

## Report to Senate of the Provost & Vice-President, Academic

April 15, 2026

Dear Senators,

I am pleased to provide the report of the Provost & Vice-President, Academic to Senate. As you will note, the structure of this report and its content are focused on Brock's [academic plan](#).

As Senate is responsible for the educational policy of the University, it is critically important that we keep the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the academic plan in mind. I have framed this report accordingly around the priorities outlined in the academic plan, with an eye to the specific actions identified within each that we've committed to as an institution. I would also like to use this report as an opportunity to celebrate our progress and achievements on the plan so far.

Thank you, and I look forward to our continued discussions.

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### Priority 1: High-Quality and Meaningful

- On March 28, the 2026 Niagara Regional Science & Engineering Fair was hosted at Brock and brought 137 student projects (Grades 5–12) and hundreds of community members to campus, with strong engagement from Brock faculty and staff as mentors, judges, and sponsors of disciplinary awards. Thank you all those involved in organizing!
- From the Faculty of Mathematics and Science, Brock University's participation in the pan-Canadian Canadian Neutron and Positron Beam Laboratory consortium, supported by \$13.5M in CFI Innovation Fund investment, has strengthened Brock's research capacity and access to world-class infrastructure for advanced materials science. This initiative directly supports research excellence, knowledge mobilization, and partnerships that enable high-impact, interdisciplinary research with real-world applications.
- Delighted to share that the [2026 Teaching Assistant Awards](#) have been announced. Congratulations to all our winners!
  - o Novice TA Winner: Erika Savage, Child & Youth Studies
  - o International TA Award: Tanima Ferdous, Faculty of Education
  - o Graduate TA Award (Masters): Megan (Maisie) Babiski, Sociology/ Applied Disability Studies
  - o Graduate TA Award (PhD): Shealin Murray, Psychology
  - o TA Award Winner: Mariam El Morched, Chemistry
- Nominations are now open for the [Award for Distinguished Teaching](#). This award is presented annually to a faculty member who, in the opinion of their peers, has made an outstanding contribution to the teaching and learning environment at Brock University. Nomination packages are due at the end of May.
- In concert with the launch of a new open educational practices stream within the University's [Open Educational Resources \(OER\) grant program](#), instructors are invited to

consider participating in an international faculty fellowship that focuses on the [United Nations sustainable development goals \(SDGs\)](#). Submissions due April 10. For more information, visit [CPI's Teaching and Learning Grants page](#).

- From Co-Op Career and Experiential Education, the final reporting for the 2025-26 CEWIL iHUB funding has been completed. Over this past year, Brock received nearly \$400,000 in federal funding, supporting 274 students across 14 projects. These initiatives continue to expand experiential learning opportunities and community impact. Recent highlights include student success stories featuring experiential learning with [Curling Canada](#) and a [virtual dance initiative supporting hospitalized children](#). Looking ahead, 21 applications have been submitted for the first round of 2026 funding cycle, with results expected in April.
- On March 23, Brock International hosted an Academics Without Borders featuring Dr. Jill Grose's experience delivering the Instructional Skills Workshop at the University of Business and Integrated Development Studies in Wa, Ghana. The workshop supported faculty members at the partner institution in developing participatory teaching practices. The session served to highlight Brock's global engagement and capacity-building work and provided an opportunity for faculty to seek guidance from Corrie Young, Associate Executive Director of Projects & Network at AWB, on opportunities for future.
- This year, Brock sent three teams to compete in the CS Games in Quebec. This event attracts strong participation from universities across Quebec and Ontario. Each participating institution selects a team of approximately ten students, assigned to specific competition streams based on their strengths. Brock's teams achieved first place in the Artificial Intelligence competition—where students developed an AI agent to play poker—along with fifth place in High-Performance Computing and sixth place in UI/UX Design. Congratulations to all those who took part in the competition!

## Priority 2: Accessible, Flexible, and Customizable

- The Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre (SWAC) has successfully launched and completed the administration of the Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (CCWS). The results are currently being analysed. SWAC also hosted the St. Patrick's Day Safety Fair focused on harm reduction and alcohol safety education and delivered an ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) workshop to help build campus capacity in suicide intervention and support. Lastly, the Ambassador of Campus Wellness has launched the sixth and final cohort began, bringing the total number of student-facing staff to 100.
- Applications are now open for Brock's Plus programs. Currently applications to Brock's Med and Law Plus programs are trending upward. Applications are open until April 15, and more information can be found on [Plus Programs website](#).
- Applications for Co-op are also open for first-year undergraduate students. In addition to direct entry into co-op programs from high school, current undergraduate students also have the opportunity to apply to co-op at the end of their first year. Applications may be submitted until June 1. For more information, please visit [Co-op website](#).

