

# RYERSON UNIVERSITY

## SPECIAL SENATE MEETING AGENDA

*Tuesday, January 15, 2008*

AGENDA  
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Tuesday, January 15, 2008  
Oakham House - Thomas Lounge

5: 30 p.m.

Light refreshments

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Meeting

- Introduction - President Sheldon Levy
- A Strategic Approach to Demand in the GTA - Paul Stenton, Vice Provost, University Planning
- Academic Planning Process Overview - Alan Shepard, Provost and Vice President Academic
- Roundtable Discussions

**Background:**

The Consultation Paper that will be used to guide the discussion as Ryerson's Academic Plan for the next five years is developed can be found at:

[www.ryerson.ca/about/provost/docs\\_policies/consultpaper.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/about/provost/docs_policies/consultpaper.pdf).

Hard copies will be available at the meeting.

A consultation was held with the Chairs, Directors and Deans (CDD) group on November 22 and subsequently with the Chairs and Directors in each Faculty separately to get input directly related to that Faculty. The Consultation Paper has evolved based on the input from these discussions. Following the consultation with the Senate, there will be consultations with faculty from groups of Departments and Schools, meetings with student groups, and a series of Town Hall meetings.

The ultimate target is to have an Academic Plan ready to present at a special meeting of the Senate in June, 2008 for its consideration.

Your ideas on Ryerson's future will be greatly appreciated.

**CONSULTATION PAPER**  
Leading toward  
**Ryerson University's Academic Plan: 2008-2013**

**Introduction**

*Learning Together*, Ryerson's Academic Plan for 2003-08, moved Ryerson ahead well beyond its expectations. Through its Master Planning process, the University is becoming a "City Builder". It has a vision that connects and engages it with its community. The next plan must continue to chart the course for Ryerson as an innovative and vibrant urban university. With its wealth of academic talent, an energetic student body, forward-thinking academic leadership, and an exciting downtown location, Ryerson can confidently move forward to the next stage in its 21<sup>st</sup> century development.

The purpose of this consultation paper is to set the stage for discussion of Ryerson's next plan. It is by no means an exhaustive look at where Ryerson should go – rather it is a framework upon which to build the conversation. The ultimate goal is to have the Academic Plan approved by the Senate by June 2008.

**Success of Ryerson's Academic Plan: 2003-08**

The current Ryerson plan established broad academic goals and its flexibility enabled the University to take advantage of opportunities as they arose. Four strategic priorities emerged during the Academic Plan cycle and Ryerson can point to remarkable successes in each:

***Student Engagement and Success***

- From 2003 to 2006, undergraduate program offerings increased from 38 to 50, with major expansion in arts and science through programs in Arts and Contemporary Studies, Social Sciences, and Contemporary Science, each with a number of upper-year options.
- Total undergraduate and graduate enrollment grew by nearly 5,000 students between Fall 2003 and Fall 2006. At the same time, quality indicators such as entering averages of students, retention rates, and graduation rates have shown steady improvement.
- The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), in which Ryerson has participated for the past two years, has become an integral part of University planning.

***Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity (SRC)***

- Ryerson has recruited some of the best and brightest faculty, both nationally and internationally. Between 2003 and 2006, 234 new tenure stream RFA faculty were hired, representing an increase of 119 to the tenure stream complement.
- Ten Canada Research Chairs have been appointed.
- External funding for research per faculty increased by 68% between 2002 and 2006, and Ryerson's first Vice President, Research and Innovation has been appointed.
- While there has been significant progress in the last five years, Ryerson remains significantly behind other comparable universities in its SRC intensity and output.

