

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

January 21, 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.

Priority 1: High-Quality and Meaningful

- At the Goodman School of Business this fall, students in Accounting Theory conducted an in-depth evaluation of IFRS 16 and submitted a formal comment letter to the Accounting Standards Board. Working in research teams, they analyzed stakeholder feedback, reviewed academic literature, and applied the IFRS Conceptual Framework to assess the standard's impact on financial reporting quality. Their work identified key challenges related to incremental borrowing rate estimation, complexity for SMEs and public sector entities, the treatment of administrative and short-term leases, and the clarity of disclosure requirements. Based on their findings, the students developed a series of practical and standards-based recommendations aimed at improving comparability, faithful representation, and decision usefulness. Their proposals included clearer guidance for determining discount rates, tiered reporting options for smaller entities, enhanced materiality thresholds for lease modifications, and strengthened disclosure guidelines to improve transparency.
- Also at Goodman, the Centre for Public Policy and Innovation in Accounting's annual symposium took place on November 6, 2025, with more than 100 people in attendance. This year's theme was Global Trade in Transition: Meeting the Moment. Canada is faced with confronting a new and evolving international trade environment. This will require a coordinated approach by government and business leaders to adapt to changing circumstances. The symposium examined Canada's strategic response to these challenges with speakers from academia, government, and industry.
- On January 8, 2026, Brock International hosted partners from Chonnam National University in South Korea. Guests Dr. Chung Chul Roh, Director, International Affairs, and Shinhye Kang, Manager, International Programs (CNU), had the opportunity to engage with academic departments, including Computer Science and Engineering, and meet students interested in studying abroad. This visit strengthened international partnerships and promoted student mobility to non-European destinations, particularly in Asia.

- On December 9 at the Faculty of Humanities, the Humanities Research Institute (HRI) had its fall term symposium of "lightning talk": 5-minute, 1-slide presentations by faculty and grad students showcasing the high quality, cutting-edge research being done by our faculty and graduate students and fostering conversation and collaboration across the Faculty.
- The Academic Advising team in the Office of the Registrar and Enrolment Services (ORES) is advancing transfer-specific initiatives this Fall/Winter, including expanded promotional materials, increased presence at college fairs, and enhanced multimedia resources such as YouTube tutorials, Brightspace "Transfer 101" modules, and monthly newsletters. One-on-one advising remains a priority, with the Transfer Academic Advisor completing 82 appointments with prospective and incoming transfer students since May 2025.
- ORES is also offering monthly information sessions to be a forum for engagement and collaboration with the campus community. These sessions tailored for department chairs, program directors, academic advisors, and administrative staff provide timely updates on upcoming deadlines, review key BrockDb system functions, and deliver just-in-time training and information relevant to departments. The schedule for these sessions is available on the [ORES SharePoint site](#) for 2026.
- Course registration dates and Smart Start timelines have been refined over the past few years to better support incoming students. For Fall/Winter registration, the separate registration date for students with fewer than 5.0 credits was eliminated in 2025; based on the success of this change, this will be the same for 2026 as well. Students with 5.0 credits or less are now grouped with those holding up to 9.5 credits, allowing earlier registration and reducing barriers experienced in previous years. All registration dates for 2026 will be posted on the ORES website [under Registration & Important Dates – Registration Guides and Timetables](#) in the coming weeks.
- Also from ORES, the Summer 2025 update to the Smart Start program introduced a format that will continue for 2026, with dates included alongside registration timelines. Feedback on these changes has been excellent, and data from Academic Advising shows a notable decline in Year 1 students requiring advising support—a direct result of Smart Start's assistance with course registration, whether students attend in person or submit their registration for virtual review.

Priority 2: Accessible, Flexible, and Customizable

- On January 24 the Goodman School of Business will host A-Team, an annual recruitment event that invites high-average applicants and their parents/supporters to campus to experience a little of what life at Brock is like. They will hear from the Dean, attend mock lectures and have the opportunity to network with current students. This annual conversion event typically has a minimum 60% of attendees accept their offer and register at Brock.
- At the Faculty of Education, all Undergraduate Educational Studies courses in the Department of Educational Studies that contribute to the BA in Educational Studies, all the concurrent education programs, and the Minor in Educational Studies are now offered as half-credit courses. The final remaining full-credit course has been restructured into two half-credit courses in the 2026-2027 Undergraduate Calendar. In addition, most

Undergraduate Educational Studies courses no longer have prerequisites. Together, these changes provide greater opportunities for students to participate in semester-abroad experiences and reduce disruption for those students who are facing extenuating circumstances while completing their programs. The Undergraduate Educational Studies Program Committee is committed to further reducing prerequisite courses moving forward.

