

The Academic Plan of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College

Approved by NSAC Senior Management Committee
July 2004.

At the recommendation of the Enrolment Management Council, the Academic Planning Committee held two workshops to identify the principles that NSAC will adhere to in matters related to Academic Programming. The Senior Management Committee approved the Academic Plan for NSAC in July 2004. NSAC's Academic Plan will be used to support and complement the institutional strategic plan. The Academic Plan is composed of a set of principles that will guide academic programming and ensure that academic programming is aligned with the strategic goals of the institution as a whole.

Section 1. Academic Planning and Enrollment Management:

1.1 Introduction to Academic Planning:

The principles established in an Academic Plan will assist the institution to set benchmarks for academic programming and specify or imply criteria for resource allocation. The Academic Plan encourages transparent decision making without being overly prescriptive and inflexible. Such a plan may also help answer the question: "Why should one attend this institution?" In this way, the institution's Academic Plan is intricately linked to recruitment and enrollment management.

At NSAC, the Academic Plan will serve to:

1. Further elaborate on academic priorities identified in the institutional Strategic Plan
2. Establish and communicate clear strategic directions for the academic programs (technical, undergraduate, graduate, continuing education) at NSAC
3. Allow individual departments and units to envision, optimize and offer academic contributions that successfully fit within the strategic plan of the institution and which will receive appropriate resource allocation
4. Serve as a set of 'guiding principles' or 'best practices' for units within the institution, whether these units are focused on 'delivery' of academic programs or on the 'evaluation' of academic offerings

The Academic Plan is intended to guide NSAC in decisions related to its academic programs over the next five years, and will be reviewed and updated annually.

Section 2. Mandate of NSAC

2.1 Mission

NSAC excels in education and the provision of new knowledge in agriculture, food and the environment for the benefit of society. The goal of academic programs at NSAC is to best utilize our expertise and resources to achieve excellence in the development and delivery of high quality academic programs at appropriate levels in response to market demand. An emerging vision for NSAC is that we become, the university of choice for excellent science education, providing students both scientific knowledge and the application of that knowledge in the form of technology.

2.2 Our Community

NSAC's key communities are society at large, the agri-food sector, and the student it serves. Its student base is comprised of traditional students, between 18-22 years of age, drawn from the small towns and rural areas of Atlantic Canada. Typically, most students came directly from farms; however, this has shifted over the years. Now, although 90% of the student population comes from rural areas, the typical student does not have a farming background. Seventy percent of the student population is female, most with an interest in the sciences.

NSAC has experienced a decline in its enrollment which may well mirror the population decline in the rural areas of Atlantic Canada. While it continues to serve "key communities", academic planning must include other specific communities of interest.

Although the world as a whole can be identified, NSAC will need to focus on key areas for international students. Unless substantial scholarship funding can be obtained, the focus will be countries where students can afford to pay the tuition and living costs in Canada. (This does not preclude students as part of international projects, eg. CIDA funding). Such countries will be identified by NSAC International and NSAC Recruiting personnel. These students may well be mature students. Programs for these students include agriculture and rural environment issues, but increasingly graduate studies and certificate courses will be needed. The North eastern US is a potential community, both to meet the above objective and because of geographic proximity.

The large number of high school graduates from urban centres need to be targeted with programs that meet the general science, pre-vet and humanities areas. This latter area might also attract more local students who are not specifically interested in agriculture.

Continuing education and upgrading programs need to be developed to meet the needs of current professionals and the future large market of retirees.

Transfer students might be interested in upper level courses in specific areas and in post-diploma courses.

Academic planning strategies must recognize the motivations of students now drawn to NSAC's program offerings, and those that will be attracted to NSAC through program revision. Motivation may be somewhat vague for some students in the 18 -22 age group, founded upon

uncertainty about a career choice or the example of peers. Others may have a strong interest in a particular program or industry, or a belief that a particular area of study will lead them to a successful career. As the only university in the central region of Nova Scotia, NSAC is seen as a cost-effective option for students who wish to remain “at home” for post-secondary study. Others opt to transfer into NSAC for similar reasons. For all groups of students, access to athletic opportunities and sports teams are of importance to many.

