URGENT

OCADFA Emergency Town Hall on Academic Restructuring

Friday, 6 November 2026 | 3 to 5 pm

Rosalie Sharpe Pavilion, 115 McCaul, MCD 200

** or check your ocadu email for a Teams invite **

OCADFA is calling an emergency town hall to discuss the three academic restructuring prototypes being advanced by the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost (VPAP).

Please join us in-person or online to discuss what is at stake and to organize our collective response.

OCADFA

Our working conditions are our students' learning conditions.

OCADFA acknowledges the sacred land on which we live and work. For over 15,000 years this land has been home to Indigenous people who have lived and continue to live in relation with the land in ways that have been proven to be ecologically sustainable and vital, and that deepen our humanity by honouring our relations.

This land is the territory of the **Anishnaabe**, **Haudenosaunee**, and **Wendat** Indigenous Peoples.

Today, this meeting place of Toronto is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to be here together, in conversation with Indigenous histories. We are committed to working in solidarity with Indigenous-led activism and to upholding the values and practices that protect the land, care for the people and make it possible to plan for a peaceable future.

OCADFA: Academic Restructuring

1. SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION

OCAD U's Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost (VPAP) has presented three prototypes for restructuring the University's academic organization.

The University argues that restructuring is necessary to address financial sustainability, clarify academic responsibilities, improve coordination and create better conditions for teaching and learning.

However, the proposals primarily reorganize academic leadership, reporting relationships and administrative support. **They do not demonstrate how these changes will improve the University's educational mission.**

The fundamental question for OCADFA is:

Is OCAD U trying to create a more effective academic organization, or a less expensive and more administratively centralized one?

Prototype A: Two Faculties

- Two Deans and four Associate Deans.
- Programs organized into two broad academic groupings.
- Concern: Larger portfolios may weaken disciplinary representation and meaningful faculty participation in academic decisions.

Program Major/Head Count (2025-26)	
ADVR	206
CRCP	55
CROS	8
CRWR	122
DIGF-UG	200
DRPT	604
ENVR	700
EXAN	490
GRPH	596
ILLU	715
INDS	270
INTM	187
INVC	18
MAAD	196
PHOT	114
PRPB	59
SCIN	75
VCS	32
CCP (G)	25
DIGF(G)	40
IAMD (G)	83
DHEA (G)	19
INCD (G)	32
SFI (G)	98
Breadth & Visual Culture (BVC)	4632

graduate programs

* [illegible]

Watch a video walkthrough to orient yourself

Prototype A

Structure

Faculty names are based on program groupings and are working titles. Some alternatives include:
1. Faculty of Art & Visual Culture *and* Faculty of Design & Communication
2. Faculty of Art & Critical Practice *and* Faculty of Design & Applied Practice
3. Faculty of Art, Culture & Society *and* Faculty of Design, Story & Systems
We welcome your feedback!

Vice-President, Academic and Provost

Associate Vice-Provost of Graduate Studies, Research & Innovation retains oversight and governance of admission policy, retention, regulations and other policies for graduate studies. The AVP, consequently, works very closely with the Deans to ensure governance and policies serve the programs. The AVP will represent the University at provincial and/or national tables dedicated to graduate studies and research.

VPAP and Deans will review necessary functions and determine the distribution of work across the areas where Associate Dean leadership is needed.

Dean, Faculty of Art, Culture & Inquiry

Dean, Faculty of Design, Strategy & Communication

Associate Vice-Provost, Graduate Studies, Research & Innovation

Associate Dean

Associate Dean

Associate Dean

Associate Dean

Executive Assistant(s)

Manager(s) / Director(s)

Centralized Back Office

Centralized back office positions are not yet determined.

People & Culture, in collaboration with the academic leadership, will review necessary support in the offices by producing a process map and undertaking a position review process. Titles, numbers of positions and grades will be based on functional requirements and responsibilities, including in the Graduate Studies.

Where indicated, "Manager/Director" roles that appear on a prototype are intended to indicate the grade is not determined in advance.

Prototype A

Program Positioning

Faculty of Art, Culture, & Inquiry

EXAN

SCIN

PHOT

IAM

DRPT

INTM

PRPB

IAMD (G)

CRCP

CCP (G)

INVC

BVC*

VCS

1722 + 4632 BVC*

Faculty of Design, Strategy & Communication

ENVR

ILLU

INDS

MAAD

ADVR

GRPH

INCD (G)

SFI (G)

DHEA (G)

DIGF(G)

DIGF(UG)

CRWR

3194

In this prototype, Chairs and GPDs remain unchanged.

* This is intended to show the proposed new program. It is still in development & has not passed governance.

