Teaching, Learning & Student Success Strategic Plan – 2019-2025

1.0 Introduction

The Office of the Vice-Provost Teaching, Learning, & Student Success integrates the strategic goals of five administrative units, federated under the Office of the Vice-Provost, Teaching, Learning & Student Success in 2016. These units include: Centre for Pedagogical Innovation (CPI); Student Wellness and Accessibility (SWAC); Student Life and Community Experience (SLCE); Student Success (SS); and Co-op, Career and Experiential Education (CCEE).

The Office of the Vice-Provost Teaching, Learning, & Student Success provides leadership, direction and support to both faculty and students through teaching, learning, and student support activities in each unit.

2.0 Background and Context

The Office of the Vice-Provost Teaching, Learning, & Student Success was established in 2016. Previously, the four departments providing student support were organized under the Associate Vice President Student Services, whereas the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation reported into the Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning (established in 2012).[1] The amalgamation of the five departments allowed for greater synergies and partnerships between those serving students and those supporting faculty/instructor engagement.

Key responsibilities are as follows:

Teaching and Learning Advancement (Centre for Pedagogical Innovation)
- Instructional, educational development (faculty & teaching assistant programming)
- E-Learning - online and blended course and program development
- Educational technologies/ online course evaluation, educational tools
- Curriculum and program enhancements
- Infrastructure and learning environments

Student Academic Supports (Student Success Centre)
- Learning supports/skills
- Indigenous student services
- Central academic advising

Health and Wellness (Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre)
- Student health services & supports
- Personal counseling, mental health
- Accessibility
- Health promotion and education

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[1] Prior to 2012, the Co-Op office reported to the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice President, Academic.

Campus and Community engagement (Student Life and Community Experience)
- Co-curricular engagement and skill development
- Community outreach
- Off-campus living services and neighbourhood relations
- Orientation and first-year experience programming and support
- Student conduct
- Students at risk protocol

Co-op, Career and Experiential Education
- Co-operative Education programing and operations
- Career education, curriculum and skills translation
- Experiential learning, community partnerships

3.0 Environment Scan

3.1 Teaching & Learning

- **Non-traditional teaching formats:** The teaching and learning landscape in the postsecondary sector has changed rapidly through the development of technology that has enabled a greater array of flexible instructional strategies and multi-modal assessments.[2] As a reflection of this development, Brock's Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) 1 (2014-2017) and SMA 2 (2017-2020) "student experience" metrics identified targets that reflected both an increase in non-traditional pedagogical formats (online, blended, accelerated) and an increase in course offerings during the Spring and Summer term. The Centre for Pedagogical Innovation, working with instructional faculty, exceeded SMA 1 targets in these areas. The SMA 2 metric re: "number of courses offered in a non-traditional format" is currently tracking above the University's 2016 baseline.[3] Teaching technology and the opportunity for flexible course delivery modalities will continue to be an important means to transform classrooms into communities of learning. Flexible teaching and learning modalities, enhanced student support services, and active classroom spaces will be needed to address future demands for interdisciplinary programming, continuing education, and lifelong learning. In addition, ongoing support for faculty and instructors in adopting student centered pedagogical approaches is more important than ever, given that technology should not replace the teacher student connection.

- **Experiential and work-integrated learning**: In addition to "flexible" methods of course delivery, experiential and work-integrated learning has emerged as a major theme in the Canadian and Ontario post-secondary sector.[4] Brock University's roots have been embedded in

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[2] Mayer, R. (2009). *Multimedia learning*. Cambridge; New York; Cambridge University Press;
Garrison, D., & Akyol, Z. (2013), Toward the Development of a metacognition construct for communities of inquiry, *The Internet of Higher Education*. Vol 17, pp 84-89.

[3] Brock University Office of Institutional Analysis. (2019). "Number of courses offered in non-traditional format" (online, blended, accelerated, Spring Summer).

[4] CEWIL Canada (2018). Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada, The role of Co-operative Education and Work-integrated (CEWIL) Canada in supporting HUMA's Experiential Learning and Pathways to

experiential learning since the University's foundation. The experiential focused seminar and lab system and early adoption of co-operative education, co-curricular transcripts and community service during the 1960s and 1970s positioned Brock to grow and be known as a University that believes in "hands-on" student-focused learning. In 2015, as part of a series of restructuring initiatives, the academic support units of Co-operative Programs, Career Services and Goodman Career merged into one department and added the centralized branch of Experiential, thereby creating Co-op, Career & Experiential Education. In December 2016, Brock University's Senate adopted twenty types of curricular experiential learning; to date 99% of all programs at Brock include courses with an experiential education component. Each academic Faculty has an Experiential Education Coordinator in order to facilitate the expansion of experiential course development, and recent enhancements to our ORBIS software platform will track and record curricular and co-curricular experiential learning on the student *Experience Record*. SMA 2 and the most recent Ontario Provincial government announcement about SMA 3 (2020-2025) continues to identify "experiential learning" as one of the five required "skills and job" metrics for all Ontario universities. As such, experiential learning and work-integrated learning will continue to be a priority for Brock University and the post-secondary sector.

• **Teaching technology**: The expanding array of technology-enabled pedagogical tools, together with the digital literacy of the millennial generation, continues to place demands on both human resources (instructional faculty, teaching assistants, and academic support staff) and ITS resources. The capacity for the adoption of course-based teaching technology is either constrained or enhanced by the learning management system (LMS) platform on which it sits. The Centre for Pedagogical Innovation (CPI), together with the department of Information Technology Services (ITS) at Brock University, have self-hosted a Sakai-based LMS since 2007. Over the years, there have been significant hardware and software updates to the system to support increasing student demand. Usage of the system has increased to become one of the largest and most utilized systems on campus (~20,000 unique logins a day). Brock migrated to the current LMS (open source, SAKAI) system in 2012. Current discussions are underway about a new LMS which will be required to keep pace with the expanding and ever more complex teaching and learning landscape of the future.