Along with other post-secondary institutions, NSAC has seen wider participation from non-traditional students, whether it be those enrolled in mainstream academic programs but requiring more flexible course delivery or those who seek opportunities for life-long learning.

Students older than the traditional 18-22 year olds bring with them expectations and differing needs. They may require upgrading to improve their career prospects or meet their organization’s need to fill positions left vacant by retiring employees. They may be unable or unwilling to leave the work force for upgrading, instead, juggling full-time work with a high course load, expecting that NSAC will provide flexibility in courses requirements, scheduling, delivery and payment options to help them meet their educational goals. Conversely, they may instead be looking for shorter, more intense programs that will limit the time required for them to leave the work force. Recognition for lifelong learner/upgrading group may include strategies such as providing more leeway in academic requirements to retain continuing scholarships.

Students transfer to NSAC for a myriad of reasons, including upgrading of a community college diploma and obtaining an agricultural education prior to application to Veterinary Medicine. Others with generic degrees in biological sciences may wish to become more specialized or study applied science.

International students often have learning English as first priority, and obtaining a diploma from an accredited and credible institution as second. However, good well resourced programs will also be required. Some will be looking at overseas education for the general life experience, and others are seeking a country of permanent residence.

Urban students may have specific program interests, but those would not be associated with a ‘cow college’ image. Small class sizes and easy access to professors and lab resources for hands-on training will be areas in which NSAC would be attractive to them. Some students will again be looking for a new experience and a chance to get away from home, while still in a safe environment.

Pre-vet students are, of course, planning on veterinary school. The fact that NSAC has animals would be attractive to them, both companion and farm animals. The ability to board horses at the racetrack facility, and to be part of the Equestrian Club, would appeal to many. They also need counselling and assistance with veterinary school applications, including information on non-Canadian schools with accredited programs. Although these students expect a two year program only, most quickly realize this is unlikely. Thus alternative programs of interest to this group are

needed.

The strategic plan of the college identifies an enrollment objective of 1200 students. The focus should remain on attracting degree students from a large potential pool, but knowledge of the composition of the student population should help guide the academic plan and programs. Growth groups such as graduate students and upgrading students must be given some priority.

2.3 Institutional Points of Pride

The points of pride that make NSAC strong and that contribute to the recruitment, retention, and success of our students, faculty and staff include:

small size/big impact	hands-on experience
progressive programs	cutting-edge research and technology
producing new generations of leaders	an international presence
excellent quality of instruction	good preparation for a career
opportunity for intellectual growth	an enjoyable, welcoming experience
faculty and staff care about the students	

Section 3. Strategic Directions of Academic Programming

3.1 Guiding Principles for evaluation and development of Academic Programs.

The core of NSAC's Academic Programming is centered around the science and business of agriculture, and at the interface of agriculture with the environment and with all aspects of society, both locally and internationally. Within this core, education and training are delivered in certificate, diploma, and undergraduate and post-graduate degree programs, with opportunities for continuous learning through program articulation.

Academic programs at NSAC adhere to all of the following principles which guide NSAC in its evaluation of new and existing programs:

1. The program is defined clearly within the core of NSAC's Academic Programming.
2. The program prepares students to be productive participants in society.
3. The program provides opportunities for applied learning, with an emphasis on hands-on experiences and problem solving exercises. Opportunities for learning in the workplace are encouraged.
4. The program develops strong literacy and numeracy skills, with emphasis on teaching students to find and evaluate sources of knowledge.
5. The program is delivered by scholars within their fields who have well developed

instructional skills supported by appropriate instructional technologies, and laboratory and library resources.

6. The program provides an integrative systems approach to subject matter delivery.
7. The program provides students the opportunity to study internationally, without impacting negatively on the length of time required to complete the program.
8. The program appeals to a student base large enough to support the costs of program delivery.

