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Joint Board/Senate Committee to Review the Principalship
c/o University Secretariat
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6

Dear Committee Members:

I write in response to the request, via Secretary Knox, that I outline for the Queen's community my vision of the future of Queen's over the coming years, and review progress over the past eight years of my service in the role. I am pleased to do so. This material may be publicly shared.

In preparing this letter, I reviewed a number of documents, including:

- a) My personal vision documents – [Where Next?](#) (2010) and [The Third Juncture](#) (2012);
- b) The many university planning documents approved over the past several years by the Senate and the Board of Trustees, including the [Academic Plan](#) (2011), the [Strategic Research Plan](#) (SRP) (2012-17), the [Strategic Framework](#) (2014-19), the [Campus Master Plan](#) (CMP) (2014) and [Library and Archives Master Plan](#) (LAMP) (2013), the [Strategic Mandate Agreement](#) (SMA) (2014-17), and the [Comprehensive International Plan](#) (CIP) (2015-19). The first two, which are Senate-approved documents, are under revision currently; the Strategic Framework, a Board-level document, will be revisited beginning about a year from now. The new [budget model](#) introduced in 2013 is also considered a foundational plan, supported by the [long-term strategic enrolment management framework](#) approved by the Senate in 2014; and
- c) All of my Board-approved goals and targets, including those for the current academic year.

In reviewing a), I find that my fundamental views of Queen's past and future trajectory, and of the balance between maintaining tradition and adapting to a rapidly changing world, have remained consistent. Over the last eight years, I have adhered to a common set of priorities, many of which have been realized and now provide the springboard across the next significant juncture in Queen's history. The following section describes our success in advancing these priorities.

In reviewing b), I believe that the extensive planning undertaken by the University that I proposed when I first applied for this position and initiated upon my appointment, has served us well. We have a consistent framework for academic, governance, and administrative decision-making, we have built a culture and commitment around transparency in decision-making, and improved our advocacy with government and the public. Let me offer an example: a large part of our success in maintaining or increasing resources through both Strategic Mandate Agreement cycles derives from the fact that we could point to clearly articulated strengths in our Academic and Strategic Research Plans, and in the Strategic Framework, the key pillars of which also point to those foundational documents.

In reviewing c), I believe the evidence supports my view that the University has made great progress in dealing with the challenges, not all of them financial, which it faced when I took up my position. I

need not rehearse these in detail here, but examples include: a planning gap, particularly on academic priorities and enrolment projections; a significant structural operating deficit; a dearth of faculty hiring; an unsustainable pension plan; inadequate financial controls; and leadership gaps. By no means have all the problems of 2008–9 been entirely vanquished. Nevertheless, we have now built a solid and stable foundation. We have celebrated 175 years of community, and are now at the juncture where we can vault ahead to be the global exemplar for excellence in undergraduate education and excellence in research and graduate-based research programs.

The balance of this communication has three sections. In the first, I review the past several years at a high level. In the second, I reflect on my leadership and areas where it could have been stronger. In the third, I outline my vision for where Queen's can go in the decades ahead, should I be reappointed.

Looking over the Past

This section describes major institutional accomplishments since 2009 that I have driven, recognizing efforts of other senior leaders who have been instrumental in our success.