• **Accessible Information**: The increased proliferation of accessible information via digital means has brought with it an increased challenge to educate students so that they may distinguish credible sources of information from those that are not credible. This will require focused efforts to engage students in critical thinking and will also necessitate more proactive academic integrity measures, given the proliferation of accessible illegitimate sources of information that threaten to compromise academic standards of integrity. As such, proactive education and instructional design best practices are important tools that can be employed by

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Employment for Canadian Youth Study; May, B. (2018). Experiential Learning and Pathways to Employment for Canadian Youth, *Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities*, 42nd Parliament; Peters, J., Sattler, P., & Kelland, J. (2014). Work-integrated Learning in Ontario's Postsecondary Sector: The Pathways of Recent College and University Graduates. Toronto: *Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario*.

faculty and academic support staff in order to address the growing need for academic integrity awareness.

• **Accessibility and cultural competency**: Government program funding, policy frameworks and Brock University's enrolment management plan encourages access to post-secondary education for a more diverse population of students. As such, future student enrolment growth is anticipated to reflect greater diversity (domestic; international; first generation; Indigenous; students with learning disabilities; and life-long learners). This increase in student diversity holds important implications for course resources, course design, and a culturally-appropriate learning environment.

Given each student has a unique profile of ability, strengths, learning styles and previous experience, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) has emerged as a leading pedagogical practice in higher education in North America.[5] These principles for course design enable learners to acquire information and knowledge in various ways, enhancing flexibility and reducing learning barriers. Since 2014-15, Brock University's Student Wellness and Accessibility Services unit has experienced a 125% increase in student requests for academic accommodation due to a learning disability.[6] This demand has been the catalyst for the development of new technologies (e.g., OASIS) in order provide academic accommodation for students and also engage faculty in the adoption of UDL principles in their course design.

In addition to UDL, the shift toward greater accessibility has been impacted by the emergence of Open Educational Resources (OER) across the Canadian postsecondary landscape. OERs are "teaching, learning and research materials in any medium that may be composed of copyrightable materials released under an open license, materials not protected by copyright, materials for which copyright protection has expired, or a combination of the foregoing."[7] The Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and the Brock University Library are working together to build capacity on campus for the greater adoption of OERs. The Brock University Student Union and the Canadian Federation of Students have advocated for the increased use of OERs in order to address the rising costs of textbooks. At the national level, the Canadian National Survey of Online and Distance Education reports 58% of distance education in Canadian colleges and universities use open textbooks[8]; and internationally, UNESCO recently adopted a series of recommendations to encourage the use of OERs at the global level. These developments indicate that open and accessible pedagogy will play a key role in the future landscape of

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[5] Centre for Applied Special Technology (CAST). (2018). *Universal Design for Learning Guidelines Version 2.2.* Retrieved from: http://udlguidelines.case.org

[6] Pennisi, S. (2019) *Student Wellness and Accessibility Report,* Brock University Board of Trustees*,* University and Community Experience Committee, p. 2

[7] UNESCO (2019). Draft recommendations on OERs. Retrieved from: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N54rMUsvVO-9f1K-LN-pmkBQSto2wLRu/view

[8] Canadian Digital Learning Research Association. (2019). Tracking Online and Distance Education in Canadian Universities and Colleges. *Canadian National Survey of Online and Distance Education Public Report.* Retrieved from https://onlinelearningsurveycanada.ca/publications-2018/

postsecondary education.

Finally, further to changes in course design and delivery, a shifting and more culturally diverse undergraduate and graduate student population requires instructional faculty, teaching assistants and student support staff to understand, communicate, and effectively interact with students—and one another—across differing cultures. The current and future campus context will necessitate a commitment to professional training in areas of equity, human rights and cultural competency.

3.2 Student Experience

• **Mental Health/Wellness**: The demand for student support services, specifically for mental health services, continues to increase on campuses across North America. In a 2016, the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey indicated that depression, anxiety and suicide attempts are increasing among Ontario's post-secondary students. Sixty-five percent of students reported experiencing overwhelming anxiety; 46% reported feeling so depressed that it was difficult to function; and 14% had seriously considered suicide.[9] Providing timely responses to student counselling requests is essential for student success, and also increases students' positive perceptions of their university.[10] At Brock, since 2014-15, Student Wellness and Accessibility has witnessed a 102% increase in personal counselling appointments.[11] As these demands continue to increase, the need to adopt multiple strategies for both on and off campus prevention, intervention and postvention strategies will be imperative.

• **Co-curricular Learning**: The academic, social and cognitive benefits of student engagement in the co-curriculum (activities both inside and outside of the classroom) is well documented, and currently remains a best practice in the North American post-secondary sector.[12] As a reflection of this importance, Brock's SMA 1 and 2 metrics identified the "student experience" indicator of engagement in the co-curriculum as an institutional priority. ExperienceBU and the Campus-Wide Co-Curriculum (CWC) was launched at Brock in 2014. Since that time, Student Life and Community Experience has successfully facilitated student participation in the CWC. In SMA 2, the 2019-2020 institutional target was set at 8,500 students (an increase of 2% from the 2017 benchmark year). To date, the number of students who have received credit in the CWC is nearly 9,650 (an increase of 20%). In 2018-2019, students completed over 40,000 experiences (an increase of 25% from 2017-2018), with more than 4,100 involvement opportunities posted

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[9] American College Health Association. (2016). *American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment II*: *Ontario Canada Reference Group Executive Summary Report*.

[10] Blau, G., DiMino, J., Sheridan, N., Stein, A., Casper, S., Chessler, M., & Beverly, C. (2015). Wait time for counseling affecting perceived stigma and attitude toward the university. *College Student Journal*, *49*(2), 280-290.

