



8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC
Canada V5A 1S6

TEL: 778.782.3925
FAX: 778.782.5876

vpacad@sfu.ca
www.sfu.ca/vpacademic

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate **DATE** November 13, 2013
FROM Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and **PAGES** 1/1
Provost, and Chair, SCUP
RE: Faculty of Science: External Review of the Faculty of Health Sciences (SCUP 13-55)

At its November 6, 2013 meeting, SCUP reviewed and approved the Action Plan for the Faculty of Health Sciences that resulted from its External Review.

Motion:

That Senate approve the Action Plan for the Faculty of Health Sciences that resulted from its External Review.

Encl.

c: J. O'Neil
J. Driver

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Jon Driver", written in a cursive style.



8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC
Canada V5A 1S6

TEL: 778.782.4636
FAX: 778.782.5876

avpcio@sfu.ca
www.sfu.ca/vpacademic

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Jon Driver, Chair, SCUP **DATE** October 29, 2013
FROM Gord Myers, Associate Vice President, **PAGES** 1/1
 Academic and Associate Provost
RE: External Review of the Faculty of Health Sciences

Attached are the External Review Report and the Action Plan for the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Excerpt from the External Review Report:

"Viewed as a whole, the Faculty of Health Sciences has made remarkable accomplishments since its creation in 2004: articulated a compelling vision with a distinctive emphasis on interdisciplinarity; recruited excellent new faculty members and staff; established the physical space in a new 3-story complex...with state of the art teaching and laboratory space; created interdisciplinary curricula for undergraduate and graduate programs...; substantially increased research productivity...; built local and global partnerships...."

Motion:

That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Action Plan for the Faculty of Health Sciences that resulted from its external review.

Following the site visit, the Report of the External Review Team* for the Faculty of Health Sciences was submitted in April 2013. The Reviewers made a number of recommendations based on the Terms of Reference that were provided to them. Subsequently, a meeting was held with the Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences and the Vice President, Academic to consider the recommendations. An Action Plan was prepared taking into consideration the discussion at the meeting and the External Review Report. The Action Plan has been endorsed by the Vice President, Academic.

SCUP recommends to Senate that the Faculty of Health Sciences be advised to pursue the Action Plan.

***External Review Team:**

Harvey Skinner, Faculty of Health, York University (Chair, Review Team)
 Delsworth Harnish, Department of Pathology and Molecular Medicine, McMaster University
 Jane Springett, School of Public Health, University of Alberta
 Michael Plischke (internal), Simon Fraser University

Attachments:

1. External Review Report (April 2013)
2. Faculty of Health Sciences Action Plan

cc John O'Neil, Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences

April 3, 2013

External Review of the Faculty of Health Sciences

Simon Fraser University

February 27 – March 1, 2013

Reviewers

Dr. Harvey Skinner, York University (Chair of Review Team)

Dr. Delsworth Harnish, McMaster University

Dr. Jane Springett, University of Alberta

Dr. Michael Plischke, Simon Fraser University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) has articulated a compelling vision to be “a leader in the generation and mobilization of interdisciplinary knowledge to understand and improve health and wellbeing”. The vision is being accomplished through the provision of interdisciplinary education and research enabled by partnerships with local, national and global organizations and communities. This vision also includes an overarching focus on reducing health inequities with a commitment to social justice.

Viewed as a whole, the Faculty of Health Sciences has made remarkable accomplishments since its creation in 2004:

- Articulated a compelling **vision** with a distinctive emphasis on interdisciplinarity.
- Recruited excellent **new faculty** members and staff:
- Established the **physical space** in a new 3-story complex (Blusson Hall) with state of the art teaching and laboratory space.
- Created **interdisciplinary curricula** for undergraduate and graduate programs:
 - Bachelor of Arts Program (BA) in September 2006; Bachelor of Science Program (BSc) in September 2007.
 - Masters of Public Health (MPH) program in September 2005, accredited by the US-Based Council on Education for Public Health in 2010.
 - Masters of Science (MSc) program in 2009 and PhD program in 2011.
- Substantially increased **research productivity**. Overall research funding has grown to more than \$8 million dollars per annum, with \$3.3 million per annum from the prestigious and competitive CIHR.
- Built **local and global partnerships**. The Faculty has established some very effective partnerships in the greater Vancouver area (e.g. Fraser Health Authority), Provincial Collaborations (e.g. Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research) and international partnerships notably in China and India.

However, the Faculty of Health Sciences has undergone a very rapid, likely too rapid, growth over its initial years. Most of the faculty members were new to SFU and a large proportion at a junior level (Assistant Professor not yet tenured). This has caused stress for the relatively small number of senior faculty members and staff in leadership and service roles for creating the new Faculty. Now is the time to consolidate the impressive gains that have been accomplished, and set the stage for FHS to seize opportunities in a rapidly changing educational climate. For example, the proposed expansion of the Surrey Campus provides an impressive strategic opportunity for the FHS to expand its faculty and staff complement, create new education programs, expand research, and build new partnerships through community engagement. Critical issues must be addressed to consolidate FHS and create a solid foundation for seizing these opportunities.

1. **Strengthen the FHS Culture of Shared Vision, Trust and Teamwork.** A 6-9 month process is recommended that fully engages faculty members, staff and students around establishing a shared understanding and consolidation of the FHS culture. This process

should be guided by a highly skilled, external facilitator to ensure that all sectors of the FHS to have a voice.

