



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**  
SCARBOROUGH

# Strategic Plan

Setting the course for a new kind of campus



2008

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## Foreword

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This is the new UTSC strategic plan. It lays the foundation for the upcoming five-year academic and campus plans by providing themes and directions that will guide our planning. The strategic plan represents the efforts of many and involved a comprehensive engagement process. This process included meetings with each UTSC academic department, various meetings with department chairs, faculty, students, staff, town halls and targeted engagement around developing the vision, mission and values. The recommendations made in the latter half of this document are directly attributed to many of these fruitful engagements and the open dialogue that has been shared across the campus.

The first part of the strategic plan presents the background conditions and rationale leading to the strategic directions. These issues were discussed with various groups as well as internal and external stakeholders across the tri-campus system. The second part of the plan lays out these strategic directions and the actions that we will take to achieve our goals.

The strategic plan is intended to provide a guide to academic departments and administrative units as they develop their academic and support plans and as we collectively define the future of UTSC.

## Background

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The University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) has a rich history as a key campus of the University of Toronto. Initially envisioned as a satellite campus aimed at responding to the expanding footprint of Toronto into the GTA and taking the overflow of undergraduates from the St. George campus, UTSC has now grown to over 10,000 students, which makes it similar in size to a medium-sized university within the provincial system.

The campus itself has made a number of unique contributions to U of T at the undergraduate and graduate levels: it is home to the University's first Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), the Master of Environmental Science and joint programs with Centennial College in Journalism, Paramedicine, Industrial Microbiology, New Media and Environmental Science and Technology.

UTSC has also been an innovator in leading the University's experiential learning platform by providing co-op education opportunities in all of the departments on campus. These examples demonstrate the ability of UTSC to innovate in the development of new programming. These programs have been developed and taught by exceptional faculty to many of the best students the provincial system has to offer. Importantly, these innovations are built on a tradition of academic excellence in scholarship and research that is reflective of the University of Toronto's high standards and reputation for achievement.

## *Emerging Opportunities*

UTSC is now entering a critical period in its development. The coming years will see a number of key opportunities emerge that will provide the means for UTSC to become an even more integral component of the University of Toronto. These opportunities include:

- Heightened international interest and trends
- Growth in undergraduate and graduate students across the province
- The changing role of the university system
- The evolution of the University of Toronto itself

It is these opportunities that require the campus to develop a plan that will re-conceptualize UTSC as an academically rich and comprehensive university that is home to influential scholarship and innovation within U of T. This transition will bring with it a number of opportunities and challenges for faculty, students, staff and the university itself.

The opportunities relate to the benefits of having UTSC as a site that will help U of T build capacity as well as diversify through some differentiation at UTSC. If we do not respond to the opportunity to continue to build a clear and strong identity for UTSC, we run the risk of marginalizing the campus and diluting the University of Toronto identity.

A major step in preparing UTSC for this transition will be the development of a Campus Plan that provides a detailed course of action for UTSC. The first phase of this process is already complete: the creation of the strategic plan which focuses on redefining the UTSC identity, establishing strategic foci and laying out a clear set of actions that will assist academic departments in developing new departmental plans. Ultimately, these plans will come together to form the five-year campus plan that will set the direction for UTSC's long-term future.

## The planning environment

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### *International Interest & Trends*

In planning UTSC's future, it is important to consider the external elements to which we must respond. At a global level, university programs and priorities will be greatly influenced by forces that emanate from the transformation of the modern economy. This transformation is characterized by technological innovation, commercialization and globalization. These forces have created a new global economic interdependence that brings with it enormous societal change— change that is characterized by the unprecedented interconnectivity.

The forces of global interconnectivity as an expression of societal transformation represent an enormous influence on what our universities look like, what they choose to teach and how they choose to teach it. UTSC has already begun to respond to the impact of this trend as the academic choices available to students are being transformed dramatically with innovative new programs, such as City Studies, International Development Studies and Environmental Sciences.

These new programs are not easily aligned with any single discipline – they are examples of the unique positioning of UTSC as a place that can mobilize across traditional disciplines to address emerging issues through excellent research and innovative educational programs.

