

**A Place to Be, a Place to Become:
A Strategic Plan for King's University College
2017 - 2024**

PREAMBLE

King's University College is a Catholic co- educational institution academically affiliated with The University of Western Ontario (Western University) and an inclusive community that celebrates diversity of faith, thought and background. Founded in 1954, the College offers more than fifty degree programs in the liberal arts, social sciences, management, and Social Work (BSW, MSW). The College is a community of approximately 3600 students and over 400 faculty and staff¹. It is renowned as a centre of teaching excellence positioned in the top rank of institutions of higher learning in Canada for the quality of its teaching faculty. Not only do its faculty teach remarkably well, but their scholarship continues to enhance King's reputation as one of Canada's first-class undergraduate colleges. Students are supported in their academic endeavours by a full range of student development and personal counselling services in an environment that values inclusiveness and diversity. They consistently express high praise for the quality of instruction, the small class sizes, the ease of access to faculty and staff, and the respectful and supportive community atmosphere. Students enjoy the wide variety of extra-curricular activities available to them on campus. Furthermore, they embrace the many experiential learning opportunities within and beyond the classroom with a core focus on programming that contributes to the social infrastructure of the community.

The College is committed to fostering a community of engaged scholars by enhancing academic programs, support for research, classroom, office and communal space; by balancing accessibility with a commitment to improving the academic quality of the student body; and by maintaining the core values of King's as a Catholic university college.

¹ In the 2016-17 academic year, King's enrolled 3046 full time and 524 part-time and 516 international students and employed 229 full-time and 192 part-time faculty, staff, and professional and administrative officers.

We acknowledge that our campus at King's University College is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawandaron peoples, all of whom have longstanding relationships to the land of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The first Nations communities of our local area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. And in our region, there are eleven First Nations communities as well as a growing indigenous urban population. King's University College values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (also known as North America).

OUR MISSION

King's is a public Catholic University College engaged in the open pursuit of truth and the discovery and sharing of knowledge in service to humanity. By integrating academic programs rooted in the liberal arts with comprehensive student support, King's creates an inclusive and empowering space for students by nourishing their capacity for critical thought, articulate expression, creativity, and ethical action.

OUR VISION

To be the leading undergraduate university in Canada, recognized as a centre of academic distinction, personal enrichment, and global engagement.

OUR VALUES

As a Catholic University College committed to the dialogue of faith and reason and the integration of knowledge for the good of society, we undertake to preserve and promote our basic mission of service to the Church and to humanity. This undertaking must include both discernment and action, to ensure a process beyond ourselves. We aim to be a welcoming, diverse and inclusive community that is animated by a spirit of charity, mutual respect, and cultural dialogue. We are committed to strategic initiatives that will allow us to better align our pursuit of knowledge with service to the common good. Seeking sincerely to be a place of community and global engagement, we acknowledge in a special way the need to undertake initiatives to promote social justice; to redress historical injustices that have resulted in marginalization and discrimination; to improve access to higher education for historically-disadvantaged individuals and communities; to speak "uncomfortable truths" (*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*) about the nature and origins of the problems of our time; and to promote the ethical use and equitable sharing of the world's resources.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The liberal arts are not only solid preparation for rewarding careers; they also develop civic engagement and nurture personal fulfillment.

- Universities Canada

As we reflect upon how King's will take its educational project forward into the next decade, we become very much aware that the post-secondary landscape, locally, across Canada, and globally, is undergoing seismic shifts. This circumstance both frees us to think more radically than ever before and constrains us to temper imagination with rationality, responsibility, and circumspection.

The terrain of higher education today has a role to play in defining the goals and objectives of our strategic plan. For the first time, we are operating in an environment in which enrolment growth is predicted to slow down to the point where it cannot be counted on to provide the increased revenues that universities require; the post-secondary sector is more competitive than ever; and the provincial government has crafted a funding model with an increased emphasis on outcomes, on improving student experience, on differentiation and on accountability (see *Focus on Outcomes, Centre on Students: Perspectives on Evolving Ontario's University Funding Model, Final Consultation Report, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2015* [MTCU report]). These changes are interrelated and significant. This same report defines student success indicators such as employment outcomes, graduation, labour market preparedness, learning outcomes, participation, outreach and opportunity, retention, student satisfaction and time-to-completion, putting more pressure on liberal arts colleges to deliver measurable results. While these are laudable outcomes we, nonetheless, expect more and want our students to achieve their full potential as life-long learners and engaged citizens.

As a comprehensive Affiliated University College offering a broad range of programs in the liberal arts, social sciences, as well as professional programs—all through the lens of the humanities-- we add a cultural dimension, personal attention and a sense of place to the educational experience that is often difficult for a larger university to provide. Specifically, we differentiate ourselves by the high quality of instruction, scholarship and the many modes of learning we utilize; by the number of unique programs and program orientations that we have created; by virtue of our ability to create a more student-centered experience within a larger university environment; by the quality and extent of the services

more readily available to our students; by a community spirit informed by our Catholic mission, the richness of our diversity and the extent of our local and international partnerships; and by the potential and vitality of our campus. At the same time, our students share the benefits of our affiliation with a large comprehensive university. These include but are not limited to a Western degree, a shared library system, and a vast array of courses, athletic opportunities and student clubs. Indeed, we leverage all these factors to create an educational environment that provides a rich academic and student life experience and pathways for our students to be agents of personal and social transformation.

The following themes have informed the structure of the strategic plan:

- Improving institutional quality and maximizing the resultant reputational advantage
- Creating and retaining a student body engaged in a transformative learning experience
- Nurturing a community informed by our Catholic vision and increasing our global engagement
- Securing our future

In the layout of the strategic plan these themes have been captured by the place based headings below:

- A Place to Think, to Imagine, to Create
- A Place of Discovery and Possibility
- A Place of Community and Global Engagement
- A Place of Vitality and Promise

The proper execution of a strategic plan requires a clearly defined plan of action and a mechanism to measure progress. These are captured in the **Implementation Plan** (to be developed as an accompanying document) that

- outlines the steps necessary to address the tactics;
- establishes timelines for these steps and tracks their progress;
- assigns responsibilities and required resources (budgetary or otherwise); and
- establishes and reviews metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the tactics and our progress towards realizing the desired outcomes.

1. A Place to Think, to Imagine, to Create

King's prepares students to enter a complex and professionalized workforce: but our ability to attract scholars and students lies in something beyond this. We challenge students and faculty to pursue truth with wisdom, to embrace language, reason, and debate on the one hand, and creative labour and ethical action on the other. Our thrust is towards program innovation that matches intellectual passion with community engagement, and abstract reason with positive action in a troubled world. The humanities- and social sciences-based programs at King's, while grounded in Catholic humanism, are responsive to diverse intellectual traditions. Delivered through a signature holistic pedagogy, they constitute a transformative education that invites students to boldly build their future.

1.1 Implement the College Academic Plan to distinguish King's as a centre of academic excellence

- 1.1.1** Continually revitalize programs and pedagogy to ensure that students understand the body of knowledge specific to their discipline, and learn to think critically, communicate effectively, and gain an appreciation of the professional standards associated with each discipline
- 1.1.2** Raise and promote our faculty's research profile in the public sphere
- 1.1.3** Formulate learning outcomes that will yield a transformative educational experience
- 1.1.4** Expand, diversify and co-ordinate high-impact learning opportunities for students, both curricular (through research projects, internships, immersive experiences, international travel and study) and co-curricular (in conjunction with all the student support services at the College)
- 1.1.5** Build dynamic partnerships and opportunities that encourage students, alumni and faculty to fully engage with contemporary challenges and make meaningful social infrastructure contributions
- 1.1.6** Create a comprehensive transition-to-university experience for first-year students, including honing of academic skills, theme-focused interdisciplinary exploration, cultural enrichment, and living and learning programs
- 1.1.7** Increase accessibility by developing academic pathways for students from diverse backgrounds, by including themes and content in courses to engage their interest, and by facilitating their success through specific transitional-year programming

1.2 Revise the College Research Plan to enhance and support faculty research, and promote student engagement with outstanding teacher-scholars

1.2.1 Charge the Faculty Research Activities Committee with the task of reviewing, developing, and refining the goals and objectives of the Research Plan “Enhancing a Spirit of Inquiry” (2007) to encourage, fund, and promote research and scholarship at King’s

1.3 Position the Cardinal Carter Library as a focal point of the teaching mission, research imperatives, and intellectual culture of our community

1.3.1 Revise the library’s mission and vision to reflect and support the King’s University College Mission and Vision

1.3.2 Create a long-term library plan that will explore and include information literacy programming, assessment programming, and a library space plan conducive to an enriched learning experience

1.3.3 Support the development and achievement of institutional learning outcomes with a focus on information literacy

1.3.4 Participate actively in Student Affairs initiatives such as transition-to-university and wellness programs

1.3.5 Continue to develop library e-holdings

1.4 DESIRED OUTCOMES

1.4.1 The implementation of the Academic Plan and its integration in College-wide, cross-functional planning

1.4.2 The development and implementation of the College Research Plan

1.4.3 The development and implementation of the Cardinal Carter Library long term plan

2. A Place of Discovery and Possibility

At King's, students explore the world, understand their place in it, and work creatively to change it for the better. From university entry to graduation, we intentionally prepare our students to benefit from exceptional opportunities for academic achievement, integrity and responsibility, health and wellness, and community engagement. In concert with our Western University partners, we create a place in which students can discover and define their academic, vocational, and personal paths, in an environment that offers comprehensive support, a powerful sense of belonging, and an invitation to adventure.

