

## Context and Background for Strategic Planning and Community Consultation

*“We are so constituted, that if we insist upon being as sure as is conceivable... we must be content to creep along the ground, and can never soar. If we are intended for great ends, we are called to great hazards; and, ... given absolute certainty in nothing, we must in all things choose between doubt and inactivity....”*

--Cardinal Newman, *Oxford University Sermons*, Sermon 11

As they reflect upon how King’s will take its educational project forward into the next decade, the members of the Planning Committee are aware that the post-secondary landscape, locally, across Canada, and globally, is undergoing seismic shifts. This circumstance both frees us to think more radically than ever before—necessity being the mother of invention—*and* constrains us to temper imagination with rationality, responsibility, circumspection. The first part of this document maps the shifting terrain, to provide as much context as possible for the discussion of the questions that the Planning Committee focus-groups are invited to consider. The context inevitably presents certain contradictions: we must unpack and articulate them, in order to go about the planning task with the greatest possible degree of clarity.

The terrain of higher education today plays a part in defining the goals and objectives for the new Strategic Plan. For instance: the new parameters for provincial funding, coupled with the new emphasis on student satisfaction and success, make it imperative for us not only to think in terms of delivering the best pedagogy and campus environment, but also to *be seen* to be doing so. Thus, our academic plan for enhancing the quality of our programs, for improving faculty research opportunities, and for mentoring fully engaged students must go hand-in-hand with building our reputational advantage. Again, the fault-lines of uncertainty about provincial funding and about the value of the liberal arts creep beyond disciplinary and departmental boundaries. In response, the academic and administrative units at King’s must act in concert for the good of the College as a whole, drawing on the Catholic intellectual tradition and dedication to service as the fount of our common inspiration, and giving thought to making the institution vibrant, globally relevant, and self-sustaining.

### **The following themes have been mooted for the focus-groups within the Planning Committee:**

1. Improving institutional quality and maximizing the resultant reputational advantage
2. Creating and retaining a student body engaged in a transformative learning experience
3. Nurturing a community informed by our Catholic vision
4. Increasing our global engagement
5. Securing our future.

# Higher education in Canada today: A map of the terrain

## Global and National Contexts

### Facts and strengths

- In Canada, between 2008 and 2015, about twice as many net new jobs were created for university graduates (1,065,000) as for college and trades graduates combined (620,000). Over their careers, university graduates earn on average 50% more than full-time workers without university degrees.
- The Social Sciences and Humanities make up more than half of Bachelor's Degrees among current professional leaders with higher education qualifications, across 30 countries and all sectors. In Canada, graduates in these disciplines share in the income premium for all university graduates. For example, full-time workers with History degrees earn, on average, over \$65,000 annually, similar to graduates with degrees in Biological and Biomedical Sciences.
- Access to university education remains uneven. For instance, only 9.8% of Indigenous people aged 25 to 64 in Canada have a university degree.
- Internationalization is the single most significant trend in Canadian education.
  - 96% of Canadian universities include internationalization as part of strategic planning, and most as one of their top five planning priorities; 89% say that the pace of internationalization on their campuses has accelerated during the past three years.
  - In 2014, about 89,000 full-time international students were enrolled in undergraduate programs on Canadian campuses (approximately 11% of full-time undergraduate). China, Brazil, India, the United States, France, Mexico and Germany are top-priority partner countries, despite student preference for English-speaking and/or western European nations such as the U.K., Australia, France and Germany.
  - 72% of Canadian universities engage in initiatives, such as intercultural research or field trips, to internationalize the curriculum.
  - International education benefits students. 82% of employers who hire recruits with international and intercultural experiences say these employees enhance their company's competitiveness; two out of three hiring managers say Canada is at risk of being left behind dynamic global economies like China, India and Brazil unless young Canadians learn to think more globally.

### Challenges

- The utilitarian approach to education, which devalues liberal arts programs in favour of professional, STEM-related or job-oriented programs, affects the **perception** of King's academic programming. There is pressure to offer programs that are more obviously job-related.

