

2011-2015 Summary

In the next year, the University of Guelph will be completing the second five-year phase of a ten-year planning cycle. Known as Multi-Year-Plan-1 (MYP1) and Multi-Year-Plan-2 (MYP2), both of these plans were responses to fiscal realities and reduced government funding.

MYP1 cut the University's base budget by \$43 million, of which the College of Physical and Engineering Science (CPES) was allocated \$6.6 million. The impact of these cuts was significant for the School of Computer Science (SoCS). We lost our entire Teaching Assistant (TA) budget, any funding for lab renewal, and the Administrative Assistant position in the School. In essence, we were cut beyond our capacity to continue normal operation.

When I began my term as Director, the University embarked on the second phase of the MYP, which implemented a further base-budget cut of \$27 million to the University, of which CPES was allocated \$2.3 million. While the amount of this cut was significantly smaller than MYP1, it is important to recognize that this cut was on top of MYP1 and therefore would have to go even deeper.

At the beginning of my term, most of our staff positions were contractually limited: Administrative Assistant, Recruitment Officer, and Systems Analyst. This caused significant additional challenges to the School (that all of us have felt in one way or another). I believed that an additional cut to the base budget of the School as part of MYP2 would have had a very negative effect on the School's mandate to deliver quality programs and our ability to continue to conduct quality research (which had already suffered as a result of MYP1).

During my term as Director, I was able to avoid the impact of further cuts during MYP2. In addition, I recovered the losses of MYP1. The School now has permanent positions for our Administrative Assistant, Recruitment Officer, and Systems Analyst. We have just received permission from the Dean's office to rehire the Graduate Program Assistant (also a permanent, full-time position). Additionally, we have also just received permission to hire an additional (permanent, full-time) Office Clerk position (this is a new position for the School), to help manage the administrative workload (which has increased significantly due to increased reporting requirements, the growth of our undergraduate programs, and downloading of work from other units).

While rebuilding the staff in the School, I have additionally secured funding for two significant lab renewals (Mac Lab, Summer 2015; SunRay replacement, Summer 2016), and increased budget for our TAs.

Finally, I have gotten permission to add three new tenure-track faculty positions to the School (regularization of Dan Gillis and two new hires). I am very excited about the applications that we have received for our job postings for the two new hires and look forward to all of us having the opportunity to meet the top applicants during the interview process in the new year.

While there are still significant challenges ahead as we adapt to all of this change, face continuing growth in our programs, train new staff, bring aboard new faculty, launch the Mobile Computing Major, bring students into our nascent PhD, etc., I think we have weathered the storm of the last 5 years extremely well, especially compared to other units on campus and what we could have been faced with if I wasn't able to avoid the cuts.

Finally, none of this would have been possible without the support of faculty, staff and students in the School. I've had the pleasure to work with many talented and dedicated individuals who often don't get the credit they deserve for their work and effort. To everyone who has made this happen, thank you! I look forward to being a part of the further success that SoCS will have.