- **Academic planning** – My first priority upon appointment was academic planning, to build a bridge between the Senate's responsibility for academic matters and the Board's fiduciary responsibility. This process, launched with *Where Next?* in January 2010 and culminating in the [approval of the plan](#) put forward by the Senate Academic Planning Task Force in November 2011, was the most complex academic planning exercise ever undertaken at Queen's. The result was a comprehensive academic plan built on Queen's commitment to be 'the Canadian research-intensive university with a transformative student learning experience.' Our academic priorities have served us well as a planning framework – they lie at the heart of the Strategic Research Plan, the Comprehensive International Plan, and the Campus Master Plan, for example – and will continue to do so as we move into a period of relative financial health and stability, and renewal of the professoriate.
- **Innovative pedagogy and research** – In both regards, we have made great strides during the period of my principalship. From the healthy debates over virtualization and online learning in my first term, we are now leaders in [blended learning](#), use of [active learning classrooms](#), [quality online programming](#), [competency-based medical education](#), the award-winning 'Major Maps' [student advising tool](#), and [learning outcomes assessment](#). The [Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts](#) is home to exciting new academic programming, and co-curricular offerings through the [Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre](#) and the [International Centre](#), such as the [new intercultural awareness certificate](#), are rich and diversified. We have reaped the harvest of past investments in research through the awarding to one of our faculty of a [Nobel Prize for physics](#) while continuing to invest in future excellence in this field. Our donors support [major research initiatives](#) and [faculty chairs](#). Queen's researchers lead national networks of centres of excellence in the [health sciences](#) and [social sciences](#). We have successfully [secured funding](#) from the [largest](#) and most competitive federal funding programs. We continue our strong record of accomplishment for faculty awards, including a recent [Trudeau Fellowship](#) and [Royal Society of Canada \(RSC\) Fellows](#), and recipients of the RSC's award for [high achievement among early career scholars, artists and scientists](#). The number of faculty who contribute to scholarship by publishing and editing books continues to be impressive, based on the [faculty author reception](#) that I hosted in the spring. The [Dunin-Deshpande Queen's Innovation Centre](#) was brought to fruition by close collaboration at many levels between the Faculty of Engineering and Applied

Science and the Smith School of Business, and now embraces the Faculty of Arts and Science. Its new home in the Innovation and Wellness Centre will bring innovation in pedagogy and research under one roof, together with a major facility dedicated to student health and wellness.

- **Internationalization** – As I affirmed in a [2010 blog](#), today’s students, graduates and faculty will be required to function in other cultures and to develop inter-cultural awareness and cross-cultural competency; hence, we have an obligation to provide more opportunities for students to spend time abroad on exchange or doing internships, and to enrich our curriculum with global perspectives. Similarly, faculty exchanges provide a richness of experience for the individual, their teaching, and research collaborations. The [MasterCard Foundation’s extraordinary \\$24M gift](#) to advance inclusive education for young people with disabilities in Ethiopia, is a testament to the ability of Queen’s faculty, staff and students to change the world. My own international travel is based on institutional priorities for academic partnerships, research opportunities, fundraising and alumni relations, and government relations opportunities. I continue to press for a consistent stream of high-quality visa students, increased outgoing exchange participation, increased research collaborations between our faculty and their global counterparts, and improved competitiveness for major international honours and awards in the annual mandate and performance review letters that I provide to the Provost and Vice-Principal (Research).
- **Financial health and reinvestment** – Queen’s University has made considerable progress in eliminating its operating deficit, achieving stability and multi-year predictability of compensation levels, and addressing pension plan sustainability. The budget model has been completely rebuilt to put the right decisions in the right hands, and emphasize transparency and innovation; we now enjoy respectable financial margins on our operations that allow us to invest strategically in faculty hiring, research and other priorities such as infrastructure improvements. We have greater collaboration between the University and all faculty and staff to ensure future sustainability of the Queen’s pension plan in support of our mutual desire to provide a high quality of living, and be an employer of choice for high calibre faculty and staff. I am fully aware that some of these transitions have been difficult, particularly in areas of the University where the budget model has been further decentralized, but I remain convinced that had we not undertaken them, we would not now be looking at the bold faculty hiring plan underway and prospects for infrastructure renewal. Queen’s is privileged to have the support of generous donors and loyal alumni, which, as the [nearly \\$37 million donated by Faculty of Engineering and Applied Sciences alumni](#) to support the innovation component of the Innovation and Wellness Centre demonstrates, is key to realizing many of our academic, research, facility, and student service priorities.
- **Cost containment and service level improvements** – Over the past eight years, I have worked with my senior administrative colleagues to identify and introduce innovations to reduce central non-academic operating costs. For example, by reducing consumption of energy during peak demand days in the province, we expect to save \$5M in 2017-18, doubling the amount realized for 2016-17. Over \$1M has been saved through a Board-approved energy conservation program and other maintenance initiatives. Increasing the visibility of service level standards for facility conditions experienced by faculty and staff has also been proposed. As the University’s budget becomes healthier, we have been reinvesting in more building renovations to address deferred maintenance and upgrade classrooms; how we tackle poorly designed, inefficient and inaccessible buildings is high on the list of our next infrastructure priorities. The cost of other aspects of support and administration has risen, owing (but not exclusively) to increased regulation and compliance requirements imposed by various provincial and federal agencies.