2. **Improve Staff Functioning.** A comprehensive review is needed of staff roles and responsibilities, clarity of policies and procedures, and infrastructure support. An external consultant with expertise in human resources should be engaged to undertake this review including an implementation plan. This recommendation should be acted upon quickly.
3. **Address Enrolment Concerns.** The FHS Dean negotiates with the VP Academic regarding support for smoothing out the yearly enrolments in the FHS. This may require an OTO strategic investment by the VP Academic whereby FHS is held safe from budget harm over one or two years to accomplish this recommendation.
4. **Fix problems regarding research support services.** Immediate attention is needed by VPs research and Administration (check titles and names) including ORS to improve research support services for the FHS, especially regarding the hiring and employment of Research Assistants.
5. **Address pressing concerns with FHS education programs including: the curriculum, student funding, strategic enrollment management, and professional development for faculty, staff and teaching assistants (TAs).** Both the Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee, working with the Dean and the Faculty Development Committee, need a coordinated plan to address these issues. Project management support will be needed.
6. **Clarify priorities and support for FHS centrally from SFU.** The VP Academic needs to work with the FHS Dean to clarify SFU priorities and support for the Faculty, and communicate this broadly (e.g. at Faculty Council).
7. **Maximize the Surrey Campus opportunity.** Prepare a strategic plan for FHS education and research at the Surrey Campus, in collaboration with other units, especially Kinesiology and Applied Science. Explore the development of innovative programs in partnership (e.g. joint undergraduate degree).

To stimulate creative thinking and action, we pose five **'Wicked' Questions**:

1. How can you mend the 'us and them' divides among staff – faculty – students to create high performing teams?
2. What would be the consequence of eliminating 30 % of undergraduate and graduate courses...what if you distill the main concepts and combine them in a single course?
3. How can you think differently and outside the regular academic assumptions in ways to integrate your education, research and community service programs – e.g. use the Surrey Campus opportunity as an 'innovation sandbox'?
4. How can you better recognize and celebrate the successes of your students, faculty and staff?
5. How can you best capture the local – global opportunities to create a sustainable Faculty that addresses the diverse challenges of academic institutions in the 21st century reality?

Table of Contents

I.	OVERVIEW	1
II.	RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS.....	2
III.	SOME UNDERLYING ELEMENTS FROM THE REVIEW	7
	1. Assessment of Four High Level Questions Posed for the Reviewers	7
	2. Some Additional Issues of Interest to the University and/or the Faculty	8
IV.	CONCLUSION	11

I. OVERVIEW

We congratulate Simon Fraser University (SFU) for its vision and bold step in establishing the new Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) in 2004. The Faculty has articulated a compelling vision to be “a leader in the generation and mobilization of interdisciplinary knowledge to understand and improve health and wellbeing”. This vision includes an overarching focus on reducing health inequities with a commitment to social justice. The vision is being accomplished through partnerships with local, national and global organizations and communities.

Viewed as a whole, the Faculty of Health Sciences has made remarkable accomplishments during this brief period:

- Articulated a compelling **vision** with a distinctive emphasis on interdisciplinarity.
- Recruited excellent **new faculty** members and staff: In the first four years the staff complement was hired and over 40 new faculty members were recruited nationally and internationally.
- Established the **physical space** in a new 3-story complex (Blusson Hall) with state of the art teaching and laboratory space.
- Created **interdisciplinary curricula** for undergraduate and graduate programs:
 - Bachelor of Arts Program (BA) in September 2006; Bachelor of Science Program (BSc) in September 2007. This program now has almost 1200 students.
 - Masters of Public Health (MPH) program in September 2005 offering concentrations in population health, global health, environmental and occupational, social inequities in health. This program was accredited by the US-Based Council on Education for Public Health in 2010. The program now has approximately 100 students.
 - Masters of Science (MSc) program in 2009 and PhD program was approved in 2011. There are approximately 50 students in this graduate research stream.
- Substantially increased **research productivity**. Overall research funding has grown to more than \$8 million dollars per annum, with \$3.3 million per annum from the prestigious and competitive CIHR. It is noteworthy that 92% of all FHS faculty members have research grants compared to 68% of SFU faculty. A high proportion of faculty members hold external salary awards including: 4 Canada Research Chairs, 5 Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research Career-New Investigator Salary Grants, 5 CIHR New Investigator Awards and 1 Grand Challenges Rising Star Award. The Faculty has established three centres of research and policy excellence: Children’s Health Policy Centre; Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction; Centre for The Study of Gender, Social Inequities and Mental Health.
- Built **local and global partnerships**. The Faculty has established some very effective partnerships in the greater Vancouver area (e.g. Fraser Health Authority), Provincial

Collaborations (e.g. Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research) and international partnerships notably in China, India and Africa.

We were impressed with the high level of engagement of faculty members, staff and students in the new Faculty. During the three very full days of the review, we noted both the enthusiasm of everyone for the new Faculty, pride about the many accomplishments, and openness about various issues and concerns facing the Faculty. A constructive, and at times concerned, tone permeated the large number of individuals that the reviewers met with. This helped the reviewers gain a deeper understanding of the critical issues now facing the Faculty.

Everyone acknowledges that the Faculty of Health Sciences has undergone a very rapid, likely too rapid, growth over its initial years. Everyone worked extremely hard and must have felt at times that they were “drinking from a fire hydrant” with the pressing workload. Most of the faculty members were new to SFU and a large proportion at a junior level (Assistant Professor not yet tenured). This has caused particular stress for the relatively small number of senior faculty members and staff in leadership and service roles for creating the new Faculty.

Now is the time to consolidate the impressive gains that have been accomplished, and set the stage for FHS to seize opportunities in a rapidly changing educational climate. For example, the proposed expansion of the Surrey Campus provides an impressive strategic opportunity for FHS to expand its faculty and staff complement, create new education programs, expand research, and build new partnerships through community engagement. However, there are some major issues that must be addressed to consolidate FHS and create a solid foundation for seizing these opportunities. The critical issues are addressed by seven key recommendations and proposed action steps.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

1. Strengthen the FHS Culture of Shared Vision, Trust and Teamwork

There are some deep issues concerning the faculty signaling that the desired respectful and high performing culture has not yet gelled. The Faculty has articulated a compelling vision but this needs to be broadly shared, understood and owned. How is interdisciplinarity, a hallmark of FHS, defined and operationalized? There are many universities embracing interdisciplinarity - what is the distinctive version of FHS (the Brand)? Also, there is tension evident regarding the various disciplines that comprise FHS, and the inherent tradeoff between interdisciplinary breadth and disciplinary depth. Some contention was evident regarding the accredited MPH program and its perceived privilege over other education programs for FHS resources. And, questions were raised about the priority and rewards for teaching excellence versus research. Some see teaching as a ‘burden’ relative to advancing research intensity. The new ‘performance based’ budget process now links the FHS budget directly to meeting enrollment targets, which can create potentially detrimental

competitiveness among programs (and Faculties) for getting students to take classes. Various problems were noted regarding communication and the apparent gaps between staff and faculty, and junior faculty and the senior leadership team. Also, various divides were evident among faculty such as: lab science versus the larger social science and epidemiology group; faculty members holding career awards versus those who do not; faculty in a discipline cluster (e.g. Epidemiology) versus faculty who are the sole representative of a discipline (e.g. health services). One individual characterized this as “us versus them”, when the Faculty wants to achieve a team work environment of “us and us”. Feelings of not knowing what is going on were voiced frequently. The service and leadership roles need to be shared by a larger portion of faculty members, especially as junior faculty are promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. In addition, one gets the sense that there are too many committees that do not have a clear enough action focus (aim, responsibilities, outcomes, timelines). In an effort to be inclusive there are multiple committees which increase discussion. However, it is not always clear who has a mandate for action. A more streamlined committee structure with time sensitive task forces focused on specific issues would alleviate some of these difficulties.

Most of these issues came to a head with the concern over governance policies, procedures and practices that sparked a review commissioned by the Vice-President Academic in 2010. An independent consultant conducted an analysis resulting in seven recommendations regarding: 1. Approve a mission statement, 2. Transparency and follow through of decisions, 3. Creation of a Chair position, 4. Conflict resolution – potential role of FHS ombudsperson, 5. Expert strategic planning, 6. Faculty workload review and reform, 7. Improving effectiveness of Faculty Council meetings. However, progress appears slow in addressing the recommendations from this review. For example, the Governance Review Implementation Committee charged with coordination of responsibilities had not yet met at the time of this review (over a year after the FHS made its response with proposed actions).

This slow progress in addressing significant issues raised by the governance review is telling. And, we question whether these seven recommendations are the right ones to address at this time. Our fundamental concern is to first improve the FHS culture. At a deep level, the Faculty needs to foster mutual respect and multi-way communication that will build trust and high performing teamwork. There is a challenge with SFU's multi campus units to ensure social and operational engagement. Regular town hall meetings with video links and social events would help enhance mutual understanding and trust. In essence, FHS needs to transform its culture that will provide a sound foundation for achieving a shared vision, improving governance and quality of the workplace.

Action: A 6-9 month process is recommended that fully engages faculty members, staff and students around establishing a shared understanding and consolidation of the FHS culture. This process should be guided by a highly skilled, external facilitator to ensure that all sectors of the FHS to have a voice. Although using an external consultant will be an expense, we believe that this will result in a substantial return on investment for advancing the culture of the Faculty.

2. Improve Staff Functioning

The current staff members were hired in the beginning phase of the new Faculty. Now that faculty members have been hired, the undergraduate and graduate curriculum built and implemented, major research programs undertaken, and expansion of external partners, it is timely to look at how the current staffing relates to the needs of FHS. Is there sufficient clarity of roles and responsibilities that are integrated to enable a high performing team? We were struck by the fact that there is no yearly setting of specific objectives and responsibilities for each staff member along with a yearly review of accomplishments and merit. Also, both formal and informal processes are needed to improve communication between staff and faculty members. The reviewers noted an 'us and them' perspective between faculty and staff that needs to be healed.

Action: A comprehensive review is needed of staff roles and responsibilities, clarity of policies and procedures, and infrastructure support. An external consultant with expertise in human resources should be engaged to undertake this review including an implementation plan. This recommendation should be acted upon quickly. Again, although using an external consultant will be an expense, we believe that this will result in a substantial return on investment for improving staff performance, morale and overall quality of the workplace.

3. Address Enrolment Concerns

There is a pressing need to smooth out the undergraduate enrolment. For example, in 2009/10 a very large cohort of 444 students was enrolled in first year, compared with 245 students in 2010/11 and 190 in 2011/12. This unevenness is creating major workload problems for faculty and staff and may jeopardize the quality of the student experience. Assuming that the overall target of 1200 students negotiated with SFU is maintained, the Faculty needs to have an enrolment model over the four year program with specific targets set for each year. At graduate level, the FHS is strongly encouraged to move on its intention to grow the MSc/PhD program that would enable reduction of the number of MPH students to address class size concerns. It is noted that the growth of the research MSc/PhD program is contingent on addressing the student funding problem described below under Recommendation 5.

Action: The FHS Dean should negotiate with the VP Academic regarding support for smoothing out the yearly enrolments in the FHS. This may require an OTO strategic investment by the VP Academic whereby FHS is held safe from budget harm over one or two years to accomplish this recommendation.

4. Fix Problems with Research Support Services

Faculty members are under considerable strain due to a lack of standardization regarding research services support. The most compelling example is the hiring of Research Assistants. Standardization and help is needed from the Office of Research Services regarding a standard contract, advice and help regarding legal and human resources issues. A number of faculty members indicated that due to this difficulty in hiring Research Assistants, some major grants have been administered at other universities rather than SFU. Concerns were also raised regarding the lack of understanding about the complexity of the research funding context in the FHS. One individual characterized that SFU was "too provincial" about how it views and handles research funding, which creates difficulties for the global research programs of the FHS (and increasing international research of other SFU Faculties).

Action: Immediate attention is needed by VP Research and VP Finance & Administration including ORS to improve research support services for the FHS, especially regarding the hiring and employment of Research Assistants.

5. Address Pressing Concerns with FHS Education Programs including: the curriculum, student funding, strategic enrollment management, and professional development for faculty, staff and teaching assistants (TAs).

