



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF FORESTRY

Alumni Association

2010 – A Time for Change

Join us in helping the Faculty of Forestry....

Educating tomorrow's leaders in conservation and sustainability...

Dear Faculty of Forestry Alumni,

As many of you may already know, **our Alma Mater is undergoing yet another review of its status and programs at the University of Toronto**, and while this opens up many opportunities, it also presents a wealth of challenges. The University has a new budget model and it shines, albeit questionably, a spotlight on our Faculty. While we all understand the need for accountability in higher education, the current budget model diminishes the Faculty's unassailable research productivity (*on par with that of Medicine!*) and ignores its outstanding contributions to undergraduate and professional training in conservation. The University wants the Faculty to move! BUT..Where? Why?

Under such severe budget constraints, can the Faculty truly move forward? How can it ensure the training of expertise in sustainability for generations to come? What institutional structure does the Faculty need to achieve its vision of training tomorrow's leaders in forest conservation? Finally, is this really the time for the Faculty to lose its unique integrative education when climate change, carbon sequestration, bio-economics, biomaterials, and conservation are the most pressing global issues?

We are asking alumni to engage in the Faculty's upcoming exercise with the University and provide input to help it find the best possible institutional structure to achieve its vision. *The Faculty needs your ideas and inspiration, your knowledge and expertise, and perhaps your voice, to navigate the waters ahead.* It seems every 20 years the Faculty must renegotiate its future with the university! Last time it met the challenge of losing its undergraduate professional BScF program by creating the Masters of Forest Conservation (MFC). This time the potential to transform is equally exciting, but it will take institutional will and commitment to make the change successful. As always, alumni input and support is key to building a case for program need and getting the University to focus on the global, societal value of a shared vision.

The Provost has formed a Working Group within the Faculty (*Shashi Kant, Mohini Sain & Sandy Smith*) to evaluate alternative scenarios within the University and identify the most optimal. In January, the group initiated discussions to refine the Faculty's vision, explore the possible options, and evaluate their various merits and demerits. **Three scenarios are currently being considered for the Faculty:**

- 1) *Move the Faculty of Forestry in part, or as a whole, into the Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS);*
- 2) *Move the Faculty of Forestry in part, or as a whole, to University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC);*
- 3) *Refocus and transform it into a new multi-disciplinary, multi-faculty entity.*

The Transition Team must submit its report to the Provost by July 1st, 2010. But in order to do this, it needs your help to influence the University and ensure that the Faculty has the necessary support and adequate timeline to achieve the best possible outcome. The future of forest conservation education at the University of Toronto depends on the success of these negotiations!

Documents pertaining to the current state of the Faculty, including its vision, the recent External Review, and the Administration's Response to the Review are on the Faculty's website:
<http://www.forestry.utoronto.ca/review/review.html>

Over the next few weeks, **the Forestry Alumni Association (FAA) Executive Committee** will be engaging with the Working Group as your representatives to **develop key actions to mobilize the alumni with respect to this issue**. Actions may include alumni meeting with faculty, staff and current students, writing letters, requesting meetings with U of T administration, and working through elected alumni representatives on U of T governance committees (e.g. Academic Board and Governing Council), mobilizing the NGO community, mobilizing industry, and contacting key ministry officials and ministers.

Ideally, we want to urge U of T administration to support the Faculty in developing a model that positions it as a leader in educating professionals to solve forest, environmental and natural resource conservation problems - joining theoretical strengths with applied solutions that integrate across environmental, social and economic criteria of sustainable systems.

We need your input, your insights and welcome your ideas. Please stay in touch with us by emailing us at: alumni.forestry@utoronto.ca

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,

Adrina

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