### *Growth in graduate and undergraduate enrolments*

The recent double cohort university expansion (2002-2003) saw a 47 percent increase in the number of applications to the provincial university system over the previous year. This growth paired with changes in the demographics prompted the addition of new universities to the Ontario system as well as significant expansion in existing universities.

During this time, UTSC grew by 100 percent of its student population and by approximately 60 percent of its faculty staff complement and by much less with respect to facilities and infrastructure. This deficit has created less than ideal conditions for students and significant challenges for the University. Recent projections from Statistics Canada estimate steady growth over the next decade peaking at an additional 10% of students entering Ontario universities by 2016<sup>1</sup> (current enrolment 640,000+).

Based on physical capacity to expand, UTSC and UTM have the potential to accommodate increased enrolment. It is important to stress, however, that expansion could only occur over the long term and would require, as a pre-condition, a dramatic increase in capital and human resources.

University systems at the provincial, national and international levels are evolving to meet the needs of their various constituencies: students, faculty, government, business, and society at

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada (2007). *Postsecondary Enrolment Trends to 2031: Three Scenarios*, Catalogue no. 81-595-MIE2007058, page 67.

large. This evolution has seen the introduction of numerous new programs, such as co-op and joint university/college programs that have historically not been delivered in traditional research university settings.

These programs are aimed at enriching the undergraduate student experience by providing not only excellent academic programs but also a rich “hands-on” experience. These programs are also more directly aimed at developing students to enter the workforce, a reality that universities are now facing.

Not surprisingly, the experience of many universities (including UTSC) is that programs with work experience options are drawing many of the top academically achieving students entering the university system. One reason for this growth is that students are looking to universities to prepare them for successful transition to work life and are attracted to programs that can give them this type of experience.

Another element that must be considered with respect to student growth is graduate program demand. Over the four year period beginning in 2000, universities saw a seven percent annual growth in the number of new PhD students entering the university system.<sup>2</sup> There is also growing demand for more student spaces in Masters Programs within the university setting. Many of these students will go on to pursue doctoral level studies; however, growing numbers of adult learners are interested in professional Masters Programs.

UTSC has had very positive experience with this second group of learners through the Master of Environmental Science. This program has attracted very strong students to UTSC who are now entering the workforce and beginning to make an impact. The Government of Ontario has acknowledged this trend and has committed resources to support universities in expanding graduate programs. These resources include additional infrastructure and operating dollars.

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<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada (2008). *Doctoral Graduates in Canada: Findings from the Survey of Earned Doctorates, 2004/2005*, Statistics Canada – Catalogue no. 81-595-M, page 11.

### *U of T and the Tri-Campus model*

The University of Toronto has been challenged to meet undergraduate and graduate student demand while balancing its role as Canada's premier research university. In order to respond to these challenges, a long-term planning exercise, "*Towards 2030: Planning for our future*" was initiated. This planning exercise speaks to the University's ability to be responsive to the changing environment and is aimed at developing a high level plan to help ensure that the University of Toronto continues to reach new levels of excellence in the years to come.

A key theme emerging from this exercise relates to the question of creating a U of T system based on a tri-campus model. The existing model is similar to a hub and spoke model with the St. George campus serving as the hub. A new system could see the creation of three distinct university campuses with greater operational independence. Such a three campus system would provide the opportunity for greater inter-campus differentiation and would make available a greater level of choice for students considering U of T.

### *The need to differentiate*

The critical element of this plan will be that each of the three campuses will need to differentiate. By having key areas of differentiation within the overall U of T system, UTSC can position itself as a site for world-class programs that stand out within the broader U of T system and beyond, and that will go a long way toward creating the identity needed to sustain UTSC as an internationally recognized intellectual and social hub in the eastern GTA. If at the end of this planning process, all three campuses are seen as offering the same choices, UTSC would likely see the quality of students it serves diminish, a consequence that may marginalize the campus. Beyond being a problem for UTSC, this would become a challenge for the U of T identity. Conversely, if UTSC continues to develop a clear identity that is grounded in the U of T standard of excellence while providing unique programs, options and experience to students, its ability to compete for the very best students, faculty and staff will grow exponentially.