- **Improving relationships with internal (students, faculty, staff) and external (alumni, City of Kingston, government, benefactors) groups essential to Queen’s success** – The administration’s relationships with student governments are now on a strong and respectful footing. The Provost and I meet with the AMS executive normally on a bi-weekly basis, a level of access that acknowledges the fundamental partnership between the University and students at Queen’s. At my direction, the whole of the PVP team and their executive staff support this key relationship. I hold monthly meetings with the Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS) president, which have been essential in developing and promoting our joint commitment to improving the graduate student experience. The Queen’s Managerial and Professional Group (QMPG) has become the forum at which I do a ‘soft launch’ of my annual goals before they [are communicated to the wider Queen’s community](#). To stay in touch with the lives and experience of faculty members, I make it a practice to meet one-on-one with professors, sometimes over lunch or dinner, and similarly, have informal meetings with Deans in addition to the monthly PVP/Deans meeting that I chair. Other details on relationships that I have successfully built, strengthened or, in some instances, rebuilt, are found in the next section.
- **Policy and governance modernization** – Policies on non-academic misconduct, sexual violence prevention and response, and alcohol, have had major upgrades in the past five years. The University’s royal charter was amended in 2011 to allow for substantial governance reform, including a streamlined Board of Trustees and University Council. Senate committees have been reinvigorated. Regular, structured dialogue with all members of the Senate and the Board of Trustees takes place annually. The Provost now presents the proposed annual budget to the Senate at approximately the same time as the Board of Trustees, and we have committed to providing regular updates to the Senate on capital priorities. The student learning experience, student health, wellness and safety, research prominence, and internationalization are at the heart of the good governance practices that we have introduced at the Board level, such as the institutional dashboard represented by the Strategic Framework and the risk management framework.

I believe that my perspective and experience as an alumnus and a two-term Principal of Queen’s University, combined with the solid internal and external relationships that I have developed, can be a unique asset in pursuing the vision I outline for Queen’s later in this document.

Leadership

Looking back on my eight years as principal, I have led progressive change or have had to take decisive steps, some of which moved the University away from long-standing traditions. I believe the examples listed below reflect a combination of vision and clear-eyed resolution.

- **Defining and articulating our mission and vision** – The ‘balanced academy’ – a concept that I promulgated in *Where Next?* to describe Queen’s potential – continues to drive our vision, mission and planning, and can take us even higher. My intent at the time of writing was to encourage better alignment of teaching and research so they are more equally balanced and complementary. The phrase quickly became common currency, both internally and in our deliberations with government. Subsequent quantitative and qualitative research conducted by VP Fraser’s portfolio shows that key constituencies recognize the ‘balanced academy’ as a legitimate niche for Queen’s. We still need to find more accessible language to describe the concept to external audiences (‘balanced academy’ was never intended as a ‘tag line’), and back

up our claim for this unique position in Ontario and Canada. Given evidence of its longevity and external validation, the concept should drive the essence of planning for the foreseeable future.

