

Dear President Gertler and Provost Regehr;

I am writing to you because of my concern regarding the "Potential Academic Restructuring" process related to the Faculty of Forestry. The University of Toronto has benefited from the activities and outputs from this Faculty for over one hundred years. However, the University has been attempting to downgrade or remove the Faculty for nearly 25 years.

This Faculty has produced the majority of the Professional Foresters working in this Province. Professional Foresters are required to be "registered" in order to practice forestry in Ontario. You would not go to a dentist, doctor or engineer who had not graduated from a professional faculty in their selected discipline. Forestry is a dynamic, complex and multi-faceted career and requires formal training in a certified academic facility. The Faculty of Forestry is such a facility and should be maintained as a viable and active professional school.

Alumni from this Faculty have been employed throughout the province, nationally and internationally. Graduates include: Ontario Secretary of Cabinet; numerous deputy ministers; associate and assistant deputy ministers; senior managers in government; research scientists; industrial managers; political staffers; representatives with the United Nations; leaders of a wide range of environmental, professional, industrial and research organizations; and university professors. These individuals have been, and continue to be, those who influence the direction of governments, industry, public opinion and the next generation of foresters. Collectively they are a massive force in this province and country. Future generations deserve the same opportunities to be trained and participate in society in a similar fashion.

Your "consultation" and "decanal search (for a 2 year term)" signals yet another attack on the Faculty of Forestry. Why is the University not backing this Faculty....funding it, as required, and producing outstanding graduates, as has been the history?? Study after independent study have found the Faculty of Forestry to be relevant, viable and productive. Only the University appears to think otherwise.

On a personal note, I was a graduate student of Erik Jorgensen's, an internationally acclaimed forest pathologist and "father" of Urban Forestry in Canada. The foundation that I received at the Faculty of Forestry prepared me for

a nearly thirty year career in the Ontario Government. For 11 years, I held the post of Assistant Deputy Minister in the Ministries of both Environment and Natural Resources. I guided the development and passage of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, in 1995. This legislation still defines the way that forests are managed on crown lands in Ontario. Upon leaving the government, I was an Associate Professor of forest policy and sustainable forest management for 7 years at the Faculty of Forestry at U. of T. I was also the "Coordinator" of the highly successful and highly subscribed Mater of Forest Conservation program. After 2004, I ran my own consulting company for several more years. I was the Chair of the Faculty's Centennial Celebration Committee and received an Arbor Award from President Naylor for this effort.

My story is similar to that of scores of Faculty graduates who have enjoyed productive careers over the past decades. New graduates are currently being gainfully and meaningfully employed in forestry and forestry-related positions.

I recently completed the U. of T.'s Alumni Impact Survey. I understand that thousands of alumni have participated in this process. I would be interested to know how many Forestry graduates were included in this survey?? It is possible that I was mis-identified. Although my graduate work was carried-out at the Faculty of Forestry, my degrees were in Botany, since Professor Jorgensen was cross-appointed, at that time. I would also be interested in the cost of the survey, since costs seem to be part of the Faculty issue. I look forward to your response to these two items.

The University appears to be on a short-sighted track with regard to this Faculty. The University should be supporting the growth and expansion of this forward-thinking, science-based institution. I hope that wisdom will prevail and the Faculty of Forestry will receive a new mandate with a strong leader as Dean, for a four year term.

Regards.....David Balsillie Ph.D.; R.P.F. (Hon.)

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