Prototype B: Two Faculties with Four Departments

- Two Deans, two Associate Deans and four new Department Chairs.
- The proposed Chairs are described as outside the MAO and potentially considered management.
- Concern: The creation of new managerial positions could transfer academic authority away from collegial governance and raise bargaining-unit classification issues.

Program Major/Head Count (2025-26)	
ADVR	206
CRCP	55
CROS	8
CRWR	122
DIGF-UG	200
DRPT	604
ENVR	700
EXAN	490
GRPH	598
ILLU	715
INDS	270
INTM	167
INVC	18
MAAD	196
PHOT	114
PRPB	59
SCIN	75
VCS	32
CCP (G)	25
DIGF (G)	40
IAMD (G)	83
DHEA (G)	19
INCD (G)	32
SFI (G)	95
Breadth & Visual Culture (BVC)	4632

graduate programs

* [Note on Breadth and Visual Culture (BVC)]

All students take a minimum of 5.0 credits of breadth (ENGL, IVCL, HUMN, SCTM, SOSC) and visual culture (VISA/C/D/M; IVCV) courses. This is equivalent to 25% of every undergraduate degree.

Prototype B

Structure

Watch a video walkthrough to orient yourself

Faculty names are based on program groupings and are working titles. Some alternatives include:
1. Faculty of Art & Visual Culture *and* Faculty of Design & Communication
2. Faculty of Art & Critical Practice *and* Faculty of Design & Applied Practice
3. Faculty of Art, Culture & Society *and* Faculty of Design, Story & Systems
We welcome your feedback!

In this prototype, responsibility for Graduate Studies, Research & Innovation (GRI) is given to one Dean. They will oversee the governance of admission policy, retention, regulations and other policies for graduate studies. Consequently, the Dean must work very closely with the other Dean to ensure governance and policies serve the graduate programs. The Dean responsible for GRI will represent the University at provincial and/or national tables dedicated to graduate studies and research.

Vice-President, Academic and Provost

Dean, Faculty of Art, Culture & Inquiry
(includes Breadth & Visual Culture courses)

Dean, Faculty of Design, Strategy, & Communication
(includes Graduate Studies, Research & Innovation)

VPAP and Deans will review necessary functions and determine the distribution of work across the areas where Associate Dean leadership is needed.

Manager/Director | Associate Dean | Department Chair 1 | Department Chair 2

Supporting Staff | Supporting Staff

Manager/Director | Associate Dean | Department Chair 3 | Department Chair 4

Supporting Staff | Supporting Staff

Centralized back office positions are not yet determined.

P&C, in collaboration with the academic leadership, will review necessary support in the offices by producing a process map and undertaking a position review process. Titles, numbers of positions and grades will be based on functional requirements and responsibilities, including in the Graduate Studies.

Where indicated, "Manager/Director" roles that appear on a prototype are intended to indicate the grade is not determined in advance.

Executive Assistant

Centralized Back Office

Supporting staff is a new position category.

Department Chairs would be a position outside the MOA as they would be considered part of management.

This prototype assumes some form of program leadership will remain necessary. The specific division of tasks between supporting staff, Department Chair and program leadership will need to be determined together.

Names of Departments are working titles only. We welcome feedback!

Prototype B

Program Positioning

Department Chair 1
Image, Culture and Society

VCS | CCP (G) | CRCP | INVC

BVC*

213 + 4632 BVC*

Department Chair 2
Material and Expanded Studio Practice

EXAN | DRPT | SCIN | PHOT | IAM | INTM | PRPB | IAMD (G)

1509

Department Chair 3
Design and Innovation

ENVR | INDS | INCD (G) | DHEA (G) | SFI (G) | DIGF(UG) | DIGF (G) | MAAD

1555

Department Chair 4
Communication and Narrative

ADVR | GRPH | ILLU | CRWR

1639

* This is intended to show the proposed new program. It is still in development & has not passed governance.

Prototype C: One Academic Unit

- One Dean and five Associate Deans.
- All academic programs report through one Dean.
- Concern: This is the most centralized academic leadership structure and could increase the distance between faculty and academic decision-makers.