2.1 Encourage innovative academic program development

- 2.1.1** Support interdisciplinary, experiential and holistic learning, identifying existing opportunities for academic engagement and creating new ones
- 2.1.2** Identify new structural pathways for funding novel course/program developments
- 2.1.3** Provide students with research and leadership opportunities through research mentorships
- 2.1.4** Encourage participation of student representatives in the development of new programs
- 2.1.5** Hold an interdisciplinary conference for students from all programs to present research findings to the King's community
- 2.1.6** Encourage the further development of *King's Cosmos*, *The King's Peer Review*, and undergraduate research journals
- 2.1.7** Expand and promote work-study and other student campus employment as experiential learning opportunities
- 2.1.8** Expand speaker series to include scholarly research talks in collaboration with academic centres at King's

2.2 Partner with other campuses to increase the breadth and depth of our programs

- 2.2.1** Identify opportunities to develop mutually beneficial collaborative programs
- 2.2.2** Establish pathways to facilitate the entry of King's students into graduate and professional programs

2.3 Integrate academic and non-academic structures to deliver an exceptional experience that addresses the student as a whole person

- 2.3.1** Establish a Student Affairs Leadership team as a subcommittee of College Council, to review the student experience at King's, with a view to maximizing academic achievement, integrity and responsibility, ethical engagement, and health and wellness
- 2.3.2** Increase the physical visibility and accessibility of Student Affairs, and ensure productive synergy between the library, academic advising, Student Affairs, Enrolment Services, Residence, Student Financial Services, and the Alumni Office
- 2.3.3** Develop service-level agreements with Western University to ensure access and support that link with resources at King's
- 2.3.4** Develop programming, space, and amenities for commuter students
- 2.3.5** Develop a residence plan that offers a diverse range of accommodation options, with modern amenities that integrate residential learning facilities and programming and contribute to student life and wellness
- 2.3.6** Implement and develop the resources that reduce the incidents of sexual violence and increase awareness of supports for survivors of sexual violence in our community
- 2.3.7** Revise the Student Code of Conduct to reflect a more restorative justice-based, learning-centered model of civility and social responsibility that complements codes associated with Western and the other affiliated colleges
- 2.3.8** Harmonize the final assessment reports of the recently conducted reviews of units at King's to maximize wrap-around student support

2.4 Develop a comprehensive integrated retention strategy

- 2.4.1** Develop an orientation and transition plan drawing on evidence-based practices and local data from King's
- 2.4.2** Develop a first to second year student retention plan to address the largest retention opportunity
- 2.4.3** Develop and implement entrance and exit surveys
- 2.4.4** Identify and expand structures that promote on-campus involvement, such as avenues for one-to-one student contact

2.5 Identify pathways of empowerment for a diverse student body

- 2.5.1** Establish an equity, diversity, and human rights office
- 2.5.2** Integrate Indigenous perspectives into all planning activities, providing educational opportunities for the King's community about Indigenous culture, history, and learning
- 2.5.3** Expand the Indigenous Elder Program at King's
- 2.5.4** Identify space needs of diverse groups on campus, including Indigenous students and students with disabilities
- 2.5.5** Support the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program
- 2.5.6** Create an inclusive environment and programming for the LGBTQ members of our community
- 2.5.7** Continue to update and implement the Equity Plan for students, faculty, and staff

2.6 Build capacity for careers, graduate school, community engagement and lifelong learning

- 2.6.1** Communicate appreciation for the role and value of the liberal arts and help students understand how they are connected to meaningful career pathways
- 2.6.2** Develop Career Services, resourcing for more full-time access to career professionals at King's
- 2.6.3** Ensure that students with disabilities have access to career supports on- and off-campus to support their transition to work or further education
- 2.6.4** Offer career-planning talks to incoming students with representatives from all units
- 2.6.5** Continue to support and encourage participation in the Liberal Arts 101, King's Hour, and Veritas Series
- 2.6.6** Expand the alumni "Life After King's" series in partnership with the Alumni Office, academic programs, and Student Affairs
- 2.6.7** In concert with Western, the London Economic Development Corporation, Fanshawe College and other partners in the community, create and sustain new networks and pathways that support the career development needs of students
- 2.6.8** Undertake an employer survey
- 2.6.9** Promote servant leadership, teamwork, social responsibility and global engagement
- 2.6.10** Create a formal student leadership recognition program

2.7 DESIRED OUTCOMES

- 2.7.1** Increased inventory of interdisciplinary and active learning opportunities and partnerships.
- 2.7.2** Strategic enrolment and retention plan developed and implemented
- 2.7.3** Enrolment and retention targets met or exceeded as per the strategic enrolment and retention plan
- 2.7.4** The development and implementation of a residence plan and a commuter student plan
- 2.7.5** Increased access to meaningful employment and postgraduate programs for our graduates
- 2.7.6** Increased integration of Indigenous perspectives in courses and community life
- 2.7.7** Increased participation by students, alumni and faculty in mentoring and Life After King's programs

3. A Place of Community and Global Engagement

At King's, students, faculty, staff, and alumni are embedded within, and committed to fostering, a vibrant and healthy community for work and learning. We align our academic programs and partnerships to engage creatively on a local and global scale. As a community with shared values focused on the dignity of the person, we nurture a person-centered, inclusive, and collegial environment in harmony with Catholic social, moral, and spiritual teachings.