[11] Pennisi, S. (2019). *Student Wellness and Accessibility Committee Report*, Brock University Board of Trustees, University and Community Experience Committee, p. 2.

[12] Kuh, G.D. (2009). What student affairs professionals need to know about student engagement. *Journal of College Student Development*, *50*(6), pp 683-706; Trowler, V., (2010). Student engagement literature review. *The Higher Education Academy*, pp 1-70; Hening, G.W. (2012). Leveraging student engagement for student and institutional success. *About Campus*, *17*(4), pp 15-18.

in the ExperienceBU portal. Co-curricular learning will continue to be a strategic priority for Brock and a dominant theme in the higher education landscape.

• **Student Success:** Student success in the postsecondary sector is dependent upon a matrix of resources and supports. Governments at the national and provincial level have encouraged universities and colleges to work together toward more effective pathways for students.[13] Student supports include transition programs and the expansion of skills training in both the classroom and in the online environment. For over a decade, Student Life and Community Experience and the Student Success Centre have offered student summer orientation programs and workshops for first-year students (e.g., "BaseCamp" and "Leap"). The Student Success Centre also offers academic enrichment modules strategically integrated into first-year courses. With a growing focus on student retention, these interventions and supports will be essential (e.g., students transitioning from high school and college; international students as they acclimatize to a new cultural environment; Indigenous students as they are supported both in their communities and during their transition to campus; First Generation students as they find networks of support with their peers, and for all students who fall into academic difficulty).

3.3 Research

• **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**: Over the past decade, there has been a significant interest in research and scholarship related to the quality of postsecondary education with a particular focus on innovative pedagogy, learning outcomes, and student engagement.[14] The Centre for Pedagogical Innovation initiated the Chancellor's Chair research awards in 2005, funding research in the area of teaching and learning (e.g., contemplative practices; student transition programs; experiential learning; first-year student interventions, etc.). CPI has also contributed to multi institutional research designed to enhance the teaching culture of campuses across the sector in order to establish a baseline for future improvement.[15]

• **Internal and External Grants**: All units will continue to identify both internal and external sources of grant funding for research that will enhance teaching and learning culture and student success:

  i)   CPI will continue to identify and establish internal and external grants that assist curricular innovation. Between 2012-2015, the SMA 1 targets re: online course development were met through the provision of both eCampus Ontario grants and grants offered by CPI as course development incentives for instructional

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[13] Universities Canada (2016). Universities and Colleges; teaming up for student success. Retrieved from: https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-and-colleges-teaming-up-for-student-success/
[14] Elgie, S., Childs, R., Fenton, N., Levy, B.A., Lopes, V., Szala-Menoek, K., Wiggers, R.D. (2012). Researching Teaching and Student Outcomes in Postsecondary Education. Toronto: *Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.*
[15] Teaching Culture Survey Report. (2018). Retrieved from https://brocku.ca/pedagogical-innovation/wp-content/uploads/sites/53/Teaching-Culture-Project-Brock-Executive-Summary.pdf

faculty.[16] These grants facilitated the University achieving SMA 1 metrics re: online course enrolments. More recently, CPI, CCEE and the Library jointly secured an Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development *Career Ready: Stream 1* grant that has enabled CCEE to purchase a suite of teaching technologies to enhance experiential learning.[17] SMA 2 metrics re: "number of courses offered in non-traditional formats" and "number of courses with an experiential learning component" continue to track above the 2016-2017 baseline established for Brock University.[18]

ii)   All student success units (SS, SLCE, SWAC, & CCEE) will continue to work within existing government grants and seek new sources of funding in order to improve the student experience. Examples: CPI and CCEE successfully acquired a second grant (*Career Ready: Stream 2*) focused on Employer and Regional Partners in collaboration with Niagara College;[19] and Student Wellness and Accessibility recently acquired a D.S. Howes grant, under the Niagara Community Foundation, to support a student mental health initiative.[20] This grant supplements other sources of grant funding for SWAC, including the MTCU Mental Health Worker and Mental Health Services Grants.[21] The Student Success Center receives Ministry grants in the areas of Indigenous student support through the Ontario Post-secondary Access and Inclusion (OPAIP) grant and the Post-secondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners grant (PEFAL).[22]

Collectively, successful external grant applications (over and above the standard grants provided to all universities) have generated revenue in excess of 1 million in 2018-19 for Brock University. In addition, donor relations advocacy through CCEE has yielded a commitment of over 2 million for Brock University to establish a Centre of Excellence for Experiential and Career Education.

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[16] Government of Ontario, eCampus Ontario. (2017). OER Textbook and Research & Innovation grants ($42,000); Post-secondary Study Grant ($330,000); CPI internal grants ($12,000).

[17] Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development. (2018-2019) *Career Ready (Stream 1).* Project: Experiential Education. ($558,067). Grant collaborators: M. Law., J. Grose., C. Krezek., S. Howe., S. Harper., J. Zhu.

[18] See footnote 3.

[19] Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (2018-2019). *Career Ready (Stream 2)*. Project: Employer and Regional Partners. ($225,000). Grant collaborators: M. Wilson, N. Hannon, M. Fenton, S. Howe, C. Krezek, M. Law.

[20] David S. Howes Fund Grant, Niagara Community Foundation. (2018-2019). ($138,000). Grant collaborators: Pennisi, S., & Kassam M., Brock University and Canadian Mental Health Association Student Mental Health Counselling

[21] Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (2018-2019), Mental Health Worker grant ($100,000); and Mental Health Services grant ($138, 161).

[22] Ontario Post-Secondary Access and Inclusion Grant. (2018-2019). ($166,000); Post-secondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners ($335,000).