3.2 Program Development Actions for 2003-04.

Each July, with input from the Academic Planning Committee, Senior Management will review NSAC's priorities for program modification and development, and provide direction to Academic Units for the upcoming year. The following priorities are identified in the 2003-04 Action Plan:

- The Curriculum Committee will propose further revision to the B. Sc. (Agr) program. Honours and non-honours streams will be considered.
- The Departments of Engineering and Environmental Sciences will propose a first year degree Foundation Science program that would allow students to study at NSAC for at least one year, and then to transfer to science programs at other Atlantic universities. These courses may be part of the B. Sc. (Agr) or the B. Sc. core.
- The Departments of Engineering, Environmental Sciences and Plant and Animal Sciences will propose programs in a B. Sc. degree in Water Management, Plant Biology, Animal Biology and Aquaculture.
- The Department of Business and Social Sciences will complete proposals for a B Tech major in Management, including technology management, a Bachelor of Management program with at least two majors, an economics and a business program outside of the B. Sc. (Agr) program, and a program in International Development.
- Working with the Marketing Specialist in the Office of the Executive Director, Alumni and External Relations, the Department of Business and Social Sciences will consider the evidence for a market for Bachelor of Arts programs at NSAC.
- The Vice-President Academic will strike a committee that will develop a program to bridge the graduates of one-year community college programs in agriculture to the B Tech programs at NSAC.
- The Departments of Business and Social Sciences, and Environmental Sciences will develop a proposal to offer the B Tech programs offered jointly by NSAC and the College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) in Jamaica with consideration for the mobility of students and

staff between the two institutions.

- The Graduate Policy Committee will investigate the opportunity to offer a Ph D program at NSAC.
- The Vice-President Academic, in consultation with faculty with expertise in Food Science, will propose a post-graduate diploma program in food quality and safety.
- The Department of Engineering will propose a program to provide admission to the program in Technology Education at institutions such as Acadia University.

4. Process for Program Development and Evaluation.

4.1 Program Development

The following processes are used at NSAC to develop and approve new academic programs.

- **Program Initiation.** The initiating group (either a department or a group of interested individuals) will develop a “concept proposal” for the new program that will include: (1) an overall program framework; (2) some indication of potential student interest; and (3) an honest, realistic review of budgetary requirements. The “concept proposal” with all the appropriate documentation will be submitted to the Academic Planning Committee.
- **Academic Planning Committee.** APC will review the “concept proposal” and all supporting documentation; additional information may be sought as needed from either the initiating group or an appointed focus group. A recommendation will be formulated to either proceed with program development or to stop it; the recommendation and its justification will then be submitted to the senior management committee.
- **Senior Management Committee.** The senior management committee will review all relevant documentation and will make a decision to either proceed with program development or to stop it. Their decision will include a more thorough financial feasibility study (may include cost-benefit analysis, market study or other financial implications) of the proposed program. The decision along with a rationale will be conveyed in writing to the initiating group. If the decision of Senior Management is negative, program development proceeds no further. If the decision of Senior Management is positive, the initiating group continues with program development.
- **Detailed Program Proposal.** The initiating group prepares a detailed program proposal with all appropriate course outlines and any changes to the curriculum. Once a complete program proposal has been assembled, the entire package is submitted to the curriculum committee of the faculty council.
- **Curriculum Committee and Faculty Council.** The curriculum committee will review the complete proposal and in consultation with the initiating group make any necessary

modifications. The curriculum committee will forward the complete program proposal to the faculty council for debate and approval of the academic content of the program.

- **External Approval and Implementation.** The Vice-President Academic is responsible for guiding program implementation. Proposals for Degree programs will be submitted for approval to the Senate of Dalhousie University, and then to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission. The Financial and Physical Planning Committee will propose a resource plan for approval of the Senior Management Committee.

N.B. The Senior Management Committee is responsible for the decision to develop and to offer a program; Faculty Council is responsible for the academic content of the program.

4.2 Program Review.

The following processes are used to review existing academic programs at NSAC.

4.2.1 Annual Review. Academic Programs are reviewed annually by the Academic Planning Committee and the Financial and Physical Planning Committee to ensure that they adhere to the principles described in section 3.1, and recommendations based on these reviews will be presented to the Senior Management committee. Programs that Senior Management considers not to adhere to these principles will be given two years to conform to the principles or face elimination.

