



ACADEMIC PLAN 2017



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO
MISSISSAUGA



Photography by: *Paul Orenstein*

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FORWARD



Photography by: Cesar Mejia

The University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) Academic Plan represents the combined efforts of many faculty, librarians, students, staff, alumni and other community members to create an inspiring roadmap of UTM’s immediate future. The Plan builds on UTM’s mission and vision statements and a year-long process of inclusive consultation. In it, we describe the critically important academic goals and measures we will pursue to allow UTM to make the most of its superb community, resources and location.

UTM is poised for take-off. The university is already renowned for the excellence of our undergraduate teaching, the research accomplishments of our faculty, our dedicated librarians and support staff, and our diverse and successful students and alumni. The next five years will see the campus embrace and expand the outstanding opportunities we offer all our students along with increased support for path-breaking research and initiatives. This Academic Plan sets the broad framework for achieving this compelling trajectory.

As I worked on this plan with many others, we were mindful of the UTM motto “Tantum Nobis Creditum” (“So much has been entrusted to us”). Priorities emerged through the process of meeting with different members of UTM’s community, reading a host of submissions from both academic and non-academic units, debating ideas around excellence, and opening ourselves up to new perspectives about how to best position UTM for the future. The key priorities that drove our considerations included positioning UTM to make unique intellectual contributions in both our local community and in a global context; educating graduates to think critically; ameliorating equity, inclusion and diversity across UTM through embracing best practices around recruitment, hiring and training; improving the student : faculty ratio; and optimizing how we use existing resources to make a substantial difference in the lives of our community members and the broader public realm. I believe that this new UTM Academic Plan helps move us forward on all of these dimensions.

The Academic Plan document consists of several key sections. After a brief contextual discussion about UTM’s current challenges and opportunities, we include UTM’s new mission, vision and identity. We then present the **five key academic goals** identified through the consultative process. Each goal is elaborated upon in its own section which consists of an intellectual rationale and a description that links each goal to other goals as well as a summary of the measures we will take to achieve the goal. The plan ends with a brief conclusion followed by an appendix that describes the consultation process we followed to create the Plan. I am convinced that this Plan is expansive enough to include all of the UTM communities at the same time as it inspires us to think well beyond our current expectations and imagine a more diverse, vibrant, creative, and sustainable campus in the future.

Amrita Daniere

Vice Principal, Academic and Dean

POSITIONING

The University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) is one of three campuses of the University of Toronto. UTM is the University's second largest Division and was founded in 1967 with one building, 155 students, 28 faculty and 40 staff members. Fifty years later, the campus has grown exponentially and boasts a large community of students, faculty, librarians, staff and alumni who all contribute to our success and reputation. UTM is proudly home to 14,200 undergraduate students, 700 graduate students, and over 2,500 full and part-time employees (including 980 permanent faculty and staff) working throughout 14 academic buildings. An alumni network of over 54,450 helps extend the reach of the UTM campus across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, the country and the globe.

The University of Toronto Mississauga has 17 academic units (15 Departments and 2 Institutes), 147 undergraduate programs in 90 areas of study, six graduate professional programs, and several research institutes including the Institute for Management & Innovation, the Centre for South Asian Civilizations, and the Mississauga Academy of Medicine. Our academic programming is innovative and creative and we pride ourselves on offering students a variety of opportunities to participate in community-engaged learning, internships and research opportunities with faculty.

The campus is situated on 225 acres of protected greenbelt along the Credit River and encompasses a number of award-winning buildings and facilities, including the Terrence Donnelly Health Sciences Complex, the Instructional Centre, the Hazel McCallion Academic Learning Centre, the Recreation, Athletics and Wellness Centre, Deerfield Hall and the Communication, Culture and Technology building. Construction on the second phase of the North Building site redevelopment is approaching completion. Set to open in 2018, the 210,000-square-foot, six-storey building will house new classroom space as well as a number of Departments.



Photography by: *Paul Orenstein*

Similar to UTM's diverse program offerings, our research profile covers a wide range of dynamic and innovative areas. Research at UTM is thriving, driven by our brilliant faculty, students, librarians, and staff. Our researchers have generated over \$15 million in research funding this past year alone. UTM has established innovative research projects with collaborators across Canada and around the world, and, more locally, we have forged significant partnerships with industry and the surrounding municipalities, most crucially with the City of Mississauga, bolstering and defining our unique place within the GTA community.