### *Graduate Program Development*

- Ryerson has enjoyed unprecedented success in initiating distinctive, high-quality graduate programs. Graduate studies at Ryerson University commenced in September 2000. By Fall 2003 (the beginning of the current five year Academic Plan), there were 8 masters programs, mainly in Engineering, and one doctoral program (*Communications and Culture*). Total graduate enrolment (headcount) was approximately 500.
- In Fall 2007 there were 27 masters programs and seven doctoral programs, with graduate work available in a range of programs in each Faculty. Total graduate enrolment was 1,640.
- Thus, Graduate Studies now has a significant presence at the masters level in all Faculties. Doctoral enrolment is concentrated in Engineering, and *Communications and Culture*.

### *Reputation Enhancement*

- Applications to undergraduate programs increased by 53% between 2002 and 2007. This year Ryerson's 17% increase in first choice applications by students entering from high school was the highest in the system (the overall increase for all applications was 9%).
- With several new buildings completed, the space needs of expanded programs and enrolment are gradually being addressed. Existing buildings have been refurbished; landscaping and new signage have made the campus more visible in the surrounding area. The recent addition of the Ted Rogers School of Management at the corner of Bay and Dundas has increased Ryerson's visibility in the city and its reputation in the world of business.
- The 2007 Globe and Mail "University Report Card" ranked Ryerson's academic reputation among large universities ahead of Concordia, York, Ottawa, Calgary and Manitoba. Ryerson came in third in student-faculty interaction, fifth overall among commuter campuses, and second in technology.

### **The Context for the Academic Plan: 2008-13**

Demographic projections and other factors affecting university participation indicate that the number of students wanting to attend university in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) may be 34 to 49 percent higher in 2021 than it is today. The Government of Ontario has recognized the potential shortage of places in the GTA universities and the need to expand university capacity. How the Ontario government will choose to deal with the increased demand is still uncertain. Ryerson must be poised to act appropriately and part of the planning process should be to anticipate possible scenarios and consider what Ryerson's response will be.

The prospect of further substantial expansion to help meet the projected needs presents both opportunities and risks for Ryerson. The conditions for growth set out by the Board of Governors are that it should be strategic, be used to leverage improvement and quality, and promote Ryerson's distinctive mission.

But Ryerson must develop its quality agenda with or without growth. The evolution of a high quality, innovative curriculum does not depend on the number of students on campus.

While the issue of potential growth will be a key driver of the new Academic Plan, there are other contextual considerations:

- The need for well-prepared graduates with generic, transferable knowledge and skills, as well as those with professional qualifications, and in particular, graduate degrees.
- The need for innovative research, particularly research that has direct applications in industry, infrastructure and systems that contribute to the prosperity and health of society.
- The effect of the establishment of local norms which balance the role of SRC, teaching and service, and the role that this will play in transforming University culture.
- The reality of Ryerson's downtown location, with very limited land, in conjunction with its role as a "City Builder" through its Master Plan.

### Foundation for the Plan

Ryerson's new Academic Plan must be forward thinking and bold. At the same time, aspirations for Ryerson in the next decade must be grounded in its commitment to quality and its mission, guided by two basic principles:

- Significant enrolment growth will only take place if the quality of teaching, SRC and student experience can be maintained or enhanced.
- Curriculum must serve students' needs, giving them knowledge and skills for a lifetime of changing career paths.

### Parameters for New Initiatives

As in the 2003-08 academic planning process, based on the University's Academic Plan, each Faculty will develop its own plan, with input from its schools/departments. Proposals for new strategic initiatives included in these plans must:

- Be achievable and fiscally sound.
- Continue to serve the University's Quality Agenda:
  - *Student Engagement and Success*
  - *Graduate Program Development*
  - *SRC*
  - *Reputation Enhancement.*
- Be responsive to societal need and student demand, and ensure career-ready graduates.
- Have measurable and demonstrable outcomes to allow progress to be tracked.

