



STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

The University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) is entering its second decade. Its story to this point has been one of extraordinary innovation and achievement. In the first ten years, much work was done to grow our programs and our student body to meet the needs of the region, invest in infrastructure to support research and innovation, and forge strong relationships with community, industry and government partners. Together, these efforts have positioned us well to join the ranks of Canada's finest universities.

The next decade will be one of greater strategic focus, we will build upon the momentum and successes of our past while continuing to grow and innovate. At the same time, we are committed to finding new ways to enrich our programs and processes, build our areas of strength, cultivate our partnerships with industry, community and government, and sharpen our focus on key priorities so that whatever we do, we do it well.

The 2012-2016 Strategic Plan is guided by three overarching priorities, which are to:

- **Prepare our graduates for the evolving 21st century workplace;**
- **Build strength and capacity through research, innovation and partnerships; and**
- **Be distinguished as a healthy 21st century workplace.**

The three overarching priorities of the Strategic Plan are driven by six strategic outcomes that will ultimately define the university in three years' time. These outcomes encompass the important facets of UOIT's unique mission, including teaching, learning and integrated student support, research that solves important real-world challenges, and working in close collaboration with campus partners and governments. The strategic outcomes are further supported by a set of university-wide initiatives that will focus our collective efforts over the next three years, establishing a firm foundation as we move through the second decade of our development.

2. FROM 10 to20

A message from President Tim McTiernan

We owe our first students a debt of gratitude. They took a chance on an unproven entity and by doing so encouraged others to follow. It is an appropriate and fitting tribute to mark the tenth anniversary of the university with the day the first class of students arrived.

It was September 4, 2003 when 947 students crossed the threshold. There was only one UOIT building on campus and, while the first lecture was being delivered, the jackhammer overhead threatened to drown out the professor. The students, faculty and staff all shared an entrepreneurial spirit. They were motivated and excited to be part of the first new university built in Ontario in more than forty years. Taking stock, now ten years later, with an enrolment of more than 9,200 students, 43 undergraduate and 27 graduate programs in STEM-based and STEM-intensive disciplines, and more than \$10 million in annual research funding, the university's numerous accomplishments are nothing short of remarkable and will be celebrated throughout the course of the coming year.

This milestone anniversary also proved to be an ideal catalyst to develop a new strategic plan and under the guidance of our Board of Governors to refresh our vision, mission and values. This strategic plan will lay the foundation to take UOIT from ten to twenty – into the next decade and beyond.

Maintaining our focus on science, technology and excellence in professional practice, we'll strive for quality and challenge convention as we modify learning strategies in order to prepare our graduates for the evolving 21st century workplace. We'll grow our enrolment in targeted areas to 11,000 students by 2016. We'll enhance our capacity to develop academic and research partnerships with industry, community and other institutions, at home and abroad, that engage students, create knowledge, solve problems and contribute to Canada's economic and social development. We will be distinguished as a technology-enriched, inclusive and innovative institution where student-centered practices are deployed across a well-planned, forward-looking and accountable university.

A campus master plan, currently in development, will include both a land use component, in collaboration with our partners at Durham College, as well as an infrastructure development plan to address our academic and student needs. Taken together, the strategic and campus master plans will inform and guide our decision-making, growth and development and clearly convey our priorities for the next 3 to 5 years.

This document reflects the input gathered during numerous in-person and online consultation sessions and includes insights provided by students, faculty, staff, alumni, our Academic Council and Board of Governors, and community and government partners. It will serve as our touchstone. We will continue to seek input as the plan unfolds, to measure our progress and to ensure we remain on track and committed to realizing our overarching priorities and achieving our strategic outcomes.

Sincerely,

Tim McTiernan, PhD
President and Vice-chancellor

3. CONTEXT FOR PLANNING AT UOIT

In 2005, UOIT created its first Strategic Plan that served as a coherent roadmap, guiding the institution through the most critical stage in its development. At that time, UOIT was still at the beginning of a rather daunting journey that would lead to the establishment of a new university. The first plan centred on a set of fourteen strategic priorities, with fifty-eight corresponding goals and 578 action items. Although it was anticipated that this ambitious plan would be accomplished over a five year period, by the spring of 2007 UOIT had already accomplished over seventy percent of the actions items and achieved some very significant milestones, including the realization of full degree-granting authority, the creation of a solid core of graduate-level offerings, and the formation of a strong foundation for research and innovation.