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY



Photography by: *Arjun Yadav*

MISSION

The University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) is an exceptional academic institution which champions the teaching, creation, dissemination, preservation and mobilization of knowledge. It is one of the three campuses of the University of Toronto system and a major contributor to its reputation as a premier international research university with undergraduate, graduate and professional programs that meet the highest standards of excellence. UTM combines the opportunities afforded by strong connections to a large urban university, the benefits of a naturally beautiful and more intimate location, and a wide range of creative academic and cultural programs.

VISION

Through the combined efforts of its motivated and talented faculty, librarians, staff and students, the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) provides an outstanding educational environment for all of its community. UTM strives to educate highly accomplished individuals who are capable of leadership in the global knowledge economy, and who are thoughtful and empathetic global citizens able to reflect critically on the world and are committed to the values of integrity, democracy, and academic freedom.

The principles that underlie this vision include:

1. Superbly well-educated university graduates, who will use their wide-ranging and focused knowledge along with their skills of interpretation, innovation, and communication to lead and to serve their communities. UTM seeks to create and maintain an exceptional educational experience for our students, one that promotes learning and accomplishment both inside and outside the classroom.
2. An internationally acclaimed research institution must bring together the best scholars from around the world to pursue path-breaking research in their disciplines and beyond. UTM is committed to diversity in scholarship and to supporting world-class research that both enriches and bridges disciplines. In the pursuit of this goal, establishing productive national and international partnerships plays a key role.
3. Knowledge and education are powerful forces in improving the wellbeing of communities, particularly those under-represented in the public sphere. UTM will increase and strengthen its collaborations locally and internationally with government and non-governmental organizations to the betterment of society.
4. Equity, diversity and inclusion are core values and we recognize that the cultivation of these values is vital to our increasingly connected global society. We interpret these terms more broadly; UTM faculty, librarians, staff and students work to create an accessible and intellectually creative space for all members of the university community including, in particular, Canada's Indigenous peoples and recent immigrant populations.

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued

IDENTITY

Implementing a vision for UTM also involves creating a shared identity built on a set of distinctive attributes of the campus. UTM's attributes include:

A campus that embraces its **Community**

- The history and growth of UTM, the City of Mississauga, and the Peel Region are intimately connected. The relationship is a wonderful example of the mutual benefit for cities and the universities they host. UTM is an intellectual community developed and sustained through the many and varied connections made by its dedicated employees, students and alumni.

An institution that values and encourages **Creativity**

- UTM aims to foster creative and critical thought through all its programs and research in the humanities, sciences and social sciences. It is at the forefront of developing exceptional models of academic programming, research, active and experiential education and artistic inquiry.

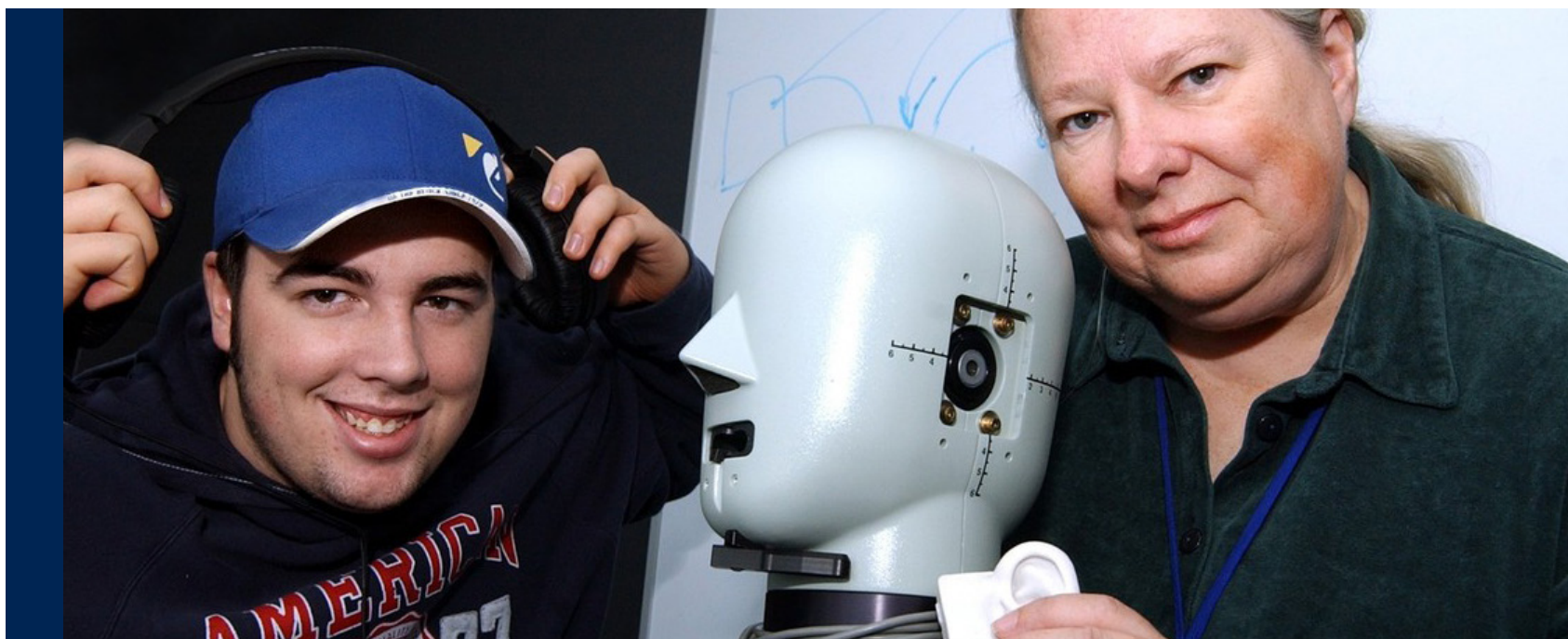
A scholarly community that prioritizes **Communication**

