

Concordia University Strategic Positioning

SCAPP Report

Introduction

In May of 2006, the Office of the President began work that would lead to strategic positioning of Concordia University. An initial environmental scan was conducted by Deloitte & Touche, and a steering committee was formed to comment on the areas of importance suggested by the environmental scan and to suggest additional avenues for examination. A qualitative survey of full- and part-time professors was conducted by the Institutional Planning Office in November and December of 2006, and results were presented to the steering committee. Subsequently, a series of workgroups was formed that focused on agreed upon areas of interest (in no particular order):

- Enhancing Teaching and Learning
- Strengthening Research Capacity, Alliances and Outreach
- Faculty and Staff Recruitment, Orientation, Retention and Engagement
- Facilitating Partnerships and Internationalization
- Achieving Financial Sustainability
- Strengthening Concordia's Ties with its Communities
- Responding to the Needs for Lifelong Learning and Professional Development
- E-Learning
- Recruiting Concordia's Future Students

Workgroups

Each workgroup was composed of members from the internal and external community. Faculty representatives, appointed by each Faculty Dean based on the particular focus of each workgroup and selected for their inter-faculty complementarity, sat on each workgroup, which was co-chaired by a high-profile member of the external community and an appropriate internal member of the senior administration. A complete list of committees and their members is provided in Appendix 1.

Eight of the nine workgroups met over several months, with their final reports tabled in the fall of 2007. It was decided in the spring that the workgroup on Enhancing Teaching and Learning would not be created until the arrival of the new Provost, who would serve as the internal co-chair of the workgroup. The distribution of the workgroup reports varied widely.

In the fall of 2007, the Acting President referred the workgroup reports to the University Senate, which in turn mandated the Senate Committee on Academic Planning and Priorities to review the workgroup reports and return to Senate with a recommendation.

SCAPP and the Workgroup Reports

The workgroup reports were distributed and discussed at the meeting of SCAPP held on 11 December, 2007. Prior to this meeting, the Executive Director, Strategic Plans and the Director, Institutional Planning had examined the workgroup reports in detail and had extracted a list of fourteen directions that had a strategic dimension. These directions were established by looking at each recommendation of each workgroup and classifying it as either having a strategic dimension or as being primarily focused operational issues. Those perceived as having a strategic direction were retained in a list of strategically oriented recommendations. The Executive Director, Strategic Plans and the Director, Institutional Planning reported to SCAPP that because the workgroups were formed based on perceived operational and procedural deficiencies, the focus of many of the recommendations of these committees were operational in nature. They noted also that once strategic positions for Concordia University have been identified, these workgroup reports will serve as one source that the University will have at its disposal in the creation of its integrated operational plan.

In the meantime, the resulting list of strategically oriented recommendations was examined for similar themes, which then were crafted into fourteen directions. In the course of SCAPP's discussions at its 11 December 2008 meeting, it was decided that the Director, Institutional Planning would solicit comments on these fourteen directions from individual members of SCAPP and prepare a report that further examined the fourteen directions from a strategic positioning point of view.

The resulting report was discussed by SCAPP at its meeting of 12 February 2008. Initiatives retained represent a qualitative analysis of ideas and categories found in the workgroup reports that relate to the *Strategic Positioning* of the University. In some cases, strategic directions were not framed as a formal recommendation, but were put forward in the contextualization of surrounding prose. The comments made at the 12 February meeting were incorporated into a new version that was circulated to SCAPP on 22 February 2008. Minor revisions were made on 4 March 2008.

SCAPP recognizes that discussion on *process* and *operational* recommendations made by these workgroups is premature before seeking consensus on those areas that strategically position Concordia. In fact, agreement on Concordia's strategic position will focus discussion relating to the process and operational recommendations, and will render them more manageable.

Concordia's Strategic Positioning

With this necessity in mind, SCAPP has identified the following five key areas that will strategically position Concordia to grow and thrive over the next five years. These areas represent *strategic* positions that specific (as yet unidentified) *process*- and *operationally*-oriented recommendations would support.

- (1) Position Concordia as a university that is reciprocally connected with its community.
- (2) Position Concordia as a "destination university" for students, both domestic and international.
- (3) Position Concordia as a "destination university" for top-notch new faculty.
- (4) Position Concordia as a preferred employer.
- (5) Position Concordia as a leader in Sustainability

Each strategic position is presented and followed by a series of statements that help describe the position. These lists are meant only to stimulate discussion about each position and are not meant to be exclusive or exhaustive.