## Opportunities

- The known facts about the correlation between education and employability must be mobilized to counter the negative perception of liberal arts degrees. King's has recently acquired access to statistics on graduation rates and employment rates among our graduates, and the figures are encouraging.
- As global demand for a university education grows in response to increasingly knowledge-based economies, Canada will continue to attract international students. King's is well-placed to become a destination of choice not only for partner countries that favour Business/Economics programs, but also the arts and humanities.
- Programs that help Indigenous students transition into university studies are offered by 61 Canadian universities. Such a program, implemented here, would be in keeping with the King's mission.

### **Provincial Context (highlighted keywords reference new government-mandated metrics)**

## Facts and strengths

- Since 2012, the Ontario government's Differentiation Agenda has put in place initiatives to transform postsecondary education with the following broad goals:
  - 1) To support **student success** and access to a **high quality** Ontario postsecondary education
  - 2) To increase **the global competitiveness** of Ontario's postsecondary education
  - 3) To build on and help focus the strengths of Ontario colleges and universities, avoiding unnecessary duplication
  - 4) To maintain an efficient and financially sustainable postsecondary education system.
- In August 2014, Ontario signed Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) with 45 publicly-funded colleges and universities, both indicating support of existing institutional strengths and attempting to bring institutions in alignment with new government initiatives. The [SMA with Western](#) emphasizes the Sciences.
- In 2013, the **Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU)** released the Differentiation Policy Framework for Postsecondary Education. Its components, and its broad directions mesh with the initiatives to review and modernize the funding model launched in 2015 by the Ontario government. Created in consultation with students, university leadership, faculty, employers, colleges, the elementary and secondary sector, and professional associations, the funding model will place an increased emphasis on
  - 1) **learning outcomes**
  - 2) **academic differentiation**
  - 3) improving **student experience** and

4) **institutional accountability** through reporting according to a specific set of metrics.

The suggested parameters for assessing **student success**, part of the accounting criteria, are: employment outcomes, graduation, labour market preparedness, **learning outcomes**, participation, outreach and opportunity, **retention**, **student satisfaction**, and time-to-completion.

## Challenges

- Ontario invested 44% less annually in its university system compared with its peer provinces. Continuous under-funding of education can be linked to Ontario's prosperity gap, and studies suggest this is a contributing factor of a \$6,000 per person prosperity gap between Ontario and the jurisdictional average.
- In particular, enrolment-based funding of institutions like King's will inevitably diminish, partly because of demographics (see the next point). The Finance Discussion Points Document from the King's Finance Department (henceforth **King's FDP Document**; available in its entirety [here](#) notes: "The recent trend has been that grants are shrinking both in nominal dollars and as a percentage of total revenues [partly] due to ... the government's initiatives to reduce grants through policy levers."
- The rapid increase (60% from in the last decade) in student enrollment in Ontario universities has not been met in similar increase of university professors (28% increase in the same time span) resulting in a student-to-faculty ratio of 26-1, which is much higher than the national average. Enrolment is projected to increase by an average of 1.7% through to 2017–18, meaning one of every thirteen adult Ontarians will be enrolled in Ontario public post-secondary institutions.

## Opportunities

- Academic programming must creatively adapt to outcome-based funding. This can be seen as a stimulus to action, rather than as a burden.
- 2% of Ontario's population comprises First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. Overall, Ontario's Indigenous communities are significantly younger and have a population growth rate four times higher than the non-Indigenous population in Ontario. 30.7% of people in Ontario have a university credential compared with only 11.8% of Indigenous people in Ontario. Today, 1.7% of university students and 3.6% of college students in Ontario overall are Indigenous; in northern Ontario, 9.2% of university students and 13% of college students are Indigenous.
- The number of international students studying in Ontario universities has grown each year by an average of 7% since the start of the 21st century, until it grew by more than 8% in 2011-12 and 9% cent in 2012-13. International students contribute just under \$3 billion annually to Ontario's economy. The top five source countries are China, India, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and Nigeria. Unlike tuition fees for domestic students, international student fees have not been regulated since 1996. Institutions use differential fees to generate revenue, and today, international

students pay, on average, 4.5 times more in tuition fees than domestic students. The FDP King's document says grants are diminishing "as a percentage of total revenues [partly] due to ... King's success in attracting increasing numbers of international students (who do not attract grants) ..."