4.2.2 Quality Review of Degree Programs: Degree Programs are reviewed by the Senate of Dalhousie University according to the procedures approved by the Senate of Dalhousie University for Reviews of Faculties:

DALHOUSIE SENATE REVIEWS OF FACULTIES

(As Revised by Senate December 8, 2003)

N.B. This section refers to the Vice-President Academic and Provost of Dalhousie University. The Vice-President Academic of NSAC will act in place of the Dean of the Faculty in reviews of NSAC and its programs.

1. After consultation with the Vice-President Academic and Provost and the Executive Director, Institutional Affairs, the Vice-Chair of Senate shall propose to the Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee (SAPBC), a three-year schedule of reviews. Wherever possible, the schedule of Senate Reviews shall be coordinated with decanal and accreditation reviews.

2. In January of each year, the Vice-Chair of Senate, following consultation with the Deans of the Faculties to be reviewed, shall forward to the SAPBC for its approval a list of potential Chairs of the Review Committees for the following academic year. The Chair of a Review

Committee shall be a Dalhousie faculty member with a primary appointment in a Faculty other than the Faculty under review. Apart from approval of these Chairs, members of the SAPBC shall refrain from voting on matters pertaining to reviews of the Faculty in which they hold their principal appointment.

3. The Vice-Chair of Senate, in consultation with the designated Chair of each Review Committee, shall forward to the SAPBC for its approval the names of prospective committee members. Normally, each Review Committee shall include three faculty members plus the Chair, none of whom shall have a principal appointment in the Faculty under review, a student in the Faculty, and the Executive Director, Institutional Affairs, or his/her designate. The Review Committee also may include a member of the community. The Office of Institutional Affairs shall provide administrative support for the activities of the Review Committee.

4. Each Review Committee shall consult with the Dean, the President, the Vice-President Academic and Provost, the Vice-President Research, and the Dean of Graduate Studies to identify any specific issues which should be addressed in the review. The SAPBC may also relay to the Review Committee any specific issues which it believes should be examined.

5. The Review Committee, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, shall select two external reviewers from outside the University. If the Review Committee and the Dean are unable to reach an agreement on the selection of external reviewers, the SAPBC shall select reviewers from lists of names proposed separately by the Review Committee and by the Dean and forwarded to the SAPBC by the Vice-Chair of Senate.

6. Prior to the end of June, the Faculty shall submit a self-study that includes:

1. a report that addresses the matters identified in Section A;
2. a new or revised academic plan;
3. commentary on specific issues identified in step 4. above;
4. identification of, and commentary on, further issues on which the Faculty is seeking the advice of the Committee or the external reviewers, or both;
5. copies of recent accreditation reports, as appendices, if applicable; and
6. a brief overview of Faculty issues addressed since the last Senate Review.

7. The external reviewers shall review their Terms of Reference and the material prepared by the Faculty. They shall jointly visit the campus (in early October, if possible) and interview appropriate individuals and groups, and shall independently prepare and submit to the Review Committee reports containing commentary and explicit recommendations. In those reports, reviewers are to avoid references to identifiable individuals. The reports shall be submitted within five weeks of the site visit. External reviewers shall be paid an honorarium of \$1,500 (from the budget of the Senate Office) and be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses.

8. In addition to the information provided by the Faculty, the Committee shall collect other pertinent information, including written and oral input from individuals and groups within and, where appropriate, outside the University. The Committee must contact all faculty members in the Faculty (individually by letter) to indicate its existence and purpose, and its willingness to meet with members (and receive written submissions, at the option of the faculty member). In a similar fashion, the Committee must contact all student societies in the Faculty. The Committee shall normally meet with the Dean, staff, students (graduate and undergraduate), the President, Vice-Presidents, and representatives of external constituencies. It shall widely advertise its existence and its receptiveness to submissions from students, concerned individuals, and groups.

9. For the review to succeed and gain full cooperation from the participants, it should be seen to be conducted fairly. Therefore, the Review Committee should communicate as openly and regularly as possible with the Faculty throughout the process, and shall treat all submissions as confidential.

10. The Committee shall prepare a confidential draft report based on the information available to it. This draft report shall address all matters identified in these Terms of Reference and shall contain explicitly-identified recommendations to the Faculty, to the University and to other bodies as appropriate.

