



**Senate Committee on Academic Development
Report on Enrolment Town Halls
October 29, 2013**

Introduction

On referral from Senate (April 2013, Appendix A), SCAD held two town hall meetings to engage the university community about enrolment. The town halls took place in the Peter Lougheed Room, Richardson Hall, on September 24 and 25, from 6 to 8 pm.

Members of the university and local communities were notified of the town halls through the Provost's website, the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) website and social media channels and the Queen's on-line events calendar. Additionally, the Alma Mater Society advertised the event through its website and social media channels, and Faculty Societies were contacted directly to make them aware of the opportunity for input. The Queen's News Centre posted a story about the town halls on September 18, 2013.

Attendees were encouraged to read the Strategic Enrolment Management Group (SEMG)'s white paper, released in September. Other opportunities were provided for the community to provide input, including:

- Comments on the themes and questions outlined in the white paper were invited to be sent to provost@queensu.ca until October 23, when all feedback will be considered as the SEMG begins to develop the first draft of the university's long term enrolment strategy;
- The white paper was discussed on October 5th at the Board-Senate retreat and again on October 18th at University Council.

Summary

Approximately 25 people attended each meeting. Undergraduate and graduate students were the primary attendees and contributors. Members of the Kingston community and the university's SEMG also attended the meetings that were co-chaired by the AMS and the Provost's Office. To facilitate discussion, attendees were provided with a list of 12 questions that were selected from the SEMG white paper (Appendix B).

Participants provided very positive feedback about their Queen's experience. Many students indicated that the 'Queen's Experience' was the most valuable aspect of their time at Queen's, specifically the opportunities outside the classroom that enhance leadership skills, self-awareness, entrepreneurship opportunities/training and international experiences.

Comments focused on implications arising from planned enrolment increases over the next several years. The following themes and suggestions emerged over the course of the two evenings.

Student Life

- The loss of common rooms in already crowded residences;
- Congested dining halls and increased wait times for food;
- The need for more housing, not just in residences, but affordable housing close to campus for graduate and upper year students;
- Increased wait times for services such as “AMS walk home” while demand rises the further students are from their residence (on or off campus.)

Learning Environment

- Class sizes are already large (particularly in the Faculty of Arts and Science) - a mechanism is needed to lower the faculty-student ratio;
- Teaching facilities vary in quality;
- Teaching methods and innovative models are not always successful;
- Access to a variety of courses or interdisciplinary opportunities need to be enhanced;
- Professional placements or internships are already scarce and access may become further compromised;
- Choice of academic programs may become more competitive with more students not studying in their first choice of program;
- More flexibility is needed in course offerings;
- Dual degree opportunities have been curtailed and may be more so in the future;
- Academic departments may become more protectionist of their already diminishing resources;
- Underuse of classroom space during summer - can academic programming be offered year-round;
- Expanded opportunities for experiential learning are required;
- Learning outcomes in non-professional programs should be codified;
- Focus on training life-long learners, as research and methodology in some areas become outdated within 5-10 years of graduation.

Accessibility (Cultural and Intellectual)

- Opportunities for increased enrolment among international students and other non-traditional students should continue to be expanded;
- Further oversubscribing of student clubs and programs will limit students’ ability to integrate and become part of the Queen’s community;
- Assess rationale for diversity and clearly articulate the institution’s definition of diversity;
- More space in residences for international upper-year exchange students may be needed;
- More opportunities for international students in clubs and groups should be actively provided;
- A representative from the Disability Services Office (DSO) reported that there are challenges related to the university’s capacity to accommodate and support an

increasing number of students with disabilities. A written report submitted by the DSO will be forwarded to the SEMG.

Additional Resource

The Alma Mater Society Assembly unanimously ratified a paper entitled: [The Rising Tide: An Enrolment Policy Paper](#) at its September 21st meeting.

Appendix A: Referral to SCAD: Senate meeting of April 30, 2013

That the Senate Committee on Academic Development hold town halls in September 2013, after the commencement of classes, on the subject of proposed enrolment increases in the 2015-2016 academic year and beyond. In accordance with its powers under section VII, 34, 2 of the Senate Rules of Procedure.

That such town halls be held on at least two separate days, and that public notice of the dates and times of these hearings be provided at least two weeks before the hearings are to commence. That a summary of the views expressed at the hearings be reported for information to the Senate at the October Senate meeting.

Appendix B: Questions circulated at SCAD town hall meetings on enrolment

Q1 What opportunities (full-time and part-time) are there for new program development (credit and non-credit) at the undergraduate level and what incentives can be put into place to encourage this innovation?

Q2 What is the role of undergraduate, graduate, and professional distance studies and off-campus delivery? What distance offerings could be pursued or expanded, that could meet existing and projected demand across a diverse student population? For example, delivering programs elsewhere (including the Bader International Study Centre), on-line learning based in Kingston or elsewhere, MOOCs, or blended learning models.

Q3 What are the unique values and outcomes of a Queen's arts degree? How can this be articulated to continue attracting students to this program?

Q4 Some direct-entry undergraduate programs have seen their minimum entry mark increase significantly in recent years. How does Queen's continue to attract students who demonstrate balance between academic strength and broad extra-curricular experience?

Q5 In light of the anticipated decline in the 18-24-year-old applicant pool, how can Queen's ensure it is appropriately assessing mature student applications?

Q6 How can Queen's maximize campus activities and course offerings year-round (spring and summer) for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, as well as non-credit programming?

Q7 How can the university capitalize and leverage its distinctive strengths and identity in undergraduate, graduate, and professional student recruitment in line with diversified enrolment strategies?

Q8 What academic and support programming could be implemented to maintain Queen's strong retention rate and improve graduation rates at both the undergraduate and graduate levels?

Q9 What opportunities exist to increase experiential and entrepreneurial learning on campus and elsewhere? Where could Queen's explore establishing satellite campuses?

Q10 How can Queen's continue to increase under-represented student populations including aboriginal learners, first-generation students, and international students?

Q11 What role can Queen's research activities on campus and abroad play in enrolment planning?

Q12 What are the key elements of the Queen's residential experience and how might it be impacted by decisions about enrolment?