- *The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario predicts*
  - increased diversity among postsecondary students (due to continued immigration, growing adult learner numbers, and efforts to increase participation by currently underrepresented groups)
  - continued enrolment growth
  - greater student mobility between institutions
  - technology enabled changes to program delivery
  
- Ontario's Ministry of Finance identifies these pressures faced by the Ontario postsecondary sector:
  - educating a growing share of the population
  - helping equalize economic and social outcomes across the population
  - providing an important component of lifelong learning
  - functioning as an engine of innovation
  - delivering quality education with a constrained provincial fiscal situation
  
- The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (Ontario)'s Reaching Higher plan for postsecondary education in the province, initiated in 2005, includes a \$6.2 billion commitment to postsecondary education to address such issues as capacity, access, financial assistance and more. The plan calls for, among other deliverables, a target postsecondary attainment rate of 70%.

## **Local Context**

### **Challenges**

- While enrolment growth in Canadian universities will continue over the next decade, it will be unevenly distributed. The increases, where they occur, will be driven mainly by participation rates rather than by demographics. The predicted enrolment levels predicted province-wide may not benefit King's, because of its position vis-a-vis local demographics. Locally, a drop in the number of secondary school graduates is projected.<sup>1</sup> Provincial level enrolment growth will be primarily in the greater Toronto area; funding will increasingly focus on *quality maintenance* rather than growth. Since 2010, the number of full time registrants at King's has dropped by 214 and the number of part time registrants has remained about the same.

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<sup>1</sup> Relevant documentation: Statistics Canada, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada's *Trends in Higher Education*, The Council of Ontario Universities' (COU) *Reaching Even Higher: The Next Multi-Year Funding Plan for Postsecondary Education*, and The University of Western Ontario's strategic plan, *Engaging the Future*, 2006.

- Sociocultural change: educators are trying to understand how the changing culture and priorities among youth are tied in with the difficulty of promoting liberal arts learning for its own sake. Students report anxiety about employability. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many students in our courses find it virtually impossible to keep up with the demands of reading-intensive courses at one end of the spectrum, and with quantitative analysis at the other end.

### Opportunities

- Consolidation of current enrolment through retention must bring our focus to student services, university transition programs, learning support.
- Alternative sources of students must be considered: internationalization is one answer among many.

## King's Institutional Context

### Facts and strengths

- Ideals deriving from Catholic intellectual tradition: a vision involving the engendering of a mature faith, responsible to the past, the present and the future, in keeping with the ideals of the Catholic intellectual tradition. Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities entitled *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* provides the framework for our understanding of a Catholic university's identity, mission and activities.
- The advantages of affiliation with Western University, including the following:
  - Our students receive Western University degrees upon graduation;
  - Students and faculty have access to the support services of a major university (athletics, student services, health services, etc.);
  - Students have access to a vast array of course offerings, including in the Sciences, that are only available on a large campus, while continuing to enjoy the more intimate atmosphere of King's for most of their studies;
  - Students and faculty have full access to the library holdings of a major research intensive university through our Shared Library program;
  - Faculty enjoy the opportunity to work collaboratively with colleagues on the other campuses;
  - Faculty have the opportunity to participate in graduate programs through adjunct membership in the School of Graduate Studies.
- King's supports:
  - 19 honors specialization modules
  - 12 specialization modules
  - 22 major modules
  - 20 minor modules
  - Over 400 course sections and approximately 3500 students
  - High quality student development, enrolment and library services

## Challenges

- The ongoing challenge of harmonizing the strategic plan of a primarily undergraduate affiliated college with the plans of several faculties and schools situated within a research intensive multi-faceted university focused on the expansion of its graduate programs. The King's strategic plan is one of many plans.
- The challenge of maintaining distinctiveness and identity as a Catholic College while being held to the affiliation agreement with Western.
- Uncertainty around the value of non-STEM education, lower morale in the classroom.
- Fewer graduate study/career opportunities for liberal arts students in the traditional disciplines: e.g., changes in Teacher Education and its impact on disciplines like English, French and History.