UOIT's second Strategic Plan, issued in 2008, provided a renewed focus on five key priorities to chart its course for the next three years. The plan centred on strategic growth, governance and management, identity and partnerships, research and graduate intensiveness, and teaching and learning innovations. Now at the end of the planning cycle, the university has once again risen to a number of formidable challenges, having achieved aggressive enrolment targets and moved some distance toward resolving its critical space shortages, while continuing to attract and retain excellent faculty and staff in a highly competitive environment.

Now as we embark on our third Strategic Plan, there remain significant challenges in our growth trajectory. The absence of capital funding at start up continues to hamper our growth ten years later. While we have been able to manage our growth through creative efforts and extensive use of technology, our space needs remain at a critical level, particularly space for small groups and labs. In addition, we face significant challenges in growing our graduate programs within a funding environment that was not designed to take into account the additional requirements of a new research intensive university in Ontario.

In developing this Plan, we must also consider the economic and demographic factors that will drive our future direction. The participation rate among the university-age population is on the rise and, while the secondary school population is on a slow decline, however, the population in the Durham Region is projected to rise to more than 800,000 residents by 2022, and more than 1 million by 2032. We can also anticipate an increasing demand for later-in-life education, particularly among new Canadians, mid-career professionals, and baby-boomers. It is also important to consider the fact that our students shoulder an increasingly larger share of their educational costs, and a large portion of them rely on financial aid. In the 2012 Budget announcement, the Ontario government made a multiyear commitment to fund enrolment increases of more than 41,000 for universities over the next three years. However, the budget also announced that "the government will work with the postsecondary sector to enhance innovation and productivity to support efficiency targets while supporting quality education for students." New policy directions in online learning, lifelong learning and internationalization must also be taken into account within our plan. Going forward, therefore, it will be important to ensure that we continue to differentiate ourselves through our academic programs and technology-intensive learning strategies, improve our capacity to ensure student success, increase our visibility at the local, national and international levels, be academically innovative, and make UOIT a desirable destination for students, faculty and staff.

At the same time, we are fortunate to have a dynamic, creative and dedicated team of faculty, staff and students who have demonstrated time and again that the impossible can be achieved. We are

fortunate also to have the strong support of partners in government, industry and in the broader community. We have developed a coherent set of innovative, market-oriented, career-focused programs of study at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and formed numerous pathways programs for college graduates to complete a university degree. We also have achieved extraordinary outcomes in research and innovation. Thus, as we move into this next phase of our institutional journey we do so with a refreshed vision, mission and values, a sharpened focus on our priorities and outcomes, and a renewed enthusiasm for building one of the most recognized universities in Canada.

4. DEVELOPING THE PLAN

In September 2011, the UOIT Board of Governors' initiated the development of a new strategic plan that will define a shared vision for the university over the next 3 years. The process was overseen by President Tim McTiernan and managed by Provost Richard Marceau, with the support of advisory committee comprised of Brad MacIsaac, assistant vice-president, Policy and Planning, Mark Naylor, assistant vice-president, IT, Lisa Banks, director of Communications and Marketing, and Olivia Petrie, secretary, Academic Council. The strategic plan was endorsed by the Board of Governors in June 2012 and is being presented for approval by Academic Council in October 2012.

Also in September 2011, the UOIT Board of Governors undertook to review UOIT's vision, mission and values to align with our strategic priorities and to extend our purpose and goals to the end of the next decade. The new statements, which were endorsed by the Board in June 2012, now serve as the foundation of our strategic plan and will effectively guide our operations well into the future.

A key goal in developing the strategic plan was to elicit input from the entire UOIT and surrounding community. To that end, the President hosted Town Halls in September 2011, January 2012 and August 2012 to provide updates on the planning process and to gather feedback on the specific elements of the plan as they emerged. In addition, the Provost held extensive consultations with over 400 faculty, staff, students, alumni, governors and external partners over the fall term. Contributions were also received from over 100 individuals through an online survey. These consultations revealed a deep and widespread commitment to UOIT and its future success, and led to the articulation of specific priorities and objectives that challenged us to think deeply about the environment that we create for teaching, research, learning and discovery, and how we can work more closely together to create interconnections and synergies between and among faculty, staff, students and the broader community.