3.1 Nurture and sustain a community that is welcoming, inclusive, and supportive of the common wellbeing of all students, faculty, and staff

- 3.1.1** Develop a Wellness Plan that reflects a holistic approach to mental, physical and emotional health, on campus and in collaboration with the community
- 3.1.2** Review mental health programming and counselling services at King's to ensure these exceed standards in supporting the wellness of all members of the King's community
- 3.1.3** Support the development of a healthy campus, incorporating health considerations into all campus development plans, in accordance with the Okanagan Charter
- 3.1.4** Increase visibility of counsellors and support programs, and promote the diverse range of services offered, such as spiritual learning, career counselling, and personal and group counselling, through physical location, communications and integration
- 3.1.5** Promote and support King's as a place of interreligious dialogue and spiritual exploration in the region

3.2 Enable members of our community to explore their relationships with God, with the Church, and with each other

- 3.2.1** Recruit and engage faculty and staff committed to the promotion of our mission and the Catholic intellectual tradition
- 3.2.2** Identify and support academic programs that reflect Catholic values, especially those that address issues of justice, stewardship, and servant leadership
- 3.2.3** Develop a strategy for acquainting employees and members of King's Board of Directors and Foundation Board with our Catholic identity

- 3.2.4** Foster the relationship of Christ the King University Parish and Campus Ministry with the wider King's community
- 3.2.5** Create a permanent place of worship at King's which will support the celebration of the Church's rites and parish-related programming
- 3.2.6** Encourage participation in liturgical and devotional services by students, staff, and faculty
- 3.2.7** Reinforce King's position as the centre of Catholic higher education in the Diocese of London and in the Church in Canada, as well as a resource on the Catholic intellectual tradition for the Catholic and non-Catholic community
- 3.2.8** Strengthen partnerships with other Catholic institutions to enhance the mutual vitality of these bodies
- 3.2.9** Ensure that all levels of governance in the community reflect Catholic commitments to being person-centered, consultative, and inclusive

3.3 Understand and respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, in partnership with our Indigenous neighbours

- 3.3.1** Encourage the integration of Indigenous ways of knowing as well as teaching methods in classrooms and across the curriculum
- 3.3.2** Create courses and co-curricular opportunities to deepen understanding of Indigenous history, culture, spiritual beliefs, and practices
- 3.3.3** Build capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members
- 3.3.4** Recruit and support Indigenous students through partnerships and relationships with local, provincial, and national Indigenous communities
- 3.3.5** Work towards removing the barriers and obstacles which limit the access and educational success of Indigenous students
- 3.3.6** Strengthen partnership and collaboration with Indigenous communities

3.4 Maintain relationships with alumni and cultivate their engagement with the King's community

- 3.4.1** Create a lifelong and worldwide community of alumni through enhanced opportunities for meaningful engagement and connection, thus increasing awareness, pride, participation, volunteer involvement, and philanthropic commitment
- 3.4.2** Continue to develop alumni programming with emphasis on sustained intellectual engagement, community building, alumni networking, alumni/student mentorships, and service to the wider community
- 3.4.3** Keep alumni conversant with the programs and activities at King's with additional pathways linking Enrolment Services, Student Affairs, Campus Ministry, and Communications
- 3.4.4** Nurture a core group of student ambassadors who will serve as links to the community of alumni, as well as supporters of our future growth and development.
- 3.4.5** In 2017, roll out the next fundraising campaign for King's highest priority needs with emphasis on alumni and community engagement and support

3.5 Strongly affirm King's leadership role which supports the building of social infrastructure in the larger community

- 3.5.1** Being a fully engaged neighbour as well as a resource responsive to the needs of our community, sharing knowledge, research and facilities, and extending support or service
- 3.5.2** Prepare an inventory of our existing social infrastructure building initiatives and strategic partnerships across all academic and non-academic departments including finance and student services
- 3.5.3** Develop a comprehensive plan to prioritize future social infrastructure initiatives, strategic partnerships and funding opportunities
- 3.5.4** Develop institution wide metrics and an annual reporting mechanism to gauge our progress in building social infrastructure and partnerships in the larger community
- 3.5.5** Provide experiential, service, and career learning opportunities for students in every academic program
- 3.5.6** Create opportunities for community engaged learning, in partnership with other organizations and companies, for students to engage in the community as a means of personal and professional growth

3.6 Build upon the achievements of internationalization of the past twenty years

- 3.6.1** Review and revitalize the King's Internationalization Plan by 2018 with a focus on ethical collaboration and partnerships
- 3.6.2** Expand infrastructure for internships and experiential learning that reflect student and faculty engagement locally and globally
- 3.6.3** Review and renew the strategies for international student success
- 3.6.4** Create international learning opportunities for students with the goal of enabling our students to engage in an experience prior to graduation and to increase participation in these opportunities
- 3.6.5** Continue to foster and initiate collaboration with international educational partners (with special attention to Catholic institutions) with a goal of developing collaborative academic programs across the disciplines within the next five years
- 3.6.6** Provide learning opportunities for all community members to expand their cross-cultural skills and understanding of internationalization

3.7 DESIRED OUTCOMES

- 3.7.2** A catalogue of initiatives that enhance the social infrastructure of the larger community
- 3.7.3** A comprehensive plan to prioritize future social infrastructure initiatives, strategic partnerships and funding opportunities
- 3.7.4** The development and implementation of the Wellness Plan
- 3.7.2** Development of a response that embraces the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action*
- 3.7.5** Increased alumni participation in events, activities, and student career development
- 3.7.6** The development and implementation of the next major gift campaign as approved by the Foundation Board
- 3.7.7** Increased opportunities for interfaith dialogue
- 3.7.8** Increased support for diverse student groups including international students, Indigenous students, students with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups
- 3.7.9** Development and implementation of the Internationalization Plan

4 A Place of Vitality and Promise

At King's, we tirelessly extend the boundaries of who we are as an affiliated University College, building rich and relevant programs that make a difference in the world. King's distinguishes itself from the larger universities in the province by creating an intimate, community-based learning environment in keeping with the emphasis placed on differentiation by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development. Responsible management of our resources ensures that our College continues to thrive and grow, and that our campus supports a welcoming and vibrant experience for students, faculty, and staff. Taking the lead in environmental stewardship and giving due care to ecological sustainability, we strive to preserve the natural environment for generations to come.

4.1 Be responsible for developing our own complementary strategic mandate agreement, and be accountable to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development

- 4.1.1** Consolidate and reflect upon our self-evaluation of the last three years
- 4.1.2** Highlight the distinctiveness and strengths of King's programs and identify related development priorities
- 4.1.3** Renegotiate our Affiliation Agreement with Western University in a proactive manner
- 4.1.4** Work to secure access to all university government funding programs

4.2 Undertake a campus space assessment and revise our campus development plan

- 4.2.1** Conduct a space utilization survey under the leadership of the Campus Development Committee
- 4.2.2** Use the results of the survey to shape the campus development plan
- 4.2.3** Acquire the necessary land and space to fulfill the obligations and priorities of the Strategic Plan

4.3 Create and maintain a physical environment that fosters a spirit of community, that attracts students, staff, and faculty of high caliber, and that is aesthetically pleasing

4.3.1 Create fully accessible and welcoming classrooms that are conducive to learning and suitable to different pedagogical approaches

4.3.2 Reimagine the use of existing spaces to develop comfortable and inviting social meeting spaces and informal study spaces

4.3.3 Develop and improve facilities and grounds through the implementation of major capital/signature projects that attract people to campus

4.3.4 Create intellectual hubs to enable enrichment and cross-fertilization of programs

4.3.5 Continue to enhance technological infrastructure to support innovative academic programming and provincial outcome measures (e.g. online learning formats, management information (data) systems, staff training in technological advancements)

4.4 Ensure our financial sustainability and compliance with government accountability requirements

4.4.1 Create comprehensive enrolment and retention strategies that support the goals of the Strategic Plan

4.4.2 Ensure acquisitions are funded through endowment, solid business plans, partnerships and alternative financing opportunities

4.4.3 Ensure operations comply with the new provincial funding formula

4.5 Pursue a rigorous annual assessment, using quantitative and qualitative measures, to inform continuous improvement, planning, and institutional decision-making

4.5.1 Provide a comprehensive report to College Council detailing enrolment and retention trends using both historical data as well as well as metrics and key performance indicators.

4.5.2 Conduct a student survey identifying primary reasons why students chose King's, and if applicable, why they leave King's prior to graduation

4.6 **Become a leader in environmental responsibility and sustainability**

- 4.6.1 All planning regarding campus development will consider opportunities for environmental responsibility as a focus
- 4.6.1 Conduct an environmental scan culminating in an environmental sustainability plan
- 4.6.2 Ensure compliance with current environmental legislation through a legislation review
- 4.6.3 Identify initiatives that can be student-driven, working with Student's Council
- 4.6.4 Liaise with the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority and the City of London to showcase the beauty of the Thames River through mutually agreed upon low-impact development

4.7 **DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- 4.7.1 Increased autonomy as an affiliated university college
- 4.7.2 Completion of a space utilization audit and implementation of a campus development plan
- 4.7.3 Completion of an environmental sustainability plan

