the Bridging Program, and partnered with the e3 program in Berlin and Washington.

c) Emphasize the development of professional capacities that are vital for life-long learning and career growth, through increased experiential opportunities.

• Started Arts Work Experience (AWE) in 2011/12 as a pilot program, and confirmed it as a permanent program in 2014/15. Eight work terms were filled in 2011/12, compared to 66 in 2015/16 (including psychology internships). AWE also assisted with the launch of the Planning Program internship program in 2013/14.

• Partnered with eHUB to offer education, support and mentorship to students to assist them with entrepreneurial projects. Proposed the development of eHUB Creative, intended to increase the collaboration between Arts students and interdisciplinary eHUB teams. eHUB Creative is scheduled to launch in 2017.

• Significantly increased involvement in Community Service-Learning (CSL). In 2011/12, 799 students from across the university were registered in CSL, 44 instructors taught CSL courses and CSL worked with 102 community partners.

In 2015/16, 1,178 UAlberta students were registered in CSL, 49 instructors taught CSL courses and CSL worked with 154 community partners.

• Increased number of departments offering experiential learning opportunities such as field schools, practicums and hands-on experiences.

• Increased study abroad opportunities by offering new programs in China and Serbia, and increased the number of terms available at the School in Cortona.

• Continued to encourage students to apply for Roger S. Smith Undergraduate Researcher awards and participate in the Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI).

d) Offer continued and enhanced support in teaching and learning for faculty.
• Established APRIL (Arts Pedagogy Research and Innovation Laboratory) to assist faculty across departments by developing improved pedagogical strategies.

\( e) \ \text{Establish an Honours College to recruit the most talented students.} \)

• Chose not to proceed with the Arts Honours College after much research and strategic planning, because the University established the Peter Lougheed Leadership College. We plan to do an environmental scan of Honours programs to determine the best path forward.

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3. **Groundbreaking research and creative work.** The Faculty will develop and enhance its capacities and reputation for excellent research and creative works.

Four goals were identified for this area of focus.

**a) Build a larger, more prominent international presence through the creation of and participation in research networks, exchanges for faculty and students, and strategic partnerships, engaging in global and cross-cultural projects at all levels of research.**

- The Wirth Institute helped to increase the Faculty’s international presence (with visiting scholars, postdoctoral fellows and graduate students) under Joseph Patrouch, building on the strong international ties established by the institute's founding director, Franz Szabo. New cooperation agreements were signed with the University of Silesia in Poland and the University of Vienna.

The institute also formally established the Wirth Alumni Network with the election of its first board in 2012. The Network aims to cultivate and expand the contacts/relationships between various Central European scholars after their time at the Wirth Institute, as well as between these scholars and the Wirth Institute. The Network’s biennial international meetings were held in Budapest, Hungary (2012) and Prague, Czech Republic (2014).

- Established UAlberta’s European Union Centre of Excellence (one of five in Canada) to focus on encouraging multidisciplinary research and international collaboration on themes ranging from citizenship and multiculturalism, to governance, democratic development, and energy and the environment. The EUCE produces working papers and sponsors workshops, lectures and conferences. It also supports funded exchanges for researchers, postdoctoral fellows and students.

- Offered ongoing support to the Faculty of Arts-Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) exchange program, which facilitates short research visits by Arts and CASS researchers.

- Continued to support the Fulbright Visiting Research Chairs program (which brings American researchers to UAlberta for a term), hosting five scholars between 2011 and 2015.

**b) Identify and encourage transformational research and creative opportunities, and obtain sustainable funding and other resources for them.**

- Re-evaluated the ways the Faculty supports researchers after the Research Services Office (RSO) was reorganized. In response, established the position of
Research Coordinator to offer support to researchers, especially during the grant application process.

- Continued internal funding through the Support for the Advancement of Scholarship (SAS) Research Fund and the Faculty of Arts Conference Fund.
- Improved the provision of technical support to researchers by the Arts Resource Centre (ARC), including in-kind contributions to major research projects and grant applications.
- Launched the Arts Research Newsletter (a regular vehicle for alerting researchers to funding opportunities, supports and services).

c) **Augment the impact of our research and creative works by increasing collaboration among faculty and students across the Faculty and University, and with our community partners, local, national and international.**

- Established Arts Collaboration Enterprise (ACE) to facilitate governance, finance, HR and communications support for centres and institutes. ACE enables centres and institutes to develop collaborations across the University, as well as with community, national and international partners.
- Supported major conferences, including the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA) in 2012, the 22nd International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development Biennial Meeting (ISSBD) in 2012 and the International Cognitive Linguistics Association (ICLA) in 2013.