Only recently has UTSC grown to a size that puts it in a position to develop an international identity, an identity that is much more than just the sum of successes in particular areas or as

solely a result of its connection with the broader U of T community. UTSC is in a special position to build on its added value and to accelerate ongoing efforts to contribute in unique ways to the U of T community and to the broader post secondary landscape. In short, UTSC represents an opportunity for U of T to diversify and build capacity.

These unique contributions are points of differentiation that will provide UTSC students with exciting and cutting edge choices that speak not only to the highest standards of excellence, but that are also quick to respond to the societal transformation that is underway. Unique contributions coming from UTSC are facilitated by the many opportunities present in our local and broader environment today.

### *The need for a clear identity*

The key first phase of the process is aimed at developing a clear identity for UTSC that is built on the standard of excellence represented by the University of Toronto and that highlights the unique features and rich history of UTSC. The need to develop a clear identity for UTSC is further underscored by the emergence of a true tri-campus structure for the University that will see each campus differentiating itself over time.

The timing of the current process is ideal for UTSC because of the tremendous growth that has seen the undergraduate student population double to over 10,000 students in the 2007/2008 academic year. This growth, together with the commitment to develop a strong campus culture, no longer makes it viable for UTSC to be seen as simply an extension of the Faculty of Arts and Science or as another member of the U of T college structure. Rather, UTSC must become a core partner in the evolution of the University. To do this, UTSC must build on its current strengths and establish a clear and sustainable identity.

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## Strategic Considerations

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### *Building on traditional research & scholarship platforms*

Notwithstanding the new strategic directions that represent opportunities for UTSC, it is important to remember that these areas are built on a strong tradition of outstanding research and scholarship that is at the very core of our identity as a world class university. It is essential that in the years to come, we provide an environment that will allow us to build on our successes in the many research areas that have gained national and international attention and nurture the expanding research and scholarship enterprise here at UTSC.

### *The student experience*

When developing our future directions and priorities, we must be very conscious of the need to be more responsive to students. In particular, we have an opportunity to build on our strong platform of research and scholarship and to establish new approaches to teaching, curriculum and co-curricular innovation that further our commitment to excellence. We must also respond to increasing expectations for higher education to provide experiential significance as a pedagogical approach.

As many of these new developments represent recently emerging trends, it is critical that our newer faculty take ownership and have opportunities to participate as co-leaders in the growth process since this strategic plan will become their legacy.

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## Strategic Planning Process

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The strategic planning process adopted by UTSC is aimed at developing a sustainable and academically rich platform that will ensure the long-term success of this vibrant element of the University of Toronto. The process will follow these phases (see table 1 for details and timing):

Phase 1 – **Strategic plan** will involve developing a clear identity including a vision, mission and values and identifying focused directions that will serve as the foundation and guide for future planning activities;

Phase 2 – **Academic plan** will focus on departmental planning that will include a review of existing educational programs and research priorities which will establish a process for developing and implementing new programs that support UTSC’s evolving identity and are responsive to changes in the university system;

Phase 3 – **Resource plan** which will be based on the academic plans that ensure the appropriate campus infrastructure (human resources and facilities) are in place for UTSC to achieve its objectives at a standard that befits the University of Toronto;

These phases will culminate in a **Campus plan** that will provide clear direction for the long term future of UTSC.

Phase 4 – **Implementation and monitoring** will be focused on ongoing monitoring of the internal and external environment to ensure that UTSC achieves its objectives and maintains its role as an elite partner in the national university system.

Ultimately, phases two to four will become iterative and these planning phases will be integrated into a five-year rolling plan that will be reexamined on an annual basis.

Table 1	Activities	Locus of planning	Completion Date
1. Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental scan</li> <li>• Develop identity for the future</li> <li>• Establishing directions</li> <li>• Develop new initiatives</li> <li>• Address current state issues</li> </ul>	Campus wide	May 2008
2. Academic Plan	Develop detailed academic plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed faculty and staff complement 5 yr plan</li> <li>• Program changes               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Undergraduate</li> <li>○ Graduate</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Research Priorities</li> <li>• Identification of extra-departmental issues</li> <li>• Draft financial plan</li> </ul>	Academic Departments	Oct 2008
3. Resource Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation of academic plans</li> <li>• <i>Intra-departmental planning (concurrent with Academic Planning)</i></li> <li>• Identification of long-term resource requirements</li> <li>• Final financial and human resource plans</li> <li>• Develop vision for a new physical campus Master Plan</li> </ul>	Administrative Departments	Dec 2008
4. Campus Plan	Consolidation of all planning activities and creation of a five-year campus plan with specific goals and objectives for UTSC		Jan 2009

