

Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on the Proposed Restructuring of the Faculty of Forestry

Committee Members:

Daniels Faculty Members: Robert Levit, Alissa North, Fadi Masoud, Jeannie Kim, John Harwood, Lisa Steele, Mason White, Pina Petricone

Forestry Faculty Members with whom the Committee met:

Danijela Puric-Miladenovic, Jay Malcolm, John Caspersen, Laura Lapchinski Mike Wotton, Nicholas Dion, Sally Kristin, Sally Smith, Sean Thomas, Shashi Kant

Meeting Dates of the Committee:

Wednesday, January 30

Wednesday, February 6

Tuesday, March 5

Description of Committee: This committee was formed as a representative group of seven representatives of the Daniels Faculty, to enable consultations and discussions with a similarly sized group from Forestry. Faculty members from Daniels were chosen to represent a variety of appointment types, all of the disciplines (Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, Visual Studies) and all of programs including undergraduate, graduate/professional, post-professional, and the forthcoming doctoral programs. The Faculty of Forestry in turn assembled their core members to participate in the committee discussions and to represent the areas of specialty within in the committee discussions.

The primary purpose of the meetings was for the two faculty cohorts to discuss the questions and expectations they bring to the proposed amalgamation, to explore prospective areas of mutual benefit in research and teaching, to consider their respective areas of concern, and more generally for the attendees to better understand each other and what it would mean to amalgamate with the Daniels Faculty. Given the limited timeframe for the consultation, and that the Forestry faculty cohort is considerably smaller in size than the Daniels faculty cohort, this committee structure was intended to allow for meaningful consultation in ways that would allow ad hoc committee members from the Daniels side to become acquainted with the issues and be able to communicate their findings to the broader Daniels faculty. Along with a recently held core faculty meeting, this report is part of the process of communicating issues and findings to Daniels colleagues.

The two respective faculty groups from the Daniels and the Faculty of Forestry met three times. A number of logistical and organizational questions arose during these conversations, and were answered to the extent possible. Yet, it was understood by committee members that their focus was to determine where synergies might lie between research and teaching goals of the two current Faculties, and what concerns and questions members had with respect to the academic and program-based aspects of the amalgamation. Organizational details and other structural arrangements of the amalgamation are set out in the *Provostial Proposal of Amalgamation* (attached, as distributed on December 22, 2018), and this document was, and remains the point of reference for issues of procedure, schedule, and organizational logic.

Summary of Discussions:

The two groups met and shared information about their respective programs, disciplinary orientations and approaches to research and creative work. The two faculty cohorts articulated several areas of teaching and research in which the prospect of collaboration and shared interests would be fruitful. These included issues of ecological stewardship, sustainable planning, urban forestry, historical and anthropological studies of forests and green habitats, and material research related to new forms of timber, but also a wider spectrum of materials research into wood-derived products and technologies. In terms of teaching and research, urban forestry has the most obvious and immediate relevance to Landscape Architecture, although, urban forestry could easily have wider appeal for MArch students who have experienced the integration of landscape architecture and architecture challenges in the third semester design studio known as Superstudio. Materials research into new timber products are clearly an area of interest for students of architecture, and an important avenue of research and industrial production in Canada. It was noted during discussions that a few architecture studios had already explored the use of new timber products, and that the Daniels Faculty had recently hosted a mass timber conference in collaboration with the Faculty of Forestry and the Mass Timber Institute of Ontario. From the Visual Studies perspective, the feeling was that while some areas of material research and the theoretical, cultural and environmental implications of forests and wilderness were of interest to contemporary artists and had potential for our Visual Studies programs, such overlapping interests would likely be limited in scope.

Discussion of the doctoral programs included a clarification that the existing doctoral program in Forestry would remain a separate program from the pending PhD program of the Daniels. Some concern was expressed about the clarity of funding sources for what would be two different PhD programs at the Daniels, particularly as this related to any funds that would involve discretionary allocation at the Daniels. Yet, it was explained that the two programs would remain separate, belonging to different SGS divisions within the University of Toronto's system (including separate funding and number of allotted students). However, where interest should arise on the part of prospective students and on the part of faculty, the possibility of overlapping research and the possibility of dual degrees was discussed as a positive prospect. Concern was also raised about the scale of the Forestry PhD program – twice the size of the anticipated steady state of the forthcoming Daniels PhD program – and the manner in which a sense of community might be produced between the two.

Faculty members from both the Daniels and Forestry expressed an interest in the research and subjects that might draw together perspectives and expertise in design and science, leading to fruitful new directions in research and design practices. Members of the Faculty of Forestry elaborated upon its own distinctive “green” position in the field of forestry compared to other “brownier” programs: meaning that Forestry's programs have traditionally been oriented more toward questions of sustainability than towards industry-oriented research directed at resource extraction. This position was viewed, by the Daniels faculty cohort, as broadly consistent with the goals and values of the design and visual studies programs.

The committee discussed the different teaching models within the two Faculties. These differences touched upon studio versus laboratory teaching and how these differences affected

both professional and doctoral teaching models. From the discussions of teaching models, a question of differences in work-load policy arose. The question of what the responsibilities would be in a future amalgamated faculty were also raised. And, while solutions were not the purview of the committee, the idea that an amalgamated faculty would have to review its work load policy to account for different modes of teaching and doctoral advising was something that the members recognized. That said, the expectation and approach is that after a period of reconciliation (2-3 years), the current workload guidelines and expectations at the Daniels Faculty will remain with some accommodation for the class types and advising loads within Forestry programs.