### Priority 3: Supportive and Student-Centred

- Student Affairs is pleased to have a weekly presence at the Burlington Campus, promoting CARE and connect programming to students. There are plans to continue growing student outreach and support in Burlington next year.
- A collaboration between Co-op, Career, and Experiential Education (CCEE) and the Office of People and Culture (OPC) is enhancing student access to on-campus employment through CareerZone by centralizing all on campus, paid, student employment opportunities across part-time/seasonal roles, co-op, and experiential learning. Faculties and administrative units interested in hiring student employees or exploring how students can support their work are encouraged to contact CCEE at [career.ed@brocku.ca](mailto:career.ed@brocku.ca)
- Over the course of March 2026, the International Student Recruitment team presented four faculty-based webinars for prospective students, supported by Deans from GSB and FAHS, as well as the Chairs of Computer Science and Engineering. The four webinars attracted more than 100 participants and provided an opportunity for highly engaged Q&A sessions, contributing to the progression of existing applicants toward conversion.
- Demand for the Student Exchange Program has increased for 2026–27, with 108 Brock students participating in an international exchange, representing a 47% rise from 74 participants in 2025–2026. Brock International’s targeted messaging has also resulted in an increase in student intent to study in non-traditional destinations.

### Priority 4: Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive

- On March 31, Indigenous Plus celebrated the completion of its inaugural year, recognizing 8 students this year who earned their one-year completion certificates. Congratulations!
- Also from the Indigenous Engagement Office, on March 16 Hadiya’dagénhahs First Nations, Métis and Inuit Student Centre in partnership with De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre hosted IAMINUK, a hands-on presentation on Inuit Culture to approximately 50 participants. On March 23, a drop-in drumming session with Elder Oakie included 60 staff and students, as well as 7 community members from the Niagara Catholic District School Board Soaring program. And on March 31, the team at Hadiya’dagénhahs prepared Exam prep kits for students and offered a finger weaving workshop with MNO (Métis Nation of Ontario) students from the Infinite Reach Program to approximately 120 participants.

### Priority 5: Future-Oriented

- From Professional and Continuing Studies, Brock ESL recently concluded their study abroad program for students from Hokkai High School on March 26 and the Intensive English Language Program for the Winter term on April 2, creating cultural learning opportunities and supporting Brock’s international profile.
- From the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation (CPI), Faculty, Instructors, Teaching Assistants and community partners are invited to join the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation’s [Spring Perspectives on Teaching and Learning](#) on Monday, May 4, from 9am – 4pm.

- Also from CPI, The [annual Spring deletion](#) of course sites will begin in June. Notifications will be placed in Brightspace in May, and as always if there is content that needs to be saved [importing it](#) into a [Project Site](#) will exclude it from the deletion process.
- On March 19, PCS celebrated the two-year anniversary of its first open-enrollment programs. Since that initial offering, PCS has offered over 660 sections for a grand total of 4831 enrollments. And on March 26th, PCS participated in the Workforce Coalition roundtable, hosted by Workforce Collective, to discuss ways to better support talent recruitment and retention in the Niagara region.
- Brock University was a full participant in the Canada-Saudi Education Partnership Forum. On March 30, the International team met with Saudi institutional representatives to discuss potential areas of academic and research collaboration. And on March 31, Brock International hosted a team of Saudi delegates, highlighting Brock's strengths in student experience and work-integrated learning, research, contract training, and academic-industry collaboration, with a focus on business and robotics.

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Since we last met, we have continued our visits to the teaching Faculties to discuss what a potential new degree architecture could look like for Brock. These conversations have been highly productive and insightful, and I would like to thank all those who have taken part and shared their thoughts. I am very much looking forward to our continued discussions on this topic at Senate this year and next. As a reminder, feedback may also be shared in writing at [reimagining@brocku.ca](mailto:reimagining@brocku.ca).

As you may recall, in my December 2025 report, I created a small working group chaired by the University Librarian Nicole Nolan—alongside Peter Berg, Anna Lathrop, Geraldine Jones, and representatives from ITS and Research—and asked them to identify concrete next steps for implementing an AI strategy at Brock. They have recently completed their work and developed a plan that we will be beginning to implement. More information from them will be coming soon.

On April 9, we hosted the Community Update. We had over 300 individuals in attendance, including students, faculty, staff, and community members—including some of you here today. The content focused on the provincial funding model for universities in Ontario, an overview of the 2026-27 budget (which I note is coming to Senate today through the Planning, Priorities, and Budget Committee) and the impact of the recent Provincial funding changes, as well as our priorities and opportunities for the future, as captured in the University Action Plan. Thank you to everyone who took the time to join, as these are important topics for the University.

Lastly, as we are now in the midst of the examination period, I want to wish all our students the best as they work towards wrapping up their Winter term!

Sincerely,

Arja Vainio-Mattila  
Provost & Vice-President, Academic