- At the Faculty of Social Sciences, [an online information session](#) was organized for potential students in the MA in Critical Sociology to learn about the program's scope as well as degree options that include the MRP, MRP with co-op, and thesis

Priority 3: Supportive and Student-Centred

- Student Life & Success (SLS) will be hosting Success and Wellness Day, a partnered event between Learning Services and SWAC on January 28 from 1:00pm-3:30pm in Market Hall. This event brings Brock's students services and supports directly to students in one place to support their academic, personal, and overall success. Students will have the opportunity to receive on-the-spot access to supports and resources along with pizza and prizes.
- SLS also delivered six engagement events during the first two weeks of January to support student transition and reconnection following the winter break, including Winter-start students. Programming focused on belonging, peer connection, and early engagement. Approximately 27 Frost Week events were offered campus-wide between January 4–16, led primarily by BUSU, Residence, Student Life, and Brock International, and coordinated through a cross-campus working group.
- Mentor Link mentee applications reopened in January to support Winter-start students and late applicants. The [Mentor Link program](#) supports students with increased confidence navigating university systems, expanded social connections, and greater engagement with academic supports, particularly during the first exam period. Mentees participate in a range of Faculty-based and co-curricular activities across campus. Primary areas of support include academics, home or family circumstances, living concerns, and finances.
- Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, Rajiv Jhangiani, while in India as part of his sabbatical, engaged with several potential Brock University applicants and with key partners through meetings facilitated by the International Student Recruitment team. During his engagements, Vice-Provost Jhangiani reinforced key messages around “Why Canada” and “Why Brock”, contributing to sustaining momentum in a priority market.
- Brock International delivered a three-part Winter term orientation experience for new international students, including a virtual orientation on December 10, 2025, an in-person welcome on January 4, 2026, and a Global Connections Meet & Greet on January 14, 2026. To date, 66% of new registered Winter international students have participated, representing 25 countries/regions. The promotional cycle for the 2026–2027 Student Exchange Program has concluded, with nearly 400 students expressing interest in participating in the Student Exchange Program. Applications closed on January 9, 2026, for the first round of placements and will remain open based on availability.
- At the Faculty of Humanities, there have been several very successful events recently (with a few still ongoing). The [Metis Nutcracker](#), featuring [Walker Cultural Leader Nicole Joy-](#)

[Fraser](#), completed its wildly successful, sold-out run as the fall mainstage production at the MIWSFPA on Sunday, December 7. The *Metis Nutcracker* is by in-house playwright Matthew MacKenzie (Métis Nation of Alberta), as part of his award-winning research, and engages nearly all areas of the Academic Plan. Students were involved in all aspects of the production from performances, assistant directing, lighting, sound, and stunning costume design, while engaged in decolonizing knowledges and practices through work with MacKenzie and Walker Cultural Leader, Nicole Joy-Fraser.