11. The Committee shall transmit its draft report, along with the external reviewers' reports, to the Dean who shall respond within two weeks with corrections to errors of fact, any concerns regarding personal references, and comments on the implications of the proposed recommendations. Since the draft reports are confidential, they are not to be shared with others; nevertheless, the Dean may consult with other officials in the Faculty regarding the accuracy of specific details in the reports, should such consultation be helpful.

12. Before finalizing its recommendations, the Committee may discuss with other relevant units at Dalhousie the potential impact that implementation of the recommendations might have on those units.

13. The Committee shall finalize its report and transmit the final report, with the external reviewers' reports as appendices, to the Chair of SAPBC by February 15. Prior to transmittal, the Committee shall delete any personal references in the external reviewers' reports.

14. The final report (including external reviewers' reports) will be copied to the Dean who shall make it available to all members of the Faculty and shall arrange for the Faculty's response to be submitted to the SAPBC within six weeks. The Dean and members of the Review Committee will be invited to meet with the SAPBC when the report is to be discussed. The SAPBC will discuss the report, paying particular attention to any university-wide implications, and will decide whether or not to accept the report. If the SAPBC does not accept the report, it may return the report to the Review Committee for further consideration or it may constitute a new Review Committee. The SAPBC will forward to Senate any recommendations resulting from the

discussion of the accepted report that require action by Senate. A copy of the final report will also be sent to each external reviewer.

15. Senate will be informed that the report is complete and that it is available for reading in the Senate Office.

16. Once the Review Report has been accepted, the Vice-President Academic and Provost will inform the Faculty concerned, and any other units of the university affected, of needed actions and the date by which these actions shall occur.

17. The Vice-President Academic and Provost will report to the SAPBC as to the status of the recommendations contained in the Review Committee's report and any motions arising from or related to that report that were adopted by Senate. This will usually occur within a year to eighteen months after the SAPBC has made the report available to the Senate.

18. Following receipt of the status report from the Vice-President Academic and Provost, the SAPBC can make recommendations concerning action recommended in the report.

19. The SAPBC shall report annually to Senate on the status of Faculty Reviews.

4.2.3 Quality Review of Diploma Programs. The President shall Direct Quality Reviews of Diploma Programs using the following procedure:

1. In January, the President and Vice-President Academic (of NSAC) shall appoint a Committee to review the diploma program. The President and Vice-President Academic shall identify specific issues that shall be addressed in the Review. The Chair of Faculty Council may recommend to the President issues to be addressed in the Review.

2. The Review Committee, in consultation with the Vice-President Academic, shall select two external reviewers from outside the University.

3. Prior to the end of June, the Department(s) responsible for the program(s) to be reviewed shall submit a self-study that includes:

1. a report that addresses the issues identified by the President and the Vice-President Academic;
2. identification of, and commentary on, further issues on which the Department(s) is (are) seeking the advice of the Committee or the external reviewers, or both;
3. copies of recent accreditation reports, as appendices, if applicable; and
4. a brief overview of issues addressed since any former review.

4. The external reviewers shall review their Terms of Reference and the material prepared by the

Department(s). They shall jointly visit the campus (in early October, if possible) and interview appropriate individuals and groups, and shall independently prepare and submit to the Review Committee reports containing commentary and explicit recommendations. In those reports, reviewers are to avoid references to identifiable individuals. The reports shall be submitted within five weeks of the site visit. External reviewers shall be paid an honorarium and be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses.

5. In addition to the information provided by the Department(s), the Committee shall collect other pertinent information, including written and oral input from individuals and groups within and, where appropriate, outside the University. The Committee must contact all faculty members in the Department(s) (individually by letter) to indicate its existence and purpose, and its willingness to meet with members (and receive written submissions, at the option of the faculty member). In a similar fashion, the Committee must contact all student societies in the Department(s). The Committee shall normally meet with the department head(s), staff, students (graduate and undergraduate), the President, Vice-Presidents, and representatives of external constituencies. It shall widely advertise its existence and its receptiveness to submissions from students, concerned individuals, and groups.

6. For the review to succeed and gain full cooperation from the participants, it should be seen to be conducted fairly. Therefore, the Review Committee should communicate as openly and regularly as possible with the Faculty throughout the process, and shall treat all submissions as confidential.