## Opportunities

- In the long run, the need to advocate for greater academic and fiscal autonomy for King's, to complement the institutional autonomy we currently enjoy.
- The need for mutually beneficial strategies developed in concert with the constituent university, Brescia and Huron, which could yield benefits to all despite increased institutional competition for a smaller number of students overall.
- The need to respond to three of the themes that dominate Western's strategic plan: interdisciplinarity, internationalization and student engagement.
- Internationalization opportunities largely linked to China in the past, but now expanding to include significant recruitment from Korea and India, among other countries.
- A widespread perception of King's as providing a supportive and accessible environment for students with disabilities.
- Productive relationships with local community, school system, Diocese, past students/alumni.
- Upcoming new Academic Plan, defined by reflection on the following goal:  
*To distinguish King's as a center of academic excellence based on a signature pedagogical ethos rooted in the Catholic humanist tradition; one that empowers students to boldly embrace their future*
  - *by cultivating a community of engaged scholars; and*
  - *by fostering engaged and successful learning.*

- Important upcoming reviews:
  1. the Ninth Academic Review (upcoming, Spring 2016)
  2. the Academic Plan as part of the Strategic Planning process (Winter 2016)
  3. the Project Team Administrative Review (re Dept. Structure: underway)
  4. the Library Review (January 2016)
  5. the Review of Student Development Services (Completed Nov 2015): notes that more work needs to be done on enhancing the coordination (“a Student Affairs Strategic Plan” consolidating efforts across the student support units), including academic advising and the student services units in a larger master-plan, with ‘student success’ and ‘student experience’ as key driving ideas, and with processes for qualitative and quantitative self-assessment set in place.
  
- New recruitment strategies and January admissions (the latter has added around 200 students to the King’s roster in 2015-16).
  
- Pedagogy and Retention Working Group efforts vs. ongoing struggles with retention, especially Year 1 to Year 2.
  
- Continued focus on campus development, especially the creation of welcoming residence spaces for students who are acculturated to ‘rooms of their own.’ **The FDP King’s Document** notes: “Physical space developments in recent years have been implemented to work towards the goal of making King’s campus one of the most inviting campuses in the country. Recent initiatives include the SLC, enhanced focus on grounds maintenance and decorations, and re-modeling of the Thames market cafeteria space.”



## Vision Values and Learning 2010 – A Concise Reflection

**Goal 1** To establish a community of engaged scholars actively pursuing the acquisition, creation and dissemination of knowledge

### Facts and strengths

- student/faculty ratio has dropped to 18.0 from 21.9 in 2010
- the Foundation Year initiative is up and running and a complementary King's Scholar program has been developed
- more on line and blended learning initiatives are underway
- a Faculty Research Activity Committee reporting to Faculty Council is in place
- faculty research is being recognized through the annual faculty publications event, book launch celebration, online library listing of faculty publications, creation of the Hugh Mellon Award, membership in the Royal Society of Canada, and the participation of the Associate Academic Dean at meetings of Associate Deans Research at Western
- many parallel programs continue to differentiate themselves from their counterparts on other campuses to an extent that is reasonable in the context of the programs involved
- programs unique to King's in the Western complex such as Social Work, Catholic Studies, Social Justice and Peace Studies, Childhood and Social Institutions, Thanatology and Disability Studies continue to develop and thrive
- all our academic programs that have undergone external reviews in accordance with Western's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) have been rated as good quality
- we have increased university partnerships around the world in an effort to increase the breadth and diversity of the international students who study on our campus
- experiential learning opportunities have increased over the last 5 years
- the new learning commons has added more collaborative study space and allowed the reassignment of space in the library
- information technology in service to students is promoted across the college by increased wireless access, increased use of OWL in courses, advanced technology in all classrooms, smart tables and more outlets, and information screens in convenient locations
- student have the opportunity to provide feedback through their representatives at all levels of our committee and governance structure

## **Challenges**

- continued heavy reliance on part time faculty
- no success in establishing endowed chairs
- the competition for students with strong academic potential has intensified particularly in the arts and humanities
- underfunding limits the resources available for our academic programs and their development, the library, and student services

## **Opportunities**

- development of an integrated and engaged learning experience
- revise the current research plan
- expand student leadership opportunities on our campus and in the community
- there is a need to develop more structure and policy around experiential learning as it becomes a more prominent mode of learning