- **Internationalization** – In *Where Next?*, I introduced internationalization as a guiding principle for academic planning, and argued for an internationalization plan that builds on our strengths and allows us to concentrate in particular parts of the world once the academic plan was in place. Internationalization was embraced in academic planning, and expanded to include ‘internationalization at home’ to reflect curricular diversity and richness, and intercultural communication on campus. The [Matariki Network of Universities](#) (MNU), of which Queen’s was a founding member in 2010, has a common commitment to [research-led education](#) and seeks to provide students with opportunities for [innovative international experiences](#). I set the 10 percent goal and target date for enrolment of visa-holding undergraduate students, which we now appear to have achieved two years in advance of our target date. At my direction, Advancement organized a highly successful [re-convocation ceremony in Hong Kong](#) to strengthen ties with alumni and donors in the Asia-Pacific region. The trend line for performance indicators against targets appears strong, and Queen’s is a [finalist for the 2017 global engagement award](#) of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) in recognition of our efforts.
- **Student health, wellness and safety** – Where necessary, I pushed the University to decisive action in response to emergent or threatened crises, for example: [mental health and suicides](#) in 2010–11; the need for sexual violence prevention (the [new policy](#) very much a product, under Vice–Provost and Dean Tierney’s leadership, of administration/student cooperation, and which was already underway prior to news stories of late 2014); and the [fall term reading break](#) recently approved by the Senate (a recommendation arising from the [Principal’s Commission on Mental Health](#), led by Dr. David Walker). I led implementation of the Board’s directive to reform [the student non-academic misconduct system](#), which, in its long-standing former shape, heightened risks to student health and safety while placing the institution at great legal and reputational risk; in its new form, it retains a student system that is unique in Canada but with greater institutional authority for offences that can threaten health and safety. I remain [frustrated and concerned](#) with alcohol-fuelled street parties that, based on recent conversations with my executive head colleagues, have become a phenomenon across southern Ontario and in other provinces. I have raised this as both a provincial and national problem at the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and Universities Canada, respectively. My recent calls to community partners have identified a number of common steps we can take, in addition to existing efforts by the administration and students and the nuisance bylaw that I have urged the mayor of Kingston to introduce. I have called for VPs to bring forward, over the next year, strategies to address cannabis legalization, freedom of speech and assembly, and the adequacy of our security and safety preparedness.
- **Professionalization of administration** – The senior administrative team has been renewed under my leadership with individuals who have deep experience in their respective roles and responsibilities. Equity and diversity are key considerations in the ongoing searches for the new Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) and the next Vice-Principal (Advancement); a key trait that I will continue to seek with both new hires is a demonstrable collaborative mindset. The provostial model has now matured, allowing me more time to focus on strategic initiatives, fundraising, international commitments, and government relations (where Queen’s had been hindered in the past by lack of presence), while ensuring that major decisions are rooted in academic and research priorities. Given the high degree of collegiality inherent in the Queen’s

culture, early in my principalship, I made it a priority that we establish and practise collaboration and transparency as guiding principles for labour relations with faculty and staff, and recruited a professional labour relations team to implement those principles. With the full cooperation of VP Harris, I merged government relations, marketing and communications into a new integrated university relations portfolio, considered to be a best practice in the sector. I am pleased with the steady improvement in tone, organization and effectiveness of Senate and Board meetings since Secretary Knox arrived. In recognition of the leadership and high calibre of legal and regulatory expertise in the University Secretariat, I merged University Counsel into the Secretariat. Innovation activities will be added to the Vice-Principal (Research) portfolio under the successor to interim VP Fisher. Financial systems, including internal controls, are now running smoothly, led by former VP Davis (who was also instrumental in improving relationships with Indigenous partners) and now VP Janiec (formerly AVP Finance).