The BA and BSc degrees in health science appear to be traditional in focus for the discipline. There is appropriate overlap of the two degree programs with respect to serving the perceived need to advance particular concepts (e.g. social, environmental, behavioural, and biological determinants of health). We understand that the province has not yet developed quality control processes but that these will come in the near future. We would note that the best use of quality control processes is to drive the system towards a faculty-determined goal and this may be the appropriate vehicle for further change in curriculum.

The reviewers noted that there is a degree of fatigue expressed by faculty in the context of curriculum discussions. This is of course understandable given the enormous effort required to operationalize courses and degrees for a large cohort of students. A range of issues must be addressed to improve the quality and sustain the FHS curriculum and pedagogy:

- a. **BA-BSc:** map out career opportunities from this interdisciplinary program (a concern of many students), examine pre-requisites so that students have greater choice of upper level courses, and review teaching opportunities in the first and second year of the BSc. Also, address the top three issues identified by undergraduate students: 1. scheduling of upper division classes, 2. class wait lists, 3. accessing advisors during busy times (registration and beginning of the semester).
- b. **MPH:** reduce the number of courses and potentially the number of students (contingent on growth of the MSc/PhD program).

- c. **MSc-PhD:** establish a minimum level of funding which may be enhanced in certain areas (e.g. lab sciences) in order to be competitive in recruiting high quality students. There is a pressing need to address the issue of Teaching Assistantships. The number of TAs need to be mapped out given the undergraduate curriculum and faculty members given professional development on the incorporation of TAs in their courses. Goal is to have the maximum uptake of TAs that will reduce workload for faculty members and provide teaching experience for graduate students and enhance the quality of the student experience. With the number of TAs established this can then be a major component of funding packages for graduate students in both the research and MPH programs.
- d. **Innovation.** The FHS with support from SFU needs to expedite the uptake of teaching and learning innovations in two key areas:
 - i. Online – Blended learning (technology enhanced learning)
 - ii. Experiential Education (community placements, practicum, co-op)
- e. **Technological Support** within the class room. Some faculty members complained about the lack of provision of basic classroom technology forcing instructors to fall back on antiquated methods and/or chasing around for a better class room. Given the large numbers of FHS students, modern classrooms and associated technology are crucial to efficient and quality delivery. This likely means further investment at university level
- f. **Professional Development.** Invest in teaching and learning professional development for faculty, staff and teaching assistants (TAs) regarding best practices, learning innovations and student engagement. An enhanced professional development program is needed to address concerns regarding the teaching quality of certain sessional faculty members.
- g. **Course Evaluations.** FHS needs to expand how courses are evaluated to include formative evaluations (not just summative) along with a shift to peer-mentoring and feedback.
- h. **Education is the Interdisciplinary Vehicle.** Overall, the goal of interdisciplinarity was encumbered by constructing two degree programs. One degree program (Bachelor of Health Sciences) with concentrations in several areas would perhaps have been better (and may be considered in the future). It is always true that discussions of curriculum innovation in the context of interdisciplinarity are encumbered by disciplinary perceptions of rigor.

Action: Both the Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee, working with the Dean and the Faculty Development Committee, need a coordinated plan to address these five issues. Project management support will likely be needed.

6. Clarify Priorities and Support for FHS Centrally from SFU.

Clarity is needed from senior administration at SFU regarding the relative priority regarding intensifying research, improving teaching quality and engaging the community. What investments is central administration willing to make to catalyze the FHS in achieving its academic plan?

Action: The VP Academic needs to work with the FHS Dean to clarify SFU priorities and support for the Faculty, and communicate this broadly (e.g. at Faculty Council).

7. Maximize the Surrey Campus Opportunity.

The FHS has not yet reached the faculty complement that was set in the original plan, and current budget and enrolment projections will not support expansion. Thus, the potential to participate in the additional 2500 students in the proposal for the Surrey Campus provides a great opportunity for the FHS to greatly expand its faculty complement and strengthen its research in collaboration with the Fraser Health Authority. The expansion of the Surrey Campus should be framed as an “innovation incubator” for exploring new ways of doing things. For example, the FHS is strongly urged to consider partnerships with other Faculties notably Kinesiology and Applied Science in developing collaborative undergraduate degree programs and innovative research partnerships.

Action: Prepare a strategic plan for FHS education and research at the Surrey Campus, in collaboration with other units, especially Kinesiology and Applied Science. Explore the development of innovative programs in partnership (e.g. joint undergraduate degree).

III. SOME UNDERLYING ELEMENTS FROM THE REVIEW

1. Assessment of Four High Level Questions Posed for the Reviewers

a) The quality of the unit's teaching programs and measures in place to ensure their evaluation and revision. (Note: the reviewers did not sit in classroom or look in detail at the curriculum so we cannot provide a comprehensive assessment of quality).

With some provisos concerning TA support, students were overall happy with the quality of the programs and were able more than faculty to see the benefits of the interdisciplinary focus of the programs. There appears to have been an ongoing review of alteration of programs which implies ongoing evaluation; however this gave the impression of constant change rather than core consolidation and an assessment of the whole. Greater attention needs to be paid to professional development in the area of teaching and learning and the review team noted that new forums for such development were being put in place and greater investment was being made in teaching only appointments, demonstrating an increasing value being placed on

teaching. FEC and other mechanisms need to be used to signal the value being placed on teaching and professional development for all instructors to support developments in this area. There were some good examples of undergraduate courses that took a topic (e.g. blood biology, safety ...) and brought interdisciplinary knowledge to bear on that topic. The Student Coop facilitator was particularly complementary about the transferable skills that Health Science students displayed

b) The quality of faculty research and faculty collaboration and interaction regarding a stimulating academic environment, as well as identify new or emerging areas that should be pursued.

One of the challenges of interdisciplinarity is that faculty when seeking stimulus for their own discipline base has to seek it outside their colleagues. Interdisciplinarity requires a focus outside the discipline and represents a challenge to faculty used to a research environment that encourages individual in depth expertise. The Faculty therefore is pioneering in this respect and needs to explore ways of helping faculty understand interdisciplinarity and how to work innovatively in such an environment. Both undergraduate and postgraduate students appear to have grasped the concept but felt the approach needed to be modeled by their supervisors and instructors. This could be achieved through a series of research seminars for faculty and students around the issue of interdisciplinarity.

c) Level of Faculty members' participation in the administration of the unit and taking an active role in the dissemination of knowledge.