The interrelationships between these positions cannot be overstated. While on the surface, Concordia would appear to be well positioned in some of these areas, weaknesses in other, necessary relationships cast a different light on its successes. Concordia will need to plan to address these positions in concert if it is to succeed in living up to what it wants to be and to societal expectations.

Position Contexts

1) *Position Concordia as a university that is reciprocally connected with its community.*

This position relates to what is generally perceived to be one of Concordia's primary strengths. Concordia strives to provide the highest quality education in an environment that is dynamic, accessible, diverse, innovative, and friendly. The "community" referred to in this statement is meant to be interpreted in a broad sense, first in the local, then at the national and international senses. This position emphasizes that Concordia is not just connected with its community, but that its community is also connected with Concordia in a bidirectional exchange of ideas, expertise, engagement, and support.

Some examples of statements that illustrate this position follow:

- a) Concordia will leverage its "DNA" (e.g., Approachability/Accessibility, Daring, Diversity, and Quality), which reflects important societal values of its community.
- b) Concordia will ensure its graduates are prepared to succeed in its community, which includes the context of a global economy and cross-cultural relations.
- c) Concordia will strategically internationalize its student body, not only to provide a quality educational experience to exceptional international students, but to provide a diverse and culturally enriching experience to its entire student body.
- d) Concordia will be recognized for the lifetime connectedness it fosters among its alumni, not only as a continuing presence in their lives, but as a support for continuous learning.
- e) Concordia will be known for its community involvement and civic engagement. It will intensify its outreach and visibility of expertise, and will pursue partnerships and alliances in the public and private sectors.
- f) Concordia will be on the leading edge in all that it does over the complete range of its educational and university life. "Daring" will be a leading attribute. This includes new learning delivery mechanisms, such as e-learning.

2) *Position Concordia as a “destination university” for students, both domestic and international.*

This position relates to something Concordia currently does well, but would like to do better. “Destination university,” in this sense, refers to the fact that students will see Concordia as a university that gives them a sense at having arrived at their destination. Students will learn and grow at an institution that ensures not only quality instruction, but quality student life, quality support, and quality cultural and environmental opportunity.

Some examples of statements that illustrate this position follow:

- a) Concordia will value great teaching.
- b) Concordia will foreground the learning that takes place through assisting in the creation of new knowledge.
- c) Concordia will be recognized for its “signature programming,” both with respect to current programs, as well as to new ones.
- d) Concordia will be a leader in new avenues of instruction that will support accessibility and provide a range of educational experiences to all students.
- e) Concordia will provide a diverse and culturally enriching experience to its entire student body and will facilitate the transition of international students into the University community.

3) *Position Concordia as a “destination university” for top-notch new faculty.*

Faculty renewal has been one of Concordia’s main foci over the past decade. During that time, nearly 500 new full-time, tenure-track professors have chosen to begin or continue their careers at Concordia. In light of the importance of these professors as drivers of quality teaching, research, and reputation, Concordia must work to be seen as the place to be for new full-time professors. Concordia also has a large cadre of part-time professors who contribute greatly to creating and maintaining the programs which attract students to study at Concordia.

Some examples of statements that illustrate this position follow:

- a) Concordia will value engagement in quality teaching.
- b) Concordia will be recognized for its signature research and graduate study opportunities.
- c) Concordia will value academic contributions through outstanding research.
- d) Concordia will be a leader in the development and deployment of research capacity.
- e) Concordia will be recognized for its support of research and its service to researchers.
- f) Concordia will create and be recognized for our unique knowledge creation environment that fosters outstanding research.

4) *Position Concordia as a preferred employer.*

This position recognizes the importance of the contributions of the entire Concordia community to the success of Concordia as a university. It focuses on communication, transparency, and respect, elements that have been identified as those where Concordia can work to develop tremendous strengths.

Some examples of statements that illustrate this position follow:

- a) Concordia will be known for its transparency.
- b) Concordia will be known for the respect it shows to its faculty and staff resources.
- c) Concordia will be known for the strength of its internal communications structures.
- d) Concordia will be recognized as a leader in social sustainability (emphasizes social equity, meeting basic needs, personal development, and responsible citizenship).