- **New budget model** – Early in my position, I became convinced of the need for transparency and innovation in budget-making. After one of my first visits as Principal to an academic departmental meeting, it became clear to me that our internal budgeting was historically-based, largely incomprehensible, and unrelated to actual levels of activity in academic units. I recruited Alan Harrison as provost to undertake this complex and challenging exercise, with current Provost Bacon ably continuing with full execution. At this stage in the implementation of the budget model, our ability to reinvest strategically is greatly enhanced, and faculties and schools are recruiting new faculty members and investing in new programs and services. While operational direction of the budgeting process rests with the Provost, I retain an oversight role and actively participate in the annual process so that I understand the budgetary pressures felt by faculties and schools, and can make informed decisions about reinvestments and adjustments to the budget model required to allow research to flourish.
- **Fundraising** – I am comfortable with fundraising because it is fundamentally about building relationships and finding common ground. My personal relationships with [Stephen Smith](#), [Seymour Schulich](#), [Aubrey Dan](#), [Drs. Alfred and Isabel Bader](#) (who have quietly funded programs in the humanities in addition to other well-known gifts), and several other major donors, including those to the [revitalized Richardson Stadium](#), contributed to the success of the recently concluded [Initiative Campaign](#). With the active engagement of Deans, we are moving expeditiously to identify potentially transformational projects that can serve as fundraising priorities for the next campaign – projects similar to the MasterCard Foundation, Smith, Lang and Dan gifts, all transformational in their own ways. I was heavily involved from inception to completion in the two unit namings (Smith and Dan) that have occurred since I assumed my role.
- **Social media presence** – My use of social media, primarily [Twitter](#) and a [blog](#), has positioned me as a leader in the practice among my Canadian peers, and enabled relationship building with students and alumni. On several recent occasions, Twitter was a major outlet for individuals (not all associated with Queen's or Kingston) to approach me directly and express their hurt and disappointment with student behaviour and/or administration's actions or inaction. Engaging directly on issues through this platform has made me more mindful of the need for empathy and understanding of nuance at all stages in communicating in this fashion, which ultimately aids the University's positive standing in the eyes of the public.

- **Relationships with key groups** – As noted earlier, our relationships with student governments are positive, now having reached a greater understanding and appreciation of each other’s mandates and governance. Similarly, our rapport with the City of Kingston is collegial; the current Mayor and city officials are working effectively with us [to advance the joint interests of town and gown](#). I moved expeditiously to put Queen’s relationship with our local community college on a more respectful footing, [signing a Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) with the St. Lawrence College president in November 2011, which has led to three new joint diploma/degree programs with more under discussion. Our external relations capacity is greatly improved under the leadership of VP Fraser, recognized by high accolades for our Strategic Mandate Agreement and federal infrastructure funding for two major capital projects. We have re-established a strong presence in the [U15 group](#) of Canadian research-intensive universities (of which I am a former vice-chair), [Universities Canada](#) (formerly the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) where I chaired the international relations committee), and the [Council of Ontario Universities](#), of which I will serve as chair until June 2019.

The work of our students and faculty in past years is justly recognized across the province and country, but the nature of a university is that the vast majority of this occurs well outside the scope of any administrator’s influence, whether that be principal, dean, or department head. In the context of this letter, however, I would be remiss if I did not indicate my pride in the work of our staff, and in particular of my closest administrative colleagues across the University in recent times. Apart from the contributions of the vice-principals, with which many on the committee will be familiar, I should like to note the following: AVP Kathy O’Brien’s work on internationalization; our Undergraduate Admission and Recruitment Office’s considerable increase in our domestic international enrolment and success in attracting visa-holding undergraduate students; Vice-Provost Whitehead’s leadership on digital planning and commitment to the Library and Archives Master Plan; Career Services’ extraordinary work on internships, experiential learning and career advising; the Student Affairs team’s work, often in difficult circumstances, on an enormous range of daily and long-term issues that cover virtually every facet of student life from residences to sexual violence education, from admission through Convocation, from international student recruitment to the reception of exchange students; Vice-Provost and Dean Brouwer’s passion for improving the graduate student experience; and last but not least, the work of the academic Deans, collectively and individually, in leading their units smoothly and running successful fundraising sub-campaigns. Much remains to be done, but there is much to celebrate.