Given the high number of young faculty there are challenges for decision making and understanding of the complex issues in administration. Lack of experience is now being ameliorated by mentoring by senior faculty brought in recently. However internal and external communication seems truncated and there is a need to invest in a communications expert within the staffing complement to enhance internal and external communication, particularly given the multi-campus nature of the Faculty. Also, note our comments earlier regarding 'too many' committees and lack of clarity about decision making and leadership for implementation, as well as the 'us and them' communication challenges between faculty and staff.

d) Is the environment conducive to the attainment of the objectives of the Faculty?

Given attention to the Action steps outlined under the seven Recommendations above, The Faculty of Health Sciences will be well positioned to achieve its bold vision and specific objectives. Also, FHS will be able to capture strategic opportunities such as the proposed expansion of the Surrey campus.

2. Some Additional Issues of Interest to the University and/or the Faculty

a) Evaluate the infrastructure, space, equipment (including wet labs), administrative support and governance within the Faculty.

SFU apparently provides each faculty with a fixed budget targeted to meeting faculty administrative needs and this has apparently resulted in a common faculty-level administrative complement. FHS should reassess their administrative support needs to ensure that function and distribution of administrative support match needs not standard SFU structure. Many faculty members expressed concern that they were not well served by some elements of the administrative group. It wasn't seen necessarily as an appropriate service model but rather a more administrative control model. The size is less important than meeting current needs. Support staff also expressed concern that issues of importance to them in performance of their roles were ignored. If FHS spends time to define and meet needs, as expressed by the three groups (administrative, support, faculty), functioning will improve. This would align well with the need for staff development and review. There is clear tension over the supervisory model that exists for support staff.

The reviewers noted that the faculty is generally well served (and perhaps quite fortunate) to occupy a new building, which has ample, and at this point, under-utilized, space. Equipment needs in research are met by the standard methods and faculty did not express any serious concerns. Infrastructure needs are generally met but there was a concern that infrastructure needs in the context of the teaching mission were not as well met. One instructor noted that they had to personally purchase a data projector for teaching. Others noted difficulty with classroom technology and support. The original SFU plan, had it reached fruition with respect to faculty hiring, would have placed more stress on research laboratory facilities. If faculty gains occur in this area in the future, the existing space will accommodate the original plan at least in terms of supporting junior faculty members. The Library seems to be adequate but would benefit from the provision of information desk for students in located in Blusson Hall to obviate the need to lose time seeking out library information across campus. The assignment of the specific services of one librarian to the faculty is forward-thinking and very appropriate.

b) Assess the strategy of interdisciplinary being pursued by the Faculty and evaluate the effectiveness of the non-departmentalized structure of the Faculty.

The original SFU vision has strong merit, is forward-thinking and is correct. In an interdisciplinary Faculty a non-departmental structure has considerable benefits but grouping of faculty members to create a sense of community would enhance the opportunities for cross-fertilization of ideas and support. The faculty would be better served by a matrix structure than it would by a departmental structure. This already appears to be happening within discrete areas such as population health but needs to be encouraged in other areas. This should be done in such a way as not to promote tribalism but rather support the aim of interdisciplinarity. There are of course issues around the critical mass required to pursue fruitful scholarship. Faculty members did not express any concern in this area and it should be noted that collaborations within and outside the faculty occur as required in a disciplinary way. The faculty is smaller than

the size of many standard health science departments and does not require the additional administrative burden associated with departmentalized structures.

The core value of interdisciplinarity - the ability to enrich problem solutions by bringing diverse perspectives to bear - is strongly held by everyone we met. It is however true that the faculty still struggle somewhat with how to do this. At the level of research, it is generally true that discipline expertise still trumps new models in terms of research support and progress and if problems are truly going to be addressed in an interdisciplinary way, it will occur with natural alignments as the correct problem arises. On the other hand, the faculty is well placed to fertilize this process with stronger interactions at the level of education (see recommendation 5).

c) Evaluate whether the Faculty has critical mass in terms of numbers of faculty, diversity of faculty, and clusters of faculty.

There were no concerns about the quality of the faculty complement. The size of the faculty is smaller than originally intended. Faculty members of all subgroups expressed that the mechanism used to decide on future hires was agreeable and the reviewers noticed that there was a willingness to recognize the importance of a faculty agenda over a personal agenda. This is important but will be lost in the future without a positive outcome from a facilitated planning process. Perceptions of challenges in workload experienced by some groups over other larger groups will only be addressed by strategic recruiting. It was apparent to the reviewers that any new recruitment is likely to be focused on a new Surrey campus and therefore careful attention to the location of subgroups will be important in redressing imbalance. It will be easier to focus on interdisciplinarity when there are more people involved from the 'hard science' side of the table.

There were no concerns over the level of research support or research progress. These are exceptional in context. FHS faculty has carried a higher service contribution as a consequence of the workload associated with degree programs, curriculum and new investigators. Strong engagement in service will be required for several more years if the recommendations in this report are to be realized. Faculty members expressed a particular concern over reweighting of service and teaching burdens in the context of major research awards and the assignment of teaching release. These issues do not have simple solutions and although the cause is well documented, the solution(s) must come from within the faculty: constructed and owned by the faculty during the facilitated culture exploration (recommendation 1).

d) Suggest opportunities that the Faculty should pursue if further growth is recommended.

FHS should and probably must capitalize on the proposed expansion of the Surrey campus and if accomplished in a reasonably careful way this may help to address some of the internal concerns (critical mass in research areas)

A more concerted strategy and effort to engage other Faculties in the interdisciplinary model may be required in the context of the Surrey campus. It should be possible for example to ask whether Surrey developments fall under FHS interdisciplinarity and if participation of other departments (e.g. kinesiology) might need to fall under a FHS umbrella (rather than separate efforts).