• **Research Informed Practice**: Within the context of an increased focus on performance metrics in the post-secondary sector, research informed practice has become increasingly important. Working closely with Institutional Analysis, all units will continue to use existing data—and also develop new data—in order to track, report and measure quality improvement across the teaching, learning and student success spectrum. These metrics will lead to best practices based on research, and in turn produce conference presentations and publications. Examples of these academic forums include: the Society for Teaching, Learning and Higher Education (STHLE); Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS); Canadian Association of Health Policy Research (CAHPR); Co-operative Education and Work Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL); Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE); Association of Experiential Education (AEE); National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and Ontario Academic Advising Professionals (OAAP).

3.4 Community Engagement

• **Community Partnerships**: Building effective community-university relations has always been an important goal for colleges and universities. Most recently—fueled by concerns about jobs and the economy—community engagement has emerged as a significant priority for all levels of government. In Ontario, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) identified the following key partnership areas: research and innovation; growing the economy; expanding the support network for students; and addressing pressing social issues (such as health care and the environment).[23] The Ontario Provincial Government's SMA 3 performance metrics also reinforces these priorities, identifying "skills and job outcomes" and "economic and community impact" as primary goals for all universities in Ontario.

At Brock, through the lens of teaching, learning, and student success, the importance of community engagement been a critical touchpoint for decades.

i) **CCEE:** The development of co-op programs in the early 1970s necessitated the early cultivation of community relations and employer development. These programs flourished, expanded significantly over several decades, and still currently function as a primary enrolment driver for the University.[24] However, the proliferation of co-op programs across the provincial landscape has also meant that the employer placement sector has become highly competitive. In addition, the lack of a standardized third academic term at Brock (Spring Summer) has had a limiting effect on co-op enrolment growth. Given the current two-term academic structure (Fall and Winter) work placements during these periods cannot be accommodated.

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[23] Council of Ontario Universities. (2017). Partnering For A Better Future for Ontario. Retrieved from: https://ontariouniversities.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/COU_Partnering-for-a-Better-Future-for-Ontario_Summary-Report.pdf

[24] Co-op student enrolment is currently 15% of total Brock Undergraduate and Graduate population.

CCEE and CPI: As noted earlier, as Brock has taken the lead in the Ontario post-secondary sector to expand the scope of co-op and work-integrated learning into a broader array of experiential learning, Brock's community partnerships have expanded exponentially.[25] Building upon this foundation, CPI will work to expand the implementation of High Impact Practices across the curriculum, and CCEE will work to map learning outcomes to skills and competencies for students. Notably, CCEE will also work to develop a formal bridge for graduating students as they prepare to enter the workforce. These initiatives will serve to both broaden and deepen Brock's community partnerships in the community.

ii)   **CPI:** over the past six years, SMA 1 and 2 have fueled the development of online and technology-enabled teaching and learning on the Brock campus. In theory, online courses offer the potential for widening the scope of accessibility for learners beyond the borders of the campus and beyond the scope of the standard fulltime Brock student population. To date, however, this vison for broader community access has not materialized. The majority of online courses currently offered at Brock are taken by fulltime Brock students fulfilling their regular programs of study. As such, in order for Brock to truly engage the community and offer part-time (and more flexible) academic degrees and professional certifications, CPI will need to work with willing institutional partners (ITS, Library and the Faculties), in order to create a platform and provide the resources required to build a continuing education presence at Brock. This initiative will also require dedicated resources and administrative leadership. CPI remains ready to assist.

iii) **SLCE:** By definition, community engagement has always been central to the mission of the Student Life and Community Experience. As indicated earlier, Brock's commitment to co-curricular student engagement and co-curricular learning has been a foundational value with demonstrated student impact for decades. Nearly half of all students attending Brock are actively engaged in the CWC, and many now walk across convocation stage and receive the CWC red honour cord—symbolizing completion of all ten CWC learning domains.[26] Student Life and Community Experience has over 65 community partnerships that engage student volunteers. One area that has witnessed a dramatic increase in visibility and importance is off campus student activity as it relates to the student code of conduct. SLCE has responded with redoubled efforts in the area of "Town and Gown" liaison with community

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[25] Experiential Education reports 100+ community partnerships annually; CCEE works with 1,000+ employers annually.
[26] CPI and SLCE, working with faculty partners, formalized ten learning domains in the CWC in 2014. The first student to receive the CWC honour cord in recognition of completing all ten learning domains graduated in 2016. In the June 2019 convocation, 14 graduating students will receive the CWC honour cord.

partners, inclusive of our many municipal partners and the Niagara Regional Police. SLCE also supports the increasing number of students living off campus and commuting to Brock through programming and services available throughout the year. This month's successful Town and Gown Association of Ontario (TGAO) conference, hosted at Brock, is evidence that this focus on community partnerships is a priority that will continue to grow in importance for all universities and colleges.[27]

iv) **SWAC**: Given the growing demands for student mental health support, the cultivation of community partnerships between on campus services and community organizations and health-care providers is also essential. In Ontario, recognizing the need to be proactive around shared efforts to address student mental health, the College Student Alliance (CSA), the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA), Colleges Ontario (CO), and the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) have recently come together to develop an action plan entitled, "In It Together: Taking Action on Student Mental Health." The plan identifies a "whole of community" approach, advocating that each post-secondary institution must work with their local health-care and community agencies "to develop and implement a plan to assist students with mental health concerns."[28]

In 2017, SWAC consulted broadly with on campus and off campus community stakeholders and developed the Brock Student Mental health and Additions Plan. SWAC secured the services of the JED Foundation[29] to review the plan and thereby identify a set of actions focusing on suicide prevention—the area prioritized by Brock student, staff, faculty and community stakeholders. SWAC is currently implementing these recommendations.

Sixty-three percent of SWAC's revenue is provided by grants and fees outside of Brock's operating budget subsidy.[30] This reflects evidence of SWAC's active community partnerships, and also further underscores the importance of further engagement in community health initiatives through shared services, partnership grants, and purchase of service agreements.