- UTM believes that the development of its students into more capable and confident communicators is of highest priority. We recognize that communication as a pedagogical focus offers rich opportunities for pioneering cross-disciplinary initiatives.



Photography by: *Scott Norsworthy*

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued



Photography by: *Stephen Uhraney*

Faculty, librarians, staff and students who lead through **Innovation**

- UTM defines innovation as the process whereby complex challenges are met with novel ideas and concrete responses. Faculty promote excellence and innovation through myriad endeavors in their research and teaching; librarians and staff engage in innovative practices as they work to enhance UTM's quality of life, and students contribute to ground breaking research in labs, libraries and in the field.

An institution that values and promotes **Sustainability**

- The natural beauty of our campus is much admired. We are mindful that environmental awareness should guide our physical planning and be reflected in our pedagogy and scholarship. UTM recognizes that the environmental challenges facing the planet cannot be solved in isolation but require collaborations across all areas of research. We are cognizant that global environmental change is not simply a technical challenge but includes scientific, political, cultural, economic and social aspects as well.



Photography by: Paul Orenstein

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL FOCUS ON:

- Supporting excellence in teaching, learning, and research
- Developing communication skills from foundational to advanced levels (written, numerical, analytical, oral and visual)
- Improving student : faculty ratios
- Improving retention rates of undergraduate students
- Building student resilience
- Hiring intellectually innovative and creative faculty
- Supporting evidence-based programs and curriculum
- Expanding opportunities for student-faculty interaction and active learning experiences
- Preparing students for further study, including graduate and professional programs, and the global workforce

GOAL 1: Inspire student success by supporting a rigorous and innovative academic environment

Maintaining high standards is essential for students' future success. We will inspire students at the same time as we support our creative and innovative faculty. Our instructors will motivate students to aspire towards excellence.

UTM will continue to create imaginative new undergraduate educational experiences designed to challenge student thinking, performance and growth to new levels. This will include sponsoring opportunities for engaged learning in multi-disciplinary collaborations at UTM that link across departments in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. For example, providing students with the option to include a 'Sustainability Pathway' in their degree will allow our students to leave UTM with a deeper appreciation and understanding of the complexity surrounding sustainability in all that it encompasses.

UTM will continue to deliver a post-secondary experience that keeps academic excellence at its centre. Departments will work to ensure that every student is offered the support and structure to improve their foundational competencies and communication skills, including written proficiency, information literacy, analytical/numerical ability and presentation skills, before they graduate from UTM. Students who communicate well across all these dimensions are more able to participate effectively in university life and will have abilities that should serve them well in their careers beyond university.

As faculty and instructors embrace digital technologies for teaching and learning, new pedagogical strategies are emerging. We will continue to support the progress being made and allow for a spectrum of pedagogical approaches, so that instructors can do even more to enable students to achieve learning outcomes. By ensuring that the services on campus for faculty and students are well supported, we can all better contribute to the innovative teaching and learning environment at UTM.

