

Principal's Written Report
Queen's University Senate
29th Oct, 2013

Government Update

- I was pleased to participate with many of our community partners at the second annual Kingston Day at Queen's Park advocacy event, organized by the City of Kingston. Many government leaders, including Premier Wynne and Reza Moridi, Minister of Research and Innovation, dropped by and chatted with me and our student government representatives. I also met with Minister Duguid in a joint meeting with St. Lawrence College to provide and update to the Minister on collaboration opportunities between our two institutions.
- The process of developing differentiation among Ontario colleges and universities, which is being driven by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, is still unfolding. Paul Genest, appointed Strategic Advisor to negotiate strategic mandate agreements, is awaiting finalization of the differentiation framework by the Ministry before he can engage directly with us and our sister institutions. We have participated in providing feedback to the Ministry on the differentiation framework in a number of different ways, including a system-wide perspective developed by COU.
- On the federal side, the work of the AUCC Standing Committee on International Relations which I chair, has had a strong focus on immigration-related matters in the wake of new regulations on the provision of advice by universities to students, faculty and staff seeking visas to study, work or visit Canada on a temporary basis. While the legislation and regulations were designed in large part to limit unscrupulous migration agents from taking advantage of those wishing to work in or immigrate to Canada, advisors to students, staff and faculty at higher education institutions have been captured in the legislation. In spite of strong advocacy by universities to be excluded from regulations requiring those providing assistance and advice regarding visa applications to undertake extensive training and ongoing professional development to be certified as registered immigration consultants, it appears that the regulations will stand. The advocacy focus is now on mitigating the effect of these changes by proposing a number of policy options including:
 - Prior learning assessment and recognition for advisors in higher education settings;
 - Specific course exemptions for employees of educational institutions given the inclusion in the curriculum of courses related to running an independent business.
 - Specialized and focussed accreditation for employees of educational institutions that takes into account the particular needs of the sector.
- In a speech last week to the fall meeting of AUCC, Minister Chris Alexander expressed his hope that a less burdensome path through this issue could be found for universities as he recognizes how resource intensive full 'consultant' qualification could become for our institutions, and that it runs against government's stated interest in increasing the intake of international students and potential new permanent residents the educational route.
- Another issue that is being monitored relates to concerns regarding the effect of the strike by the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers in terms of Canada's long-term reputation as a welcoming destination for students and researchers in the global competition for talent.

Advancement Report

- A number of academic units reached out to welcome alumni home for Homecoming – Homecoming was a tremendous success.
- They appreciated academic department and unit heads, along with their deans and associate deans, going to such efforts to open their doors during tours, receptions and other events over the two Homecoming weekends.
- These activities allowed thousands of alumni to reconnect with the campus community.
- It also allowed alumni to have a close look at the important work in which faculty and staff are engaged.

International Outreach

- In the week following the first Homecoming weekend I was able to make a quick trip to develop and consolidate alumni ties. It has been nearly ten years since a Queen's Principal has visited Hong Kong and the visit was long overdue.
- We have many loyal alumni in Hong Kong whose support will be invaluable not only in a philanthropic sense but in terms of making connections as we work towards increasing international student recruitment and improving our international profile.
- Through one-on-one meetings, a private dinner with key alumni at the residence of the Canadian Consulate General who is also an alumnus, and a well-attended alumni reception, I learned first-hand of the passion of these alumni for their alma mater.
- I also had the opportunity to visit two of Hong Kong's top high schools, one of which is headed by a Queen's alumnus, and speak with both students, the principal and guidance counselors about the unique benefits of the Queen's student learning experience. The response was enthusiastic.
- The resoundingly positive reception from those I met on this trip sought to emphasize the important role of face-to-face meetings as Queen's strives to improve international recognition and profile. To build on and sustain the momentum from this visit it will be important to ensure that senior representatives of the institution, particularly including the Principal where possible, are able to engage directly with our alumni, potential students and academic and research partners.