Faculty of Environment, Dean’s Report to General Assembly, 2021

Some Highlights of 2020-2021


**Goal 1: Be Canada's leader in environmental and sustainability education.**

- To build capacity in new program development, an Associate Dean of Strategic Initiatives, Johanna Wandel, was appointed in 2020.
- As part of our commitment to extending environmental and sustainability education on campus in partnership with others,
  - The School of Environment Enterprise and Development partnered with the School of Accounting and Finance in Arts to develop a new undergraduate degree program, the Bachelor of Sustainability and Financial Management, with its first intake class expected in Fall 2022.
  - Selected Environment courses are included as ‘context electives’ in the Indigenous Entrepreneurship Minor and Diploma, which was developed by St. Paul's and the Faculty of Arts in 2020.
- As part of our commitment to increase our involvement in non-traditional educational activities, the Faculty
  - Is leading discussion about the possible creation of collaborative graduate programs in aeronautics and in climate change.
  - Has been exploring the developing of lifelong/executive training.

**Goal 2: Achieve increased impact through national and global leadership in environmental and sustainability research.**

- We remain committed to being at the forefront of defining and framing emergent environmental and sustainability problems that require an interdisciplinary approach.
  - The development of a BSc in Climate and Environmental Management in Geography and Environmental Management, which combines depth in environmental science with courses on societal adaptation, energy and sustainability, climate services, climate justice, low-carbon economies, and climate change communication, is expected to accept its first cohort in 2022.

**Goal 3: Demonstrate an ethos of caring in all that we do.**

- As part of our commitment to continually review student-facing roles to ensure excellent academic support,
  - Environment participated in the “Enhancing Undergrad Advising Project” with the Student Success Office. Recommendations were received in 2020 and are being responded to throughout 2021.
2. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism

An inventory of Faculty initiatives and activities is posted and regularly updated: https://uwaterloo.ca/environment/about-environment/strategy-and-progress. Members of the Environment Community are also involved with and actively responding to recommendations of the President’s Anti-Racism Taskforce, https://uwaterloo.ca/anti-racism/timeline-action.

Of note are three major Faculty of Environment initiatives:

• Amendment of our Strategic Plan, Together for a Sustainable Future, embedding lens of decolonization, Indigeneity and inclusivity in a Faculty-wide curriculum review.
• A focus on equity, diversity and inclusivity in all hiring processes in order to increase representation of Black, Indigenous and other under-represented groups. This includes advertisement in May 2021 for a Lecturer who is an Indigenous Curriculum Expert, https://uwaterloo.ca/environment/about-environment/employment-opportunities, and the development of theme areas for the University’s cluster hire of faculty members who identify as Black or Indigenous.
• Extension of the Dean’s Doctoral Initiative (DDI) to 10 incoming, international PhD students, which has attracted students of diverse backgrounds and races.

3. Warm congratulations, welcomes and thank-you

o Congratulations to all who were recognized by external organizations for your extraordinary work; to Janice Barry, Assistant Professor in the School of Planning, who was awarded the “Environment Research Excellence Award” for her achievements in 2020; and to Suzanne Kearns, who received UW’s Distinguished Teacher Award earlier this year.

o Welcome to all our new faculty and staff. In the Dean’s Office, we have welcomed Kelsey Leonard as a faculty member, Akansha Jakhar filling in for Christina Pope in Graduate Studies Marketing and Recruitment, and Shoshannah Holdom, Administrator for Graduate Studies, replacing Lori McConnell after 30 years of service to the University. We also have welcomed Neil Carnegie and Graham Barnes as permanent on-going employees. Also, the Intact Centre has welcomed Taylor Legere and Joanna Eyquem, and Partners for Action has a new Director, Julie Wright.

o A big thank you to all the staff of the Dean’s Office, and indeed to the entire ENV community. We’ve weathered a year of covid restrictions and virtual meetings together. Looking forward to working with you toward a new normal … soon.

o A thank you to everyone for their fiscal prudence over the past year, which allowed us to end the 2020-2021 year with a balanced budget; and more importantly for your strong sense of commitment and collegiality. We have an amazing community.
4. As shown in the following activity summaries, we have experienced stable enrolment and increased undergraduate teaching over the past several years.

Comments:
1) Spring 2020 higher due to lower co-op placement rate. Spring 2021 is an estimate.
2) From 2013 to 2019, international undergraduate student applications and registration increased, both as a percentage and in absolute numbers. In contrast, the most recent two years (2020 and estimate for 2021) have seen a decline in the same.
3) The increase in undergraduate teaching is helping to reduce the longstanding ‘service teaching deficit’.