



DURHAM COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AGENDA

Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
Location: Oshawa Campus, Durham College Boardroom A144

When making decisions, the Board is encouraged to consider the College's values of collaboration, diversity & inclusion, excellence, innovation, integrity, respect, and social responsibility.

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1 Introduction of New Governor, John Ecker

2. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

4. PRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 New Leading the Way Video - D. Lovisa
- 4.2 Program Spotlight: Oshawa Music Week

Presenters: Barry Waite, Moreen Fearon-Tapper, Tony Sutherland, John Starling, Ashwani Pareek (student), Simmone Chada (student), Eyrica D'Rozario (student)

- 4.3 Young African Works Kenya: Youth Employability Through TVET

Presenters: Don Lovisa, Ana Belen Jimenez

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The following items will be addressed through the Consent Agenda unless specifically removed for separate attention, by request.

Recommendation

That all items listed under the heading of consent agenda be adopted as recommended.

- 5.1 Approval of Public Session Agenda - December 13, 2023

Recommendation

That the public agenda for the December 13, 2023, Board of Governors meeting be approved as presented.

- 5.2 Approval of Public Minutes from the Board of Governors Meeting of October 11, 2023 4 - 10

Recommendation

That the public minutes of the Board of Governors meeting of October 11, 2023 be approved as presented.

- 5.3 Report of the Governance Review Committee - November 15, 2023 11 - 14

Recommendation

That the report of the Governance Review Committee from November 15, 2023, be received for information.

6. CHAIR'S REPORT

- 6.1 Report Back from the Higher Education Summit

7. CO-POPULOUS GOVERNORS' REPORT

8. DECISION ITEMS

- 8.1 New Program of Instruction: Career Development Practitioner Foundations - E. Popp & N. Simpson 15 - 25

Recommendation

It is recommended to the Durham College Board of Governors:

That in accordance with Report BOG-2023-95, the Career Development Practitioner Foundations, Durham College Certificate program be approved.

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 9.1 Government Relations Update - Blue Ribbon Edition - D. Lovisa & P. Garrett 26 - 110
9.2 Quality Assurance Audit Report Executive Summary - D. Lovisa & E. Popp 111 - 118
9.3 Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship: Anticipated Policy Changes to Protect International Students - D. Lovisa 119 - 121

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

- 10.1 Update on the College's Social Commitments 122 - 127
10.2 President's Report - October to December 2023 128 - 140
10.3 Report of the Chief Administrative Officer - December 2023 141 - 166
10.4 The Barrett Centre of Innovation in Sustainable Urban Agriculture - September 2023 Update 167 - 196

11. UPCOMING EVENTS

- Holiday Closure - December 23, 2023 to January 1, 2024
- Durham College Alumni Hockey Night - January 19, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., Tribute Communities Centre. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased [here](#).
- Learn More Series: Metrics & More: Strategic Mandate Agreement - Monday, January 29, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. (MS Teams)

12. MOVE TO IN-CAMERA SESSION

13. ADJOURNMENT



**DURHAM COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY
BOARD OF GOVERNORS REGULAR MEETING
PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES**

Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Location: Oshawa Campus, Durham College Boardroom A144

Members Present: Gail Johnson Morris, Board Chair
Lisa Allen, Board Vice-Chair
Ian Ball
Jim Brown
Melissa Bosomworth
Elizabeth Cowie
Kalyan Chakravarthy
Jeff Dornan
Kelly Doyle
Don Lovisa, President
Ian Murray
Jerry Ouellette
Peter Pryce
Dwight Townsend
Nathan Wilson

Members Absent: Aakash Chib

Staff Present: Scott Blakey, Chief Administrative Officer
Peter Garrett, Mgr., Strategic Reporting & Government Relations
Tara Koski, Dean, Students
Barbara MacCheyne, VP, Administration/Chief Financial Officer
Elaine Popp, Executive Vice-President, Academic
Melissa Pringle, Board Secretary
Janse Tolmie, AVP, IT Services

1. CALL TO ORDER

With quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Chief Administrative Officer introduced the following guests:

