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Situation Analysis

OT = Occupational Therapy, OS = Occupational Science

External Factors
1. Increasing demand for OT services, esp as wellness, chronic diseases, home care & mental health services continue to become more important
2. Profession carving new niche and making inroads in non-traditional areas
3. Continued workplace evolution (teamwork, program models, public health, ...)
4. More restrictions in traditional funding sources
5. High tuitions at Dalhousie, possible MUN expansion and more career options for students
6. Proliferation of educational programs for OT support personnel
7. Health care delivery shifting to lowest credential
8. Profession is gaining respect/OT is more visible as a profession/OTs moving up to leadership
9. The School will continue to be important to the development of the profession
10. Increased expectations at Dal for research and external funding

Strengths
1. A positive, responsive and dynamic organization
2. Strong, capable, competent, enthusiastic, caring faculty, who are staying on and “moving up”
3. Solid educational programs, with considerable strength in IPHE
4. Faculty hold more research grant funding than ever before
5. Strong, cohesive, hard-working staff group
6. Work well as a team
7. Very good involvement of practitioners as tutors in the program with strong support from the field / practitioners increasingly viewing precepting as “this is what we do”
8. Good structures in place to have students participate in School and University life
9. Strong Atlantic region base/focus
10. Freeze on tuitions for three years and a payback for NS students
11. Has an enhanced reputation for OT & OS because it is successful and is recognized as such
12. The Dal graduates – more mature, better appreciation of evidence, better able to work with other HC providers, taking more opportunities for leadership
13. The imminent PhD program

Constraints
1. A School with new researchers
2. Decreased funding to universities
3. Funding agencies changing mandates and decreasing resources
4. Lack of scholarship funds
5. Alumni financially constrained yet involved, well positioned and connected
6. Diversity in student body and faculty still needs attention
7. Atlantic Canada awareness of OT undeveloped beyond classic roles
8. Health system not organized to support well-being, quality of life, equity aspects of OT
9. Navigating four jurisdictions in the entry to practice program
10. Faculty Contracts create uncertainty and stress and limit research and project capacity

Challenges
1. Managing and generating the resources to deal with the opportunities
2. Maintaining quality standards during the University’s corporatization process
3. Supporting the faculty and its scholarship growth
4. Building strong external relationships
5. New leadership at Dal and in the FHP
6. Appropriately supporting the profession and the alumni
7. Maintaining a positive and supportive environment in light of the challenges and constraints.

Dalhousie University School of Occupational Therapy - Strategic Plan, 2014-2019
## Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Excellence</th>
<th>We strive for excellence in our work, through:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• creating a teaching, learning, and scholarly culture that is challenging, exciting, intellectually rigorous, and balanced;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• exceeding professional standards for educating quality therapists;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• engaging in scholarship that is respected and admired; and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• fulfilling our commitment to practicing therapists by providing opportunities for lifelong learning.</td>
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<tr>
<th>2. Collaboration</th>
<th>We actively engage in constructing a collaborative, team oriented, supportive community among faculty, students, staff, preceptors, practitioners, clients and other partners, by:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>• practicing open communication;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• ensuring fairness in our treatment of each other;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• respecting the contributions of all; and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• welcoming challenges, questions and debate.</td>
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<th>3. Justice</th>
<th>We actively pursue justice, equity and inclusiveness, by:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• welcoming people from diverse and/or marginalized backgrounds;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• ensuring that no one feels dismissed, especially due to status, rank, experience, or social background; and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• attending to and speaking out about everyday life injustices.</td>
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<th>4. Balance</th>
<th>We seek balance, individually and collectively, through:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>• managing the creative tensions between personal, professional and community commitments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• establishing equilibrium between the academic pursuit of knowledge and the education of skilled practitioners; and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• remembering to have fun together.</td>
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## Mission, Vision and Strategic Directions