APPENDIX

Higher education in Canada today: A map of the terrain

Global and National Contexts

Facts and strengths

- In Canada, between March 2008 and March 2016, 1,416,600 new jobs were created for university graduates -- almost triple as many new jobs for college and trades graduates combined.
- Four out of five employers surveyed say co-op and internship students are a source of new talent and potential future employees.
- More than half of today's undergraduates benefit from experiential learning – such as co-ops, internships and service learning – as part of their university education.
- Enrolment in co-op programs at universities has jumped by 25 percent in recent years, from 53,000 students in 2006 to 65,000 students in 2013.
- Social science and humanities grads share in the income premium for university graduates. For example, full-time workers with degrees in history earn, on average, above \$65,000 annually.
- The social sciences and humanities make up more than half of bachelor's degrees among current professional leaders with higher education qualifications, across 30 countries and all sectors.
- A study of Canada's largest employers states that employers, when evaluating entry-level hires, value soft skills over technical knowledge. The soft skills most often cited as desirable by

employers include relationship-building, communication and problem-solving skills, analytical and leadership abilities – attributes developed and honed through studies in the social sciences and humanities.

- Access to university education remains uneven. For instance, only 9.8% of Indigenous people aged 25 to 64 in Canada have a university degree.
- Seventy-one percent of universities partner with local Indigenous communities, offering outreach programs, educational support and mentorship opportunities to students.
- Universities offer 233 undergraduate and 62 graduate programs on Indigenous issues or for Indigenous students - a 33% increase since 2013.
- Internationalization is the single most significant trend in Canadian education.
 - 97% of Canadian universities include internationalization as part of strategic planning, and most as one of their top five planning priorities; 89% say that the pace of internationalization on their campuses has accelerated during the past three years.
 - In 2014, about 89,000 full-time international students were enrolled in undergraduate programs on Canadian campuses (approximately 11% of full-time undergraduates). China, Brazil, India, the United States, France, Mexico and Germany are top-priority partner countries, despite student preference for English-speaking and/or western European nations such as the U.K., Australia, France and Germany.
 - 72% of Canadian universities engage in initiatives, such as intercultural research or field trips, to internationalize the curriculum.
 - International education benefits students. In fact, 82% of employers who hire recruits with international and intercultural experiences say these employees enhance their company's competitiveness; and two out of three hiring managers say Canada is at risk

of being left behind dynamic global economies like China, India and Brazil unless young Canadians learn to think more globally.

- Taking inflation into account, funding for the federal research councils has decreased by seven percent since 2007.
- Forty percent of faculty at Canadian universities have at least one international degree.

Challenges

- The utilitarian approach to education, which devalues liberal arts programs in favour of professional, STEM-related or job-oriented programs, affects the **perception** of King's academic programming. There is pressure to offer programs that are more obviously job-related.

Opportunities

- The known facts about the correlation between education and employability must be mobilized to counter the negative perception of liberal arts degrees. King's has recently acquired access to statistics on graduation rates and employment rates among our graduates, and the figures are encouraging.
- As global demand for a university education grows in response to increasingly knowledge-based economies, Canada will continue to attract international students. King's is well-placed to become a destination of choice not only for partner countries that favour Business/Economics programs, but also the arts and humanities.
- Programs that help Indigenous students transition into university studies are offered by 61 Canadian universities. Such programs, implemented here, would be consistent with our mission.

- The panel, led by Dr. David Naylor, sets out a strategy to reinvigorate research and innovation in Canada in its report: *Investing in Canada's Future – Strengthening the Foundations of Canadian Research*. Among the report's many recommendations, the following are noteworthy:
 - To modernize and, where possible, harmonize the legislation for the four agencies (NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC, CFI) that support extramural research
 - To review the current allocation of funding across the granting councils to maximize the ability of researchers across the disciplines to carry out world-leading research
 - To consider hard equity targets and quotas where persistent and unacceptable disparities exist
 - To examine best practices in supporting early career researchers
 - To promote and provide long-term support for Indigenous research
 - To support international research collaborations and modify existing funding programs so as to strengthen international partnerships
 - To encourage, facilitate, evaluate, and support multidisciplinary research
 - To renew the Canada Research Chair program

Provincial Context (highlighted keywords reference new government-mandated metrics)