## STRATEGIC PLAN

### *Developing our vision, mission and values*

In developing the new vision, mission and values for UTSC, it was imperative that a broad engagement strategy be used that allowed faculty, students and staff to participate in the process. In addition to helping to build a clearer sense of UTSC identity, this process served as an important mobilizing force and catalyst for engaging faculty, students, staff and community members in the development of a strategic plan for UTSC.

In total, more than 30 workshops were held for faculty, staff and students. Workshops at the academic department level provided an opportunity for colleagues to develop consensus regarding the most important elements to be captured. Key elements of UTSC *vision, missions and values* that emerged from our workshops and consultations included the following themes:

## Vision

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- ***Global perspective***
- ***Our position as a leading research university***
- ***Engaged students***
- ***Creating sustainable pedagogical platforms for core areas of scholarship, as well as new and emerging areas of knowledge***

## Mission

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- ***Commitment to excellence and innovation in teaching and research***
- ***The centrality of teaching and research to the educational mission***
- ***Nurture and support scholars to make contributions that are recognized internationally for their excellence and impact***
- ***Ensuring a first rate experience for our students***

## Values

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- ***Holistic Student experience***
- ***Supportive environment for students, staff and faculty***
- ***Research and scholarship***
- ***Diversity and equity***
- ***Partnership and Outreach***

Over the coming year, these concepts and themes will be used to help create a more concise set of vision, mission and values statements.

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## *UTSC Strategic Directions*

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The following strategic directions have been developed as a result of consensus gained through the various departmental consultations and town hall meetings held across the campus. They also reinforce program content and pedagogical directions that had already been areas of strength, and part of the academic offerings, at UTSC.

- 1. New and emerging areas of scholarship at the undergraduate level**
- 2. Enhanced Graduate Training**
- 3. Internationalism**
- 4. Experiential learning**
- 5. Sustainable University Platform**

### *1. New and emerging areas of scholarship at the undergraduate level*

The last three decades have seen the emergence of new areas that have grown out of collaboration of traditional disciplines; women and gender studies and neuroscience are two such examples. The strength of this approach is that these new disciplines benefit from the rich traditions of well-established fields and from the synergies that arise from a variety of perspectives that develop whole new areas and approaches to scholarship and research. Based on its size and critical mass of scholarship, UTSC is ideally suited to develop and support new and emerging areas of scholarship that are responsive to the needs of today's student.

#### *Strategic Direction:*

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***UTSC will create an environment to house and support the growth of new and emerging fields of scholarship.***

#### Objectives:

- New and emerging areas of scholarship will be built on the excellent reputation of traditional disciplines and will be based on evidence of a defined area of impactful scholarship.
- Additional resources will be allocated to support the development of emerging areas of scholarship.
- Creation of viable academic homes for these new programs, particularly in cases where the areas cut across traditional disciplinary boundaries.

#### Near term actions:

- A review of existing interdisciplinary programs which will focus on assessing:
  - The presence and interest of a critical mass of scholars
  - Responsiveness to student needs
  - Adequacy of resources
  - Viability/sustainability of an administrative/academic home (i.e. within an existing department or the creation of new EDU or department)

A framework will be developed and used to assess new and emerging areas of scholarship to ensure that any further expansion is adequately resourced for success.

## *2. Enhanced Graduate Training*

Graduate training is taking on a new dimension, as the need and demand for postgraduate training continues to rise. This trend was cited in Bob Rae's<sup>3</sup> report on the future of post-secondary education, and supported by the Government of Ontario as evidenced by their targeted funding efforts aimed at increasing graduate enrolments.

The desire for enhanced graduate training is attributable to many factors. The workforce has changed dramatically over the past twenty years, with people changing careers more often, the elimination of mandatory retirement here in Ontario and the growing demand for graduate training. Indeed, in many sectors, the Masters degree is quickly becoming the educational credential of demand, where the Bachelors degree was once sufficient. UTSC is responding to this changing dynamic and will continue to pursue opportunities to provide its students with the knowledge base that is required to compete in the workforce.