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[27] Town and Gown Association of Ontario, "Building Bridges" Conference, June 3-6, 2019, Brock University.
[28] COU (2017). In It Together: Taking Action on Student Mental Health, p. 8. Retreived from: https://cou.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/In-It-Together-PSE-Mental-Health-Action-Plan.pdf
[29] The JED Foundation is a non-profit organization focused on protecting emotional health and preventing suicide. It is led by the Chief Clinical officer of Yale School of medicine, Dr. N. Roy. JED has supported more than 3,000 colleges and universities in Canada and the United States engaging two million students. Retrieved from: https://www.jedfoundation.org

[30] Pennisi, S. (2018) *Student Wellness, Health and Safety Report,* Brock University Board of Trustees, Audit Committee, p. 2.

v)   **SS:** Student Success encompasses: Aboriginal Student Services; A-Z Learning Services; and Academic Advising. All three units have important community linkages.

Aboriginal Student Services functions as a central support hub for Indigenous students on campus—and also facilitates critical connections with our many Native Centers and Indigenous educational organizations across the Region. Within the context of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Recommendations, access to post-secondary education for Indigenous youth is a critical priority. Brock University has also recently appointed an inaugural Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement. These developments foreshadow the further expansion and formalization of more pathways and greater support for Indigenous students both on campus—and within their local communities.

A-Z learning Services provides an extensive array of learning support services for on campus students (academic integrity workshops; study skills workshops, etc.), and, in partnership with Recruitment, participates in community outreach initiatives for students transitioning to university. As the landscape for enhanced accessibility broadens, these services will become even more essential. Retention rates are a key indicator of a university's success—and Brock University continues to prioritize this an area for improvement.[31] The Ontario Provincial Government's SMA 3 performance metrics that identify "graduate earnings", "graduate employment" and "graduation rates" further underscores the importance of student retention. Learning services also provides an important conduit to the community through tutoring services. This is an area of future growth and could complement the University's continuing education aspirations.

Academic Advising is the third function currently located in the Student Success Centre. A recent internal report solicited by the Provost recommends that the federated academic advising model at Brock should be further supported with additional human and technological resources. Central academic advising has the potential to play a key role in student success, student retention, and community outreach.

3.5 Economic and Policy Factors

• **Financial**: In 2019, the Ontario Provincial Government announced significant changes to the funding of higher education in the Province. These measures included a 10% reduction in

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[31] Brock University Retention Report. (2016). Retrieved from: https://brocku.ca/institutional-analysis/wp-content/uploads/sites/90/RetentionReport-2016.pdf

domestic tuition, changes to the student ancillary fee structure, and changes to student grants and loans. These impacts will have significant long-term consequences to Brock University.

• **SMA 3 Metrics**: In 2019, the Ontario Provincial Government announced changes to the Strategic Mandate Agreement metrics with the post-secondary sector in Ontario. SMA 3 (2020-2025) metrics include eleven indicators: six in the "skills and job outcomes" category and five in the "economic & community impact" category. SMA 3 indicators will play a major role in how Brock University aligns resources and programs to ensure our students are successful and career ready.

• **Truth and Reconciliation**: The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples together with the 94 recommendations of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada convey both international and national expectations with regard to increasing the number of Indigenous students with access to a post-secondary education. Creating a campus culture that is welcoming, together with the decolonization of academic curriculum, are key initiatives that will help frame the work of reconciliation.

• **Policy Compliance**: Brock University must ensure compliance with national, provincial and internal policies. Each of these policies hold particular relevance for the teaching, learning, and student services sectors: the Copyright Act of Canada; Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA); Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA); the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA); and the University's Human Rights and Equity Policies (Sexual Assault and Harassment; Freedom of Expression; Respectful Work and Learning Environment; Student Code of Conduct).

4.0 Consultation Process

The Teaching, Learning, and Student Success Institutional Plan has evolved over several stages:

Phase 1: **Teaching and Learning Plan (2013-2017)**: In 2013, the Teaching and Learning Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with CPI, faculty and student stakeholders.

Phase 2: Teaching, Learning and Student Success Plan (2017-2020): In 2016, with the addition of four student support units, the Teaching, Learning and Student Success Plan was developed and a new integrated plan created. This plan was developed with broad consultation from students and staff and through a number of unit-focused retreats. Two units in particular (Co-op, Career, and Experiential Education; and Student Wellness and Accessibility) experienced major consolidation with the creation of new, amalgamated units and underwent extensive consultations and strategic planning sessions).

Phase 3: **Teaching, Learning and Student Success Plan (2017-2020, Revised)**. During 2018-2019, the Teaching, Learning, & Student Success leadership team held three retreats and participated in the campus-wide and community-focused forms and discussions re: the development of Brock's Institutional Plan. Following the completion of the Brock University

Institutional Strategic Plan (2018-2025), in November 2018, the leadership team reconvened to revise and map the Teaching, Learning & Student Success Strategic Plan (2017-2020) with the goals and objectives of the Brock University Institutional Strategic Plan.

5.0 Teaching, Learning & Student Success Vision, Mission, Values

Vision: To be the leading Canadian mid-sized comprehensive university defined by the integration of innovative teaching and learning and a unique and exceptional student experience.

Mission: We equip future-ready students with the knowledge, experience, skills, and competencies that will prepare them to meet the challenges of a quickly changing, knowledge-based global economy.

Values: *In addition* to the eight values of the Brock University Strategic plan,[32] we are also committed to the following values:

•Pride: We take pride in our people and our institution.

•Passion: We are passionate about our work and the impact we have on others.

•Perseverance: We value the ability to "push on" in the face of adversity.