In early January, the Provost and his team met with each faculty and department to review the overarching strategic priorities and to consider them within the context of their own units and their role within the university. Specifically, faculties and departments were asked to develop unit plans that set out the strategies that they will undertake independently and in collaboration with others to contribute to the strategic priorities. By the end of April, all eighteen faculties and departments had completed their plans once again affirming the deep commitment to the university that exists across the campus and the demonstrating creative ways that the overarching priorities can be achieved over the next three years.

Following the submission of unit plans, the President held an all-day strategic planning session to draw from the unit plans those areas that will be tackled on an institution-wide basis and to realize

synergies between and among unit plans. These elements evolved into the six outcomes and 36 university wide initiatives that are presented in this document.

In pulling all of this together we are indebted to the faculty, staff, students, governors, alumni and community members who contributed to the development of the plan at all stages, and without whom we wouldn't be where we are and certainly won't get to where we need to go.

5. VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Vision

With its foundation in technology, the sciences and professional practice, UOIT advances the discovery and application of knowledge that accelerates economic growth, regional development and social innovation, and inspires graduates who will continue to make an impact on the world, as it is and as it will be.

Mission

- *Provide superior undergraduate and graduate programs that are technology-enriched and responsive to the needs of students and the evolving workplace*
- *Conduct research that creates knowledge, solves problems, results in economic and social innovation, and engages students*
- *Facilitate life-long learning that is flexible, inclusive and emphasizes college university transfers*
- *Develop academic and research collaborations with industry and community that stimulate and enhance the region and university at home and abroad*
- *Cultivate a dynamic learning environment for students by promoting social engagement, fostering critical thinking, and integrating experiences inside and outside the classroom*

Values

- ***Integrity and Respect*** – *We embrace honesty, inclusivity, and equity in all that we do*
- ***Honesty and Accountability*** – *Our actions reflect our values, and we are accountable for both.*
- ***Dedication to Quality and Intellectual Rigour*** – *We strive for excellence with energy, commitment and passion*
- ***Pursuit of Innovation*** - *We cultivate creativity, adaptability and flexibility in our students, faculty and staff*

6. OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

6.1 PREPARE OUR GRADUATES FOR THE EVOLVING 21ST CENTURY WORKPLACE

UOIT prepares graduates who have deep disciplinary knowledge and related competencies, an ability to use technology in creative ways, and a keen understanding of the world.

UOIT’s first priority is to create a learning environment where students are engaged in active learning, one that is technology-enriched and practice-integrated both inside and outside of the classroom, and one that offers improved support for learning. Through the implementation of outcomes-based learning strategies, flexible delivery models, and exposure to relevant work-learning opportunities, our graduates will be better prepared to thrive in the 21st century workplace and to make meaningful contributions in an

increasingly complex technological, global and social world immediately upon graduation. To achieve this, we are challenged to examine our teaching, learning and assessment strategies to enhance the ways in which students engage in their learning activities and assimilate knowledge and skills through problem-, case-, project-, research- and team-based learning. Our use of technology in this respect serves to both differentiate and enrich the student experience and we will continue to push the boundaries of thinking and learning through innovative and imaginative use of technology and by bringing students, faculty, staff and alumni together in different ways to support student success from acceptance to post graduation.

We also remain committed to our special mission to create opportunities for college graduates to complete a university degree and promote student mobility across the post-secondary system. To this end we will enhance and broaden opportunities that will enable students to pursue a range of pathways from college to university and from university to college to promote life-long learning.

The outcomes and initiatives below set out the plan to achieve our first strategic priority: preparing graduates who will thrive in the evolving 21st century workplace.

	OUTCOME 1.1	UNIVERSITY-WIDE INITIATIVES
GRADUATES OF THE 21ST CENTURY	Students engage in active learning that is technology-enriched and practice-integrated both inside and outside of the classroom	<p>To achieve this strategic outcome UOIT will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify learning strategies to enhance student empowerment, intensify the use of technology and strengthen learning outcomes • Create virtual and physical spaces where student teams, faculty, alumni, and partners can gather, create and learn from each other • Ensure all students have an experiential learning opportunity to develop skills and increase knowledge • Create a formal “Think Tank” that drives the UOIT Technology-Enriched Learning Environment and anticipates future trends • Increase access through the creation of certificates that are innovative, relevant and promote life-long learning • Manage growth to 11,000 students by 2016 (10,000 FTEs) in market-oriented and technology-based programs with an

