

Email to the Campus Community

March 4, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of Senate Academic Priorities and Planning Committee (APP) to update you about work that is currently being led by APP to develop StFX's first Academic Plan. This planning exercise will provide members of the campus community an opportunity to contribute to envisioning the future of academics at StFX.

Terms of Reference

You can access the Terms of Reference for the exercise [here](#). Some of the key goals of the project are as follows:

- Present a distinct vision for academics at StFX, one that enables StFX to differentiate itself from comparator schools based on our academic environment.
- Focus on the academic activities of the university: program offerings; teaching and learning; student academic supports; academic quality; equity, diversity, and inclusion, decolonization. (Research has been addressed through the recent StFX Strategic Research and Creative Works Plan.)
- Present a clear set of objectives and specific goals that will support each of those objectives.
- Be informed by extensive consultation within the StFX community, as well as by research on best practices in higher education.

Communication and updates

We will regularly update the community as the process proceeds. Also, a new 'Academic Plan' section of the [AVP&P website](#) will serve as a communication and information hub. The website will be updated regularly and provide resources that will help inform planning and inspire ideas. I encourage you to review the content and to suggest other resources that will help focus our thinking.

Managing the workload

Recognizing that this year has been filled with disruption and that members are concerned about pandemic fatigue, we are designing a process that will allow broad participation without an onerous time commitment:

- We extended the exercise over approximately 14 months.
- We will be keeping the scope of the exercise focused and manageable, recognizing that there will be a university-wide strategic planning exercise taking place concurrently and that we have existing Faculty-level plans that address aspects of this work. We will not duplicate the work of these other planning exercises.
- There will be two formal community consultation periods. The first one is a period of discussion to generate ideas and will take place this spring and early summer. A second consultation period will invite comments on a draft academic plan and will take place in Fall 2021.

- APP has organized the work of planning this exercise into a series of very small tasks, and members of APP will lead small working groups (micro-committees) that will complete each task over one or two short meetings. The working groups will bring recommendations to APP for approval.

Call for participation

We would like to have many voices involved in helping design this planning exercise, so APP is inviting members of Faculty and teaching staff to participate in the planning by joining one (or more) of the APP micro-committees. Each micro-committee will have a very focused task (e.g., draft a consultation plan; identify and assess resources; frame consultation questions). Each committee will complete its task in only 1-2 meetings. If you are interested in serving alongside members of APP on one of these micro-committees, please contact Gina Sampson gsampson@stfx.ca for more information.

I look forward to hearing from you throughout this exercise. If you have other questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

Kevin