- Carol Beam, Associate Vice-President, Communications and Marketing
- Dale Burt, professor, Faculty of Social and Community Services
- Debbie Johnston, Associate Vice-President, Academic (Enrolment & International Education)
- Jennifer Cosway, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources + Equity
- Kathan Biswas, Graduate, Walls to Bridges Program
- Laura Bogaert, Executive Assistant, Office of the President
- Marisa Mei, Sexual Violence Education & Prevention Coordinator
- Neil Gonsalves, Interim Director, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Ralph Hofmann, Executive Dean, Faculty of Social and Community Services
- Thom MacDonald, Dean, International Education
- Zak Amara, Graduate, Walls to Bridges Program

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. None noted.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Program Spotlight: Walls to Bridges Program

The Board received a presentation from the Executive Dean, Faculty of Social and Community Services, D. Burt, Professor, Faculty of Social and Community Services, and program graduates Kathan Biswas and Zak Amara regarding the Walls to Bridges program and its impact.

The Board questioned the presenters.

4.2 Update on the International Student Landscape

The Board received a presentation from the Executive Vice-President, Academic and Dean, International Education, providing an update on key issues related to international students, including the sector's overreliance on international enrolment and lack of diversification, unscrupulous education agents, international student vulnerability, and how Durham College (DC) was addressing the sector challenges. The presenters also discussed the Standards of Practice for International Education and contingencies for disrupted India enrolment.

The Board questioned the presenters regarding DC's recruitment tactics, diversification strategies, enrolment targets, international student fees, health insurance, and mental health supports.

4.3 Presentation of Advanced Good Governance Certificates

The Board presented Governor Bosomworth, Governor Pryce, and Governor Wilson with their advanced good governance certificates.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The Chair reminded Governors about the purpose and use of the consent agenda.

Moved by Governor Ball

Seconded by Governor Bosomworth

"That all items listed under the heading of consent agenda be adopted as recommended." CARRIED

5.1 Approval of Public Session Agenda - October 11, 2023

That the public agenda for the October 11, 2023, Board of Governors meeting be approved as presented.

5.2 Approval of Public Minutes from the Board of Governors Meeting of June 7, 2023

That the public minutes of the Board of Governors meeting of June 7, 2023, be approved as presented.

5.3 Approval of Public Minutes from the Board of Governors Meeting of June 19, 2023

That the public minutes of the Board of Governors meeting of June 19, 2023, be approved as presented.

5.4 Approval of Public Minutes from the Board of Governors Meeting of August 8, 2023

That the public minutes of the Board of Governors meeting of August 8, 2023, be approved as presented.

5.5 Report of the Governance Review Committee - September 20, 2023

That the report of the Governance Review Committee from September 20, 2023 be received for information.

6. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair offered the following report:

- Governors were reminded to complete and submit their annual leadership agreement and to register for the platform party at the fall convocation ceremonies.
- The Chair reported that the College had received confirmation that the provincial government had reappointed Ian Murray for a three-year term as an LGIC Governor and that the Board was still awaiting news on an appointment to fill the vacancy left by Kenneth Michalko.
- The Chair announced that Governor Cowie was recently awarded an honorary CPA from the Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario, and Governor Townsend completed the work for his Master of Health Law program at York University-Osgoode Hall Law School.
- The Chair discussed recent attendance at the Hail & Farewell event, Employee Service Awards, and the Barrett Centre for Sustainable Urban Agriculture Grand Opening.

7. CO-POPULOUS GOVERNORS' REPORT

The Chair advised that Ontario Tech University (OTU) was sent the expressions of interest from Jerry Ouellette and Dwight Townsend to serve as a co-populous governor. To date, OTU has advised they are reviewing its governance structure and will respond later this fall.

8. DECISION ITEMS

There were no decision items.

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

9.1 Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Statistics Report

The Board received a report from the Sexual Violence Education & Prevention Coordinator and Interim Director, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion about the annual sexual violence reporting statistics and campus advocacy work.

The Board questioned the presenters regarding the pro-rated reporting period, academic accommodations available to survivors, and incidents reported (on-campus versus off-campus).

9.2 Domestic and International Enrolment Update – Fall 2023

The Board received a report from the Associate Vice-President, Academic (Enrolment & International Education), who reported that for fall 2023, DC had 8,738 domestic and 3,890 international students.

Governor Chakravarthy temporarily left and re-entered the meeting.

The Board questioned the Associate Vice-President, Academic (Enrolment & International Education), regarding the tactics used to increase domestic enrolment.

9.3 First Update on the 2023-2024 Business Plan

The Board received a report from the Manager, Strategic Reporting and Government Relations, which focused on the “Our Students” pillar and progress toward achieving the 2023-2024 business plan objectives.

Governor Ball temporarily left and re-entered the meeting.

The Board questioned the Dean, Students and Manager, Strategic Reporting and Government Relations regarding objectives delayed in the business plan related to Indigenous relations.

9.4 Engagement Plan for Renewal of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan

The Board received a report from the Manager, Strategic Reporting and Government Relations, providing a framework for stakeholder engagement and renewal of the 2020-2025 strategic plan. Additionally, the Manager, Strategic Reporting and Government Relations reported that the Board would receive a report in February providing a summary of the completion of objectives in the current strategic plan.

9.5 Government Relations Update

The Board received a report from President Lovisa and the Manager, Strategic Reporting and Government Relations, providing an update on government relations activities and government policies currently affecting the college sector.

Governor Murray temporarily left and re-entered the meeting.

The Board questioned the presenters.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

10.1 President's Report - June to October 2023

10.2 Program Advisory Committee Semi-Annual Report (October 2023)

The Board questioned the Executive Vice-President, Academic, regarding the status of the trades Program Advisory Committees, which appear to be having issues with quorum.

11. UPCOMING EVENTS

The Chair drew attention to the following upcoming events:

- Fall Convocation - October 25 & 26, 2023 - Tribute Communities Centre
- Higher Education Summit - November 25 & 26, 2023 - Sheraton Centre Hotel, Toronto

12. MOVE TO IN-CAMERA SESSION

Durham College By-law No. 1. provides for the Board of Governors to address, in-camera, items of corporate business that the Board deems to be confidential to the College.

Moved by Governor Brown

Seconded by Governor Cowie

“That the Board of Governors move in-camera after a 10-minute recess.” CARRIED

The Board recessed at 7:47 p.m. and reconvened in-camera at 8:00 p.m.

The Board rose from the in-camera session at 8:48 p.m.

During the in-camera session, the Board discussed recommendations from its Standing Committees and the future of the Durham College Foundation and received updates from the Presidential Selection Committee.

13. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting ended at 8:49 p.m.



**PUBLIC REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE
TO THE DURHAM COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR CONSIDERATION AT
ITS PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 13, 2023**

BACKGROUND

The Governance Review Committee met by videoconference on Wednesday, November 15, 2023.

SUMMARY

1. Minutes of the September 20, 2023, Governance Review Committee Meeting

That the minutes from the September 20, 2023, meeting of the Governance Review Committee be approved as presented.

2. Governance Discussion about the Durham College Foundation

The Committee received an update from the Associate Vice-President, Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, regarding the process for winding down the Durham College Foundation and reported on a meeting with Victoria Prince at BLG to discuss the path forward. Considerations include a review of current agreements to determine the legalities of transferring funds to the College, deciding whether to close the Foundation or keep it dormant, and determining how the Board of Governors will assume oversight of the investment portfolio. Furthermore, the Associate Vice-President, Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, reported that preliminary work has begun to assess the current agreements and that approximately 95% of gifts could be transferred with no issue. The remaining 5% of gifts can be pursued by contacting the donor and getting permission or by court order.

The Committee questioned President Lovisa and the Associate Vice-President, Office of Development and Alumni Affairs.

A discussion ensued about the benefits and risks of keeping the Foundation dormant. If left dormant, there would need to be a minimum of three directors and an annual meeting to remain compliant. Additionally, the Committee discussed the current investment strategy, the Foundation's articles and mandate, various governance options for assuming oversight, and the need to consider potential changes to the Board's governing documents when making future decisions.

As part of the information-gathering stage, the Committee requested that the Foundation's investment policy, articles, and governing documents be brought to the next Governance Review Committee meeting for discussion. Also, the Committee discussed a desire to explore all options for a new governance structure before deciding and asking legal counsel for advice when appropriate.