The principal’s role is to set directions and goals and leave unit leaders to manage how they achieve them. In some instances, I have been more interventionist, and have initiated comprehensive reviews of several administrative units and functions, bringing in external expertise where necessary, including the [comprehensive review of university research](#) two years ago and the current [Principal’s Commission on the Future of Public Policy at Queen’s](#) (PCFPP). While I have taken the advice of my senior colleagues as well as the Deans and a number of department heads, the decision-making on many of these matters rested with me, and thus the responsibility for the success or failure of particular initiatives. Though I do not, by choice and instinct, micro-manage, I have consistently directed, reviewed and managed the overall performance of my direct reports, just as the Chair of the Board and the Human Resources Committee manages mine, and I have changed the composition of the senior team when necessary.

The Principal of Queen’s University must be an academic as well as an administrative leader, and connected internally as well as externally. Throughout my principalship, I have maintained active ties

to the classroom with part-time teaching of undergraduate (including first year) and graduate students, and to graduate supervision. I care deeply about teaching and my recent experience in reshaping an upper-year seminar to focus on learning outcomes, chronicled in [University Affairs](#), was as much a learning experience for me as my students. In my capacity as member of the Executive Committee and Council of the Royal Society of Canada (RSC), I successfully persuaded the RSC to hold their [annual general meeting in Kingston](#), demonstrating Queen's commitment to recognizing the foremost of Canadian scholars, humanists, scientists and artists. I serve on the Board of Directors for Historica Canada in support of its mission to advance awareness of Canadian history and citizenship, and continue to produce scholarly work of my own and participate in academic workshops and conferences.

I now highlight several areas where progress has been slower than I would like:

- **Research prominence** – Our research progress has been positive but slow, owing, in part, to a more competitive funding environment but also to internal factors. At Queen's, the recent relative scarcity of faculty hiring, the large cohort of social sciences and humanities faculty whose research is less reliant on awarded research funding and often more oriented to major scholarly works such as books that are not counted in most international rankings, and certain recent challenges in filling our allotment of domestic graduate student spaces, are factors that we are addressing. I will also note that the budget model and budget process now contain identifiable mechanisms to support and encourage research, a gap that was identified in the [mid-term review of the budget model](#) and the aforementioned external review of research.
- **Graduate student experience** – Over the past year, I have emphasized to governing bodies that the senior administrative team and I are increasingly focused on improving our performance on the graduate student experience. A new guidance document to help graduate students and supervisors navigate situations of potential harassment that fall outside human rights and/or labour codes [is now publicly available](#). Vice-Provost and Dean Brouwer and her team regularly meet with departments to review student satisfaction data on programs and discuss strategies to enhance the graduate experience and awareness of academic, personal and professional supports. I am discussing with graduate student leaders currently the ways in which we might provide a higher profile to graduate student issues over the coming months.
- **Interdisciplinary research and teaching** – I would have liked us to have made more progress toward supporting interdisciplinary teaching and research, which I identified in *Where Next?* as a priority. Suggestions for addressing this gap are found in the next section.
- **Equity, diversity and inclusion** – Our response to the [Diversity, Anti-Racism and Equity \(DARE\)](#) and [Diversity and Equity Task Force \(DET\)](#) reports was insufficiently decisive. Preoccupied with major budgetary and administrative challenges, with mental health issues on campus, and with converting the University to the new budget model in order to address some of these concerns, we made discrete progress on issues of inclusion with multicultural programming and aboriginal recruitment. Nevertheless, a comprehensive response, of the sort I directed in the case of mental health, did not emerge until this year with reports from the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force](#) and the [Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity and Inclusion](#). We are now committed to executing against the recommendations of these reports. This commitment has been both timely and salutary in refining recruitment processes at a time of vigorous faculty hiring to ensure that diversity is a

major criterion, aided by the [Diversity and Equity Assessment and Planning \(DEAP\)](#) tool developed by the Equity Office. I am resolved that we will improve our performance on this score, with full Board support and I believe that of Senate. Apart from such activities as have already been reported to Senate and Board recently, including the [review of undergraduate orientation](#), cultural change will be effected through continued curricular change, faculty renewal, and greater oversight of hiring procedures. The [Principal's Dream Courses](#) initiative, through which my office has funded a select number of course redesign proposals for the last three years, has increased the number of aboriginally related courses.