### Looking Forward

Innovation might be considered the overarching theme of the *Ryerson Academic Plan: 2008-2013*. In looking to its future, Ryerson can look to the models that are successful in other areas of enterprise. It can be driven by opportunity, be action oriented and build on community effort where anyone in the organization can help institute change. Ryerson is known for its ability to make things happen. The University can take advantage of its already "nimble" processes, and work to further streamline those processes to allow for new ideas to prosper and grow with as little hierarchical bureaucracy as possible. Ryerson can be a part of the enterprise that will help to build Toronto, Ontario and Canada.

An academic plan that can best move Ryerson in the right direction should address five main areas: Academic Programming, Academic Structures and Administrative Practices, SRC, Supporting Teaching and Learning, and Partnerships.

### *Academic Programming*

Academic programs are at Ryerson's core and future program development must be central to Ryerson's Academic Plan. Four topics relating to programs are suggested for discussion:

1. *Further development of high quality, innovative, cross-disciplinary programs among Faculties, schools and departments*

New program concepts that address societal needs, encourage collaboration, and reduce the "silo" effect of existing department-specific programs should be considered. There are many clear areas for collaboration that have already been identified, and many more that seem possible. There are clear intersections of fields of study that would benefit students dealing in today's global society. Ryerson could adapt its curriculum model to include double majors through the development of modules in specific areas, revisit the concept of minors, and develop five-year bachelor/masters programs that provide cross disciplinary educational opportunities.

While cross-disciplinary programs will be important for the future, it should be noted that there are still areas where disciplined based programs should be developed or matured.

2. *Determining the appropriate level of growth of current programs compared to new programs*

Ryerson must evaluate its whole program mix to ensure that its offerings meet both societal need and student demand, while supporting Ryerson's mission and maintaining quality. New programs must add constructively to the mix, and must be sustainable both academically and financially.

3. *Moving toward an appropriate mix of graduate and undergraduate programs*

While the increase in graduate enrollment has been remarkable over the past few years, compared with similar institutions Ryerson still has a low ratio of graduate enrolment to total enrolment. The potential exists for both graduate enrolment and the number of programs offered to continue to increase.

4. *The role of Continuing Education*

In addition to serving the life-long educational needs of adult learners, the Chang School, through its collaborative model with the Faculties, supports many existing programs. Students have made it clear that they would like more Spring and Summer semester courses to help them improve their academic skills and to advance in their programs. As Ryerson builds more flexibility into its programs, these expanded Spring/Summer offerings will become essential to student success. Such expanded offerings will also allow for greater usage of some facilities in the summer months. This expansion will require an evaluation of current funding structures.

***Evolution of Ryerson's academic structures and administrative practices to fit changing academic needs***

This is a good time in Ryerson's development to look at possible new structural organizations to support its future. The establishment of new Faculties may be very timely, as may the addition or reorganization of schools/departments. Academic administration processes that support the academic growth of the University should be assessed to ensure that Ryerson's ability to respond quickly is retained. Funding models should be reviewed where necessary, including the addition of incentives to promote curricular innovation and enhanced SRC and teaching. Staffing practices should support growth when and where it occurs. If Ryerson is to be an innovative University, its structures must support that innovation. At the same time, care must be taken not to add unnecessary and costly administrative structures that do not promote the University's mission.

***Supporting Teaching and Learning***

Student success and retention greatly depend on the teaching and learning environment of the University. Thus, the hiring of high quality faculty and support for, and recognition of, teaching excellence is critical to the academic plan. There must be continued support for the improvement of teaching and enhanced use of appropriate learning and teaching technology. Supports for student success must be assessed, and services provided in convenient and efficient ways which promote student access to those services. The development of spaces where students can get the support they need in a wide variety of areas will be essential.

***Growth in SRC and linkage of SRC to undergraduate and graduate education***

The scholarly research and creative activities of the University are the second key pillar of the academic enterprise, and both growth in SRC and its linkage to both graduate and undergraduate education is essential. Students at all levels should be engaged not only in the acquisition of knowledge, but also in the creation of knowledge and in the creative enterprise.