Partnership: We value teamwork and building collaborative networks.
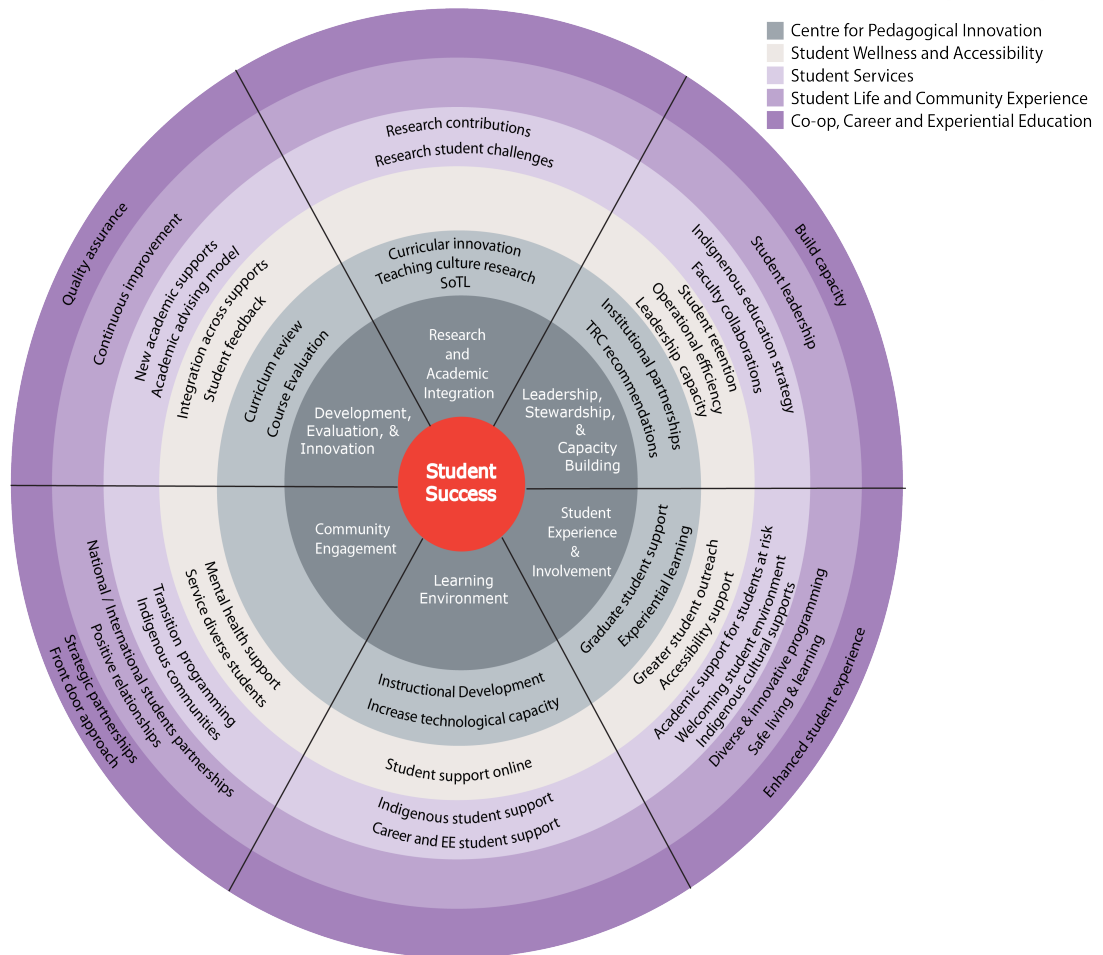
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[32] Brock University's Institutional Strategic Plan (2018-2025) identifies the following values: Integrity & respect; Unique student experience; Freedom of thought & expression; Knowledge mobilization; Innovation; Inclusivity, diversity & equity; Reconciliation & decolonization; Sustainable, accountable & transparent stewardship.

Teaching, Learning and Student Success Integrated Plan

April 2018

Anna Lathrop, Vice-Provost, Teaching, Learning & Student Services

Legend:
- Centre for Pedagogical Innovation
- Student Wellness and Accessibility
- Student Services
- Student Life and Community Experience
- Co-op, Career and Experiential Education

Center: **Student Success**

Inner ring segments:
- Research and Academic Integration
- Leadership, Stewardship, & Capacity Building
- Student Experience & Involvement
- Learning Environment
- Community Engagement
- Development, Evaluation, & Innovation

Outer labels:
- Research contributions
- Research student challenges
- Build capacity
- Indigenous education strategy
- Student leadership
- Faculty collaborations
- Student retention
- Operational efficiency
- Leadership capacity
- Institutional partnerships
- TRC recommendations
- Curricular innovation
- Teaching culture research
- SoTL
- Quality assurance
- Continuous improvement
- New academic supports
- Academic advising model
- Integration across supports
- Student feedback
- Curriclum review
- Course Evaluation
- Graduate student support
- Experiential learning
- Greater student outreach
- Accessibility support
- Academic support for students at risk
- Welcoming student environment
- Indigenous cultural supports
- Diverse & innovative programming
- Safe living & learning
- Enhanced student experience
- Mental health support
- Service diverse students
- Transition programming
- Indigenous communities
- National / International students partnerships
- Positive relationships
- Strategic partnerships
- Front door approach
- Instructional Development
- Increase technological capacity
- Student support online
- Indigenous student support
- Career and EE student support