		emphasis on college university transfers
	OUTCOME 1.2	UNIVERSITY-WIDE INITIATIVES
GRADUATES OF THE 21ST CENTURY	Students experience quality through integrated support for learning and discovery	<p>To achieve this strategic outcome UOIT will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen peer mentorship programs to support students through all transitions from acceptance to post graduation • Establish an Innovation Opportunities Fund to create and implement advanced learning and discovery strategies • Create entrepreneurial and professional skills development programs to strengthen graduate attributes for the global workplace • Build interdisciplinary teams that promote the adoption of innovative models for student learning and development • Increase recruitment and retention by developing a cohesive plan that strengthens all aspects of the student experience • Strengthen administrative partnerships across the university to facilitate a seamless student service experience

6.2 BUILD STRENGTH AND CAPACITY THROUGH RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

UOIT contributes to Canada’s economic and social development and its global competitiveness by solving real-world challenges in collaboration with our communities.

UOIT’s second priority is to enhance opportunities for faculty, staff and students to contribute to multi-disciplinary projects that address important societal and scientific challenges, in addition to the individual contributions that address bold questions within the disciplines. To this end, we are committed to leveraging our existing partnerships and cultivating new ones locally, nationally, and internationally. This will be achieved by continuing to build relevant and productive relationships with business, industry, post-

secondary institutions, government, and non-governmental bodies. This will also be achieved by building upon our disciplinary and programmatic strengths through the development of collaborative projects that emphasize the application of research and scholarship in solving real-world challenges. With our strong commitment to examine new ways to meet the demands of the changing world and by enabling innovation and the evolution of ideas that focus on big, important problems, we can ensure that students, research faculty and staff can continue to contribute to the global competitiveness of the Ontario and Canadian economies. We will enhance capacity by establishing metrics and processes to identify and pursue strategic partnerships and collaborations between disciplines, and across sectors in order to engage in fundamental and applied research, community development and education, and to support knowledge mobilization and entrepreneurship. In short, through inspiration and imagination, we will continue to “challenge, innovate, and connect.”

Thus, the outcomes and initiatives below set out our plan for achieving our second strategic priority: building strength and capacity through research, innovation and partnerships.

	OUTCOME 2.1	UNIVERSITY-WIDE INITIATIVES
BUILDING STRENGTH AND CAPACITY	<p>Faculty, staff and students contribute to multi-disciplinary projects that address important societal and scientific challenges</p>	<p>To achieve this strategic outcome UOIT will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden student engagement in academic conferences and professional organizations at both the graduate and undergraduate levels • Boost public awareness and student engagement by offering a great problems symposium • Enhance knowledge mobilization through increased sponsored research, grants, technology transfer and commercialization • Improve professional and research services to strengthen institutional support for research and scholarship • Establish a flagship research unit that builds on our strengths in information and communication technologies • Expand the research park beyond the Automotive Centre of Excellence and Energy Research Centre to enhance research opportunities and business incubation

	OUTCOME 2.2	UNIVERSITY-WIDE INITIATIVES
BUILDING STRENGTH AND CAPACITY	<p>Faculty, staff and students engage in partnerships that build on disciplinary and programmatic strengths</p>	<p>To achieve this strategic outcome UOIT will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students • Create a mentorship program hosted by the Alumni Association that helps students transition to the workplace • Implement a comprehensive internationalization strategy with a focus on joint exchanges, collaborative programs, and high quality research links • Strengthen Durham Region research partnerships in health and community services • Secure additional funding sources to support students through greater connections with foundations and private donors • Enhance relationships with government, non-government, and business leaders that are informed by common priorities

6.3 BE DISTINGUISHED AS A HEALTHY 21ST CENTURY WORKPLACE

UOIT collaborates across all academic and administrative areas to create and implement a forward looking, technology-intensive, people-centred campus environment.

UOIT’s third priority is to provide a positive, healthy and inclusive workplace, characterized by respect and innovative thinking and where faculty and staff employ technology-enriched, student-centred practices in a well-planned, accountable and sustainable environment. Our workplace will be one that brings together faculty and staff from across the university to contribute more broadly to university education, that fosters collaboration, innovation and inquiry, and that supports and encourages new ways of thinking, doing and

leading. At UOIT, we enjoy a highly educated and skilled faculty and staff complement, and we must continue to invest in highly qualified personnel and develop their potential through life-long professional development and the cross-pollination of our human resources. We must also work to enhance the physical and technological infrastructure to promote innovation in teaching, research and administration and improve productivity and create strong, efficient and effective management processes that are accountable to our diverse stakeholders. We must innovate structurally to ensure we are an organization that is accessible, relevant and agile. We will rely on strong financial analysis and IT systems to provide optimal service delivery aligned to student needs. We will commit to high quality and sustainability in all that we do.