FHS, within the structure of SFU, has an opportunity, which is relatively unique in the global system. Since tenure and promotion reviews and criteria are largely a Faculty concern, careful review and thought should go into an evaluation of these in the context of the Faculty mission, vision and direction. Is there sufficient value placed on participation in interdisciplinary activity (teaching, research or service)? The reviewers were surprised that this opportunity was not readily apparent to faculty members, particularly in the context of the normal overall anxiety associated with Tenure and Promotion.

IV. CONCLUSION

We celebrate the foresight and courage of SFU in creating this most innovative Faculty of Health Sciences, as well as the dynamic leadership of Dean John O'Neil and his colleagues in moving the interdisciplinary Faculty from vision to action. The accomplishments to date are most impressive. The Faculty of Health Sciences and indeed SFU are poised to be a leading global force "in the generation and mobilization of interdisciplinary knowledge to understand and improve health and wellbeing". However, the Faculty has developed at an unwieldy pace and must take serious efforts to consolidate its core base by addressing internal cultural, structural and process concerns. Our seven recommendations and action steps are intended to help the Faculty and SFU successfully address these concerns.

To help facilitate advancing the Faculty of Health Sciences, we end this Report with five 'wicked' questions:

6. How can you mend the 'us and them' divides among staff – faculty – students to create high performing teams?
7. What would be the consequence of eliminating 30 % of undergraduate and graduate courses...what if you distill the main concepts and combine them in a single course?
8. How can you think differently and outside the regular academic assumptions in ways to integrate your education, research and community service programs – e.g. use the Surrey Campus opportunity as an 'innovation sandbox'?
9. How can you better recognize and celebrate the successes of your students, faculty and staff?
10. How can you best capture the local – global opportunities to create a sustainable Faculty that addresses the diverse challenges of academic institutions in the 21st century reality?



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

PHONE (778) 782-4821
FAX (778) 782-5927

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 17, 2013
TO: Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and Provost
FROM: John O'Neil, Professor & Dean
RE: Action Plan – External Review of FHS



Dear Jon,

Attached please find the Action Plan for the External review of FHS, conducted in February, 2013. Our process to date has been extensive open discussion at Faculty Executive, Faculty Council and staff meetings in April/May followed by a review of the External Review and preliminary action items at a staff meeting and meetings of the UGSC and GSC. Written input from these committee meetings were incorporated into a revised Action Plan and this plan was taken to a combined faculty and staff half day retreat in June. Small group discussions in each of the domains produced further revision and refinement. Throughout the process various drafts were reviewed and edited by Associate Deans and the Director of Administration. A final draft of the Action Plan was submitted independently to the Faculty Council (September 26, 2013) and the monthly Staff Meeting (October 25, 2013). The Action Plan was unanimously approved by both faculty and staff.

BLUSSON HALL, ROOM 11300
8888 UNIVERSITY DRIVE
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY, BURNABY BC
CANADA, V5A 1S6

NON DEPARTMENTAL FACULTY EXTERNAL REVIEW – Faculty of Health Sciences

DRAFT ACTION PLAN July 8/13

Section 1 – To be completed by the Dean

Unit under review Faculty of Health Sciences	Date of Review Site visit February 27 – March 1, 2013	Responsible Unit person, John D. O’Neil Dean	Faculty Dean John O’Neil
---	--	--	---

***Note:** It is **not** expected that every recommendation made by the Review Team be covered by this Action Plan. The major thrusts of the Report should be identified and some consolidation of the recommendations may be possible while other recommendations of lesser importance may be excluded.*

Should an additional response be warranted, it should be attached as a separate document.

1. PROGRAMMING

External Review Recommendations:

1. **Address Enrolment Concerns.** The FHS Dean negotiates with the VP Academic regarding support for smoothing out the yearly enrolments in the FHS. This may require an OTO strategic investment by the VP Academic whereby FHS is held safe from budget harm over one or two years to accomplish this recommendation.
2. **Address pressing concerns with FHS education programs including: the curriculum, student funding, strategic enrollment management, and professional development for faculty, staff and teaching assistants (TAs).** Both the Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee, working with the Dean and the Faculty Development Committee, need a coordinated plan to address these issues. Project management support will be needed.
3. **Maximize the Surrey Campus opportunity.** Prepare a strategic plan for FHS education and research at the Surrey Campus, in collaboration with other units, especially Kinesiology and Applied Science. Explore the development of innovative programs in partnership (e.g. joint undergraduate degree).

1.1 Action/s (description what is going to be done):

FHS recognizes that there is a need to consolidate the extraordinary growth of the Faculty over the past 6 years, and in particular to undertake a comprehensive review of educational programs. FHS also recognizes that this review will require significant faculty and staff time. The Faculty has also initiated many of these Actions prior to receiving the External Review report, and will continue with these processes. The Dean has had discussions with the AVPA about enrollment fluctuations and budgetary impact, and they will work together to resolve the issue. The goal will be to facilitate continuity from year to year in admission targets and will protect FHS from wide budget fluctuations. The Dean participated in the Dean's Council strategic planning process for scaling up programs in Surrey. Subject to provincial funding, FHS will have an opportunity to expand programs on the Surrey campus.