Ryerson has the opportunity to further its research efforts in societally-relevant areas, and must look at how to best move its SRC agenda ahead and where its efforts should best be targeted. An SRC plan for the next five years is being developed in conjunction with the academic plan, and it should include further clarification of the how to stimulate and measure creative activity as part of the whole SRC enterprise. The SRC plan must be innovative, support Ryerson's direction, and lead to a significant improvement in SRC intensity and output.

Ryerson's library will play a key role in the expansion and support of SRC, and care must be given to expand the library and its resources to support not only faculty research and creative activity, but both undergraduate and graduate SRC.

***Partnerships with other public and private sector institutions, in Canada and internationally***

Ryerson's location gives it an exceptional competitive advantage that can be used to develop new joint arrangements with business, health care and governmental organizations. There are already many such partnerships in play, and those can be expanded and new ones developed. Partnerships may also extend to institutions in other countries, through joint degrees that will give GTA-based students international experience, preparing them for careers and lives that are likely to be global. Ryerson must look for new and unique partnerships which support its quality agenda.

The innovative approach to education can also take advantage of Ryerson's unique position in the GTA. For example, students can be paired with mentors from the community who can assist them in the development of their creative ideas in business, or social policy, or politics, or any number of areas where students can become enterprising. Ryerson is already known for its experiential learning opportunities, and its location can provide increasing opportunities for students to be engaged in coop programs, internships and placements. Service learning can provide students with increase opportunities to put their knowledge to work in providing creative solutions where they are most needed. There are many high quality experiential opportunities that are still untapped, and Ryerson must be creative in its use of its urban resources to further engage its students.

In the next five years, Ryerson should become a place sought after by those who wish to form innovative partnerships.

#### **Planning Process**

A series of consultations with Deans, Chairs, Directors, and Departments and Schools will be held in the next few months. There will be a special meeting of the Senate on Academic Planning, and there will be a variety of Town Hall meetings. A draft Academic Plan should be ready by mid-March. The ultimate goal is to present the final plan for Senate's consideration at a special meeting in June, 2008.

The Plan itself will be a high level academic vision for the University as a whole. Following the approval of the plan, each of the Faculties, in conjunction with their Departments and Schools, will be asked to develop plans by late Fall 2008.

#### **Summary**

Ryerson University is at a critical point in its development. It is a University on the move – building its quality, its SRC, its reputation and its place in the GTA, Ontario and Canada. Its growth is remarkable and ongoing. The next five years will see challenges not foreseen five years ago – or perhaps even now. The uncertainties around the requirement for growth – both physically and in numbers – mean that the flexibility which made its last academic plan so successful must be retained. Ryerson must be able to respond to opportunities that present themselves in the future, and be poised to respond.

Ryerson is a vibrant university. Its academic plan must support the innovations that will continue to keep it that way.



## SUMMARY OF FACILITATORS' REPORTS – ACADEMIC PLAN

### SPECIAL MEETING OF SENATE - JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup> 2008

*General comments by Facilitators regarding the Process: A great deal of enthusiasm was expressed for the opportunity to speak and to be heard. They were also pleased with the opportunity to speak with some of the senior administrators in the University and the sharing of knowledge that they provided.*

**The following are ideas presented by the Senators at the Senate meeting of January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 and reported by the Facilitators.**

#### **1) The Context for the Academic Plan: 2008-13**

- a) There is pressure on Ryerson to grow
  - a. Growth must not be at the cost of quality.
  - b. Without sufficient funding from the government, growth is not a good option.
  - c. Colleges and other universities outside the GTA have expressed interest in the GTA.
- b) Student study, meeting and housing space:
  - a. There is a need for places for students to live, work and gather in and around the campus.
  - b. We need to provide ways for students to be engaged in the university.
  - c. We need to build a sense of community.
  - d. Meeting these needs is also part of building a quality reputation.
- c) Amount of Growth:
  - a. We could double the size.
  - b. We could establish a second campus.
  - c. We could expand the present downtown campus.
  - d. We could support the establishment of a new university in the GTA.
  - e. Not all programs are in a position to grow.
  - f. There is capacity in the sciences to grow (perhaps a new faculty of science).
  - g. We should grow only where there is student demand.
  - h. Faculties that are resource-dependent should not be forced to grow without resources.
  - i. Creating brand new programs is expensive.
  - j. There is a risk of overpopulating the workforce with even more graduates in areas where there is not sufficient demand.
  - k. We need to gain efficiencies that accommodate larger classes.

