Dalla Lana School of Public Health
Strategic Planning Exercise
Towards 2021 and Beyond

TEACHING INNOVATION SUB-COMMITTEE Report

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TISC Terms of Reference (Revised)

With an overarching focus on improving the student/learner experience and supporting continual faculty development, the Teaching Innovation Sub-Committee will provide advice on curricular expansion and renewal, platforms for integrating technologies such as eLearning, and building on emerging good practices at the University of Toronto, other leading universities, and in the private sector. More specifically, the Committee will provide advice on:

(1) Clear criteria and executable pathways on which to base decisions on whether or not to expand (or make changes to existing) curricula at the undergraduate, graduate and professional certification levels.

(2) Strategies/processes for implementing curricula changes.

(3) Specific investments such as teaching spaces, smart classrooms, eLearning technology and other teaching innovations that are essential to support preferred options for graduate and undergraduate teaching and health professional education and/or other methods of delivery of public health training.

(4) Specific investments in faculty development and supports for teaching, including (a) specific pedagogical training opportunities, (b) administrative supports, (c) data collection/analysis/reporting on current/prospective students/learners.

(5) Strategies for increasing the efficiency of programming, and integrating and improving the accessibility for status-only, adjunct, and remote faculty.

(6) Need for and value of national and international certification.

Through our deliberations we realized that the above points were pitched more towards implementation and required more detailed work than we could undertake with our limited time and information available. So we encompassed them within two higher-level strategic directions (longer term) with the slogan "We teach the right things right."

Strategic Direction One – "We teach the right things to the right people...."

A. Provide a clear statement of the first suggested strategic direction.

DLSPH programs anticipate, respond to, and meet the evolving needs of current (and future) stakeholders in the context of population health needs glocally. These needs include existing and emerging ones, with the goal of promoting equity.

B. Provide clear rationale/statements on the following:

1.   What will be the anticipated return / "payoff" / "value" on direction?
        (Measured in different ways likely for various stakeholders)

An overall sense of the value of different programs to be based on an understanding of evolving needs of different sets of stakeholders i.e. partners, funders, potential students; working with the existing and potential strengths of faculty and staff; and recruiting excellent students to co-learn with us and be successful.

2.   Does this direction align with the strategic plans of the University of Toronto, or any of its other faculties, units or partners *(alignment is not a requirement; refer to documents on Crush site)*? If yes, please specify how.

President Gertler's Three Priorities

- Strengthen and deepen key international partnerships by means of a well-defined strategic focus
- Re-imagine and reinvent undergraduate education.

UotT Towards 2030:

• Reinforcing our strengths in research and scholarship through our enrolment and recruitment strategies, and maintaining our leadership position in graduate and secondary professional education

IHPME Strategy 2013

Do more to reach potential students and learners across the health system to increase the capacity for leadership across our health system.
Identify opportunities to reach global audiences with ... our teaching

3.   Alignment with current themes at the School, or its units (direction does not have to align with any current themes) and list any relevant cross-cutting themes that the strategic direction incorporates.

Currently no specific themes have been advanced about experience of learners, educational program quality, perhaps because they are cross-cutting and part of the overall teaching mission. However, the Healthy Communities theme was resonant, as we recognized our GTA location, current partnerships and potential ones.

4.   Outline the implementation resources you imagine would be important/ helpful.
        (Implementation does not need to be the focus)

Discussed implementation approaches more than resources.

TISC suggests that DLSPH upgrade its ability to collect data on stakeholder needs and conduct regular workforce analyses to understand where stakeholders that participate in DLSPH teaching programs go.

TISC suggests that criteria and executable pathways on which to base decisions on whether or not to expand curricula or make changes to existing curricula, should focus on (1) clear expectations for both the quality and relevance of existing and proposed curricula. DLSPH should (2) standardize approaches and processes to assessing curricula quality/relevance based on consideration of best practices and existing frameworks for defining and assessing the quality in higher education (e.g., Harvey and Green, 1993; Biggs, 1993)

DLSPH should pursue activities that position it globally as a top tier school of public health (which may include aligning with certification/accreditation standards), the committee advises that pursuit of any specific certification and/or accreditation within or across DLSPH be coordinated centrally with a requirement to justify the value-add for the resources required to attain the certification/accreditation and its appropriateness to the particular field.

