



UNIVERSITY OF KING'S COLLEGE STRATEGIC ACADEMIC PLAN, 2023-2028

The University of King's College is known for its programs in the Humanities, Journalism and Writing. It attracts students from across Canada and around the world. It has a close association with Dalhousie University, one of the largest research universities in Canada, giving students both the experience of a small tight-knit college community, and the teaching and research capacity of Dalhousie.

As we approach the end of the first quarter of the 21st century, there is work to be done to build upon and enhance King's College as an inclusive and diverse community. The strategic academic plan sets out a roadmap to continue and enhance King's tradition of teaching excellence, create a student experience that is both supportive and accessible, renew the faculty, and build on our longstanding relationship with Dalhousie. It is built on five core values.

The academic component of the university's accessibility plan forms a part of this strategic academic plan and is appended to it.

CORE VALUES

- King's will build on its reputation for **teaching excellence**, in both in-person and virtual environments.
- King's will continue its work to become a **more diverse, inclusive, accessible and equitable community** that reaches out to the many communities that surround it and embraces its presence in Mi'kma'ki as an integral part of its identity.
- King's will provide a **student experience** that includes rich learning, enhanced mental health and a supportive academic environment for all.
- King's will **support its faculty** to ensure that their working environment fosters excellence, that their workload is reasonable and sustainable, and that retiring faculty are replaced.
- King's will continue to develop **collaborations** both within its programs, with Dalhousie and with other external players.

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

King's is well known as a teaching-intensive university, where providing excellent learning opportunities is the first and most important goal. This remains the primary mission of the university, with faculty scholarship and professional development enhancing excellence in teaching.

ACTIONS:

- (1) King's will continue its efforts to renew faculty and reduce reliance on part-time instructors, through additional tenure-track hires, with an emphasis on hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds and with areas of expertise required to enable teaching and research in areas beyond the university's traditional core competencies.
- (2) King's programs will continue to explore online and hybrid learning opportunities where appropriate to serve students who might otherwise be unable to experience a King's education, allow flexibility in programs, and bring instructors to King's who otherwise could not teach here, all the while being careful to maintain the quality of a King's education. Micro-credentials or other programs that could be offered or moved online will be considered, so that expertise and knowledge at King's are shared with a wider community.
- (3) Investments will be made in technologies to allow for a seamless learning experience in hybrid courses, where these can be shown to enhance the learning and teaching environment.
- (4) King's programs will expand experiential, community-connected learning opportunities including those involving work experience. In doing so, it will collaborate with senior levels of government.
- (5) King's will explore the creation and expansion of programs where appropriate. Examples could include further initiatives in Medical Humanities, Art History and Visual Culture, and the rapidly changing field of Journalism.
- (6) King's will consider further opportunities for endowed chairs and designated joint appointments with Dalhousie (Carnegie appointments).

A MORE DIVERSE COMMUNITY

King's programs, faculty members, staff and student body are not as diverse as many in our community and beyond would wish to see. The university will work to overcome barriers to a more diverse, equitable and inclusive community.

ACTIONS:

- (1) King's programs will actively seek to integrate more content related to Indigenous peoples and issues across its offerings and in doing so will make including Indigenous perspectives a core value.
- (2) King's programs will also continue to diversify their curricula to include perspectives from other equity-deserving groups, including persons of colour and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

- (3) King's, collectively and at the program level, will work toward implementation of the commitments contained in the Scarborough Charter on anti-Black racism and Black inclusion in Higher Education. King's will also comply with the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act.
- (4) King's programs will continue efforts to attract a more diverse student body through such initiatives as more outreach to underserved communities, targeted recruitment in high schools, targeted financial aid, and further discussion of curricula.
- (5) The administration and Faculty will collaborate closely on recruitment strategies, including recognizing and addressing differences in recruitment needs and strategies for graduate and undergraduate programs.
- (6) The School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing will continue to make appropriate changes in response to the calls to action from its students, issued in 2020.
- (7) King's will seek ongoing advice from the Mi'kmaw and African Nova Scotian communities as it pursues these initiatives.

IMPROVING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The student experience is at the core of any university education. King's is known for its emphasis on small class sizes, tutorial groups, and one-on-one mentoring. Supporting students, be it through financial aid, health supports or upgraded facilities, is crucial to a vibrant and healthy university community.

ACTIONS:

- (1) King's will consult with its academic programs on appropriate upgrades to AV facilities in individual classrooms, including upgraded facilities for video journalism.
- (2) King's will explore, where possible, ways to decolonize classroom arrangements.
- (3) King's will seek to increase supports for international students, to ensure they can succeed in the same ways domestic students are able to do so.
- (4) King's will pursue planning, design, and construction of a new community-facing facility to house the gym, Journalism, Writing & Publishing, student services, and possibly residence space and parking.
- (5) King's will work collaboratively with Dalhousie to strengthen supports for students with mental health challenges.
- (6) King's will provide dedicated tutoring support to assist students who may otherwise struggle in our programs, including those who may have been disadvantaged in their earlier education.
- (7) The university will seek opportunities to expand study-abroad programs.

FACULTY RENEWAL AND SUPPORT

King's has made progress in diversifying its faculty complement and expertise in content beyond the university's traditional core areas, but it falls short in numbers of faculty members from equity-deserving groups. As a result, some students may not see themselves reflected in

the composition of Faculty. Programs also lack expertise in key areas needed to diversify program content. At the same time, faculty workloads have increased.

ACTIONS

- (1) King's will continue its efforts to renew faculty and reduce reliance on part-time instructors, through additional tenure-track hires, with an emphasis on hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds and with areas of expertise required to enable teaching and research in areas beyond the university's traditional core competencies. These steps will be taken within a framework of financial responsibility.
- (2) King's will identify sources of funds to accelerate faculty hiring, including joint appointments with FASS and Canada Research Chairs.
- (3) The university will explore ways to reduce the service commitments of faculty members and more evenly distribute those expectations.
- (4) The university will reduce the teaching workload where this is appropriate and financially feasible.

COLLABORATION WITH DALHOUSIE, WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY, AND WITHIN KING'S

King's has enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with Dalhousie. But there are opportunities to enhance it. There are also other opportunities for increased collaboration both internally and externally.

ACTIONS

- (1) King's will continue efforts to increase collaboration between its own programs.
- (2) In collaboration with Dalhousie, King's will explore further ways to dismantle barriers to greater collaboration between the two institutions.
- (3) In conjunction with Dalhousie, King's will work to restore the Joint Faculty positions that have fallen into abeyance in the past decade and, through their creative reconfiguration, secure them once again as a key element of the Dalhousie-King's partnership.
- (4) King's will continue to discuss opportunities for collaboration with other institutions such as NSCAD and NSCC.
- (5) The university will explore arrangements with a university or universities overseas for scholar and student exchanges and joint curricula, with an aim of diversifying the curriculum at King's.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2023-2028 ACADEMIC PLAN

Individual academic units and other units in the university will develop their own implementation plans. Units will report, as part of their annual reports, achievements under the plan.

Approximately two and a half years after the commencement of the planning timeframe, P&P will review progress on the plan and make any necessary recommendations for improvement.

The university will publish a report summarizing the outcomes of the plan, including where it has succeeded and failed, after the conclusion of the five-year planning cycle, with an eye to the development of the next plan.

While this plan has a specific lifespan, it should be viewed as a living document that will benefit from ongoing advice, including from the university's Indigenous Advisory Circle.