

Provost's Report to December 2, 2013, Senate Meeting

Queen's National Scholar Program, 2013-2014

The Queen's National Scholar (QNS) Advisory Committee met recently to review expressions of interest (EOIs) for QNS appointments effective July 1, 2014. Of the 23 EOIs submitted, 20 came from the Faculty of Arts and Science, two from the Faculty of Health Sciences and one from the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science.

The four successful EOIs are in the fields of Aquatic Ecotoxicology (Faculty of Arts and Science), Indigenous Visual and Material Culture of the Americas (Faculty of Arts and Science), Integrated Energy Systems (Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science), and International Community Rehabilitation Therapy (Faculty of Health Sciences). In each case, the Faculty has been invited to submit an expanded proposal that nominates, after an appropriate recruitment process, an individual to be appointed.

Additional information on the QNS program can be found on the [Provost's website](#).

Ellis Hall Renovations to Create Active Learning Spaces

A project to contribute significantly to Queen's active learning spaces has been underway since the summer of 2013. Several units, including the Provost's Office, Physical Plant Services, Information Technology Services, Campus Planning, and the Centre for Teaching and Learning, have been involved in the creation of the Ellis Hall Active Learning Spaces. The project, when complete, will provide three classrooms, each of a different size and configuration, with diverse types of technology, including HDMI, VGA, and ethernet connectivity, interactive displays, LCD touchscreens, flat-screen monitors, document cameras, and whiteboards.

Great care has been taken to incorporate into the project a research and assessment component, which will ensure that we learn how to make effective use of these spaces, and how to improve on the design in future similar projects. Several courses are already scheduled to be taught in these spaces for the winter term. Instructors using these classrooms will receive guidance from educational developers on how to adapt their instructional methods to foster active learning.

The Ellis Hall Active Learning Classrooms website has more information on the [project](#), the [classrooms](#), and the [courses](#) that will use the classrooms.

Provost's Advisory Committee on the Student Learning Experience: Update

The Student Learning Experience Task Force was established in November, 2012. It was asked to make specific recommendations that, if implemented, would sustain and improve the student learning experience, which had been identified as an important pillar of the Academic Plan. The task force is developing a Teaching and Learning Action Plan focused on processes or interventions that are innovative, sustainable, cost-effective, and informed by evidence-based practices in teaching and learning. Since submitting its interim recommendations, the task force has focused its work on five key areas: student learning supports, teaching support services, strategic program enhancement, data management and learning analytics, and supports for eLearning. The task force's final set of recommendations will be submitted to the Provost in December.

Provost's Advisory Committee on Mental Health: Update

The Division of Student Affairs has introduced several student health and wellness initiatives that respond to the recommendations in the report of the [Principal's Commission on Mental Health](#). One such initiative, Q Success, is a transition support program for first-year students focused on academic skills development. Trained upper year peers and professional staff have recently completed a nine-week series of interactive sessions for groups of 25 first-year students. Session topics included:

- how to think, learn and write for university
- organizational and time-management skills
- coping and self-management skills
- healthy lifestyle and self-care skills

There were more than 300 applications from the incoming undergraduate class for 75 spaces, and enrolment was increased to 106 students in response to this strong demand. In addition, a small cohort of students opted to join a parallel Aboriginal-student-specific cohort led by staff at the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre. There was also considerable interest in the sessions from upper-year student who were applying for positions as mentors, and seven students were chosen from among 60 applicants.

An on-line version, Q Success 2.0, was created and offered to students who did not get into the formal program. About 25 percent of these students opted to participate, and received weekly e-mails with study tips and links to academic skills development resources.

An anonymous donor provided funding for this initial offering of Q Success, and we are extremely grateful for the donor's generosity and support for mental health initiatives. The [Provost's Advisory Committee on Mental Health](#) is preparing its annual report, which will provide an update on this and other initiatives and identify priorities that require sustainment funding or new investment in the coming years.

Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts: Update

The Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts (IBCPA) is on target to reach substantial completion by the end of January 2014, at which point it will no longer be a construction site and we hope to initiate tours of the facility.

The IBCPA Academic Planning Committee, chaired by Faculty of Arts and Science Associate Dean Gordon Smith, is meanwhile hard at work. The Heads of Drama and Film and Media, the Directors of Music and the Bachelor of Fine Art Program, and the IBCPA Director Jerry Doiron comprise this group, which was established to address all aspects of academic planning with respect to the IBCPA.

Gordon Smith is also acting as facilitator for a separate working group, consisting of representatives from the four creative arts units and Cultural Studies. This group is discussing a variety of curricular initiatives and cross disciplinary projects that the IBCPA makes possible.

The Centre's official opening is set for September 20, 2014. The evening, with the Bader family in attendance, will include receptions, dinner, speeches from several dignitaries, and a short concert featuring both the new Steinway piano and some of Canada's most exciting young talent.

The official opening will be preceded by other recognition events. In mid-August, Queen's will partner with the City of Kingston's Tett Centre to celebrate and recognize the City's involvement in both projects. Queen's will also use this event to acknowledge the efforts of the work force. On September 13, the building will be opened by the students for the students in a distinct ceremony.

Please visit the [project website](#) for a more detailed update.