5) *Position Concordia as a Leader in Sustainability.*

Concordia is already known as a leader in *environmental* sustainability (defined in the Government of Canada's *Guidelines for the Development of Sustainability Indicators* where the environment is protected in such a condition and to such a degree that environmental capacities are maintained over time: at least at levels sufficient to avoid future catastrophe and at most at levels which give future generations the opportunity to enjoy an equal measure of environmental consumption). But there are two other categories of sustainability as well that are generally recognized: (a) *social*, which emphasizes social equity, meeting basic needs, personal development, and responsible citizenship; and (b) *economic*, which ensures that the local economy is both stable and diversified and that economic activities have minimal impacts on the natural environment and are efficient in their resource consumption. It is not the purpose of this report to define or operationalize sustainability, and thus the definitions and categories are open to further refinement through public discussions. Rather, this report simply states that this position can differentiate Concordia, and for that reason, was retained by the committee.

When understanding Sustainability in this broad context, this position cuts across all other positions, as other positions cut across Sustainability.

Some examples of statements that illustrate this position follow:

- a) Concordia will continue to be recognized as a leader in environmental sustainability.
- b) Concordia will be recognized as a leader in economic sustainability.
- c) Concordia will be recognized as a leader in social sustainability.

APPENDIX 1
Workgroup Membership

Strengthening Research Capacity, Alliances and Outreach

Dr. Camille Limoges	Committee Chair; Retired Deputy Minister, Quebec Ministry of Research, Science and Technology
Dr. Louise Dandurand	Committee Co-Chair; Vice President Research and Graduate Studies
Dr. Carole Brabant	Director, Research & Innovation
Dr. Truong Vo-Van	Associate VP, Research
Dr. Charles Despins	CEO, PDG Prompt-Québec
Ms. Carmen Charette	Executive Vice-President, SSHRC
Dr. Javed Sadri	Postdoctoral Fellow, Centre for Pattern Recognition and Machine Intelligence, ENCS
Dr. John Capobianco	Professor Arts & Science
Prof. Michael Longford	Associate Professor, Design & Computation Arts and Hexagram, Fine Arts
Dr. Rachida Dssouli	Professor ENCS, Director of Concordia Institute for Information Systems Engineering
Dr. Marylène Gagné	Associate Professor, JMSB

Faculty and Staff Recruitment, Orientation, Retention and Engagement

Ms. Barbara Harris	Committee Co-Chair; Executive Assistant to the Dean, Arts & Science
Dean Catherine Wild	Committee Co-Chair; Dean, Fine Arts
Dr. Stéphane Brutus	Associate Professor, JMSB
Prof. Elaine Cohen	Professor, School of Extended Learning
Mr. William Curran	Director, Libraries
Ms. Magda Francescutti	Director, Human Resources, Maison Alcan; Director, Organizational Development, Alcan Primary Metal
Prof. Judy Garfin	Professor, Fine Arts
Ms. Linda Healey	University Registrar
Prof. Kathy MacDonald	Part-Time Professor, Arts and Science
Mr. Pat Pietromonaco	Property/Operations Manger, Loyola
Dr. Justin Powlowski	Associate Dean, Arts & Science
Dr. Martin Pugh	Associate Professor, ENCS
Ms. Donna Whittaker	Assistant to the Chair, History, Arts & Science
Mr. Laurie Zack	Director, Internal and Web Communications

Facilitating Partnerships and Internationalization

Mr. Peter Kruyt	Committee Chair; Vice President, Power Corporation of Canada
Dr. Jerry Tomberlin	Committee Co-Chair; Dean, JMSB
Prof. Liselyn Adams	Associate Vice-President, International Relations
Prof. Sandeep Bhagwati	Canada Research Chair, Fine Arts
Dr. Rama Bhat	Professor, ENCS; Member, Concordia Board of Governors
Hon. Baljit Singh Chadha	P.C.; President, Balcop, Ltd.; Member, Concordia Board of Governors
William Cheaib	Director, Concordia International
Marc Drouin	Vice-President, Corporate Development, Alcan
George Hanna	President, Intrafina, Ltd.; Member, Concordia Board of Governors
Dr. Terri Lituchy	Associate Professor, JMSB
Dr. Bradley Nelson	Professor, Arts and Science
Christine Webb	Director, Institute for Cooperative Education

Achieving Financial Sustainability

Mr. Norman Raschkowan	Committee Chair; Chief Investment Officer and Director, Standard Life Investments
Mr. Larry English	Committee Co-Chair; Vice-President Finance and CFO
Mr. Alex Carpini	Director, Planned Giving, Advancement and Alumni Relations
Dr. Ian Irvine	Professor, Arts and Science
Mr. Patrick Kelley	Executive Director, Administration/HR, JMSB
Dr. Thiruvengadam Krishnan	Professor, ENCS
Mr. Stephen Lieff	President, Royal York Capital
Prof. Michael Longford	Associate Professor, Fine Arts
Mr. Tony Vanvari	Director, Major Programs, Facilities Management
Mr. Saad Zubair	Internal Auditor

Strengthening Concordia's Ties with its Communities

Mr. Andrew Molson	Committee Chair; Vice-Chairman, Legal Affairs and Corporate Secretary, Res Publica Consulting Group; Member of Concordia's Board of Governors
Hon. Me. Marcel Danis	Committee Co-Chair; Vice-President External Relations and Secretary General
Mr. John Ayles	Past-President, Concordia University Alumni Association
Dr. Clarence Epstein	Director, Special Projects, Office of the President
Dr. Mike Gasher	Professor, Arts and Science
Ms. Isabelle Hudon	President and CEO, Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal
Ms. Phylis Lambert	Founder and Chair, Canadian Centre for Architecture
Dr. Martha Langford	Assistant Professor, Fine Arts
Dr. Michel Magnan	Associate Dean, JMSB
Mr. John Parisella	Special Advisor to the President
Prof. Louise Quesnel	Associate Dean, ENCS
Mr. Jean Simard	Member of Advisory Board; Vice-President, Public and Government Affairs, Gaz Métro
Ms. Christine Webb	Director, Institute for Cooperative Education

Responding to the Needs for Lifelong Learning and Professional Development

Mr. Paul Marion	Committee Chair; Managing Director, CIBC World Markets
Dr. Nabil Esmail	Committee Co-Chair; Dean, ENCS
Dr. Sabah Alkass	Professor, ENCS
Mr. Karim Boulos	Director, External Affairs, JMSB
Dr. Ollivier Dyens	Associate Professor, Arts and Science
Mr. Patrick Kelley	Executive Director, Administration/HR, JMSB
Prof. Erin Manning	Assistant Professor, Fine Arts
Dr. Robert Oppenheimer	Director, Centre for Mature Students
Mr. Murray Sang	Director, Continuing Education
Ms. Annie Tobias	Director, Deloitte Learning Centre

E-Learning

Mr. Brian Edwards	Committee Chair; Corporate Director; Vice-Chair, Board of Governors
Dr. David Graham	Committee Co-Chair; Dean, Arts and Science
Dr. Arshad Ahmad	Associate Professor, JMSB
Lynn Hughes	Associate Dean, Fine Arts
Mr. Patrick Kelley	Associate Professor, Arts and Science
Alice Keung	Senior Vice-President, Information Technology, and CIO, National Bank
Prof. Joanne Locke	Associate Dean, Arts and Science
Mr. Andrew McAusland	Associate Vice-President, IITS
Ms. Annie Tobias	Director, Deloitte Learning Centre
Dr. Christopher Trueman	Professor, ENCS

Recruiting Concordia's Future Students

Ms. Françoise Bertrand	Committee Chair; President, Quebec Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Roger Côté	Committee Co-Chair; Associate Vice-President, Enrolment and Student Services
Dr. Catherine Bolton	Associate Dean, Arts and Science
Ms. Madelaine Chenette	Senior Partner, SECOR Consulting
Mr. Renato Cudicio	President, Multiple-Media.com
Ms. Edith Katz	Coordinator, Cooperative Education, JMSB
Dr. Richard Lachapelle	Professor, Fine Arts
Dr. William Lynch	Associate Dean, ENCS
Prof. Wendy Roscoe	Senior Lecturer and Director, Diploma in Chartered Accountancy, JMSB
Mr. Terry Too	Associate Registrar
Mr. Bradley Tucker	Director, Institutional Planning