### *Responding to demand*

Pedagogical directions are also pointing to the importance of providing programs that build on research and scholarship in areas that mobilize across traditional disciplines to address important societal questions. The best research leads to creating a platform for the best education.

In addition to our core strengths in traditional disciplines, UTSC is already leading the way in providing innovative graduate training in distinct areas. Our Professional Masters Program in Environmental Science is the first of its kind in Canada, offering a unique internship and training that provides fresh approaches to environmental science issues and challenges, preparing our students to be leaders not only in research, but also in policy and planning for this important field.

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<sup>3</sup> Rae, B., *Ontario a Leader in Learning* found at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/postsec.pdf>

We have also recently introduced the Masters in Human Resources Management and Industrial Relations. As Professional Masters (and PhD) Programs continue to flourish, it will be important for UTSC to think about additional innovative directions and opportunities in these areas.

*Strategic Direction:*

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***The University of Toronto Scarborough is committed to expanding its onsite graduate training at the Masters and PhD levels to 10+ percent of the total student population.***

Objectives:

- Growth of existing Masters programs with the expansion into PhD streams where appropriate
- The creation of new professional Masters programs
- The creation of extra-departmental units to support PhD level programs in emerging new disciplines or areas where a critical mass of scholarship is in place to support and sustain programs at UTSC

The home base of these new programs would be at UTSC while being a part of the University tri-campus graduate program structure. Any expansion of graduate programs will be based on a critical mass of scholarship and excellence offered locally by UTSC departments and faculty.

Near term actions:

- Departments will develop proposals for graduate expansion that will be evaluated and then incorporated into their Academic plan;
- To support these plans and their implementation, a dean's advisor for graduate program development will be appointed whose focus will be the development of these programs;
- A working group reporting to the Dean will be established that will be responsible for identifying and planning for infrastructure to support this expansion.

### *3. Internationalism*

For a variety of reasons, in part relating to our diverse student population and in part because of areas of strength within UTSC, we have the opportunity to strengthen our focus on undergraduate and graduate programs that have international relevance and impact so that they provide global context to the educational experience.

UTSC has already made investments that are having an impact internationally. We have developed an intensive preparatory program geared at some of China's top students and high schools. UTSC students are making their presence felt around the world through international development and outreach. Locally, our campus is fortunate to reflect the diversity that makes Canada a unique and harmonious home for citizens from all corners of the globe.

#### *Strategic Direction:*

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***UTSC will become an international hub for learning and partnership within the U of T system.***

Objectives:

- UTSC will offer a range of programs at the undergraduate level that provides students with an international perspective and awareness;
- Growth in our GreenPath Program will include global expansion, as part of ongoing efforts to enrich the student experience at UTSC;
- Develop international partnerships, exchange, volunteer and workplace opportunities for our students and faculty with universities and other global organizations;
- Include international contexts in programs and courses to ensure that students have an appreciation of the global environment in which we live and work.

## Near Term Actions:

- Develop a Centre for Partnership in Developing Countries in specific areas i.e. Environmental Sciences;
- Strike working group to examine the feasibility of an expansion plan for the GreenPath Program that will focus on growth to other countries;
- Examine the feasibility of a first-year study abroad program or other international experiences;
- Work with programs to identify and categorize internationally relevant programs and develop plans for integration where appropriate.
- Examine opportunities to develop certificate, diploma or Masters Programs to upgrade and train foreign trained professionals and international students.

#### *4. Experiential learning*

Our focus on experiential learning, which includes our sought-after co-op education programs and joint programs with Centennial College, are aimed at producing a new generation of leaders who are prepared intellectually in the broadest sense, as well as being prepared to “hit the ground running” to adapt more quickly as they enter the workforce.

Not only are employers interested in employees who possess marketplace skills, students themselves are looking for an educational experience that is grounded in real-life approaches while incorporating theory and general knowledge into their learning. UTSC is a leader in this area by offering the University’s only formal co-operative programs and the exclusive Bachelor of Business Administration Co-op degree.

