

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

September 24, 2025

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

- Brock is expanding its partnership with Dublin City University (DCU). The success of Goodman's dual degree with DCU has led to partnering with them on a student exchange agreement that is open to all Faculties. You can read more [online here](#).
- On August 28, Brock organized its fourth Annual Educator Day. This event welcomed international recruitment partners to campus, together with nearly 60 college partners, recruitment agents, educators from K to 12 schools, and language pathway providers to learn more about Brock and explore opportunities for collaboration. Highlights of the day included enthusiastic interest in Brock's innovative combined MBA program, the Integrated Engineering program, and the University's signature Robotics Competition, all of which drew strong attention and sparked exciting conversations about future partnerships.
- Over the summer, our International's Global Scholars Program welcomed 20 visiting scholars from 12 different countries to engage in collaborative research and mentorship with faculty in 5 Faculties. Of these scholars, 6 were funded by the Mitacs Globalinks.
- Delighted to share that three Brock professors have been elected to the [Royal Society of Canada this year](#). Congratulations to Professor Fiona Blaikie, Professor Robert Dimand and Professor Allison Glazebrook on your remarkable achievement!

Priority 2: Accessible, Flexible, and Customizable

- BU101 (Learning Services' asynchronous academic strategy and skill preparation program) has expanded its outreach with the following courses providing grade incentive for course completion. Courses include: MGMT 1P93, ACTG 1P01, PSYC 1F90, RECL 1P90, HLSC 1F90, MUSI 1P50. As well, 51 customized Learning Services Academic Skill Development workshops have been requested by faculty and campus partners to run integrated into their course time during the Fall term.

- Student Accessibility Services (SAS) launched a more proactive and visible presence during Orientation Week this year by tabling at orientation events across campus, including Weather Station field and the Thistle hallway/chalkboard. Meeting approximately 500 students between events, SAS provided proactive information about services, support with transition and registration, and appointment scheduling support. Additionally, the SAS Open House saw approximately 175 new and returning students meet to engage with services and seek community and connection.

Priority 3: Supportive and Student-Centred

- Brock International is collaborating with Student Life and Success to address a growing need for additional retention supports for international students, as they face unique academic and personal challenges that impact their success and persistence. Through this collaboration, international students will be provided with research-informed academic skill development opportunities focusing on areas such as academic writing, time management, and citation practices, which are crucial for student success.
- In Learning Services, registration for the first-year Student Transition and Engagement Program (STEP 0N00) has been opened to all Brock University students for a fee of \$850. Historically, STEP 0N00 was offered as an alternate admission pathway course that focused on academic skill development and supported successful academic transitions to university studies. This year, all students seeking additional support in their studies are welcome to register in the Fall and newly released Winter course offerings.
- The Brock Sport Medicine Clinic (BSMC) opened its doors at Canada Games Park in April and has its grand opening set for September 19, 2025. All students, staff and faculty now have access to leading experts in physiotherapy, massage therapy, chiropractic care and osteopathy right on campus. In addition, the multi-disciplinary services provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to complete experiential education-based placements by working with various practitioners. The BSMC will also serve as a placement location for the new Master of Athletic Therapy program in 2026.
- Sports & Recreation has an updated slate of offerings for 2025-26, and students across campus will see new types of programming in movement and wellness this year, such as new “Learn To Play” instructional programs where students can learn the basic skills needed to play selected sports through drills and small sided games, aimed at gaining confidence to take part in intramural leagues. Additional programs include new themed tournaments, like the Movember Dodgeball Tournament, as an awareness piece for men's health, and integrating adaptive sports leagues into the roster of offerings, like sitting-volleyball and wheelchair basketball.

Priority 4: Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive

- Earlier this month, on September 6, the Black Student Success Centre (BSSC) hosted its welcome bash. More than 300 students (25% increase from 2024) gathered in Jubilee Courtyard to build community, celebrate culture, and foster belonging through games, peer connections, and student small business engagement.