- Also at the Faculty of Humanities, the VISA student exhibition "[Models of Sound](#)" is in its final weeks, and the Department of Classics hosted their 13th annual [Saturnalia](#) event—an opportunity for undergraduates to come together for fun and learning and foster department and student community. A nearly sold-out Brock Choir, The Weight of Light, also recently showcased student voices from across campus through a diverse holiday program that included an adaptation of Huron Carol by Wendat poet Andrée Levesque Sioui, a traditional South African protest song, and a Levantine choral arrangement by upcoming WCL Shireen Abu-Khader.
- The Brock Badgers proudly celebrated the academic accomplishments of 271 student-athletes during the annual Celebration of Academic Excellence. The ceremony, presented by Nothers The Award Store, took place in Pond Inlet on January 15 and highlighted student success from the 2024-25 academic year. With an average of at least 80 per cent in their program of study, each Badgers Academic Excellence Award recipient will be honoured with a certificate and pin at the ceremony. Student-athletes who achieve honour roll status in subsequent years earn a distinct pin each year in celebration of their academic success throughout their Brock University career. Brock Sports also hosted its annual holiday skate in support of Community Care on December 3, with members of the Brock men's and women's hockey programs supporting.
- Also from Sports & Rec, Madalyn Weinhart (Women's Basketball) was named a Top 8 USPORTS All-Canadian Academic, which recognizes the best and brightest university student-athletes from across Canada. Official announcement and celebration will take place January 27-28 in Ottawa. This is the first time a female student-athlete from Brock has received this incredible honour. Congratulations, Madalyn!
- From the Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre (SWAC), personal counselling and supports for students continue to be available. This includes an ADHD group will be starting in February, including a Q and A with a specialist; DBT Skills groups will be offered to grad students only starting in February; CBT will also be starting in February for all students; a new Social Service worker student has started in the Hub, as well as two additional interns in personal counselling; and a Grief Group every other Thursday, co-lead with Faith and Life. SWAC is also continuing this term to offer medical supports by physicians who specialize in ADHD, Concussions, Eating Disorders (Dysregulated Eating). In the fall semester these specializations were highly utilized.
- Also from SWAC, on October 22, 2025 the Ambassador of Campus Well-being program was launched. Funded by the McCall MacBain Foundation, the Ambassador of Campus Well-being program strengthens Brock University's commitment to cultivating a healthy,

inclusive, and supportive campus environment. Designed to build capacity across the institution, the program equips staff with foundational knowledge, shared language, and practical tools to promote well-being within their roles and everyday interactions. The 12-week professional development program includes a mix of in-person learning, online modules, and a capstone project. Participants in the program engage in learning that emphasizes mental health literacy, health equity, connection and belonging, and early support for students who may be in distress. SWAC has set a goal of having 100 staff, across six cohorts, complete the program by the end of June. To date, 78 staff are currently participating or have registered for an upcoming cohort!

- From Student Accessibility Services (SAS), work continues to advance student success and accessibility through expanded programming, improved service delivery, and strengthened institutional collaboration. This includes group-based and peer-supported programming, including ADHD-specific initiatives in collaboration with Personal Counselling Services, skills-based workshops, updated orientation sessions, and a mid-January Open House to support early student connection. Peer supported initiatives including partnerships with the Black Student Success Centre and the Hub enhance student engagement through study halls, social media posts, and targeted events.
- The Office of the Registrar & Enrolment Services' Student Success Navigator (SSN) initiative launched in Fall 2025. Former Smart Start staff conducted outreach via phone, text, and email to incoming Year 1 students identified as academically, financially, or personally at risk, as well as late-admitted students who may have missed orientation. Students who had not logged into Brightspace by the D2 drop deadline were also contacted. The goal was to provide friendly, peer-to-peer, confidential conversations to answer questions and connect students with appropriate supports. Of 1,043 academically at-risk students, Navigators reached 448 high-risk students, achieving a 60% response rate—up from 48% in 2024 and 22% in 2023. Common referrals included Learning Services, Academic Advising, ExperienceBU, and Student Wellness and Accessibility Services.
- At the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Department of Political Science kicked off 2026 by hosting [Dr. Game Masters Night](#), an opportunity for students to get together in person to play a variety of interactive games with PoliSci faculty members acting as game masters.

Priority 4: Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive

- As we look ahead to next month, February is a time to recognize and honour Black History and African Heritage. Brock is proud to offer a variety of events that celebrate culture, community, and creativity. The full schedule is on [ExperienceBU](#). A key highlight is [Afro-Caribbean Night](#): the largest cultural celebration on campus. This year, it will take place on February 27 and will include a Black Futures Showcase (formerly *Art Speaks*), a Vendor Fair, Variety Show, 360 Photo Booth, and exciting prizes. All are welcome, and early bird tickets are available now through [University Tickets](#).
- Last winter, the Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement partnered with the Office of People & Culture to develop a component for their leadership programming. The result was a four-day training opportunity organized around Indigenous Engagement. The goal was to support the participants in developing their understanding and capacity to engage collaboratively

with Indigenous peoples. In addition to Indigenous basics, topics covered included land-based learning, consultation best practices, cultural safety, and policy considerations. The sessions were grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing and being. There was significant interest among non-Indigenous folk in improving their capacity to engage respectfully with Indigenous peoples, and work is underway to adapt this initial offering for groups including students (as a parallel to the Indigenous stream of Indigenous plus) and the community potentially through Professional and Continuing Studies.