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued



To ensure success at UTM, we need to attract and retain high quality and motivated students. UTM must provide opportunities that promote engagement and personal development, through which students are encouraged to stretch their minds to confront both abstract ideas and real-world problems and, at the same time, offer students all they need to excel. We will improve the retention and graduation rates of our students as critical components of setting excellent standards and enriching the undergraduate learning experience.

We will embrace evolutions in curriculum and pedagogy that push education forward in innovative ways. We will continue establishing a curriculum that includes opportunities for the development of deep knowledge and fosters application of knowledge to real-world problems. Our courses and programs must be designed to align with program learning outcomes, have value for the students and provide opportunities for them to actively interact with each other both within and outside of the classroom.



TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL FOCUS ON:

- Communicating UTM research excellence
- Continuing to attract world-class scholars
- Strengthening UTM research culture
- Investing in research infrastructure across all disciplines while targeting a few areas for sustained support
- Supporting research through funding, mentorship, and administration
- Introducing new UTM undergraduate and graduate programs
- Leveraging the strengths of both the tri-campus model and the uniqueness of UTM

GOAL 2: Demonstrate that UTM is a home for world-class research

UTM faculty members are international leaders in terms of the creativity and quality of their research accomplishments. Additionally, all of UTM's departments and institutes are committed to engaging in research that furthers our reputation as a site of world-class research. UTM plans to build on these strengths by encouraging multi-disciplinary research initiatives, targeting key research areas for sustained support and assisting our scholars to engage fully in both applied and fundamental research.

Our faculty are very successful already at garnering research funding through international, tri-council, provincial and third-party grants and they participate in a number of significant academic and non-academic, national and international research partnerships and collaborations. UTM encourages and provides support to our faculty to conduct research work with undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, technicians and colleagues based in their own as well as other units in the university and beyond.

We will pursue and promote investment in infrastructure to continue to attract highly motivated, creative and internationally renowned scholars in areas that are congruent with UTM's vision and strategic plans for future research endeavours. Beyond supporting research projects, the university can assist scholars through increased attention to mentorship and training. We will embark on several new training projects that include research mentoring of junior faculty by senior faculty or faculty working in different departments as well as research mentoring of graduate students and undergraduates, across all units at UTM.

A concomitant focus of UTM is our investment in research-based graduate programs. Many of the affiliated graduate students at UTM conduct their research in departmental space located on campus. Efforts to introduce additional research-based programs can enhance UTM's capacity to be a research leader. We may create additional extra-departmental units to foster interdisciplinary research across the entire university and beyond.

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued



One way to advance UTM's achievements along all these dimensions is by elevating the awareness about our research accomplishments both internally and externally. Communicating about our research can be enhanced through means beyond academic publications and conference presentations. Community-based research, perhaps in partnership with community organizations, entrepreneurs or public entities, is one way to communicate about our research and create positive impacts. Creating opportunities for high school and prospective graduate students to engage with members of the campus community regarding research work and other opportunities offered through departments can further promote UTM's research successes. Finally, deepening our relationships with our alumni and volunteers represents a rewarding way to share our expertise.

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued



TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL FOCUS ON:

- Enhancing student engagement and experiential learning opportunities
- Engaging students in active and intentional career development experiences
- Involving faculty, librarians and staff more fully in community building
- Creating partnerships for eliminating barriers within and outside of the campus
- Collaborating with local and global communities including Indigenous communities
- Offering out-bound and in-bound students research opportunities with partner institutions
- Giving back through arts and culture
- Helping the public know what we do

GOAL 3: Enrich the student experience by embracing opportunities for community involvement

Post-secondary institutions have a significant role to play in community development, education and diversification. Through partnerships with the community, we can do our part to accelerate learning and distribute knowledge and skills as well as ensure that student engagement with their communities is encouraged and supported. UTM has developed and maintained a long-standing relationship with the City of Mississauga. We have been engaged with the City through advising on higher education and economic development, acting on recommendations from the community to build specific types of programming and through the involvement of faculty members and students in local research, volunteer work and student internship placements. We seek to involve staff more fully in creating outreach experiences and opportunities. A good place to begin is to create more ways for UTM's internal community to interact more often and more authentically.