Thus, the outcomes and initiatives below set out our plan for achieving our third strategic priority: being distinguished as a healthy 21st century workplace.

	OUTCOME 3.1	UNIVERSITY-WIDE INITIATIVES
21ST CENTURY WORKPLACE	<p>Faculty and staff experience a positive, healthy and inclusive environment characterized by respect and innovative thinking</p>	<p>To achieve this strategic outcome UOIT will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a wellness program that integrates mental health awareness and intervention • Engage faculty and staff in programs that enhance teaching development, professional practice and continuous learning • Build a reputation for our creative and progressive approach to attracting faculty and staff, developing careers and retaining talent • Recognize and reward faculty and staff who deliver service excellence and achieve strategic milestones • Improve navigational tools and create a point of entry that will facilitate access to the university • Facilitate the effective exchange of information among faculty and staff to enhance knowledge of university services, policies and procedures

	OUTCOME 3.2	UNIVERSITY-WIDE INITIATIVES
21ST CENTURY WORKPLACE	<p>Faculty and staff employ technology-enriched, student-centered practices in a well-planned, accountable and sustainable university</p>	<p>To achieve this strategic outcome UOIT will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an effective operating model based on a diverse mix of income sources and integrated resource management • Enhance business processes to realize increased productivity and continuous improvement • Support students, faculty and staff in the effective use of technology systems and processes • Expand student-life programming to address specific areas of need within our diverse population and support student success across multiple sites • Conduct a detailed infrastructure study and develop a master plan to support growth and development at the university, in collaboration with Durham College • Ensure donors and alumni have a lasting connection with our university and are well informed of how their contributions support students, research and capacity-building

7. ACCOUNTABILITY AND METRICS

UOIT's Strategic Plan 2012-16 sets out an ambitious agenda for future growth and transformation to meet the evolving needs of students and the local community. Achieving our priorities and outcomes will require extensive collaboration and cooperation from all members of the university community. It will also require considerable management and coordination. To that end, the Office of the Provost, assisted by a steering committee of academic and administrative leaders, will take the lead in ensuring the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan, including monitoring the progress of unit plans, advancing the achievement of the university-wide initiatives, measuring their impact upon the outcomes and priorities, and assuring accountability.

Specifically, our progress toward the achievement of our outcomes and priorities will be measured in the following ways:

- 1. Graduate Outcomes** – Outcomes, measured through student recruitment, highly qualified personnel, and reputational factors, will help to gauge the extent to which our programs prepare graduates for the evolving 21st century. Such indicators may include the number of first choice applicants, the number of students entering our programs, satisfaction survey results, student retention, graduation and employment rates, the range of opportunities for learning and study, including hybrid and online courses, certification programs, exchange programs, mentoring programs, and experiential learning opportunities
- 2. Partnerships and Research Outcomes** – Indicators that assess intellectual property contributions, the evolution of knowledge, the economic and social impact of our activities, and reputational measures will inform the ways in which we are influencing knowledge creation, contributing to important societal and scientific challenges, and distinguishing UOIT at home and abroad. Such indicators may include research partnerships and chairs, number of journal articles and conference papers, citation rates, invention disclosures, patents, grants, licenses, spin-offs, contract research income, commercialization, and student placements in work and research and development settings.
- 3. Workplace Outcomes** – Outcomes, measured by faculty and staff engagement, system improvements and reputational factors, will help to assess the extent to which our internal structures and processes contribute to a healthy and sustainable environment for work and study. Such indicators may include course/curriculum innovations, service automation, productivity enhancements, satisfaction survey results, employee retention and turnover rates, exit surveys, employee development, workplace safety, use of support for teaching, research and employee well-being, and external recognition.

A full set of indicators and metrics will be posted on the UOIT website and updated on a regular basis. Reports on the progress of the strategic plan will be provided on a regular basis to Academic Council, the Board of Governors and the broader university community.