d) **Quality:**

- a. Quality is not easy to define.
- b. Quality does not mean increases in class size.
- c. Quality does mean more classrooms and hiring more faculty.
- d. Growth should be as soon as possible.
- e. We should develop the innovation side and build our reputation as a quality university.
- f. We need to incorporate into the plan how to build our reputation as a quality university and think about how this fits into the workplace regarding hiring.
- g. One way to define quality is through
  - i. Having the best library;
  - ii. More awards; and
  - iii. Good scholars.
- h. Some feel the higher the tuition the higher the quality of the education.

e) **Student Application Quality:**

- a. There is a concern about student application quality if we grow too much.
- b. Many would prefer to teach the cream of the crop.

2) **Academic Programming**

a) **Interdisciplinary studies:**

- a. We should institute Double majors.
- b. Students want freedom to pursue intellectually what they are interested in.
- c. The nature of the work force has changed.
- d. What is required today is a graduate with a wider scope and understanding.
- e. There is one proviso: there should be the proper structure and proper direction.

b) **Cross-disciplinary programs:**

- a. We should not be trendy.
- b. Life long generalist education may conflict with professional accredited education.
- c. There are good possibilities for cross-disciplinary programs – this was referred to as the “atom-smashing concept” – the principle of creating new programs from existing ones.

c) **The administrative structure at Ryerson must allow for change:**

- a. We need an evolution of Ryerson’s academic structures and administrative practices to fit changing academic needs.
- b. There was also perceived to be a need to make sure that change comes from the centre and is not downloaded on departments.

- c. In the current system students cannot make lateral moves within programs.
- d) **Minors:**
  - a. We should redefine and expand minors.
  - b. We should ask students what they want.
  - c. Instituting minors may mean the reorganization of Faculties and cross appointments.
- e) **The mix between graduate and undergraduate programs:**
  - a. We need both.
  - b. We need a good undergraduate base.
  - c. Funding for graduate students is low compared to some other places.
  - d. There is also a need to address work load issues relative to graduate students; i.e. not just the courses taught but student supervision.
  - e. The graduate level still has a lot of room for growth to bring it into proportion with the undergraduate offerings.
  - f. Graduate studies also brings in more money per student so it is a viable economic model for future growth (especially the PhD)
  - g. Graduate programs leverage research.
  - h. PhD graduates are required for growth.
- f) **Superstar faculty:**
  - a. We should bring in a small number of superstar faculty.
  - b. There is a precedent in health care networks.
- g) **Continuing Education:**
  - a. We need to reflect on CE.
  - b. Departments should be encouraged to look at their own academic structures and champion change.
  - c. There are monetary and timetabling issues to be resolved regarding CE.
  - d. Running courses through CE, and hiring part-time instructors somewhat disconnects students from our SRC agenda.
  - e. The old thinking about "spring/summer" has to go.
  - f. CE has a tradition of "adult learning".
  - g. CE is also a good place for professional development which ties into our mandate of keeping us current with industry.
  - h. Integrating CE with the schools and faculties should be more internally consistent.
  - i. Each program has a slightly different way of dealing with CE which is sometimes confusing.
  - j. Some concern was expressed about singling out continuing education for a new role.