- Also pleased to share the success of Hadiya'dagénhahs' 3rd Annual Pow Wow, which was hosted last week on January 16. The annual Pow Wow is organized with support from Brock University and the Office of the Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement. I hope many of you were able to attend to take part!
- At the Faculty of Social Sciences (FOSS), [Daniel Krowchuk \(BSc '23\) was named an EDI Changemaker for December](#) in recognition of his commitment to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in existing spaces and creating new opportunities to build community on campus and beyond. Krowchuk recently supported the launch of Loud and Proud, a queer-focused weekly drop-in space for the 2SLGBTQAI+ community in Brock's Student Health and Wellness HUB.
- Also FOSS, Students Jazlyn Savoie (Child and Youth Studies) and Michael Selbie (Labour Studies and Sociology) were among accessibility and inclusion champions awarded [Brock University Accessibility and Inclusion Awards](#). Among recent CPI teaching award announcements, Assistant Professor of Child and Youth Studies Christiana Okyere Folson was named a 2025 Faculty Fellow in Accessibility.

Priority 5: Future-Oriented

- On February 2, the Goodman School of Business will welcome Randy Ambrosie as the 2026 Distinguished Leader. After a nine-season career in the Canadian Football League (CFL), Randy transitioned to senior leadership roles in financial services including Managing Director at CIBC World Markets and President of AGF Funds. He also served as CEO of MacDougall, MacDougal and MacTier, before finishing his career back where he started with eight years at the helm of the CFL as Commissioner. Randy will be speaking with students in a class in the morning and in a fireside chat with Dean Barry Wright from 2pm-3:30pm. All are welcome. Watch Brock News for details.
- The Black Print is a holistic career and identity series led by the Black Student Success Centre. This monthly series of workshops, panels, and conversations is designed to support the Black student community in navigating career pathways while centering culture, wellness, and leadership. January's session is [Leadership & Influence: From Campus to Career](#), unpacking how students can develop influence, confidence, and credibility. In February, students are encouraged to participate in the Black Futures Showcase as part of Afro-Caribbean night to share their creations, research, and/or tech projects
- From Brock Sports & Recreation, final camp numbers are in. Through our PALS BSR Camps, Spring Day, and Spring Overnight programs— 8,334 students stepped onto campus to participate in Youth University in 2025!

- The Library is coordinating the creation of a Research Data Management Operations Group (RDM-OG) to coordinate activities on campus to support data management by graduate students and researchers. The new group is an outcome of Brock's Research Data Management Strategy announced in 2023. It will include representatives from several key stakeholder units on campus, as well as a researcher advisory council.
- Next month, the Faculty of Social Sciences is co-hosting with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs a session on [Building Your LinkedIn Profile: Tips for Graduate Students](#). This interactive workshop will give students tips and advice on how to build and effectively present their graduate work to connect with potential employers or volunteer opportunities.

Happy new year—and welcome to 2026! I hope everyone had a restful holiday break.

As we kick off the Winter term, I will keep my comments here brief as I am very much looking forward to our generative discussion today on a potential new Degree Architecture for Brock. Thank you, in advance, for your consideration and thoughtful input on this important item.

I will also note that the budget development for 2026-27 continues. Brock—like the other public-sector higher education institutions—continues to face a significant budget deficit. [As I noted previously](#), what this means is that as we look ahead, it will be ever more important for all members of our community to acknowledge that the University's capacity for significant financial commitments remains limited. The ongoing structural deficit will require a careful and measured approach to all resource allocation questions in the coming years. The path to balanced budget for 2026-27 will not be easy. Over the coming months we will continue to grapple with some difficult questions and decisions that go to the core of who we are as an academic institution and what our priorities are for the future.

Lastly, as is customary early in the new calendar year, appended to this report is the updated list of programs scheduled for Cyclical Program Reviews in 2027-28. The Quality Assurance team will be reaching out these programs to share details as the reviews begin.

Sincerely,

Arja Vainio-Mattila
Provost & Vice-President, Academic

Enclosure: Cyclical Program Review Map for 2027-28