



Faculty Complement Renewal Strategy

Office of the Provost and VP Academic

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YORK 





Background

In October 2018, the Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic launched an initiative to develop a multi-year Complement Renewal Strategy for the University, with the goals of:

- › understanding what high-level principles should guide the University, and what outcomes we should strive for, as we invest in faculty complement renewal over the next 5-10 years;
- › informing the annual, Faculty-based complement planning process with an appreciation of longer-term goals for the University; and
- › clarifying how best to build the complement needed to achieve academic priorities as expressed in key planning documents including the University Academic Plan and Strategic Research Plan.

A study was undertaken based on available sector data and literature on faculty complement development and diversification. Two papers were circulated for information and comment:

- › Faculty Complement Renewal at York University: Provostial Discussion Paper
- › York University's Faculty Complement: A Comparative Analysis.

This strategy builds on the analysis in these papers as well as feedback received from individuals and groups consulted in person, on-line, and through email. It has been reviewed and updated in fall 2020.

Introduction

There is a wide consensus among colleagues at York University that renewal and growth of the tenure stream faculty is vital to realize the progressive and aspirational vision expressed in our University Academic Plan 2020-2025. A complement renewal strategy is meant to inform, not replace, the annual process of complement requests, appointment authorizations and faculty recruitment that occurs within the Faculties. A core principle that will continue to guide this process is the need for open, collegially driven searches to recruit the most qualified candidates possible into tenure stream positions. By its nature though, this annual hiring process is incremental and distributed widely across academic units. The purpose of the complement renewal study and consultation was to develop a longer term view of institutional needs and objectives to guide the annual planning and recruitment process. Defining what we mean by success will help us collectively to point our resources in the right direction over a period of years, and to evaluate our progress toward the outcomes we are seeking. ¹

¹ Faculty Complement Renewal at York University, Provostial Discussion Paper, March http://vpap.info.yorku.ca/ppy_protected/renewing-york-universitys-full-time-faculty-complement/

Strategy

York University's Faculty Complement Renewal Strategy supports both growth and diversification of our faculty as essential to achieving the goals set out in our University Academic Plan and its commitment to inclusive excellence.

Over the coming decade York has an opportunity to recruit the next generation of talented full-time faculty from many backgrounds, who will propel the mission of the University forward and position us as a leader in shaping the future of higher education. The purpose of this Strategy is to set out how we can build the full-time complement we need to prepare our students to contribute and thrive in a rapidly changing world, and to continue amplifying our research to have a positive impact on the communities we serve, both locally and globally. The Strategy will support our complement renewal efforts while we take into consideration the challenges that post-secondary education faces and other urgent pressures including the need to support faculty members with necessary infrastructure and technology. It is meant to serve as a compass to guide and inform how we can best allocate available resources through the annual complement planning and budget processes in each Faculty and at an institutional level.

Tenure-stream Faculty Complement Growth

York University has been making steady progress over several years toward renewing, diversifying and growing our tenure-stream faculty complement. Moving forward we will:

- › Continue increasing the number of tenure-stream faculty over the 2017-18 benchmark level with one measure of progress being a gradual increase in faculty:student ratios institutionally, and particularly in the Faculties of Health, Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, and Science.
- › Include continued teaching stream hires in our complement planning and foster an institutional culture that values both research and teaching as vital contributions to our mission and recognizes the interaction between them.
- › Increase the attention paid to the alignment of all professorial stream hires with research needs and the research objectives of the hiring unit, Faculty, and institution.
- › Align hiring with the needs of a changing and diverse student body, anticipating the shifts in higher education, and supporting more active, experiential pedagogies, digital literacy and digital services.
- › Strengthen ties between complement and faculty:student ratios, while ensuring consideration of the renewal needs of smaller, high quality programs to ensure long-term health.
- › Increase the percentage of courses and students taught by tenure-stream faculty, with a goal of exceeding the provincial average over time and ensuring that the majority of overall teaching across the institution is done by tenure-stream faculty.
- › Consider the ways in which open rank and/or high level hiring might attract candidates to leadership roles in research and teaching at the University.