1. UGSC and GSC will work with Associate Dean, Education (ADE) to complete the mapping of curriculum and learning outcomes with consideration of:
 - Expand/reduce course offerings
 - Enrollment planning and impact on budget
 - Resource implications (e.g. TAs, Faculty, Staff)
 - Attraction of non-FHS students
 - Understanding of bottlenecks to course access, particularly required courses to facilitate timely graduation.
 - Implications of changes for faculty workload
 - Understanding of competition from other programs
2. UGSC and GSC will work with ADE to review teaching/course/program evaluation practice with respect to:
 - SFU Teaching and Course Evaluation Project (TCEP)
 - Mid-semester formative evaluation
3. Dean will work with the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) to develop clear guidelines consistent with the Academic Plan for hiring processes to strengthen teaching capacity where possible within budgetary limitations and with a priority for :
 - Transition of term teaching faculty into continuing positions.
 - Expansion of opportunities for faculty positions for candidates with applied and practical experience.
 - Workload coordination across undergraduate and graduate programs
4. The Dean, ADE and Program Directors will work with Teaching Fellows to develop a plan to strengthen professional development and teaching excellence.
5. The FEC will establish a sub-committee to develop guidelines for clear metrics for teaching, and a process for TPC and Associate Dean (Education) to apply these guidelines in workload assignments and performance evaluations.
6. The Dean will work with the TPC to identify clear criteria for recognizing teaching innovation and excellence.
7. The Dean will ensure faculty and staff continue to have input into future enrollment target planning.

1.2 Resource implications (if any):

1. Expectations for faculty and staff service will be high during this process. Faculty administration will work to distribute service expectations equitably and recognize extraordinary service contributions.
2. Changes to enrollment targets, curriculum and hiring practices may have a positive or negative impact on the budget. Ongoing monitoring of the relationship between enrollment, curriculum, faculty workload, WAFTES and the budget will be necessary.

1.3 Expected completion date/s:

1. August 30, 2014.

2. RESEARCH

External Review Recommendation:

4. **Fix problems regarding research support services.** Immediate attention is needed by VPs Research and Administration including ORS to improve research support services for the FHS, especially regarding the hiring and employment of Research Assistants.

2.1 Action/s (what is going to be done):

FHS has articulated ongoing concerns with university level research administrative processes over the past several years. We recognize that these are in part due to constraints on the VPR's portfolio. We acknowledge there have been changes to policies and practices in the VPR office and Office of Research Services in response to FHS concerns, which were not fully captured in the External Review. For example, the VPR has created a new position of "University Research Assistant" to enable researchers to hire key continuing personnel as university employees. The Vice-Presidents of the BC research intensive universities have agreed to pre-negotiated overhead rates on contracts with various organizations and SFU is constrained by this agreement. Many funding agencies in recent years have also required the University to assume indemnification for risks associated with contracts and this requirement sometimes results in extended legal negotiations over contractual language. However, significant concerns continue to be expressed that require ongoing clarification and response:

1. Dean and ADR will continue to work with VPR to ensure that the particular needs of FHS researchers are taken into account in research administration
2. ADR will invite the VPR, AVPR and appropriate staff to meet with faculty and relevant staff to discuss ongoing concerns with research administration
3. Dean will provide resources to strengthen FHS support for research development and administration. Policies and resources will be completed for bridge funding, internal mentorship, review of grant proposals, and research administrative support. The Dean and ADR will continue to support an effective system of research mentorship, peer review and support involving faculty, researchers, graduate students, and relevant staff.

Also important to FHS faculty is the development of a strong internal culture of mutual respect and understanding across disciplinary boundaries (see Recommendation #5). In order to achieve the vision of a strong interdisciplinary culture, FHS will further strengthen opportunities for FHS faculty and graduate students to engage in research related dialogue:

4. Dean and ADR will provide support for FHS research seminars as guided by the FHS Research Seminar Committee
5. ADR will ensure that wide range of disciplines will be reflected among speakers within FHS Research Seminars and encourage speakers with an interdisciplinary interest.
6. Dean's office will allocate FHS resources as seed funding for interdisciplinary team development
7. ADR will organize an annual research retreat in FHS designed to facilitate sharing of research ideas and development of

interdisciplinary teams.

8. ADR will establish an effective system of internal communication of research activities from development to completion stages
9. ADR will establish clear metrics for measuring and reporting research activities within FHS internally and externally

2.2 Resource implications ((if any):

1. Allocation of resources to seminars, retreats, seed grants, bridge funding, and administrative support is subject to annual budget review.

2.3 Expected completion date/s:

1. Immediate implementation of new initiatives plus ongoing commitments.

3. ADMINISTRATION

External Review Recommendation:

5. **Strengthen the FHS Culture of Shared Vision, Trust and Teamwork.** A 6-9 month process is recommended that fully engages faculty members, staff and students around establishing a shared understanding and consolidation of the FHS culture. This process should be guided by a highly skilled, external facilitator to ensure that all sectors of the FHS to have a voice.

3.1 Action/s(what is going to be done) :

FHS recognizes that the rapid development of the Faculty has resulted in some of the tensions identified by the External Review related to governance, interdisciplinarity, communication, workload roles and responsibilities and shared service. Faculty and staff agreed during the Action Plan development process that more specific actions were required to address these concerns than the facilitated discussion recommended by the Reviewers. In particular, faculty and staff supported a process that would complete the review and implementation of governance recommendations that were generated by the Governance Review Committee and that may require changes to the FHS Constitution. FHS acknowledges that as a non-departmentalized Faculty, the traditional department Chair position is assumed by the Dean. Nonetheless, the current administrative structure will be reviewed to determine whether Chair-like functions can be re-distributed to other elected administrative faculty positions in the Faculty. Additional actions to strengthen communication and broader faculty, staff and student participation in decision-making are:

1. Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) will establish a sub-committee with staff and student representation to review and recommend changes to the FHS Constitution. These changes may include:
 - a. Increased staff and student participation in FC, FEC and other standing committee decision-making processes;
 - b. A review of TORs for various "Chair and Director" positions in the Faculty (e.g., TPC Chair, Undergrad and Grad Program Directors) to determine options for a Chair type position(s) in FHS; and
 - c. Define role and responsibilities for possibility of an elected faculty member who could provide advice and support to faculty and staff on how to resolve conflicts and improve communication in the Faculty.
2. Restructure Faculty Council (FC) meetings to provide a more open agenda and increased opportunities for debate and discussion, including a review of agenda setting process and meeting Chair responsibilities.
3. FEC will participate more directly in annual budget and business cycle planning
4. Dean's office will offer organizational development workshops for faculty and staff. These workshops will address strategic planning, leadership mentoring, and succession planning.
5. FHS will hold a Semesterly General Meeting for all faculty, staff and student representatives in FHS to review progress with implementation of Academic Plan.
6. Dean's office will develop an Annual Planning Calendar with administrative faculty and Senior Managers to reflect the annual cycle of deadlines and events in synchrony with the university planning cycle. All faculty and staff will be apprised of workload cycles and peak demands to ensure efficient planning across the Faculty.
7. Dean's office will support the activities of the Social Committee to implement an expanded menu of community building opportunities for faculty, staff and students.