Partnerships with groups and individuals in the external community (both locally and globally) give real meaning to a university's mission in society. UTM must continue to be useful to its community in a direct and applied way, through the education it provides and the long-term benefits of our research. One way to do this is to enhance student experiential learning opportunities. We will strive to provide our students with experiential learning and work-integrated learning opportunities that promote mutually beneficial connections to organizations within the community. We will expand curricular and co-curricular experiences by working with Departments to identify and create opportunities as well as develop relationships that are beneficial for our students. Collaboration between partners from the community with all members of the university can enhance the student learning environment and lead to even stronger community relationships.

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued



The reach and influence of UTM extend beyond the campus. From the City of Mississauga to the Region of Peel and further into the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), UTM has a presence in many local communities, including those of Indigenous Peoples. Partnerships with the external community will open opportunities for research, networking, knowledge transfer, and professional development for students, faculty, staff, and librarians. To facilitate, nurture and sustain even deeper relationships and linkages with the broader community, we will explore an initiative to create an engaged form of research between community partners and interested UTM departments. Additionally, we will actively work to engage the broader public, exploring the possibility to create spaces that will bring the community on campus, to help enhance external community engagement and awareness of what UTM has to offer.

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued



Photography by: Paul Orenstein

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL FOCUS ON:

- Attracting diverse perspectives to UTM
- Expanding opportunities for students to increase their awareness of global issues and cultures
- Incorporating global learning as a specific learning outcome in UTM programs where appropriate
- Expanding and promoting opportunities for students to gain international experiences at UTM, and through authentic learning experiences in our local communities and globally
- Undertaking initiatives that enhance understanding of Indigenous knowledge

GOAL 4: Educate future leaders to be global citizens meeting complex challenges

UTM must create leaders, educating students to be fully aware of their communities and able to actively engage in the challenges of creating an environmentally, politically and socially better world. We must ensure that UTM graduates globally competent students who have a heightened sense of social responsibility, can investigate the world, interact with a variety of audiences, weigh perspectives and take action.

Appreciating and understanding different cultures, histories and points of view are essential elements of global awareness and are necessary in order to recognize different perspectives in a multicultural region, such as the one we live and work in. We will continue expanding and promoting our cross-cultural opportunities to provide students with options for study and research that deepen this understanding and contribute to a global perspective. Students will also be encouraged to acquire exposure to various viewpoints by working with a wide range of individuals and groups in local communities through experiential learning placements as well as embracing different ways of knowing. These experiences promote socially conscious awareness that can prepare students to think about both local and international community development and understand social change.

We will continue to integrate global and Indigenous content into the curriculum including attracting diverse perspectives and hiring full time faculty in global topics. To respond to current workplace opportunities within a complex and multicultural landscape, students need more than the traditional model of scholarly education. Students need robust sociolinguistic and pragmatic competencies to navigate across cultures and behaviors in order to communicate efficiently and appropriately. We will work towards teaching students how to document their global knowledge, skills, and experiences to

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued



share with potential employers and community members in various capacities. We aim to develop more connections to Indigenous communities and international partnerships that can facilitate such opportunities. We must increase awareness of and financially support students who are interested in UTM Abroad programs. We will encourage a broader range of international students to attend UTM at the same time as we seek out new ways to provide students with the opportunity to study abroad and learn about cultures first hand through immersion.

We have a responsibility to help students understand the meaning of engaged living in a culturally diverse and rapidly changing world. Through a combination of academic courses, research opportunities, and exchange opportunities in the form of co-curricular and for-credit activities, we will aim to offer all students the opportunity to gain a global perspective with a deep understanding of diversity, cultural complexity, and an increased sense of personal and community responsibility.



TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL FOCUS ON:

- Fostering a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion across UTM
- Building academic community
- Creating a high-performing culture that supports staff, faculty and librarian effectiveness and recognition
- Supporting innovative pedagogical practices and infrastructure
- Recruiting new generations of outstanding students
- Continuing to enhance the quality and quantity of the physical and technological infrastructure

GOAL 5: Focus on transformation and innovation to create a sustainable and cohesive community

UTM seeks to hire the best people and help students achieve excellence at the same time as it is creating an inclusive, diverse and cohesive institution that embraces the communities it serves.

An integrated and collaborative campus must necessarily include support of all the hard-working staff whose efforts allows students, librarians and faculty to thrive. We will provide opportunities for staff to enhance their skills, engage directly with students and faculty on a more regular and positive basis and to interact with each other across divisions and job categories. A vibrant community requires the voices and aspirations of all stakeholders to be heard, understood, valued, and promoted. While this is a more unusual goal for a university, it is a priority clearly expressed by many submissions to the Academic Planning process.