5.   Comment on the risk of the suggested strategic direction

Low

Strategic Direction Two – "...and we teach those right things right."

A. Provide a clear statement of the second suggested strategic direction.

DLSPH will be a leader in pedagogy (andragogy) in public health-health systems education, constantly informed by new developments, and systematically generating evidence on existing and innovative approaches used.

B. Provide clear rationale/statements on the following:

1.   What will be the anticipated return / "payoff" / "value" on direction?
         (Measured in different ways likely for various stakeholders)

More effective and efficient learning, and a deeper sense of engagement among stakeholders.

With respect to status-only/adjunct faculty, DLSPH can help in defining the value proposition to key stakeholders of their contributions to DLSPH and ensure that all appointments include an explicit written agreement regarding the expectations of the appointment signed by the faculty member, their employer, and the DLSPH Dean.

2.   Does this direction align with the strategic plans of the University of Toronto, or any of its other faculties, units or partners *(alignment is not a requirement; refer to documents on Crush site)*? If yes, please specify how.

President Gertler's Three Priorities

   •   Re-imagine and reinvent undergraduate education

UotT Towards 2030:

Engaging all categories of faculty with our teaching mission, and maintaining an emphasis on nurturing inquiring minds and building the creative and analytical capacity of our students at all levels
Focusing on providing an excellent experience for students, inside and outside our classrooms

3.   Alignment with current themes at the School, or its units (direction does not have to align with any current themes) and list any relevant cross-cutting themes that the strategic direction incorporates.

Currently no specific themes have been advanced about experience of learners, educational program quality, perhaps because they are cross-cutting and part of the overall teaching mission rather than a particular substantive area.

4.   Outline the implementation resources you imagine would be important/ helpful.

Discussed implementation approaches more than resources.

(1) DLSPH build a safe environment for faculty to learn/explore teaching innovations.
(2) Investment decisions on teaching innovation (including technology, e-learning strategies, platforms, space and other resources) should clearly align with DLSPH strategic mission/goals, and be able to address deficiencies in the student/learner experience (informed by ongoing evaluation) with a requirement to justify these investment decisions in a standardized way.
(3) Investment in teaching innovation needs to take a balanced approach, ensuring basic teaching resources are addressed (e.g., computer lab space, required software for teaching purposes) while advancing new approaches. As our colleague Laurie Harrison at the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation reminds us, don't let the technological tail wag the pedagogical dog. In other words, we need to ensure that basic and less glamorous issues are addressed alongside teaching innovation considerations.

Faculty development and support for teaching needs to be strengthened to ensure the quality of teaching and education improves. TISC suggests five approaches:

(1) Continuing pedagogical education: Fortnightly or monthly seminars/webcasts and one full-day workshop per term on specific aspects of pedagogy in adult and higher education, organized in collaboration with (i) the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE, division of Continuing and Professional Learning / Post-Secondary Education: www.oise.utoronto.ca/cpl/Post_Secondary_Education), and (ii) the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI: teaching.utoronto.ca).
(2) A regular electronic bulletin on pedagogy: This bulletin would include discussion, lessons learned, case studies, and resources related to a large number of themes, including (among many others): (i) academic labour in contemporary society; (ii) adult and higher education pedagogy; (iii) innovative approaches to teaching/learning in class and outside; (iv) digital literacy; (v) hybrid and digital pedagogy, blended learning, distance education, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), digital learning networks, etc.; and (vi) teaching and social media.
(3) Administrative supports: Appropriate access to administrative assistants and teaching assistants to support faculty and improve the student/learner experience.
(4) Faculty mentoring: provide new instructors with experienced faculty mentors to guide teaching and access to additional teaching supports
(5) Faculty awards/incentives to recognize teaching excellence
(6) Information/data repository on course evaluations/performance reporting, and resources for faculty development. This is of primary importance is to first develop a method of continual evaluation of student experience to identify gaps. We need to measure, reflect, action and repeat.

5.   Comment on the risk of the suggested strategic direction

Low