- The Future Black Leaders Mentorship Program has kicked off for another year providing Black students with equitable access to mentorship and representation, fostering inclusion and empowerment, with student participation growing by 151% as compared to last year. As well, the [Mentor Link program](#) (a campus-wide first year peer mentorship program) officially launched with 51 upper-year mentors paired with 73 first-year mentees, providing personalized peer guidance to support transition and belonging.
- As a part of welcome week and orientation, Student Life and Success organized several events and activities to connect students with community and provide support as they begin their studies. Among the many events, a few highlights include: the [Brock Cares Day of Service](#), the [Off-Campus Community Dinner](#), and the [Welcome Wagon](#). Welcome week events engaged more than 2,000 students this year—up 400 from 2024!
- In partnership with the Hadiya'dagénhahs First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Student Centre, Sports & Recreation will be organizing "Learn to Play Lacrosse" workshops this year, with a speaker series featuring Dr. Ted Nolan.

Priority 5: Future-Oriented

- The Department of Visual Arts developed, planned, and hosted [DRAWN 2025](#), a juried drawing exhibition featuring the work of secondary students from the Niagara Region. The exhibition took place this summer in the Visual Art Gallery at the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts. The initial call for submissions reached over 25 local secondary schools (Public, Catholic, and Private), school board consultants, teachers, and students. We received over 150 individual submissions from 16 schools. Sixty drawings were selected for the exhibition, and three awards were given to deserving students in collaboration with the St. Catharines Art Association and the Pelham Arts Festival. This exhibition reached hundreds of local students and their parents/supporters and brought them to our campus—250 people attended the opening reception, and 310 visitors total came to see the show. This exhibition strategically strengthened our ties to local secondary schools, teachers, consultants, school boards, and students, and it allowed us to showcase and celebrate the tremendous artistic talent in our region. Visual Arts is hoping to be able to run another drawing exhibition in 2027 and have it become a biennial event.
- As part of the 10th Anniversary celebrations for the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, the Brock University Library and the Department of Visual Arts are hosting [Intentional Futures](#), an exhibition showcasing work from the Brock University Art Collection. The MIWSFPA is also hosting [a ten-year kick-off event](#) this homecoming weekend to launch their anniversary celebrations.
- Consultation regarding the Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy continued throughout the summer months. Draft changes to the policy are anticipated to be shared in October. These revisions are expected to bring the policy into compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) directives, as well as enhance the clarity of procedures, supporting consistency and transparency.
- Thrilled to be able to share that our Burlington campus is now open. Students had their first day of in-person classes at Burlington on September 15, and the space is serving as a hub

for the Teacher Education and Applied Disability Studies programs. The campus also includes Library space, a satellite office for the Hadiya'dagénhahs First Nations, Métis and Inuit Student Centre, and Professional and Continuing Studies' programming.

- Also delighted to share that we have met our enrolment goal for this fall, and in fact have exceeded it slightly. This is a significant achievement—congratulations to everyone involved! As the recruitment cycle for the next academic year kicks off (OUF is just around the corner on September 27-28) this is welcome and encouraging news.

Welcome to the new academic year!

As we're heading into 2025-26, I am pleased to be able to pick up where we left off by sharing another update from the [Curriculum Delivery Initiative](#) (CDI). Over the summer months, Adult Education was the third program to engage in the initiative, and discussion focused on program pathways, enrolment, retention, course offerings, and academic flexibility in the areas of pre-requisites, context credits and full versus half-courses. The program was particularly interested in thinking about generative AI in the context of assessments, marketing and recruitment.

Overall, the program was in strong alignment with the Curriculum Delivery Initiative guidelines and principles. Adult Education supports flexible program pathways, laddering credentials, multiple exit ramp options ranging from a certificate and minor to an honours degree. F courses are also offered in a flexible condensed format, and core courses are offered on all four terms. The program also reviewed and considered its highly flexibility structure in context of its student population, primarily consisting of adult learners at post-graduate level, taking part-time studies.

The CDI is a resource I will continue to recommend leveraging, especially if your program is thinking about changes. The CDI team, via Anna Lathrop, is happy to help interested programs.

On the topic of change, as you may have seen over the summer, we opened a Brightspace shell titled "[Reimagining Brock University](#)" that will serve as an open forum for asking questions of the community. If you haven't had a chance yet, you can [access the Brightspace shell here](#). The current discussion topics are around degree architecture and core & context. Comments, thoughts, or suggestions on these topics are welcome by email at reimagining@brocku.ca.

Lastly, I would like to extend my thanks to everyone on a successful start of term—the excitement on campus this time of year is always wonderful to see!

Sincerely,

Arja Vainio-Mattila
Provost & Vice-President, Academic