7. The Committee shall prepare a confidential draft report based on the information available to it. This draft report shall address all matters identified in these Terms of Reference and shall contain explicitly-identified recommendations to the Faculty, to the University and to other bodies as appropriate.

8. The Committee shall transmit its draft report, along with the external reviewers' reports, to the Department Head(s) who shall respond within two weeks with corrections to errors of fact, any concerns regarding personal references, and comments on the implications of the proposed recommendations. Since the draft reports are confidential, they are not to be shared with others; nevertheless, the Department Head(s) may consult with other officials in the department(s) regarding the accuracy of specific details in the reports, should such consultation be helpful.

9. Before finalizing its recommendations, the Committee may discuss with other relevant units of NSAC the potential impact that implementation of the recommendations might have on those units.

10. The Committee shall finalize its report and transmit the final report, with the external reviewers' reports as appendices, to the Vice-President Academic by February 15. Prior to transmittal, the Committee shall delete any personal references in the external reviewers' reports.

11. The final report (including external reviewers' reports) will be copied to the Department Head(s) who shall make it available to all members of the Department(s) and shall arrange for the Departmental response to be submitted to the Vice-President Academic within six weeks. The Department Head(s) and members of the Review Committee will be invited to meet with the President, and Vice-President Academic when the report is to be discussed. The President and Vice-President Academic will decide whether or not to accept the report. If the report is not accepted, it may be returned to the Review Committee for further consideration or a new Review Committee may be constituted. Copy of the final report will also be sent to each external reviewer.

12. Once the Review Report has been accepted, the Vice-President Academic will inform the Department(s) concerned, and any other units of the university affected, of needed actions and the date by which these actions shall occur.

5. Academic Policies and Governance

As a branch of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, NSAC is governed by Cabinet. The President receives advice from the Advisory Board and from other committees as described below.

5.1 Advisory Board

The NSAC Advisory Board meets at least twice a year and consists of 12 members appointed by the governments of the Atlantic provinces, by the NSAC and by the Board itself. The Board is involved in long-term planning, which includes development initiatives, academic offerings and facilities, research directions and external communications as well as governance.

The Board is chaired by John Bragg. Other members include: Rod MacLennan, Dr Bernie MacDonald, Dr Jeff Hoyle (Chair of NSAC Faculty Council), Susan Wren, Dr Philip Hicks (President of NSAC), Lynn MacLean, Bill Adams, Elmer MacDonald, Joe Brennan, and Dr David Cameron. Theresa Blois serves as recording secretary to the Advisory Board.

5.2 Senior Management Committee.

The purpose of the Senior Management Committee is to develop policy and provide advice to the President on the initiation and implementation of strategic, policy, and procedural matters affecting the operation of the University and its relationships with external stakeholders.

Membership

- President
- VP Academic
- VP Administration
- Dean, Research
- Dean, Student Services
- Dean, Internationalization

- Registrar
- Executive Director, Development and External Relations
- Director, Enrollment Management

Responsibilities:

1. To advise the President on strategic and policy direction in relation to the following matters:
 - a) Strategic planning;
 - b) External relations;
 - c) Financial management and capital planning;
 - d) Key internal management and operational decisions.

2. To co-ordinate action for developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the University's strategic plan, using consultative management practises. Issues will include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Departmental and unit contributions to the Strategic Plan;
 - b) Fostering of good inter-departmental and unit relationships;
 - c) Improving financial stability;
 - d) Resource allocation and reporting;
 - e) Human resources and internal relations management;
 - f) Marketing, external relations and community service;
 - g) Strategies to achieve enrollment targets.

3. To receive regular reports from the Academic Planning Committee (APC) and Financial & Physical Planning Committee (FPPC);

4. To develop policies based on recommendations from APC and FPPC;

5. Regular meeting schedule (normally bi-weekly).

5.3 Financial and Physical Planning Committee

The purpose of the Financial & Physical Planning Committee is to provide direction to, and recommend policy for, institutional planning, facility and financial management.