UTM needs to continue attracting outstanding faculty who conduct path-breaking research who are also committed to effective teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. UTM is currently home to some of the most highly qualified and most engaged faculty in the world. UTM aspires to enhance the diversity of our staff, librarians, and faculty so that we more closely mirror the make-up of our incredibly diverse student body. We are particularly committed, as is the University of Toronto as a whole, to implementing programming and hiring around Indigenous culture and practices. Hiring practices at institutions can be greatly improved through changes in recruitment and interviewing practices, both of which we believe we can implement over the next five years. An upfront investment, which begins with faculty complement but then extends to Human Resources practices more generally, is a key element in approaching this challenge in a transformative manner.

MISSION, VISION & IDENTITY continued



Looking ahead to the next generation of university students, recruitment will require engagement at all levels. UTM will endeavor to collaborate with our campus partners (such as the Office of Communications, the Career Centre, Office of Student Recruitment and Admissions, and the Offices of Student Transition and Student Engagement) in developing strong communications about the excellence and relevance of our academic programming. Our aim is to have department faculty, staff and students actively participate in various recruitment events. We intend to invite prospective students to engage in a substantive way with our research, labs and professors, and we will participate in targeted outreach programs in our various communities that provide opportunities for us to showcase UTM innovation and success.

Garnering and prudently managing our economic and spatial resources is one of the most complex challenges facing UTM, as well as most universities in North America, at this time. Having sufficient resources to implement our ambitious plans for the future of the campus underpins our ability to meet all of the goals outlined in this document. Implementation of our goals, in turn, will allow us to make the most of the time and energy of faculty, staff and librarians, as well as our physical resources. Strategic and mindful allocation of resources that effectively supports our academic goals will allow us to make significant progress towards creating a UTM that is even more dynamic, creative and attractive in terms of both its physical layout and intellectual infrastructure.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

This Academic Plan, in combination with the UTM Mission, Vision and Identity, seeks to encourage students, staff, librarians and faculty to align around a common set of principles and goals that add tremendous value to the University and empower all of us to achieve significant positive change within the campus, in the local region and, ultimately, on a global scale. The first steps in this journey will necessarily be modest but there is every reason to believe that we can make significant progress over the next five years. The Implementation Plan, an evolving document that details specific tactics and steps we plan to take in the next few years, can be found at:

<http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/dean/initiatives/FinalVision/implementation-plan>.

We intend, over the next five years, to update our progress towards meeting the goals that form the heart of the Academic Plan via a public website. This will also give us many opportunities to include new objectives and modify outdated ones as conditions change on campus and in our surroundings. The overall goals, however, as articulated in the comments and submissions we received from concerned individuals and groups and built into the Plan, are likely to remain constant. The Academic Plan provides a creative and inclusive umbrella for the myriad creative communities found at UTM. It is time to begin putting all of our exceptional ideas into practice.