Our joint programs with Centennial College are tangible examples of the symbiotic effects of theory grounded in practical approaches. These kinds of partnerships with community colleges are new territory for many universities and they speak to the renewed emphasis on the value of blending theory and practice.

#### *Strategic Direction:*

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***UTSC will be a leader in experiential learning by offering curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students.***

Objectives:

- Expand internship programs at the undergraduate and graduate level;
- Provide opportunities for students to apply and present their work in academic, public and private sector environments;
- Improve campus student life experience by broadening the range of co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences;
- Provide meaningful and appropriate service learning experiences;
- Identify other academic institutions domestic and abroad that UTSC can partner with to expand experiential learning;

- Develop processes and approaches which will further strengthen our co-op education programming.
- Expand leadership development opportunities to include more co-curricular, mentorship and experiential offerings

#### Near Term Actions:

- Strike an academic task force to report on curricular based experiential learning opportunities at UTSC;
- Create an experiential work group made up of students, faculty and staff to identify areas of expansion of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities;
- Identify new sources of funding to support experiential opportunities;
- Complete the review of existing joint partnership programs with Centennial College to determine whether expected outcomes are being achieved and look for other opportunities to partner to offer new programs.

### *5. Sustainable University Platform*

Despite the many opportunities, recent growth in UTSC student numbers and campus expansion is thought to be out of synch with the full capital and human resource requirements needed to sustain the growth over the long term and maintain our commitment to outstanding scholarship and research.

Over time, the transparency of the new budget model will help redress some of the disadvantages currently experienced at UTSC, but the new model will not create transformative opportunities for our campus. Our efforts to successfully address the current challenges in a timely manner while providing exciting and innovative opportunities for UTSC must be focused on seeking innovative solutions that speak to our excellence and uniqueness within the broader U of T system.

Students at UTSC benefit from courses taught by outstanding faculty. However, a chief complaint that many students have is the lack of visibility and presence of some faculty outside of their teaching commitment on campus. It is important to address the existing challenge for the UTSC campus in that students do not always optimally benefit from the presence and scholarship of some of our faculty members beyond the classroom.

While there are many faculty members who have made UTSC their “academic home,” there continue to be faculty members who see the St. George campus as their academic home for a number of reasons. This situation can lead to the limited presence and visibility of faculty to the detriment of the student experience. Therefore, moving forward, we must ensure that new faculty at UTSC establish their academic home here at UTSC.

#### *Strategic Direction:*

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***UTSC will ensure that the best people, appropriate resources and excellent facilities and programs are in place to provide an exceptional place to work and learn.***

## Objectives:

- Significantly increase the faculty complement overall and ensure that new faculty see their academic home at UTSC to ensure that current and future programs are effectively resourced;
- Increase the staff complement to ensure that adequate supports are in place for UTSC;
- Build a new classroom facility to address shortfalls in office, classroom and student space;
- Construct a second state-of-the-art science and research facility;
- Build additional student facilities that include student residence, world class athletic facilities and multipurpose activity space;
- Undertake a comprehensive curriculum review to ensure that UTSC programs are appropriately resourced and are reflective of demand;
- Focus on enhancing the vibrancy of campus life and related activities.
- Build profile for the campus through Recruiting, Marketing, Admissions to raise awareness of the programs at UTSC and attract the best students.

## Near Term Actions:

- Each department will develop proposals that are aligned with UTSC's strategic directions and that address current shortages in faculty and staff;
- Under the direction of the Dean, a curriculum review will be completed to make sure programs are relevant and dynamic for students and faculty;
- The VP Research will lead a group of UTSC researchers through a planning process for the Phase Two Science Building;
- A new campus Master Plan process will engage our UTSC community and other stakeholders in creating a long-term facilities plan for UTSC;
- Temporary office space will be created to address current space shortages (2008).

## *Conclusion*

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UTSC is and will continue to grow as an intellectual and social hub for the GTA: a place in which the community can take pride and a place in which the community can feel a part. This strategic plan is the basis upon which we can continue to develop a campus that is global in its reach and that builds on our international profile and reputation at the local level.

The elements in this plan should be used in the decision-making and prioritization process that faculty and staff will go through as they develop academic and department specific plans.