Membership

- VP Administration (Chair)
- All Academic Department Heads
- Director, Financial Services, RCSU
- Manager, Physical Plant
- Dean, Student Services
- Director, Athletics
- Financial Manager, Residence and Business Conference Services
- Executive Director, Development and External Relations

- Manager, IT services, RCSU
- Chief Librarian
- Registrar

Responsibilities:

1. To report to the Senior Management Committee;
2. To provide oversight, institutional planning and direction for physical planning and facility management. Issues will include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Providing a forum for communication for all departments and units about facility management issues for the University;
 - b) Providing the direction and principles for short and long-term facility planning for the University;
 - c) Advising on the space allocation and renovation implications of financial resource allocation decisions;
 - d) Recommending to Senior Management, as appropriate, policy guidelines for space management, including allocation and alterations of University space and other policies, which support innovations in academic program delivery.
3. To provide oversight, institutional planning and direction for financial management. Issues will include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Providing a forum for communication for all departments and units about financial management issues for the University;
 - b) Providing the direction and principles for short and long-term financial planning for budget committee;
 - c) Receiving, from the Budget Committee, the annual budget and related financial reports;
 - d) Providing advice to Senior Management on financial policy matters;
 - e) Monitoring generally the revenues and expenditures of the University and work with budget units on meeting the budget target of the University.
4. Normally bi-monthly meetings will be planned at the beginning of each semester/term.

5.4 Academic Planning Committee

The purpose of the Academic Planning Committee is to provide direction and approval for matters related to the academic direction of the University. This includes facilitating the development of academic program; encouraging innovation in their design and delivery; and promoting continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning for all academic programmes.

Membership

- VP Academic (Chair)
- All Department Heads
- Registrar

- Manager, Continuing Education
- Dean, Research
- Dean, Internationalization
- Chair, Faculty Council
- Chair, Faculty Council Curriculum Committee

Responsibilities:

1. To report to Senior Management Committee;
2. To provide oversight, institutional planning and direction for academic programmes at NSAC. Issues will include, but will not be limited to:
 - a) Facilitating the development of academic programmes;
 - b) Encouraging innovation and responsiveness in academic programme design and delivery;
 - c) Reporting to Senior Management at the earliest stage of programme development on new academic programme proposals and proposals for the expansion, reduction, rationalisation or dropping of academic programmes;
 - d) Recommending to Senior Management on matters related to new academic programme proposals, and proposals for the expansion, extension, reduction or closure of academic programs;
 - e) Recommending to Senior Management the assignment of priorities for the establishment of new academic programs and on the expansion of existing academic programmes;
 - f) Promoting the continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning for all academic programs;
 - g) Recommending to the Senior Management Committee enrollment quotas, both existing and proposed;
 - h) Resolving interdepartmental academic issues raised by the Curriculum Committee and other bodies;
 - i) Proposing policy related to the delivery of academic and training programs, including those offered through continuing education;
 - j) Providing guidance and assistance to the Dean of Research, Dean of Internationalisation, the Chief Librarian and the VP Academic, to realise institutional academic goals and the delivery of academic programmes;
3. To provide a regular report to Faculty Council.

5.4 Budget Committee

The purpose of the Budget Committee, a subcommittee of the Financial & Physical Planning Committee, is to prepare the annual budget.

Membership

- President
- VP Administration (Chair)
- VP Academic

- All Department Heads
- Director, Financial Services, RCSU
- Manager, Physical Plant
- Financial Manager, Residence and Business Conference Services

Responsibilities:

1. To prepare the annual budget for the next fiscal year;
2. To develop a financial plan and projections over the intermediate term (multi-year);
3. To conduct regular reviews of the University's financial position in comparison with the approved budget and to make such recommendations to the Financial & Physical Planning Committee;
4. To examine, discuss and make recommendations about any financial strategic plans or scenarios, capital budgets and operating budgets as proposed by Senior Management, and to make recommendations to the Financial & Physical Planning Committee about such matters;
5. To recommend operating budget allocations for budget units to the Financial & Physical Planning Committee;
6. To examine the financial statement and the accompanying financial reports on the past year's financial performance, and to make such recommendations to the Financial & Physical Planning Committee;
7. To recommend a proposed level of operating budget for the subsequent fiscal year.