- 3) Supporting Teaching and Learning
  - a) There is a need for TAs.
  - b) Capstone courses allow students to engage in creative problem-solving with business and industry and are more important than co-ops or internships.
  - c) Supporting teaching means also supporting staff.
    - a. There is an existing problem with the level of administrative support, especially at a local level.
    - b. We should dispel the idea that there are teaching faculty and research faculty which creates status and morale problems.
  - d) The quality and outside experience of the faculty makes a difference to the students and how they perceive their program.
    - a. Students like to have faculty who have had some experience in the workplace
- 4) Growth in SRC and linkage of SRC to undergraduate and graduate education
  - a) We need to enhance the research culture at Ryerson:
    - a. There were two schools of thought with no final consensus:
      - i. build research on existing strengths found in the professional programs
      - ii. build in areas where there are greater established research opportunities
      - iii. build professional program research by encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration
  - b) Undergraduates and SRC:
    - a. We need to promote SRC more among undergraduates,
    - b. Undergraduates want to get involved in research.
  - c) We need new ways of thinking of SRC – publishing is old fashioned.
- 5) Partnerships with other public and private sector institutions, in Canada and internationally
  - a) If Ryerson does not do it then the private sector is going to take over.
    - a. We should establish housing partnerships.
    - b. We need to develop some new revenue streams in order to get capital funding.
    - c. Our location is good in terms of the community, with hospitals and businesses and others downtown.
    - d. We are also in a good position to develop clinical or field practice

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## WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO BE IN THE PLAN:

- a) There needs to be specific mention of facilities to support all the above.
  - a. Not only do we need more space, we also need to have a commitment to renovating existing teaching and learning spaces to attract and keep students and faculty.
  - b. Ryerson is in the middle of downtown but there is a sense that there is no centre for students to emphasize their sense of belonging.
- b) There is a need for greater congruence between academic and master planning
  - a. Academic planning is problematic when it is unclear what space and building options will be available or what academic areas are likely to be earmarked for development.
  - b. On the local level, there was a view that new buildings need to include an expanded library, build office spaces for faculty and better student amenities such as lounges, sports and cultural facilities.
- c) Ryerson needs to address the on-going infrastructure needs of existing programs to create sustainable programs.
  - a. A good infrastructure would provide a key foundation for the future as programs grow, morph and/or consolidate into new interdisciplinary hybrids in the years ahead.
  - b. This requires a carefully-conceived, transformative and flexible design model that would enable both expansion and greater inter-disciplinary opportunities.
- d) It is important to maintain access and diversity of students.
  - a. We need to look at it who is here and who is not here.
  - b. We need to make sure all this growth does not decrease diversity in our student population.
- e) Specialization/differentiation between universities is an ongoing issue.
  - a. We need to think about how to combine two conflicting development models (Ryerson vs. the more traditional universities).
- f) People are not in this document – students, faculty, administration, etc.
  - a. When we increase the quality of intake of students we must ask ourselves whether quality should only be measured by grades.
  - b. When we hire faculty we must ask ourselves whether we should only hire PhDs.
- g) Ryerson does not have much of a detailed teaching/mentoring process in place –
  - a. There are orientation seminars in the summer, but not much after that.
- h) We must include something on Social Values
  - a. There was some discussion of “social values” and “citizenship.”

- b. We need to be mindful of our social responsibility in terms of who we take money from (e.g. private corporations).
- i) The role of service areas need to be addressed.:
  - a. The Registrar
  - b. Student finance –the most critical aspects
  - c. Finance and the HR process.
- j) We need some mention in the plan about workload norms, particularly with regard to the attraction of Faculty.
- k) Another thing that needs to be mentioned is access to part-time studies for people who work.
- l) International students are an important topic.
  - a. People are hoping that we will have more of a mix when there is more money.
- m) Blended and Online Learning has not been specifically addressed.
  - a. We should look at ways to solve physical space, increase engagement and flexibility.
  - b. We need computer labs and simulations, but we don't need so many physical labs any more.
  - c. Connectivity and students spaces are more important.
- n) We need to include the alumni more.