Facts and strengths

- Since 2012, the Ontario government's Differentiation Agenda has put in place initiatives to transform postsecondary education with the following broad goals:
 - 1) To support **student success** and access to a **high-quality** Ontario postsecondary education;
 - 2) To increase **the global competitiveness** of Ontario's postsecondary education;
 - 3) To build on and help focus the strengths of Ontario colleges and universities, avoiding unnecessary duplication; and
 - 4) To maintain an efficient and financially sustainable postsecondary education system.
- In July 2015, HEQCO released a comprehensive report entitled Affiliated and Federated Universities as a Source of Differentiation. Authored by Dr. David Trick, the report detailed and concluded the important role institutions like King's play in the provincial post-secondary landscape and argued that funding changes should acknowledge this role and that the presidents of so-called 'parent institutions' like Western demonstrate how they would ensure the continued viability of the Affiliates.
<http://www.heqco.ca/en-ca/Research/ResPub/Pages/Affiliated-and-Federated-Universities-as-Sources-of-University-Differentiation.aspx>
- In August 2014, Ontario signed Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) with 45 publicly-funded colleges and universities, indicating support of existing institutional strengths and attempting to bring institutions in alignment with new government initiatives. The SMA1 with Western makes no mention of the Affiliated Colleges or their program areas. Currently, a second round of provincial SMAs are being negotiated (SMA2) in which the Western Affiliates' programs will have limited visibility.
- In 2013, the **Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU, now MAESDS)** released the Differentiation Policy Framework for Postsecondary Education. Its components, and its broad directions mesh with initiatives to review and modernize the funding model launched in 2015 by

the Ontario government. Created in consultation with students, university leadership, faculty, employers, colleges, the elementary and secondary sector, and professional associations, the funding model will place an increased emphasis on

- 1) **learning outcomes**
- 2) **academic differentiation**
- 3) improving **student experience** and
- 4) **institutional accountability** through reporting according to a specific set of metrics.

The suggested parameters for assessing **student success**, part of the accounting criteria, are: employment outcomes, graduation, labour market preparedness, **learning outcomes**, participation, outreach and opportunity, **retention, student satisfaction**, and time-to-completion.

Challenges

- While enrolment growth in Canadian universities will continue over the next decade, it will be unevenly distributed. The increases, where they occur, will be driven mainly by participation rates rather than by demographics. The predicted enrolment levels province-wide may not benefit King's, because of its position vis-a-vis local demographics. Locally, a drop in the number of secondary school graduates is projected.² Provincial level enrolment growth will be primarily in the greater Toronto area; funding will increasingly focus on quality maintenance rather than growth. Since 2010, the number of full time registrants at King's has dropped by 214 and the number of part time registrants has remained about the same.
- Sociocultural change: educators are trying to understand how the changing culture and priorities among youth are tied in with the difficulty of promoting liberal arts learning for its own sake. Students report anxiety about employability. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many students in our courses find it virtually impossible to keep up with the demands of reading-intensive courses at one end of the spectrum, and with quantitative analysis at the other end.

² Relevant documentation: Statistics Canada, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada's *Trends in Higher Education*, The Council of Ontario Universities' (COU) *Reaching Even Higher: The Next Multi-Year Funding Plan for Postsecondary Education*, and The University of Western Ontario's strategic plan, *Engaging the Future*, 2006.

- Ontario invested 44% less annually in its university system compared with its peer provinces. Continuous under-funding of education can be linked to Ontario's prosperity gap, and studies suggest this is a contributing factor of a \$6,000 per person prosperity gap between Ontario and the jurisdictional average.
- For the first time in 15 years, there were fewer new high school grads starting at Ontario campuses in the fall of 2015: 2.9 per cent fewer at universities and 3.5 per cent fewer at community colleges, according to mid-September figures from central application centres in Guelph.
- The rapid increase (60% in the last decade) in student enrollment at Ontario universities has not been met by a similar increase in the number of university professors (28% increase in the same time span) resulting in a student-to-faculty ratio of 26-1, which is much higher than the national average.

Opportunities

- Consolidation of current enrolment through retention must bring our focus to student services, university transition programs and learning support. King's will need to respond and refine its strategy to benefit from the increasing participation rates, even if they aren't in our backyard:
 - 1) by being more competitive in our traditional areas of recruitment; and
 - 2) by looking increasingly to new sources of students (domestic and international)
- Academic programming must creatively adapt to outcome-based funding - a stimulus to action, rather than a detriment.
- 2% of Ontario's population comprises First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. Overall, Ontario's Indigenous communities are significantly younger and have a population growth rate four times higher than the non-Indigenous population in Ontario. 30.7% of people in Ontario have a university credential compared with only 11.8% of Indigenous people in Ontario. Today, 1.7% of

university students and 3.6% of college students in Ontario overall are Indigenous; in northern Ontario, 9.2% of university students and 13% of college students are Indigenous.

- The number of international students studying in Ontario universities has grown each year by an average of 7% since the start of the 21st century, and grew by more than 8% in 2011-12 and by 9% cent in 2012-13. International students contribute just under \$3 billion annually to Ontario's economy. The top five source countries are China, India, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and Nigeria. Unlike tuition fees for domestic students, international student fees have not been regulated since 1996. Institutions use differential fees to generate revenue, and today, international students pay, on average, 4.5 times more in tuition fees than domestic students.

King's Institutional Context

Facts and strengths

- Ideals deriving from the Catholic intellectual tradition and Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities (Ex Corde Ecclesiae) provide the framework for our understanding of a Catholic university's identity, mission and activities.