Statement of Confidentiality

Members of the Budget Committee deal with financial information that provides them with a very broad knowledge of the University, Faculty, and Departmental planning that extends far beyond finances, including sensitive information on personnel planning, faculty and departmental restructuring, early retirement initiatives, etc.

Each member of the Budget Committee is reminded of the need to maintain confidentiality of all information discussed by the Budget Committee.

6. Strategic Initiatives.

6.1 Excellence in Learning

The ultimate goal of any institution of higher learning is not that the professors have taught, but rather that the students have learned. This very idea is underscored by the numerous experiments which have been conducted into student understanding and retention based on the way in which instruction was carried out. Invariably pure academic, uninvolved lecturing comes out at the bottom of the list despite how much any of us might have enjoyed putting on the performance. Education at the post secondary level has moved from a professor-centred (if not “revered”) system to one in which the student is at the centre and is more responsible for his or her own learning. If we do not allow this to happen we are doing a profound disservice to our students despite the fact that it is probably done with the best of intentions. Most larger universities, particularly in the United States are now much further than we are along the road to student-centred learning, integrated programming, service learning, learning communities and the like. With respect to student learning NSAC is quite traditional despite our acceptance of computer-based methodologies in many of our course offerings. This is, after all, a matter of a methodology, rather than a philosophy.

Among the innovations which are currently available to us are:

- Learning communities: small groupings of students which remain active for a semester or an academic year, or more. Members of these communities follow the same set of courses and engage in some level of integrated programming. They might also occupy a designated residence or residence space and have a specific mentor for the activities of the community.
- Integrated programming: a system that addresses the isolation of the traditional university course from all other courses. It can be as simple as a loose linkage amongst two or three courses, perhaps through a common term project or as involved as a complete melding of all the courses in one semester so that individual courses no longer exist, being replaced by a multidisciplinary program.
- Applied and career oriented learning: Engineering and medical schools have been doing this for decades, as have the NSAC technical programs. Should we make the B. Sc.(Agr) even more applied than it is? After all it is a professional degree. Matters of academic rigour, especially within the traditional disciplines would have to be addressed, but there might be gains in student interest and engagement.
- Inquiry focused, or discovery learning: has probably been going on for a long time at NSAC in one way or another. After all laboratory work is work of discovery if it is done properly. It doesn't really matter if you as a student are discovering something new, or something new to you. But how about the classroom experience where the lines between class and laboratory can be erased and we can move to a “studio” learning environment. This is just another form of the integrated learning approach.
- Student Educational Services: In today's high tech, high content environment it is very

easy for a student to become lost, and frantic, in the face of the expectations for him or her during university life. This has traditionally been handled by the professor's "office hours", but is that still realistic? Professors have more to do than ever before, are encouraged to seek large research grants and manage research empires while still maintaining a calm, friendly and helpful system of office hours. Established Learning Centres which are staffed by faculty, graduate students, teaching associates, computers and others is probably a very good addition to the "office hours", even though it will not and should not replace them. Panicky students can then get the help that they need on their terms and in their own time frame in an atmosphere which is strictly third-party. Such a system would be of immense value to all students and require a relatively small investment to establish and manage.

6.2 Program Articulation

NSAC supports learners in their pursuit of life-long learning. The Bachelor of Technology Degree was first offered in 1997 to allow students who had completed the requirements of a Technology Diploma in Landscape Horticulture to continue to study toward an undergraduate degree. Graduates of the Bachelor of Technology Degree have continued to study at the graduate level at other universities in Canada. Similarly, graduates of a two-year diploma program in agriculture are credited with credit for ten courses in the B. Sc. (Agr.) program.

NSAC will continue to find ways to articulate technical diploma programs at NSAC and elsewhere with the Bachelor's Degrees. In addition to this, NSAC will develop programs to allow students who have completed one-year certificate programs in agriculture to continue to study in agriculture.

6.3 Agricultural Policy Framework

Academic Programs at NSAC will support the Agricultural Policy Framework, an agreement among the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments in Canada that identifies the directions for agriculture in Canada. In particular, NSAC will provide research and education related to agricultural production, environmental sciences, food and bio-product development, agricultural business, economics and policy, and agriculture in the international context.