3.2 Resource implications(if any):

1. Organizational development workshops will require financial support from the VPA office.

3.3 Expected completion date/s:

1. FEC review of Constitution and ratification of recommended changes by April 1, 2014.
2. Other changes effective immediately.

4. WORKING ENVIRONMENT

External Review Recommendation:

8. **Improve Staff Functioning.** A comprehensive review is needed of staff roles and responsibilities, clarity of policies and procedures, and infrastructure support. An external consultant with expertise in human resources should be engaged to undertake this review including an implementation plan. This recommendation should be acted upon quickly.

4.1 Action/s(what is going to be done) :

SFU has recently concluded a comprehensive review of Human Resources (HR) and HR is in the process of implementing a new program for review of staff roles and responsibilities, performance reviews and staff development. The pilot phase is intended to be complete by August 31, 2013. FHS has requested participation in Phase 2 of the implementation, beginning in November, 2013. FHS will use participation in this process to address many of the concerns expressed by staff and reflected in the recommendation above. However, specific actions are identified here that will be undertaken through an external consultant in the event the SFU process does not address specific issues identified in the external review.

1. Dean's office (Dean, Associate Deans, Director of Administration and Operations) will implement mapping of all administrative positions with description of roles and responsibilities and ensure wide communication of this information to faculty and staff.
2. Dean's office will work with HR (or External Consultant) to ensure that staff performance reviews and career development processes are constructive and supportive. This process will be respectful of CUPE and APSA processes and policy as described in collective agreements with these staff complements.
3. Dean's office will organize management training opportunities for administrative faculty and senior managers.
4. Dean's office will ensure decisions and rationale for decisions are widely circulated among faculty and staff in FHS
5. Dean will participate in a staff meeting once per semester, or as requested to ensure decisions are shared and understood.
6. Dean will continue to meet bi-weekly with Dean's office staff to ensure coordination and sharing of information.

4.2 Resource implications(if any):

1. HR and/or External Consultant if necessary will require resources.

4.3 Expected completion date/s:

1. Mapping and description of roles and responsibilities will be complete by August 31, 2014, unless additional external consultation is required.
2. Other Actions will be on-going.

5. Other

External Review Recommendation:

7. **Clarify priorities and support for FHS centrally from SFU.** The VP Academic needs to work with the FHS Dean to clarify SFU priorities and support for the Faculty, and communicate this broadly (e.g. at Faculty Council).

5.1 Action/s:

1. VPA will be invited to meet with FC and staff to discuss implementation and resourcing of External Review Action Plan and of FHS Academic Plan.
2. Dean, ADE and Program Directors will meet with VPA and AVPA to discuss historical budget and curricular constraints on FHS. Discussion will address challenges faced by FHS in attempting to implement a creative curriculum that balances workload.

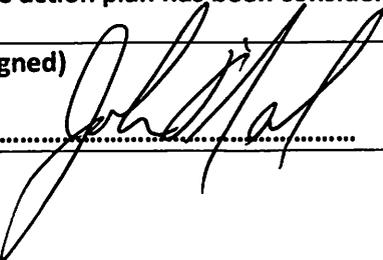
5.2 Resource implications(if any):

None

5.3 Expected completion date/s:

August 31, 2014

The above action plan has been considered by the Faculty under review and has been discussed and agreed with the Vice President Academic.

Dean (signed)		Date	
Name		Title.....	08/16/13

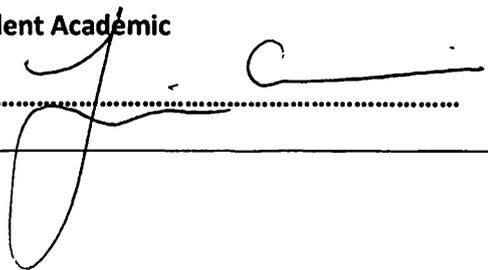
Section 2 - VPA's comments and endorsement of the Faculty Action Plan :

The external review highlights the considerable progress made by the Faculty of Health Sciences in developing a full range of academic programs and research strengths in less than a decade. In large part this reflects the enthusiasm and commitment of faculty members, staff, academic administrators and students to developing a diverse and interdisciplinary Faculty. It also reflects a commitment by senior administration to fund and support the Faculty. As recommended in the review and the action plan, I will continue to work with the Dean to find adequate resources to sustain the Faculty; but in a period of very limited opportunities for growth, I have to balance the needs of Health Sciences against the other SFU faculties and support services.

The external review identified a number of areas that require further attention. The Dean has led an effective process to consider the issues raised in the report. It is appropriate that most of the action plan will be managed within the Faculty; I am willing to assist in each of the components of the action plan that identify the need for some external input. For example, the Dean has already proposed a method for dealing with budget uncertainties associated with fluctuating enrollments in a relatively small student body, and this has now been incorporated into the VPA budget process; I would be pleased to meet with Faculty Council to discuss the implementation of the action plan; I will advise the Dean on how current SFU policies can be used to provide solutions to some of the governance issues that have been identified.

As this Action Plan moves forward to Senate and the Board of Governors, I would like to emphasize the remarkable achievements of the Faculty of Health Sciences. They have created novel interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programs that have received recognition through external accreditation. They have stimulated health research in the university and attracted significant levels of research funding and endowments. Faculty members are known not only for their scholarly contributions, but also for their impact on critical areas of public policy. I am confident that this action plan will place the Faculty on a firm foundation for future success.

Vice President Academic



Date

2005/2013