**Goal 2 To articulate, realize and celebrate the Catholic vision in all dimensions of College life;**

## **Facts and strengths**

- the College has partnership agreements with all the Catholic School Boards in Ontario, hosts annual meetings of Board representatives and showcases our programs in Catholic Studies, Social Justice etc.
- external appraisers are given all our Catholic mission related documents and these are discussed in meetings with the Academic Dean and Principal
- the Center for Advanced Research in Catholic Thought has been established and works on organizing conferences
- the Veritas Series has replaced the Religious Life Lecture Series and continues to sponsor speakers with the support of the College
- we continue to promote our vision for Catholic higher education in discussions with the Seminary and the Diocese
- the Principal has been very much engaged with the ACCUC, ACCU and IFCU

## **Challenges**

- promoting the value of the Catholic moral, spiritual and social tradition in an increasingly secular world
- securing funding for the development of our Catholic mission

## **Opportunities**

- realizing our vision of a greater Catholic university with the acquisition of more property
- to be a centre for Catholic thought and discourse in the London community
- engaging the community in our centres and outreach activities
- developing Catholic themes in more of our programs
- to encourage research initiatives with Catholic themes
- building more Catholic leadership opportunities for our students
- developing initiatives designed to attract and recruit Catholic scholars in every discipline
- to increase Board engagement in the expansion of Catholic life at King's

## **Goal 3 To enhance the spirit of community within the College**

### **Facts and strengths**

- all constituencies of the College community are invited to participate in Campus Ministry programs, religious events and celebrations
- we reflect the ecumenical and multi-faith dimensions of the Catholic mission in community events, celebrations, and services
- our community values and celebrates diversity through a variety of events and awareness programs
- the Thames Market cafeteria expansion and renovation are aesthetically pleasing and increase opportunities for social activities and community engagement
- all constituent groups are represented on the major governing bodies of the College
- the College's safety, emergency and pandemic response plans have been implemented and are up for review
- the new Student Life Center opened in 2014 with space for classrooms, meeting rooms, learning commons, studying, physical fitness activities, the Write Place, Student Council offices, social gathering and theatre size events
- the new Student Life Center freed up existing space for cafeteria expansion, offices and social space
- accessibility plans for all persons with disabilities studying, visiting and working at King's are in place in some areas and under development in others
- training on harassment and bullying sensitivity and prevention has been made available to managers, faculty and staff

## **Challenges**

- having to do more with less increases stress in some areas of the College, in particular, those areas that see a great deal of student traffic and could benefit from more staff
- space needs are apparent in areas where the configuration of space is not ideal for the services that are being provided

## **Opportunities**

- a space plan to inform and prioritize space needs and development on our campus
- another round of training on harassment and bullying sensitivity and prevention is necessary to serve new members of our community and employees who were missed in the first round

## **Goal 4 To develop the College's regional, national and global profile**

### **Facts and strengths**

- the Foundation is continuing to grow its extensive fundraising partnerships and networks
- the College has extensive partnerships in the secondary school system and continues to cultivate and strengthen these connections with special events and gatherings
- Alumni Affairs at King's routinely visits alumni chapters across the country, has held alumni events in China and is making connections with our prospective alumni, our current students
- the College has strong connections with community agencies and local government
- we continue to recruit students from more than 25 countries with the majority hailing from China
- the MOS program has many outstanding international students
- partnerships with universities in other countries continue to develop with the current focus on China, India and Brazil
- partnerships are developing with Catholic universities in Brazil
- China is one possible area for the development of international alumni chapters
- direct relationships cultivated with both staff and elected government officials to raise the profile of King's and affiliates and the ability to assist in meeting the government's mandates for the sector
- direct participation and contact with COU and subcommittees to increase the profile of King's within the university sector

### **Challenges**

- International partnerships can take years to develop

## **Opportunities**

- the exploration of new markets for partnerships such as the USA
- the main campus and the affiliated University Colleges must work more closely to enhance the public profile of the university and showcase the richness that we all bring to the educational experience
- creating an institute of Religion, Culture and Public Life
- China is one possible area for the development of international alumni chapters

