We are a leading Canadian institution for students seeking an interdisciplinary, sustainability-oriented education, so my responsibility over the past six years has been to maintain areas of quality and to help improve where I can. My vision is that our curriculum reaches every UW student and that our own graduates lead positive change as a result of the work-integrated, experiential, supportive and quality education they receive in our Faculty. Although there’s always more we can do, I think it’s been a good run with the campus-wide Diploma in Sustainability and two new programs (BSFM, BSc) being key outcomes alongside numerous initiatives mentioned below that improve the quality of our students’ experiences.

Here, I report on the areas of activity and priorities highlighted in my previous (2021) report. My portfolio is broad (including tasks split among 3-4 Associate Deans in the large faculties), so in several areas listed below I rely heavily—and with much thanks—on collegial collaboration with Co-operative Education & Career Action (CECA), Marketing and Undergrad Recruitment (MUR), the Registrar’s Office (RO), and the Student Success Office (SSO). In addition to my two reports, Carol Knipe and Graham Barnes, it was a huge step forward to welcome Jaime Fohkens into ENV’s undergrad team in 2021 (reporting to Carol). It’s been a pleasure to work with all of you—as well as these colleagues from across campus—and I’m thrilled to be passing the torch to such a capable colleague, Johanna Wandel.

A. RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS
COVID-19 continued to be the story for the Fall 2021 admissions process, with all of our normal recruitment events continuing in an online form. The entire team, spear-headed by Graham Barnes and Kayla Synder (with Amanda St. Marie taking over for Kayla in summer 2021), worked tirelessly to make the most of the online reality—though ultimately we fell slightly short of our target (438 on a target of 456), mainly due to a reduction in international students.

The good news is that our two new programs, the Bachelor of Sustainability and Financial Management (BSFM) and the Bachelor of Science in Climate and Environmental Change (BSc), bode well for the future. We have increased our target for Fall 2022 to 477, yet realize this will be challenging to meet in this transitional year, when Geography and Aviation still has space constraints due to COVID-19 and our new programs are getting going.

In the longer-term, it will be critical for our faculty to move forward on outreach to increase the number of applicants to our programs. We also need to continue to diversify our international student body, one example being the initiative with Waterloo International in 2021 that led to 50 course enrollments by Indonesian students.

B. CO-OP AND EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION
Work-integrated and experiential education form a key plank in our educational mandate and these experiences can provide some of the most fulfilling memories in an undergraduate degree. Through 2021, we continued to make adjustments to the requirements for co-op students unemployed due to COVID-19, and with financial support from the Provost we continued to hire Learning Assistant and “retention” positions. In other news, we achieved a key recommendation from our 2021 “co-op in ENV working group” by phasing out work term reports, with reflection instead integrated into PD courses.

C. STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND SUCCESS
One silver lining of COVID-19 times has been that we’ve had to work differently to engage students and some of what we’ve learned will inform how we engage them in the future. A prime example has been Graham’s efforts to develop a community of mentorship in the faculty that begins with new student transition (“Waterloo Ready”). Carol continues to enact the recommendations from our review with the SSO of advising in the faculty. Finally, we have constituted a new petitions committee that will provide even more consistency and transparency to a process that greatly affects so many students.

D. OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING
Our faculty are committed to high-quality teaching, which is reflected in the quality of our teaching scores and many teaching awards. I appreciate everyone’s support as we have adjusted to these novel times.

E. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND POLICY
- The Office of the ADUG regularly deals with issues of academic integrity (as well as issues under Policies 33, 42, 70-72), including 188 cases in fiscal 2021-22, which was similar to the previous year (though both of them were much higher than the previous year, n=79). Thanks for your reports and patience as we’ve worked through these cases.
- I am involved with diverse efforts to clarify/improve policy related to UG matters, including updates to our calendar through the UGSC and ongoing campus-wide review of UG policies and procedures with the other ADUGs (through the Undergraduate Operations Committee, Senate Undergraduate Council and ADUG/RO “Policy Group”).

F. THANK YOU: I am grateful for the assistance and support I’ve received from so many of you over my term as AD. I am honoured to work with such a great team. Carol’s deep knowledge and her commitment to our students continue to amaze me; she has taught me so much. It’s been a pleasure to welcome Graham to the team and his energy is a boon to the faculty.