ACADEMIC STRUCTURE PROTOTYPES

EVALUATIVE CONDITIONS

Use these conditions to "test" the prototypes.

Enable Conditions (Summary)

What the structure must make possible

1. Studio-based education as a core differentiator
Protect studio-based education as a differentiator, while separating it conceptually from small class size for the purposes of analysis and design. Support the right pedagogy for each context, and technical mastery alongside the capacity to keep/learning across a career.

2. Teaching and learning as the structure's purpose
Optimize the teaching and learning experience while responding to operating cost constraints. Allocate space and resources on institutional and student need rather than legacy claims, with clearer financial transparency and accountability.

3. Supporting student experience and graduating on time
Actively support students in navigating their learning pathways, selecting courses, and understanding how to register and plan.

4. Role clarity and accountability as a precondition
Reduce competition for resources. Enable consistent, simplified shared processes while leaving room for nuance and customization where it is warranted.

5. Collaboration, exploration and experimentation
Make collaboration across programs a regular, expected part of faculty and Chair work rather than ad hoc. Keep boundaries where they are needed, but porous. Enable exploration between undergraduate and graduate study, and fast creation of experimental courses and programs with timely sunsetting.

Design Conditions (Summary)

What the structure itself must be built to do: who decides, who reports to whom, where a unit boundary sits

1. Relationship between graduate and undergraduate studies
Reduce graduate studies' dependence on informal relationships for studio access, supervision and teaching. Make responsibilities explicit, and lead with what integration enables rather than with cost savings.

2. Councils, curriculum committees and Chairs
Do not create new formal decision rights. Design a visible pathway from committee recommendations into Senate, with audience and format known upfront. Empower those with decision-making authority with real program-level costing data. Treat continuity (onboarding, knowledge transfer) as a structural requirement.

3. Responsibility, accountability and information
Make academic units accountable for the entire program experience, not only for those courses that carry their own code. Build two-way information flow so those held accountable can act.

4. Governance, participation and leadership development
Consider broader, non-optional participation in shared governance, and committee service as a deliberate leadership pathway.

5. Psychological safety and culture
Build in dedicated, protected capacity for connective work, naming where connection is held, by whom, and with what protected time. Account for workload directly, evaluating what each configuration adds or removes.

6. Grounded in external requirements
Test against regulatory, quality and accreditation obligations before internal preference. Benchmark against how peer art and design institutions organize graduate and undergraduate relationships.

7.Formal data pathways, not informal workarounds
Create formal, reliable pathways for the information decision-makers need, so it exists in usable form rather than in informal systems that leave with the people who built them.

LINK TO PRIORITY CONDITIONS

OCAD U Strategic Considerations

1. **Solve for the Structural Deficit:** How might this initiative contribute to reducing the structural deficit while maintaining or enhancing the institution's core strengths?
2. **Advance Practice-Based Art & Design Education:** How might this initiative enhance, expand, or reposition practice-based art and design education to better prepare students for evolving industries and opportunities?
3. **Foster Student Agility for the Future:** How might we equip students with the adaptability, critical thinking, and resilience needed to navigate an uncertain job market and evolving creative industries?
4. **Calibrate Impact on Key Audiences (Internal):** How might we ensure that proposal decisions are informed by a clear understanding of their impact on key internal audiences?
5. **Enhance Reputation (External):** How might we strengthen OCADU's reputation in key industries, academic circles, and with the communities it serves?
6. **Leverage and Optimize Existing Resources:** How might we leverage existing resources (e.g., research, facilities, technology, staff expertise) in the development of this proposal?
7. **Ensure Impact Over Time:** How might we assess the operational needs and impact over our proposal time frame?

LINK TO STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS