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<tr>
<th>Mission</th>
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<tr>
<td>To educate exceptional professionals and scholars and to generate knowledge about occupation and occupational therapy, within Atlantic Canada and beyond.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Vision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The School of Occupational Therapy is a great place to learn and work – known for graduating exceptional professionals and scholars, a supportive learning and working environment, and for occupation-focused scholarship and teaching.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Strategic Directions</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Advance our educational offerings and approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Expand our scholarly capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Enrich our practice partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Foster our energizing environment</td>
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### Strategic Action Plan

**Direction 1**  
Advance our educational offerings and approaches

**Objective**  
Our sustainable, high-quality array of educational offerings attracts and educates a diversity of learners

**Major Initiatives**  
1. Refine the MSc (OT) program  
2. Refocus Post-Professional offerings  
3. Revitalize the DMC program  
4. Actively market our educational offerings  
5. Recruit PhD students  
6. Proactively seek, evaluate and implement potential new program offerings.

**Direction 2**  
Expand our scholarly capacity

**Objectives**  
- Increased output within a broad range of recognized scholarly products  
- All scholarly work is valued

**Major Initiatives**  
1. Create scholarly product definitions in line with T&P, CDI & position expectations  
2. Create School-based solutions to secure and manage new and creative funding  
3. Maintain proactive involvement with Dal’s initiative to create research infrastructure  
4. Foster productive research partnerships to maximize knowledge generation and dissemination opportunities

**Direction 3**  
Enrich our practice partnerships

**Objective**  
The connections between School and its Practice partners are strong and numerous

**Major Initiatives**  
1. Strengthen existing partnerships to support sustainable relationships  
2. Systematically share knowledge between the School and partners  
3. Within the ELP, continue to co-create a vibrant fieldwork program responsive to change

**Direction 4**  
Foster our energizing environment

**Objective**  
Faculty, staff and students agree that the School is a great place to learn and work

**Major Initiatives**  
1. Fuel our positive culture  
2. Provide opportunities for faculty and staff to stretch into new areas  
3. Support and celebrate community efforts that promote OT
### School of Occupational Therapy: Strategic Action Plan

#### Strategic Direction 1: Advance our educational offerings and approaches

**Objective:**
To attract and educate a diverse audience of learners by providing a sustainable, high-quality array of educational offerings

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Key Results</th>
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</table>
| 1   | Refine the MSc (OT) program | - The recommendations of a full scale review of the MSc (OT) curriculum are being implemented  
- Research stream educates strong consumers of the literature and evidence based practitioners  
- CAOT Certification Exam pass rates remain at or above national pass rates  
- Use of innovative educational technology and teaching strategies and approaches  
- The Program achieves an excellent accreditation review that reflects our commitment to graduating exceptional professionals and scholars |
| 2   | Refocus Post-Professional offerings | - The post-professional Masters' program attracts learners from a diverse range of backgrounds  
- Use of innovative educational technology and teaching strategies and approaches  
- All program offerings are financially viable based on university minimum enrollment numbers  
- More on-site research students work with faculty |
| 3   | Revitalize the DMC program | - Revised DMC (program) curriculum implemented; evaluation initiated  
- Use of innovative educational technology and/or teaching strategies and approaches  
- Streamlined, efficient policies and procedures integrated into School routines  
- Program recognized as meeting educational requirements for eligibility to write NIDMAR exam |
| 4   | Actively market our educational offerings | - A sustainable and strategic marketing plan implemented for all educational offerings (with professional consultation)  
- Marketing activities integrated into routine work of faculty and staff, as appropriate  
- Applicants to our programs are plentiful and diverse  
- Faculty are more confident at promoting the School |
|   | Attract PhD students | We have experienced PhD supervisors and an active mentoring programme for new supervisors
|   |                     | A cohort of funded PhD students
|   |                     | Students graduating from the School have clearly articulated pathways to the new PhD and are using them
|   |                     | Our PhD supervisors encourage students in a broad range of scholarly activities (RA, grant and funding applications and peer-reviewed publications)
|   |                     | Faculty are developing skills in attracting PhD students
|   | Proactively seek, evaluate and implement potential new program offerings | There are established Criteria against which the decision to implement new programs are made
|   |                     | Potential new programs (e.g. Disability Studies, online statistics) are assessed against the Criteria and decisions based on these assessments
|   |                     | Expansion is sustainable, resourced and in keeping with the School vision and mission. |
### School of Occupational Therapy: Strategic Action Plan