## **Goal 5 To consolidate and augment the legal, organizational and financial position of the College**

### **Facts and strengths**

- over the last ten years, King's total revenue has continued to increase year-over-year with increases over the last ten years have averaging around 4% annually
- new programming initiatives have resulted in growth in areas where students see job potential; the development and refinement of the Accounting program has resulted in growth from 6 to 114 students from 2010 to 2016; the development of a major in Disability Studies has resulted in 72 students enrolled in 2016 where no program existed 3 years ago
- incorporation has been completed
- planning for financial stability is an ongoing focus of the finance office
- phase 1 (senior administration) of the governance review has been completed and implemented
- phase 2 (the academic departments and direct supports) is underway
- the Student Life Campaign has been completed
- Retention Committee created to investigate initiatives directed at improving retention rates with focus on Year 1 to Year 2 retention. Focus on student success and transitioning from high school to university
- India – several new partnerships with Indian universities to develop 2+2 programs. 24 students from India in 2015 up from 2 in 2010

### **Challenges**

- we continue to struggle with financial and physical resources directed at program delivery in the face of enrolment decline, decreasing grants and limited tuition increases
- growth has averaged around 2% for the last three years
- due in large part to the competitive nature of the Toronto market and the propensity of students from the GTA to remain in the GTA to attend university, King's has not seen much of an increase in the overall percentage of its enrolment from the GTA

### **Opportunities**

- a comprehensive space needs plan must to be developed to inform and prioritize campus development initiatives
- the transitioning of the MSW to a 2-year program and the negotiation with UWO for additional graduate spaces has the potential to increase our program from 32 spaces to 60 spaces
- ONCAT Initiative - \$100,000 grant received to develop pathway program with Fanshawe College. Private Wealth Management program in place for 2017 with the expectation of 50 spaces being created
- discussions with Fanshawe regarding development of pathway programs for Police Foundations/Criminology and PSW/Disability Studies -grant application pending.

### **Goal 6 To create an environmentally sustainable College.**

#### **Facts and strengths**

- the Student Life Centre has a LEEDS silver designation
- solar panels have been installed on the Wemple and Labatt Hall roofs
- the College has an extensive recycling program
- conversion to LED lighting has taken place in the parking lots and upper floor of the library
- high efficiency boiler replacements in Dante and some of the townhouses
- green cleaning program with the use of environmentally friendly cleaning agents

#### **Challenges**

- communicating the importance of recycling to the community
- increasing the participation of the community in the College recycling program

#### **Opportunities**

- conversion to LED lighting across the entire campus
- to undertake an environmental audit to inform planning for new green initiatives

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## Background and preparatory questions for the focus groups

### Group 1: Improving institutional quality and maximizing the resultant reputational advantage

*“Schools and – even more so – universities, work to provide students with training that will enable them to enter the labor market and social life with adequate skills. Albeit indispensable, this is not enough: the measure of good schools and universities is also given by their ability to promote a kind of learning that is more focused on developing general and higher-level skills through education.”*

*--Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion*

### Guiding questions

1. How would you complete the sentence: “King’s has a reputation for/as...”? What attributes (from academic programming to student support services, from campus improvements to co-op opportunities) should define our “reputational advantage”? How can we develop and showcase those attributes?
2. What can we do to cultivate and publicize a reputational advantage that works to attract students who are interested in programming characterized by a strong liberal arts/humanistic core augmented by relevant work-related opportunities and that will serve as the foundation for a wide range of professional programs, graduate studies and employment?
3. How can we cultivate a local, national and international profile through effective support for and promotion of faculty research and teaching excellence?
4. How can we differentiate ourselves within the Western university cluster (and perhaps across the country)? How should we, in other words, define our institutional focus?
5. How can we build more partnerships with post-graduate institutions across Canada so that our signature undergraduate programs make us into a recognized feeder-institution for graduate programs in these institutions?