Photography by: *Arjun Yadav*

APPENDIX A – OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

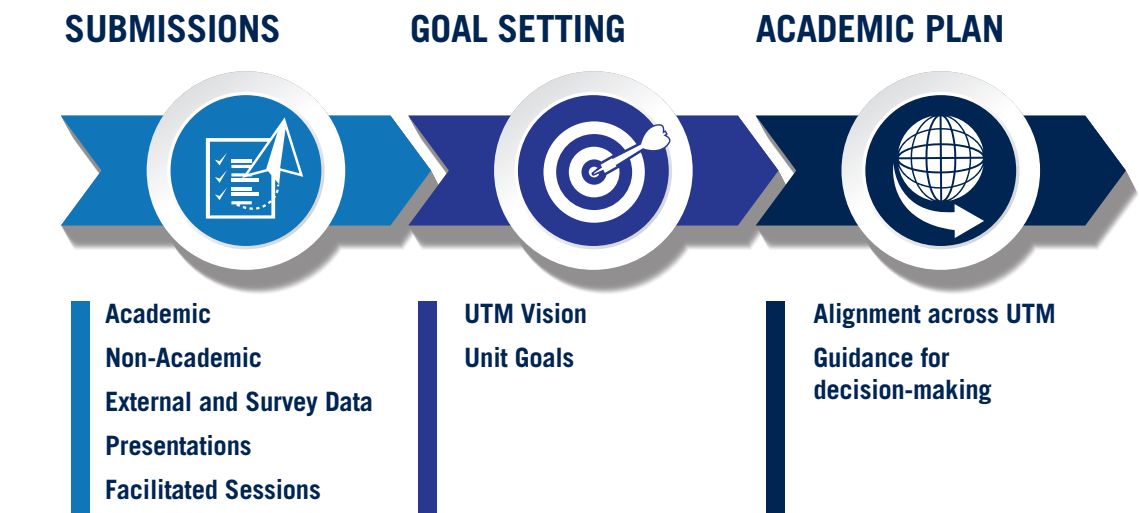
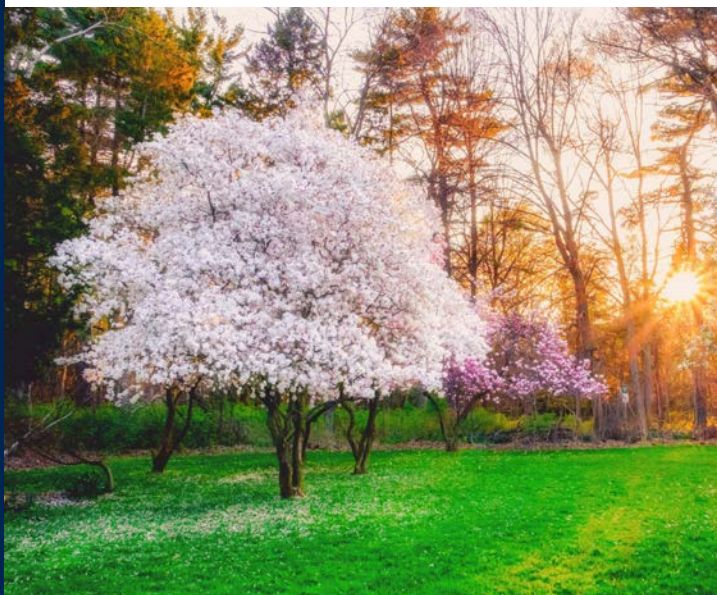
The Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF) was convened in January 2017. The purpose of SPTF was to help develop the content of the UTM Academic Plan by establishing goals and objectives, setting priorities and creating a roadmap to implement the new UTM Vision over the next five years. The SPTF was composed of faculty, staff, and a librarian as well as a student and a community representative who expressed deep interest in academic issues and who were active during the UTM Vision consultation that took place in the fall of 2016.

During the first few months of 2017, SPTF members held facilitated sessions with numerous departments, received submissions from academic and non-academic units, hosted an open forum to receive presentations, gathered and reviewed additional internal and external data, and surveyed the staff, librarians, and faculty. This information, particularly the goals identified in the unit submissions, became the foundation for determining the Academic Plan goals.

The Task Force devised the Academic Plan goals to be inclusive and overarching, with the belief that most if not all individuals, departments and offices across UTM will be able to see where their work fits in the Plan and support its strategic directions.

An Implementation Plan to accompany the Academic Plan and include specific objectives and tactics to achieve the objectives and meet the goals of the Academic Plan can be found here: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/dean/initiatives/FinalVision/implementation-plan>.

I would like to personally thank each member of the SPTF who has been incredibly generous with their time and their abilities throughout the process. They represent what makes UTM such as wonderful university.



APPENDIX B – STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

Mohammad Amin, *Student*

Shelley Hawrychuk, *Library*

Devin Kreuger, *Office of the Vice-Principal, Research*

Professor Joel Levine, *Department of Biology*

Professor Rhonda McEwen, *Institute of Communication, Culture,
Information and Technology*

Professor Shivaji Mukherjee, *Department of Political Science*

Jay Nirula, *Community member*

Professor Christopher Petrakos, *Department of Historical Studies*

Professor Lindsay Schoenbohm, *Department of Chemical and
Physical Sciences*

Susan Senese, *Information and Instructional Technology*

Professor Alison Syme, *Department of Visual Studies*

Sherry Yuan Hunter, *Office of the Registrar*

The planning process was guided by a professional facilitator, Karyn Dumble, from The Monarch Park Group. In addition, it was supported by two members from the Office of the Dean: Ciaran Graham (Manager, Strategic Initiatives) and Anuar Rodrigues (Senior Project Specialist).

Photography by: *Arjun Yadav*