- The academic programs at King's reflect the present state of knowledge, are sensitive to the dignity of the human person and are delivered in an environment characterized by integrated student support and development, smaller classes, high quality faculty mentorship and scholarship, research opportunities for students, inspiring experiential learning opportunities, and outstanding library services. The broad range of programs available to our 3500 students is supported by
 - 19 honors specialization modules
 - 12 specialization modules
 - 22 major modules
 - 20 minor modules
 - over 400 courses

- The advantages of affiliation with Western University, including the following:
 - Our students receive Western University degrees upon graduation;
 - Students and faculty are meant to have full access to the support services of a major university (athletics, student services, health services, etc.);
 - Students have access to a vast array of course offerings, including the sciences, that are only available on a large campus, while continuing to enjoy the more intimate atmosphere of King's for most of their studies;
 - Students and faculty have full access to the library holdings of a major research intensive university through our shared library program;
 - Faculty enjoy the opportunity to work collaboratively with colleagues on the other campuses;

- Faculty may participate in graduate programs through adjunct membership in the School of Graduate Studies.

Challenges

- The ongoing challenge of harmonizing the strategic plan of a primarily undergraduate affiliated college with the plans of several faculties and schools situated within a research intensive multifaceted university focused on the expansion of its graduate programs. The King's strategic plan is one of many plans.
- The challenge of maintaining distinctiveness and identity as a Catholic College while being held to the affiliation agreement with Western.
- Getting the message out that social sciences and humanities grads don't take a back seat on earnings.
- Continue to advocate for greater access for funding to support services at King's that complement the vast array of services offered by Western University.

Opportunities

- The need to advocate for greater academic and fiscal autonomy for King's to complement the institutional autonomy we currently enjoy.
- The need for mutually beneficial strategies developed in concert with the constituent university, Brescia and Huron, which could yield benefits to all despite increased institutional competition for a smaller number of students overall.
- The need to respond to three of the themes that dominate Western's strategic plan: interdisciplinarity, internationalization, and student engagement.

- Internationalization opportunities originally linked to China in EBM: need to continue to build on the successes of the last several years expanding source of international students as well as destination programming at King's.
- A widespread perception of King's as providing a supportive and accessible environment for students with disabilities.
- Productive relationships with local community, school system, Diocese, past students/alumni.
- The new Academic Plan, defined by reflection on the following goal:
 - *To distinguish King's as a center of academic excellence based on a signature pedagogical ethos rooted in the Catholic humanist tradition; one that empowers students to boldly embrace their future by cultivating a community of engaged scholars; and by fostering engaged and successful learning.*
- Important recent reviews:
 - 1) the Review of Student Development Services (Nov 2015)
 - 2) the Library Review (January 2016)
 - 3) the Academic Plan as part of the Strategic Planning process (May 2016)
 - 4) the Review of Academic Advising (Sept 2016)
 - 5) the Ninth Academic Review (October 2016)
 - 6) the Project Team Administrative Review (April 2017)
 - 7) the Strategic Plan (May 2017)

Other planning initiatives on the horizon:

- 1) the Research Plan
- 2) the Long-Term Library Plan
- 3) the Residence Plan
- 4) the Student Enrolment and Retention Plan
- 5) the Equity Plan
- 6) the Wellness Plan

- 7) the College Space Utilization Plan
- 8) the King's Internationalization Plan
- 9) A comprehensive plan to prioritize social infrastructure initiatives, strategic partnerships, and funding opportunities

The number and breadth of all these studies is a measure of the extent of our self-reflection, vitality and commitment to positioning King's as a centre of academic distinction, personal enrichment, and global engagement.

- New recruitment strategies and January admissions (the latter has added around 200 students to the King's roster in 2015-16).
- The work of the Strategic Enrolment Planning Committee and its focus on retention, especially from year 1 to year 2.
- Continued focus on campus development, especially the creation of welcoming residence spaces for students who are acculturated to 'rooms of their own.' Physical space developments in recent years have been implemented to work towards the goal of making the King's campus one of the most inviting campuses in the country. Recent initiatives include the SLC, enhanced focus on grounds maintenance and decorations, and re-modeling of the Thames market cafeteria space.
- At King's, the attention to the dignity of the human person in keeping with our institutional mission of service to humanity and inherent in our academic programs is reflected in our engagement and partnership with the larger community to build social infrastructure. Select social infrastructure Initiatives supported by the King's community are listed below:
 1. Employment of people with disabilities on our campus
 2. Psychology department community based projects
 3. Southwestern Ontario Women's Political Summit
 4. Liberal Arts 101 - a free non-credit university lecture series for people with low income and an interest in learning
 5. The adoption of the Okanagan Charter

6. Parent Mental Health Conference – TVDSB
7. Mental Health Innovation Fund in partnership with Lambton College
8. King's community engagement with the St. Joseph's Hospitality Centre
9. BSW & MSW practicum laying the foundation for a lifelong practice-based learning model
10. Partnership with Living Wage London
11. London Poverty Research Centre permanently housed at King's