## **Group 2: Creating and retaining a student body engaged in a transformative learning experience**

*“...the beneficial experience of university life ... [enables] the ardent search for truth and its unselfish transmission to youth and to all those learning to think rigorously, so as to act rightly and to serve humanity better....”*

*--John Paul II, Ex Corde Ecclesiae*

### **Guiding questions**

1. How can the academic and nonacademic units of the College work together more effectively to create an exceptional integrated, engaged student learning and development experience?
2. What measures should be taken to distinguish King’s as a center of academic excellence and to engage and inspire the ideal King’s student within its environs?
3. How should we interpret and adapt to our core academic function the MTCU metrics that propose to tie funding to a definition of student success characterized by employment outcomes, graduation, labor market preparedness, learning outcomes, participation, outreach and opportunity, retention, student satisfaction, and time-to-completion?
4. What practical measures and resources can we employ to differentiate the first-year experience at King’s with a view to increasing retention and graduation/completion rates and what, precisely, should that differentiated experience look like (smaller class sizes; increased student-faculty interaction; core curriculum; transitional classes; etc.)?
5. How can we more effectively develop experiential learning, service learning and work related opportunities (such as internships, co-op placements, mentoring/job-shadowing etc.) in our courses and programs?



### **Group 3: Nurturing a community informed by our Catholic vision and mission**

*“Scientific and technological discoveries create an enormous economic and industrial growth, but they also inescapably require the correspondingly necessary search for meaning in order to guarantee that the new discoveries be used for the authentic good of individuals and of human society as a whole. If it is the responsibility of every University to search for such meaning, a Catholic University is called ... to include the moral, spiritual and religious dimension in its research....” --John Paul II, Ex Corde Ecclesiae.*

#### **Guiding questions**

1. How do we understand the nature and purpose of a Catholic university in 21<sup>st</sup> century higher education and society and what role does a genuine liberal arts education play in nurturing a community informed by Catholic mission and social teachings?
2. What are the benefits and potential costs in terms of reputational advantage and recruitment/retention of a prominent association with our Catholic identity and mission?
3. How can our Catholic identity and mission contribute to differentiation and reputational advantage, in terms of academic programming, the development of the student as a whole person, promotion of an inclusive, engaged community, etc.?
4. What should be our relationship to the Church and to the wider society?
5. Should faculty and staff be expected to engage in some capacity with the various Catholic dimensions of our community life and if so, to what extent and in what manner?

#### **Group 4: Increasing our Global Engagement**

*“Today, these establishments are found worldwide and the majority of their students come from different religious backgrounds, nations and cultures. However, students’ confessional allegiances should not be seen as a barrier, but as a condition for intercultural dialogue, helping each pupil grow in their humanness, civic responsibility and learning....”*

*-- Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion.*

#### **Guiding questions**

1. What strategies should we pursue to develop partnership opportunities that will attract students to programs in the arts and the traditional social sciences?
2. How can we improve upon the support services we provide international students?
3. How can we assist international students with their transition to our educational environment and community?
4. What role can distance learning play in the delivery of our courses and programs to international students?
5. How should we build our reputation as a destination for international students?

## Group 5: Securing our Future

*“How can the centrality of scientific research and the formation of highly-skilled human capital be restored, being aware that universities must not only be places where knowledge is processed but also shared, in order to respond to social needs, and become instruments not just for cultural and civil development but for economic growth as well?”*

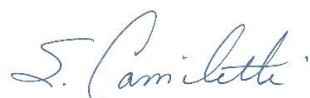
*--Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion*

### Guiding questions

1. Are there alternative ‘business models’ and approaches employed by comparable institutions of higher learning to consider when exploring the financial dimensions of our future?
2. Do we allocate resources internally in a way that is consistent with the academic nature and mission of the university college? Is there a proper balance between investment in academic and administrative resources?
3. What campus development imperatives are necessary to better serve our community and establish King’s as a preferred destination for prospective students?
4. What new recruitment markets should King’s explore and how should we position ourselves to be successful in these markets?
5. What opportunities exist for King’s to secure its future by limiting enrolment growth and cultivating richly diverse academic programs with established reputations of excellence?

**The focus groups meetings are being arranged for March 2016 and will be facilitated by Professor Jennifer Kirkham. A follow up notice will be distributed to the community when a schedule and locations have been finalized. We realize that people are busy, but if these meetings fit your schedule, please make every effort to attend. Your attention to this matter is very much appreciated.**

Respectfully submitted,



Sauro Camiletti  
Chair  
Planning Committee

