Annual Report of the Associate Dean, Strategic Initiatives
Presented to the General Assembly, May 2019

Two strategic initiatives have been the focus of activity: Entrepreneurship at Environment and evolv1.

Entrepreneurship at Environment

Celebration: Students and alumni from the Faculty of Environment have been using their ideas, knowledge and skills to create business, social and environmental ventures for decades. These successes can be enhanced with a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem that starts in our Faculty. Entrepreneurship at Environment supports our students by helping them nurture ideas, develop skills and connect with the broader Waterloo network of entrepreneurial programs, organizations and pitch competitions.

The Faculty is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2019 and we are proud to share the profiles of many alumni who have launched successful ventures. These profiles will form the core of the digital ‘Wall of Recognition’ to be launched on the Faculty website as part of the 2019 celebrations.

Pathways and Partners

Connections with students start in the classroom. The Faculty offers a series of specialized entrepreneurship courses (e.g. ENBUS 203, INDEV 308, ECDEV 605) and sections of courses related to entrepreneurship. Several instructors have invited the Entrepreneur-in-Residence to give guest lectures. Access to entrepreneurship courses has been enhanced with an extra offering of Green Entrepreneurship.

As part of its 2018 outreach program, the Entrepreneurship at Environment team (Entrepreneur-in-Residence, co-op student, graduate TA, Associate Dean) visited 30 classes (2925 students enrolled) to inform students of the range of services available and activities underway. Winter 2019 visits reached classes with 1242 additional students. Team members are also available at the shared office in EV2 2004 to meet privately with students. Look for us under the row of 17 Sustainable Development Goals where we use the goals as challenges to inspire solutions for a better local/global future.

Partner organizations (Velocity, GreenHouse, Conrad Centre, Accelerator Centre) offer many programs and events that our students/alumni can participate in. Velocity Start at Environment strengthens the connection and awareness for our students to participate in Velocity workshops and pitch competitions.

Entrepreneurship at Environment also arranges special events for our students, to complement the programs available through our partners. Nine events were held in 2018 with approximately 400 attendees/registrants (primarily ENV students). Panelists at the events included graduate students or alumni from GEM, MDP, MEDI, PLAN, SERS, SUSM and TOUR programs.

- 27 Feb. How to Thrive Consulting in the Gig Economy
- 8 Mar. Energy Ideation Workshop (with UW Energy Network, GreenHouse)
- 21 June My Student Entrepreneurship Story - Discussion Panel
- 19 July Entrepreneurial Speed Dating – Environment Style
- 4 Oct. Entrepreneurial Speed Dating
- 1 Nov. Equal Entrepreneurs – A Panel on Women in Entrepreneurship
- 6 Nov. Experiences of Entrepreneurship and Environment in Co-op
- 11 Dec. How to Thrive Consulting in the Gig Economy
Winter term 2019 included several Environment Faculty focused events:

- Jack Rosen Pitch Competition (ENV Advancement partner)
- World’s Challenge Challenge (winner: She Cycles – cross-faculty team)
- Problem Pitch - Climate Driven Emergencies theme (Problem Lab partner)
- Oxford Map the System Challenge (linked course: INDEV 308)

So, who is taking their ideas further and arranging one-on-one meetings with our Entrepreneur-in-Residence? In 2018, consultations were held with 58 students/alumni (44 ENV, 7 other UW, 7 other) seeking advice, contacts or direction. A single meeting was held with each of 30 students, 10 students had two meetings and 18 students returned for multiple meetings. Graduate students (67%) outnumbered undergraduates and the gender mix (53% female) reflected that of the faculty overall.

Special thanks to all of the students who participated throughout the year and brought their ideas forward.

**Evolv1 and evolvGREEN**

**Evolv1** sets a new standard in building design and performance. It is located beside the LRT stop in UW’s David Johnston Research and Technology Park and is the first building to meet the Canada Green Building Council’s **zero carbon standard** (April 2018). The Faculty of Environment has its **‘Make Change’ Classroom** on the ground floor. Early users of this space include the Masters in Climate Change and Masters in Economic Development and Innovation students.

The goal to grow the green economy is supported by the **evolvGREEN** collaboration, including Sustainable Waterloo Region, Accelerator Centre, Wilfrid Laurier University and University of Waterloo.

Two UW research institutes (Waterloo Institute for Sustainable Energy and Interdisciplinary Centre on Climate Change) and the Economic Development Program are now based at evolv1. Entrepreneurship at Environment has an office there to facilitate connections with partner organizations, including the Accelerator Centre and its clean tech incubator located on the ground floor.

The evolv1 building and its tenants also serve as a living lab for sustainability research and the goal to develop a low carbon future.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Parker, Associate Dean, Strategic Initiatives