Program Major/Head Count (2025-26)	
ADVR	206
CRCP	55
CROS	8
CRWR	122
DIGF-UG	200
DRPT	604
ENVR	700
EXAN	490
GRPH	596
ILLU	715
INDS	270
INTM	167
INVC	19
MAAD	196
PHOT	114
PRPB	59
SCIN	75
VCS	32
CCP (G)	25
DIGF(G)	40
IAMD (G)	83
DHEA (G)	19
INCD (G)	32
SFI (G)	98
Breadth & Visual Culture (BVC)	4632

graduate programs

* Note on Breadth and Visual Culture (BVC)

All students have a minimum of 3.0 credits of breadth (ENGL, HCL, HUMN, SCTM, SOSC) and visual culture (VISA/C/D/H; MCVI) courses. This is equivalent to 75% of every undergraduate

Watch a video walkthrough to orient yourself

Prototype C

Structure

Vice-President, Academic and Provost

Dean, Academic

Associate Vice-Provost, Graduate Studies, Research & Innovation

Associate Vice-Provost of Graduate Studies, Research & Innovation retains oversight and governance of admission policy, retention, regulations and other policies for graduate studies. The AVP, consequently, works very closely with the Dean, Academic to ensure governance and policies serve the programs. The AVP will represent the University at provincial and/or national tables dedicated to graduate studies and research.

Associate Dean | Associate Dean | Associate Dean | Associate Dean | Associate Dean

VPAP, Dean and AVP will review necessary functions and determine the distribution of work across the areas where Associate Dean leadership is needed. The number of Associate Deans may change as a consequence.

Executive Assistant

Manager(s) / Director(s)

Centralized Back Office

Centralized back office positions are not yet determined.

P&C, in collaboration with the academic leadership, will review necessary support in the offices by producing a process map and undertaking a position review process. Titles, numbers of positions and grades will be based on functional requirements and responsibilities, including in the Graduate Studies.

Where indicated, "Manager/Director" roles that appear on a prototype are intended to indicate the grade is not determined in advance.

Prototype C

Program Positioning

All programs report to Dean, Academic

SCIN | PHOT | IAM | INTM | PRPB

DRPT | ENVR | ILLU | INDS

EXAN | MAAD | ADVR | GRPH

In this prototype, Chairs and GPDs remain unchanged.

DIGF(G) | CCP (G) | VCS | INCD (G) | SFI (G) | DHEA (G)

DIGF(UG) | CRCP | CRWR | INVC | BVC*

IAMD (G)

* This is intended to show the proposed new program. It is still in development & has not passed governance.

OCADFA's position: None of the three prototypes can be supported in its current form because the information needed to evaluate their academic, financial and labour consequences has not been provided.

What all three prototypes have in common:

- All three propose a centralized back office for academic administrative support.
- This is one of the most consequential aspects of the restructuring, yet it is not being presented as a meaningful choice.
- The University has not determined the positions, staffing levels or allocation of responsibilities within this centralized structure.
- **The VPAP is proposing to reorganize academic support before completing the assessment of the work that needs to be supported.**
- This threatens more than administrative positions. Faculty administrative staff hold specialized knowledge, institutional memory and working relationships essential to curriculum planning, teaching assignments, course scheduling, program coordination and student support.
- Administrative staff are not separate from our academic mission. Their work is integral to delivering it.
- **You cannot Walmartize a university.** Academic programs are not interchangeable departments, and administrative staff are not interchangeable units of labour.

The Restructuring Timeline

The University's FAQ establishes the following sequence:

- November–December 2026: Community consultation.
- January 2027: Preliminary Senate discussion.
- February 2027: Senate decision on a proposed structure.
- After the structural decision: Detailed evaluation of roles, work and reporting relationships.
- Fall 2027: Planned implementation.

This sequence is fundamentally backwards.

Faculty and Senate are being asked to evaluate and potentially approve a new structure before knowing its staffing, workload, financial and governance consequences.

The University also acknowledges that restructuring cannot, by itself, improve teaching and learning, reduce workload, create collaboration or rebuild trust.

If restructuring cannot guarantee these improvements, the University must demonstrate why these particular changes are necessary and how they will enable better academic outcomes.

OCADFA's Key Concerns

Concern 1: Centralization of academic administrative support

- **OCADFA position:** No decision to centralize academic administrative support without a full assessment of its impact on curriculum delivery, staffing, student services and faculty workload.

Concern 2: Faculty workload intensification

- **OCADFA position:** No additional responsibilities without appropriate workload recognition, compensation, resources and negotiated protections

Concern 3: Erosion of collegial governance

- **OCADFA position:** Academic restructuring must strengthen collegial governance, not replace it with managerial control.

Concern 4: Lack of financial transparency

- OCADFA position: No restructuring decision without transparent financial modelling, including costs, projected savings, staffing implications and alternative approaches.

Concern 5: Weak academic rationale

- OCADFA position: Academic restructuring must be guided by an educational vision, not simply administrative efficiency.

Concern 6: Equity and employment security

- OCADFA position: Every restructuring proposal must be evaluated for its effects on equity, employment security, workload and access to academic decision-making.

Concern 7: A flawed consultation and evaluation process. Consultation is not the same as governance.

- OCADFA position: No decision should proceed until faculty and Senate have the information and authority necessary to evaluate the consequences.