- **Alcohol use and misuse** – We have been only partly successful in solving the problem of street parties and in particular alcohol misuse, as the events of 2017 Homecoming weekend demonstrated. I am not convinced that the solution lies in a renewed cancellation of Homecoming. The original problem of controlling unsanctioned street parties is now confounded by over-taxed Emergency Care capacity and risk to life from excess alcohol consumption. The former, which is frustratingly still an issue, has been addressed through increasingly extensive coordination between Queen's and local authorities, and the AMS's initiative in creating the ReUnion Street Festival. All local leaders with whom I have spoken recently agree that nuisance parties (not restricted to Kingston and Queen's, but an unfortunate trend across Ontario this fall) must be addressed in a collective fashion. Nevertheless, the latter problem is far more concerning to me. Alcohol remains a major threat to student safety – on campus and off – and a risk to town-gown relations that we have worked hard to rebuild. The security and safety review that VP Janiec is conducting will provide options for strengthening mandates and operations while the [Alcohol Working Group](#) continues its policy, best practice and communication efforts around safe and responsible drinking for those who choose to do so. The work of the University Council Special Purpose Committee on the use and misuse of alcohol by Queen's students and the effect on the Kingston community is timely and complementary to existing efforts. Perhaps we can better tap into faculty research and outreach, along the lines of the work done by Dr. Heather Stuart, [Bell Canada Mental Health and Anti-Stigma Research Chair](#), which has proven effective in guiding our mental health services.

Looking Ahead

In my 2012 thought piece, *The Third Juncture*, I wrote 'Now is our opportunity to continue the trajectory of the past 171 years by positioning ourselves as an institution that is old, established and reliable, but also fresh, nimble, adaptable and of value on a global, not merely provincial or national stage.' I continue to hold this view, and indeed would go further. We are not merely approaching a third juncture. We are there, and in a good position to leapfrog ahead in many areas. Queen's reputation for caution has served it well for many years. While I do not propose that we abandon this stance, an aversion to risk can be equally harmful to an institution. I believe the next few years require that we catalyze change on campus, and display to the wider world a greater boldness and a reputation for risk and innovation. This can occur in many spheres of our activity, including our research achievements and aspirations; our willingness to experiment with and reform curriculum; and our determination to differentiate the University as not merely an outstanding undergraduate institution but also one of the very best research and graduate universities.

To realize this vision, I propose two pillars: *Renown* and *Renewal*. Since the beginning of my principalship, I have consistently argued that Queen's should be as *renowned* for research excellence as it is for our highly respected undergraduate education experience. Strategic

reinvestment in our research enterprise will ensure that Queen's is acclaimed in both areas. This is not, as has been observed, an easy space to occupy, but we must continue to make the effort on both fronts. Having made much progress on improving our undergraduate learning experience in recent years, a significant reinvestment in our research and graduate training enterprise, strategically allocated, over the next few years, is essential. Twenty years hence, we should aspire to be respected as a leading Canadian university, and one within the top 200 institutions worldwide, with some fields ranked more highly still and among the world's very best.

What can we do differently to advance renowned research? I would like, early in a potential third term, to explore creating university-wide, cross-faculty interdisciplinary research 'pillars.' Having depth in areas of research excellence will always be a challenge, given the relatively modest size of our faculty complement (even after the projected 50 net new hires), as compared with larger U15 institutions. Nevertheless, we can tap into expertise across disciplines and faculties through a more purposive, institutionalized encouragement of interdisciplinarity. These research institutes may be 'virtual' at the outset, but we can explore mechanisms at our disposal – the new Strategic Research Plan, infrastructure renewal, strategic reinvestments, and government and/or donor funding – to enhance facilities, amenities and programming that will propel Queen's contribution to scholarship, research and creativity to international renown. As a humanist, I have great interest in seeing how we can enhance scholarship in the humanities through a digital strategy, launched by a recent [Matariki Network symposium](#). I am considering new organizational models (to be informed by expert opinion in the final report, expected in November, of the Principal's Commission on the Future of Public Policy at Queen's) to position us to 'leapfrog' our competition in public policy research, outreach and engagement.

Queen's already enjoys considerable renown for the excellent undergraduate learning experience and the high quality of our students, as exemplified by our top-of-class standing in employment prospects for our graduates. I believe we need further to entrench our reputation as a catalyst for undergraduate leadership achievements and high social conscience by ensuring Queen's is, and is perceived to be, a welcoming, inclusive destination for *exceptional* and academically accomplished students of any race, ethnicity, economic background, physical ability, gender or sexual orientation. Action toward the latter goal is already underway as demonstrated by the recently announced undergraduate orientation review, and our province-wide leadership on learning outcomes measurement. These, too, will shift and validate our renown. (I would also be greatly pleased were we to relinquish, quickly, our reputation as a 'top party school.')

My vision for a *renewed* Queen's takes several forms. People are the heart of the University and essential to our success. The single most important accomplishment needed over the coming years is renewing our human resources, and in particular, our faculty complement. As my own generation of professors begins to retire in greater numbers, it is imperative that we move as aggressively as our finances permit to hire the next cohort of academics who will take Queen's to mid-century. Similarly, I believe that a more diverse and inclusive Queen's community – faculty and staff as well as students – is an important aspect of this renewal.

Infrastructure renewal to revitalize the current campus environment and anticipate future needs will contribute to a better student learning experience, help attract exciting young faculty, support exemplary research, and promote innovation. We have a fantastic performing arts centre and a state-of-the-art medical school while the Innovation and Wellness Centre, when complete, has the potential to transform the heart of main campus. The Schools of Nursing and Rehabilitation Therapy

have outgrown their current facilities and need space more appropriate to their growing academic and research impact. Renovation to student life and learning space is also long overdue; successive AMS executives have indicated that renovation of the John Deutsch University Centre is a priority and significantly improved study space, as proposed in the Library and Archives Master Plan, must be realized. To achieve excellence in research, we must address the insufficiencies of research labs and facilities. Stirling Hall, for example, no longer adequately serves our Nobel-quality Physics department and our research services office lacks accessible and visible space. More generally, what kind of space do 21st century learners, faculty, graduate students and their collaborators need, and how do we provide that on a campus that has physical and historic limitations? How do we bridge the physical and attitudinal divide between main campus and west campus? How do we respect the surrounding community while advancing our long-term vision of Queen's future footprint? The strategic asset management plan, one of the final remaining pieces of foundational planning, will address these questions and more in a long-term plan for infrastructure renewal and funding.

Renown and *renewal* are not mutually exclusive and should be pursued in tandem where appropriate. To do so requires that we think very carefully about the allocation of resources, balancing teaching and research needs. For example, we can renew the faculty complement but if we choose not to invest in strategic research areas, or fail to provide advanced research infrastructure, our ability to achieve our goals of research prominence will be compromised. At the same time, we must also realize the recommendations of recent committees – building on much earlier efforts – that our curriculum be more inclusive and diverse, and that more faculty be hired from within equity-seeking groups. As I told the Board of Trustees at its October 13 meeting, the two primary determinants of our hiring program will be research excellence and diversity/inclusion. I have urged the Provost, Vice-Principal (Research) and Deans to embrace what is sometimes called 'cluster' hiring to grow depth in areas of research and create cross-disciplinary linkages. Cluster hires can also remedy some of our deficiencies in terms of the profile of our faculty. Several U.S. universities have increased their complement of faculty from racialized minorities by hiring explicitly with a view to creating new teaching and research strengths in areas where the population of candidates is deepest.

Conclusion

In closing, I believe that, under my leadership, we have built a solid and stable launch pad for our University to pursue renown and renewal over the next 20 to 30 years. I look forward to the opportunity of leading our community through this next chapter in our story and moving Queen's toward sustained global excellence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Daniel R. Woolf". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Daniel R. Woolf, DPhil, FRSC
Principal and Vice-Chancellor