d) **Support innovative graduate training, encourage networking opportunities and provide outlets for graduate student research and creative work.**

- Developed an MA in Gender & Social Justice Studies in the Department of Women’s & Gender Studies.
- Worked on a Master of Policy Studies (work in process).
- Held a workshop on “The Future of the PhD” to bring together students and department representatives to learn from a group of international thought leaders.
- Took part in the PhDiversification project with FGSR, aimed at identifying and understanding career paths for PhD students, and how the institution can support those varied paths.
- Continued to support FGSR in its new direction to encourage graduate students to take part in an internship term.

- Established small funds for graduate students for travel and professional opportunities (a result of advancement initiatives).

- Encouraged Arts students to be active in various "3-minute thesis" events, providing them with experience of presenting their work to a broad audience in a very brief format.

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4. **Pathways to excellence.** We must identify those developments and improvements that are required to support the Faculty as it strives to meet the above-mentioned goals.

Three goals were identified for this area of focus.

   a) **Enhancing and revitalizing critical resources and space such as for research, performance, and exhibition, labs or other space-sensitive programs.**

      - Undertook a significant amount of work for the development of Galleria, a downtown location for the Departments of Music and Art & Design. The Galleria project is contingent on the availability of federal and provincial funding which, to date, has not been forthcoming. Work continues to proceed on the architectural elements and the Faculty of Arts is providing input as requested. Meanwhile, the Faculty continues to advocate at the university level for improved space to meet the requirements of the Departments of Music and Art & Design.

      - Relocated USS to a more welcoming and accessible space for students on the main floor of Humanities Centre.

      - Consolidated some centres and institutes into the Arts Building to facilitate collaboration.

      - Moved the Parkland Institute to the Humanities Centre.

      - DEALT WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF TWO MUSIC HOUSES.

      - Began the Tory Building Retrofit Project in 2010 and continued through until 2011.

   b) **Develop a comprehensive IT strategy to ensure that the administrative, instructional, creative and research needs of the Faculty are met.**

      - Developed an excellent (but informal) working relationship between ARC and the Faculty Office's strategic team. This helped to better align ARC’s operations with the Faculty’s strategic direction to produce technology solutions that fulfil research and administrative needs with fast turnover and in-house support.

      - Made substantial improvements in directing grant applicants to ARC for consultation about their technology needs. This has helped researchers with their IT budgeting and in-kind contributions.

      - Migrated Faculty and department websites to Sitecore.
• Restructured the Research Computing and ARC Multimedia teams under one supervisor, which has improved the collaboration and efficiencies between the two teams, with several positive outcomes:
  ○ Event Support: ARC is now able to provide comprehensive solution packages that cover the full spectrum of researchers’ needs (e.g. audio/visual support, video recording and editing, websites, document submissions and registrations).
  ○ Multimedia Digitization: ARC rebuilt its multimedia digitization facility with enhancements in scale, quality and reliability. This has improved support for researchers while generating some additional revenue.
  ○ Grant Support: Because of efficiency improvements resulting from collaboration between the multimedia and computing teams, ARC has been able to provide better cost estimates and in-kind support for grant applications.
• Decided to keep the Research Computing and Multimedia units within the Faculty, which has resulted in direct access to specialized IT professionals who can fulfil the Faculty’s research, administrative and promotional needs at a minimal cost.
• The Arts Resource Centre developed Subline in 2015, an online platform that manages data collection, document submissions and reviews, online registrations and electronic payments. Because of the flexibility of customizing electronic forms, workflows, permissions and reports, Subline has shown great potential to become the solution platform for a wide range of research and administrative requirements.

Subline has already supported 16 projects and is currently being extended to facilitate the administrative workflow for awarding grants by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Several other research projects have been scheduled to launch on this platform in the first quarter of 2017.

c) **Responsive, effective, and efficient governance must be further encouraged within the Faculty of Arts.**

• Changed the scope of the Governance Coordinator position to work alongside associate deans, in addition to working within the Faculty’s administrative structure.

• Developed a consent agenda for Arts Faculty Council to create more space for real discussion.

• Undertook online surveys to solicit members’ views of the Faculty’s vision, mission and key messages (as part of Community Affairs & Development Advisory Committee [see 1b]).
• Provided a wide range of opportunities for faculty, staff and students to provide input and comment on the BA Renewal. (e.g., round tables, committees, town halls, online surveys).