Teaching, Learning and Student Success Integrated Goals and Objectives

Primary Areas of Integrated Planning & Support	Strategic Objectives
A. Learning Environment We develop the university's learning environment for both instructors/faculty and students by strengthening resources and supports that contribute to teaching and learning, experiential education, indigenous and marginalized student populations, and technological capacity.	1. Enhance teaching and learning infrastructure and technological capacity.
	2. Develop and implement improved practices and protocols in teaching (UDL; OERs).
	3. Develop and improve online academic support tools and resources to enhance student engagement and learning.
	4. Collaboratively build teaching and learning pedagogies, curriculum and spaces that are culturally appropriate for Indigenous students.
	5. Build capacity in Career Education and Experiential Learning.
B. Student Experience & Success We develop innovative, experiential and diverse programming for both undergraduate and graduate students.	1. Further develop instructional programming to support graduate students.
	2. Contribute to institutional initiatives to strengthen and expand experiential learning.
	3. Align services / supports / programs with demand to increase student outreach.
	4. Establish a baseline graduation rate for students who access accessibility services.
	5. Further develop academic support programming and services for students demonstrating need or who have been identified as potentially at risk.
	6. Renovate existing space for academic supports to provide a more accessible and welcoming environment for students.
	7. Provide Indigenous students with unique and opportunities for support and cultural experiences.
	8. Conceptualize and implement innovative and diverse programming and supports for students.
	9. Foster a safe living and learning environment that promotes student development and success.
	10. Develop innovative programming to facilitate post-graduation career development.

C. Research & Academic Integration	1. Promote Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).
	2. Contribute to multi institutional research on teaching culture to establish baseline for future directions.
Contribute to research and grant opportunities that support and enhance teaching, learning and student success.	3. Identify and establish internal and external grant opportunities contributing to curricular change.
	4. Participate in research opportunities through professional associations such as CACUSS and OAAP to better enhance the student experience.
	5. Contribute to research through participation in funded government programs (OPAIP, PEFAL, etc.).
D. Community Engagement	1. Implement actions identified in Brock's Student Mental Health and Addictions Plan.
	2. Respond to recommendations in the 2017 Human Rights Task Force re: diversity in student service provision in SHS and PCS.
We work collaboratively to facilitate and develop community partnerships to foster positive and reciprocal learning relationships.	3. Facilitate on-campus tutoring that fosters identity-based motivation.
	4. Facilitate consultation and collaboration with the Indigenous community, on and off campus.
	5. Facilitate opportunities for Brock students to engage with communities locally, across Canada, and globally.
	6. Foster positive relationships between Brock and the broader community.
	7. Enhance strategic partnerships, internally & externally.
	8. Create a central community/employer access point.
	9. Increase communication and brand awareness.
E. Strengthening Capacity	1. Enhance leadership capacity in teaching and learning through institutional partnerships.
	2. Support and contribute to the recommendations of the TRC .
	3. Identify and train the next level of leaders.
Through institutional partnerships and collaborations, contribute to leadership capacity in students, faculty and staff.	4. Implement a new staffing model for student health services to increase operational efficiencies.
	5. Engage in student retention initiatives with Student Services partners.
	6. Collaborate with faculty to develop strategic academic supports for students.
	7. Participate in supporting the development of a comprehensive strategy for Indigenous education on campus.
	8. Offer learning opportunities that build capacity and develop skills in student leaders and student organizations.

	9. Build capacity in Career Education and Experiential Learning.
F. Evaluation & Innovation All units in Teaching, Learning and Student Success are dedicated to continuous improvement, quality assurance, and program innovation within the supports and services provided to the university community.	1. Contribute to departmental curriculum review processes across institution.
	2. Facilitate the development of policies and protocols with respect to formative and summative course evaluation.
	3. Create feedback mechanisms for students and use feedback to inform services/supports/programs.
	4. Foster staff engagement by establishing an integration committee that will develop operational actions to support the strategic vision.
	5. Contribute to review process for Academic Advising; assist in developing strategic direction/model for Advising across the campus.
	6. Review academic support assessment strategies; develop new or enhanced strategies to evaluate effectiveness and student learning.
	7. Commit to continuous improvement and innovation through assessment, evaluation and evidence-based decision-making.
	8. Track, report and measure quality improvement.

6.0 Teaching, Learning, and Student Success: Actions and Measures

A. Learning Environment:
- In collaboration with Faculties, facilitate growth in online and flexible learning opportunities to meet the demands for increases in student enrollment and retention (CPI).
- Strengthen instructional development (faculty and sessional) programming and outreach with a focus on universal design for learning; decolonization of the curriculum; and open educational resources (CPI).
- Support continuous program improvement through curriculum renewal, integration of high impact practices, and pedagogical innovation (CPI and CCEE).
- In collaboration with the Faculties, increase learning skills support for online and blended courses (CPI, SS).
- Implemented career education into the curriculum (CCEE).
- Increased capacity in experiential learning and career education (CCEE).

By 2025 we will have:
1. Established increased partnerships with the Faculties and increased growth in online and flexible learning (CPI).
2. Supported the establishment of the Centre for Professional and Continuing Studies through instructional supports (CPI) and student services (SWAC, SS).
3. Expanded the adoption of UDL and OERs (CPI).
4. Established partnerships to help facilitate decolonization of the curriculum (CPI).
5. Supported and completed cyclical program reviews and renewal in the Faculties (CPI).
6. Supported the integration of high impact practices into the curriculum and academic programs on campus (CPI).
7. Increased research capacity via internal funding (Chancellor's Chairs) and through procurement of other funding sources to enhance teaching and learning on campus (CPI).

B. Student Experience & Success:

- Partner with Faculties to support Faculty-specific retention programming that targets first-year students (SS).
- Develop, pilot and evaluate a program to support students on academic probation (SS).
- Develop formal programs with community partners to increase opportunities for student transition into the workplace (CCEE).
- Increase the number of experiential and work integrated learning opportunities across campus (CCEE).
- Map curricular and co-curricular learning outcomes to skills and competencies for students (CCEE, SLCE).
- Increase opportunities for students to engage in co-curricular learning experiences on campus and in the community with a focus on first-year experience, student wellness, leadership, and reciprocal community development opportunities (SLCE).