#### Strategic Direction 2: Expand our scholarly capacity

**Objectives:**
1. Increased scholarly output within a broad range of recognized scholarly products
2. All scholarly work is valued

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<tr>
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</table>
| 1   | Create scholarly product definitions in line with T&P, CDI and position expectations | • School CDI criteria reflect School values  
• Explicit recognition of scholarship beyond the traditional, including KT  
• All faculty have scholarly work identified in their workload  
• FHP T&P criteria revised to include KT  
• School always has a representative on FHP T&P |
| 2   | Create School based solutions to secure and manage new and creative funding | • School Research Coordinator with a clear mandate  
• Funded, part-time research support person on staff  
• Increased Tri-Council funding and/or increased research contracts |
| 3   | Maintain proactive involvement with Dal's initiative to create research infrastructure | • School actively participates in the Dal research infrastructure renewal efforts  
• School has consistent voice on decision-making bodies relating to space development of CHEB  
• Increased number of junior faculty on FHP/university level committees  
• Adequate, well-managed research space |
| 4   | Foster productive research partnerships to maximize knowledge generation and dissemination opportunities | • All faculty are actively involved in scholarly work  
• Increased research partnerships on and off campus  
• Increased communication of school research activities to practice community and research networks |
### School of Occupational Therapy: Strategic Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Direction 3:</th>
<th>Enrich our Practice Partnerships</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong></td>
<td>The connections between School and its Practice partners are strong and numerous</td>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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</table>
| 1   | Strengthen existing partnerships to support sustainable relationships       | • Face-to-face collaboration is routine and intentional  
• Successful fieldwork placements and scholarly projects on Dalhousie Campus (e.g. Custodian Project, AASC, Harassment/Equity, etc.) raise awareness of the School within the University.  
• CPD Certificate in Fieldwork Education Preceptorship |
| 2   | Systematically sharing knowledge between the School and partners             | • A strong reciprocal connection between the School and the practice community in Atlantic Canada  
• Student-preceptor teams advance practice  
• Projects are initiated and supported, where interests intersect |
| 3   | Within the ELP, continue to co-create a vibrant fieldwork program responsive to change | • FW revisions to the ELP are implemented and evaluated  
• School and practice community share a vision and participate in the education of “professionals and scholars”  
• Plentiful array of FW opportunities  
• FW sites seek Dal students |
## School of Occupational Therapy: Strategic Action Plan

### Strategic Direction 4: Foster our energizing environment

**Objective:** Faculty, staff and students agree that the School is a great place to learn and work

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Key Results</th>
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</table>
| 1   | Fuel our positive culture                      | • We are demonstrably living our values  
• The School’s culture supports an open and positive environment where there is comfort in raising issues, discussing them and making suggestions for change  
• Staff and faculty retention is maintained  
• Ongoing initiatives address the contributions of diverse jobs and roles within the School  
• There are increased opportunities for internal interactions and fun  
• New faculty, PhD students, Post Docs and staff are satisfied with their introduction and orientation to the School  
• The School constitutes a community that wants to spend time together |
| 2   | Provide opportunities to stretch into new areas | • More faculty on thesis committees, PhD committees  
• More faculty and staff opportunities for professional development  
• Projects enabling novel collaborations are fostered |
| 3   | Support and celebrate community efforts that promote OT | • Support and celebrate student-initiated community efforts  
• Support and celebrate other Atlantic Provinces OT organizations community efforts |