Diversification

Diversity is a fundamental element of excellence. York University is an Affirmative Action (AA) employer and strongly values diversity, including gender and sexual diversity, within its community. York's AA Program applies to Aboriginal /Indigenous people, visible minorities/racialized people, people with disabilities, and women. It is essential that we continue and increase our efforts to diversify our collegium with attention to specific groups, perspectives and expertise that remain underrepresented, particularly in light of the diversity of our student body. To do so, we will:

- › Collect meaningful and accurate disaggregated data to support effective affirmative action hiring and growth in all Federal Employment Equity categories, and with a view to addressing particular gaps in representation within these categories, at the University level and within each Faculty.
- › Increase understanding of procedures around affirmative action hiring to ensure more excellent candidates are made aware of hiring opportunities and are properly considered throughout the hiring process.
- › Encourage a range of advertising and recruiting methods to ensure more excellent candidates from equity seeking groups are considering York.
- › Facilitate the sharing of experience and best practices used to help generate applications and interest from members of equity seeking groups.
- › Pursue continuous improvement in support and training around Affirmative Action for faculty hiring committees.
- › Track our progress toward achieving the federal government's 10-year goals established in July 2019 for the Canada Research Chairs program (the goals can be viewed here: http://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/2019_addendum-eng.aspx).

Competitiveness

In order to ensure we attract top candidates from around the world who demonstrate research and teaching excellence and innovation, commitment to providing high quality student experiences, and potential to advance their field of scholarly or creative inquiry, we must consider the following:

- › **International candidates** – increase advertising and recruitment globally. Additionally, we must increase understanding of procedures and options around international hiring to ensure excellent candidates are properly considered as appropriate.
- › **Compensation** – ensure we continue to offer comprehensive and competitive compensation packages in the GTA and beyond, including research start up funding.
- › **Timing** – complete hiring on the same, or a shorter timeline, than our competitors each year, and hire aggressively over the next three years before expected retirements within the broader university sector.
- › **Infrastructure** – meet current and future infrastructure needs in order to continue to attract top candidates. This includes infrastructure for research, teaching, students, and movement between campuses, and must be developed in light of institutional goals around sustainability.

Streamed Hiring

The large majority of tenure-stream appointments at York University will continue to be in the professorial stream. We will seek to grow the number of research chairs and other research enhanced positions available to our professorial stream faculty. These positions are designed to accelerate our continued growth and development as a research intensive university that is known for creating positive social and economic impact, and providing students with access to leading scholars in the classroom.

In addition, we will continue hiring teaching stream faculty who will play a key role in reinventing our programs and pedagogies to achieve the vision of 21st century learning set out in our UAP. These positions are designed to lead the University's efforts to strengthen program quality and innovation, teaching and learning excellence, and an enhanced student experience.

In considering and making teaching stream appointments we will:

- › Ensure supports are provided for teaching stream faculty to inspire and accelerate pedagogical innovation.
- › Promote engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).
- › Work to achieve the optimal balance between teaching stream and other hiring in order to achieve the full benefit of differentiated faculty positions.

Both professorial and teaching stream positions will contribute to teaching excellence, pedagogical innovation, and attaining our goal of having tenure stream faculty deliver a greater share of the teaching mission of the University. The University will seek to establish new programs designed to attract, recognize, support and retain outstanding teachers in both the professorial and teaching streams.

Strategic Hiring

Strategic hiring, including cluster hiring, can be an effective way to build institutional strength of various types. We will consider targeted strategic and cluster hiring, where appropriate, to:

- › Address specific gaps in representation to create a University environment that is more supportive for scholars from equity deserving groups.
- › Connect complement renewal more closely to the broader strategic planning processes of the University.
- › Respond to opportunities that advance areas of research inquiry, student interest, and curricular innovation and position York for success over the long-term.
- › Build areas of interdisciplinary strength and potential collaboration across traditional disciplinary boundaries and with external partners.

Contract Faculty Success

Contract faculty have and will continue to play a valuable role within our overall mix of instructors at the University by contributing a wide range of knowledge and academic subject matter expertise. Even as we grow the tenure stream complement, contract faculty will continue to play a very significant role in our students' education and in achieving the aspirations of the University Academic Plan. In order to recognize the contributions made by our contract faculty on an ongoing basis, and to ensure that each contract faculty member has appropriate professional development and teaching supports, we will:

- › Encourage an inclusive environment where contract faculty are treated with respect and their expertise and perspectives are included in shaping University priorities and initiatives.
- › Commit to enhancing opportunities for professional development and other supports for contract faculty to continuously develop and adapt their teaching skills, and to design and renew curriculum.
- › Ensure contract faculty have the infrastructure needed to be effective in their work.