- Foster off-campus student communities (SLCE).
- Implement all recommendations in Brock's Mental Health and Addiction Services Plan (SWAC).
- Continue to implement JED's recommendations for suicide prevention, intervention and postvention (SWAC).
- Continue to work with staff to integrate student services with increased efficiency and expanded capacity (SWAC, SS, SLCE, CCEE).
- Explore ways to collaborate on providing increased services and supports to all of Brock campus locations (all units).

By 2025 we will have:
1. Achieved steady increases in our institutional metrics for experiential learning from 2019 baseline and have met SMA 3 targets (CCEE).
2. Established a student experience record that indicates all forms of curricular and co-curricular experiential learning on every student's academic record (CCEE).
3. Piloted, tested and adopted a new Learning Management System (CPI).
4. Established proactive academic interventions that will have improved Brock's retention and graduation rates (SS).
5. Increased the number of Co-op enrolments as a result of new programs and the introduction of a regularized Spring Summer term (CCEE)
6. Established a new program (Talent Bridge) to transition graduating students into industry employment (CCEE).
7. Mapped career skills and competencies for all students (CCEE).
8. Fully integrated all students in CWC (SLCE).
9. Achieved a central role in proactively engaging all Faculties in curricular discussions re: flexible teaching and learning, learning outcomes, UDL (CPI).
10. Centralized the three functions of SWAC and expanded student service capacity in a new University student centre building (SWAC).

C. **Research & Academic Integration:**
- Promote the scholarship of teaching and learning (CPI).
- Identify and establish internal and external grant opportunities that contribute to teaching and learning and student success goals and objectives (all units).
- Participate in research opportunities through professional associations (all units).

By 2025 we will have:
1. Secured more external grant funding to enhance the scholarship of teaching and learning and have increased capacity in student services (all units).
2. Developed new data analytic measures to track and improve the student experience (SWAC; CCEE; SLCE; SS; CPI).
3. Contributed to academic and professional research re: best practices in teaching, learning and student success (all units).

D. Community Engagement:
- Implement the Student Mental Health and Addictions Plan (SWAC).
- Develop more strategic partnerships with local community agencies (all units).
- Formalize a front door articulation with the community re: employer and community development (CCEE; SLCE; SS; SWAC).
- Foster engagement with Indigenous communities and participate in reconciliation initiatives (all units).
- Increase community engagement opportunities for students (SLCE).
- Enhance engagement with alumni and potential donors (CCEE, SLCE).

By 2025 we will have:
1. Formalized more MOUs based on our collaborations with the community (all units).
2. Increased Brock's economic and social value impact in the community (all units).
3. Expanded our Co-op and work integrated learning employer base (CCEE).
4. Increased Brock graduating student employment rates (all units).
5. Demonstrated success with alumni and potential donors through enhanced engagement and increased funding revenue (all units).
6. Demonstrated an increase in partnerships with Indigenous communities (all units).

E. Strengthening Capacity: (all units)
- Enhance leadership capacity and interprofessional collaborations.
- Improve student retention rates.
- Expand student supports (learning strategists) in areas of academic need.
- Expand student leadership opportunities.
- Expand career education.
- Secure space for a new dedicated exam location for accessibility services.
- Adopt new technologies to enhance staff effectiveness and efficiency.

By 2025 we will have:
1. Increased Brock student retention and graduation rates (all units).
2. Increased capacity to provide student services through on and off campus resourcing (SS, SWAC, SLCE, CCEE).
3. Increased capacity to support instructional faculty and teaching assistants through a number of new digital forums (CPI).
4. Fostered leadership opportunities for all staff.
5. Enhanced Indigenous education; inclusion; accessibility.
6. Established the brand of our campus as a "culture of caring."

F. Evaluation & Innovation:
- Contribute to establishing institutional policies and protocols for end of term course evaluation (CPI).
- Develop processes to evaluate effectiveness of new initiatives and programming in student support services (CCEE, SLCE, SS, & SWAC).

    • Contribute to quality assurance through Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP)(CPI).

By 2025 we will:
1. Establish benchmarks for the deliverables in the Teaching, Learning, & Student Success Plan.
2. Assess progress in achieving SMA 3 benchmarks.
3. Continue to work with programs to achieve curriculum recommendations emerging from IQAP.

7.0 Brock University Teaching, Learning & Student Success at 60:

Brock University has a reputation for excellence in teaching and for outstanding student support and student services. The integration of the five units in the Teaching, Learning and Student Success portfolio allows for synergies and collaborations that historically were unrealized. Bringing teaching and learning closer together to support both the faculty and the students they teach means the unit as whole is more flexible, better informed as to pressure points and opportunities, and more efficient in terms of resource allocation and utilization.

By 2024, we will have established our national reputation in experiential and work-integrated learning, and we will be a global destination of choice for future-ready students who seek a unique, student-focused education. Our students will graduate with career-ready skills and we will be the first university in Canada to facilitate their direct entrance into the workforce through programs that "bridge" their education with the skills and competencies required for job placement. Our social and economic impact in Niagara, and beyond, will be extended through expanded continuing and professional education, and we will have moved to an academic trimester system—enabling accelerated degrees and greater access and flexibility for lifelong learning.

8.0 Conclusion

The Brock University Teaching, Learning, and Student Success Plan identifies six strategic priorities that frame our work, and we have mapped these priorities to the four institutional priorities of the University. This plan will guide our efforts and form the basis for annual goal setting, reporting and year-end assessment.

While the recent government announcement allowing students to opt out of student ancillary fees provides financial pressures for many, it also provides opportunities to reimagine how we might offer new initiatives focusing on student success. In a similar vein, we are faced with both challenges and opportunities when we consider how to begin to decolonize our institution through the programs and services we provide. We are excited about these future possibilities for both personal and professional growth and we are committed to working collaboratively with all campus partners and resources to achieve these goals.