The question of professional accreditation in our respective master's programs was discussed. Members of the Daniels Faculty were able to explain that the professionally accredited programs currently within the Daniels Faculty operate with sufficient autonomy, allocation of resources, required faculty cohorts, and curriculum oversight to allow for strong and positive reviews by their respective professional accrediting bodies. The same circumstances would apply to Forestry's professional program following an amalgamation. A commitment to an appropriate curriculum, robust resources, and an appropriate faculty cohort should not be in question, and has good precedent in the Daniels current management and resourcing of its professional programs.

Members of the committee discussed the possibility that some courses had the potential of being taught jointly by Forestry faculty and existing program faculty at the Daniels. In such cases the view was that it would be important for such courses to be staffed by faculty members representative of the disciplines of the respective programs for which the course was offered.

Discussions about future directions of the Daniels Faculty with an amalgamation of Forestry's programs were discussed in light of the prospect for new faculty hires. Committee members from both Faculties would like to see new hires in forestry, and forestry-related disciplines, scholarship, and creative practice capable of building bridges between design and scientifically-oriented disciplines. Committee members expressed an interest in such areas of expertise as environmental history, anthropological perspectives on the environment, and other areas of alignment between design and forestry related to material science, new timber products and urban forestry. It was also observed by members of the Faculty of Forestry that any potential new hires might also address criteria not met in their own accreditation process. Discussions regarding new directions and areas of shared focus that could be addressed through the new faculty positions included in the amalgamation proposal will need to be balanced against ongoing forestry program needs in teaching and research, and the size of Forestry's programs and enrollment.

The members of the committee recognized that while there are many exciting prospects for joint or complementary research with parallel opportunities in teaching and curriculum development, as is the case with the current array of programs at the Daniels, Forestry's independent disciplinary goals would continue to be pursued in the research of its faculty members and students; that their discipline specific graduate curricula would continue, and that professional accreditation requirements would be tended to. The committee did not see a contradiction

between the synergies that it foresaw arising from an amalgamation, and the distinctive disciplinary needs and commitments of Forestry's existing programs.

The Daniels side of the committee expressed a concern that new administrative stresses of a larger faculty would be placed on Daniels existing management and staff, and asked that proper attention would be given to the amalgamation of student and registrarial services. The change will be bigger for the Faculty of Forestry given that it is moving from a small self-administered unit into a much larger multi-program Faculty. Care will need to be given to the transition and the orientation of faculty members, students, and staff members moving into the Daniels environment. After consultation with administration and staff in both divisions, assurances were provided that resources would be in place to allow existing supports on both sides to stay in place for a suitable period, while synergies and possible amalgamations of services are explored. More specifically, the committee also recognized the financial benefits that would accrue to the Daniels Faculty as-a-whole from amalgamation and that these would help the Faculty make the necessary adjustments to its operations and staffing.

The committee's discussion of undergraduate teaching issues was brief, given that the current proposal of amalgamation does not yet include undergraduate programs. As with the undergraduate program in Architectural Studies prior to 2014, members from Forestry acknowledged that teaching a cohort of students whose tuition fees were going to another division (Faculty of Arts and Science) was not an ideal situation. The degree to which undergraduate students cultivate future graduate interest was discussed, as was the fact that there are perhaps too many program options for a relatively small cohort of students. The members of the committee from both Faculties recognize that the arrangements in place to support undergraduate teaching of forestry majors in the Faculty of Arts and Science will be an issue at a point further down the road, but that even so, there are areas where contributions to the study of environmental issues might be an early advantage of amalgamation for our own undergraduate programs.

The issue of naming was discussed by the committee. The committee felt that concern about the identity of the respective programs in the Daniels and noted this will need to be dealt with through consideration of the identity of each of the Faculty's programs, through the Faculty's "branding," and through potential research centers that could act as externally facing entities for a discipline such as Forestry. Visual Studies has its own ongoing concerns about its program's identities and the Faculty's name, and it has been made clear to all that a change to the name of the Faculty is not an element of, or negotiation point in the Provost's Amalgamation Proposal.

Committee members expressed the importance for them that strong leadership in the evolution of the amalgamation be sought. Given that the current Dean Richard Sommer will complete his term at the end of the 2019-20 academic year, members would like to ensure that a future dean is found who demonstrates an understanding of, and a vision for the broader array of disciplines and programs that she or he will inherit should amalgamation proceed. Likewise, it will be important that in the transition from a Faculty of Forestry to Forestry programs within the Daniels Faculty, the leadership position and potential of a future director of the program be established.

The committee discussed how significant leadership will be in shaping the ways in which the identity of the Daniels Faculty will be able to benefit from all its constituents following an amalgamation. The current crises around climate change, the enormous questions about environmental management, the transformative role of new carbon capturing materials in the building industry, and the importance of forestry within the Canadian context suggest great opportunities to shape a Daniels Faculty at the forefront of research and progressive design. The prospect of as many as six new faculty hires over time will be an important part of shaping this future agenda and will require careful consideration in finding individuals to forge areas of common interest in research and in the shaping of future generations of students. The committee saw leadership in facing these challenges as crucial to the Daniels Faculty's future success should the amalgamation proceed.

With the understanding that there will many challenges in the coming years if amalgamation is to occur, the committee members generally support the Provost's Amalgamation Proposal.



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