The Committee requested that all Governors be asked to identify if they have investment experience and expertise. The Board Secretary will add this to the Chair's notes for the December Board meeting.

3. Board Retreat Planning (Continued)

The Committee reviewed the draft agenda for the spring retreat and agreed it reflected its previous conversations. After reviewing the agenda, the Committee discussed the flow and suggested that the presidential priorities session be moved to immediately following lunch on the first day and discussed the particulars of the strategic planning session (with a request to include a conversation about alternative revenue sources) and diversity, equity, and inclusion sessions (with a request for the facilitator to contact Governor Townsend to get his input on the content). Furthermore, the Committee discussed the idea of conducting stakeholder interviews; however, no decision was made on this suggestion. Additionally, the Committee discussed having Board members facilitate different portions of the agenda as it would be the first retreat for the new president.

Also, the Committee discussed options for a social event, such as a cooking class or teambuilding games and gift ideas. The Committee also requested a more robust breakfast be provided at the event.

4. Advancing the Board's Goal: Generative Governance

The Committee discussed the following Board goal under the purview of the Governance Review Committee:

"The Board will consider a year end report from the Governance Review Committee assessing the effectiveness of its governance model and framework and advise on any requisite finetuning of the model in the next Board year."

As part of the discussion, the Committee discussed the Board's governance framework, the annual Board evaluation survey, and ways to address areas of concern identified in the survey results, such as conducting pulse surveys,

educating the Board on generative governance, and keeping track of ineffective processes or duplication in the Board's governing documents throughout the year and to review the list semi-annually for potential corrective action.

Furthermore, the Committee agreed to provide a brief education about generative governance at the December Board meeting.

5. 2022-2023 Committee Start/Stop/Continue Feedback (for action)

The Committee reviewed its stop, start, and continue feedback from 2022-2023 and discussed the possibility of ensuring vice-chairs can chair a meeting throughout the year and soliciting insights from outgoing Governors via exit interviews.

**Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Cowie, Chair, Nominating Committee**

View all supporting material from this meeting by clicking [here](#).

Durham College Board of Governors Retreat Agenda (Tentative)
April 2024

Saturday Session

Time	Item
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast Available
8:30 a.m.	The Broader Context: Pari Johnston (CICan) and/or Marketa Evans (Colleges Ontario)
10:00 a.m.	Refreshment Break
10:15 a.m.	Open Forum: Leadership Team (ask your Q's)
11:00 a.m.	Refreshment Break
11:15 a.m.	Student Panel: The International Experience
12:30 p.m.	Lunch Break
1:15 p.m.	Open Forum: Presidential Priorities + Mandate (opportunity for new president to engage the Board)
2:30 p.m.	Refreshment Break
2:45 p.m.	DC Future-Focused: Strategic Visioning Exercise with Peter Garrett & Laura Bogaert
4:30 p.m.	Travel to Whitby Campus (TBD)
5:00 p.m.	Social Event: Cooking Class/Potting Activity/Team Games - TBD

Sunday Session

Time	Item
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast Available
8:30 a.m.	DEI + Board Governance Interactive Workshop with N. Gonsalves
12:30 p.m.	Closing Remarks
12:45 p.m.	Retreat Ends

Report Number: BOG-2023-95

To: Board of Governors

From: Dr. Elaine Popp, Executive Vice President, Academic

Date of Report: November 21, 2023

Date of Meeting: December 13, 2023

Subject: New Program of Instruction – Career Development Practitioner Foundations

1. Purpose

To seek approval from the Board of Governors for the following post-secondary program of instruction for January 2024 intake:

Career Development Practitioner Foundations

- Credential: Durham College Certificate (DCC)
- Duration: 270 hours
- Faculty: Professional and Part-time Learning (PPL)

2. Recommendation

It is recommended to the Durham College Board of Governors:

That in accordance with Report BOG-2023-95, the Career Development Practitioner Foundations, Durham College Certificate program be approved.

3. Background

PPL is proposing to offer a new DCC, *Career Development Practitioner Foundations*, designed for individuals looking to work in career services. This credential will be of particular interest to those working in human resources or in social and community services who may be keen to specialize or upskill to better support clients in navigating career pathways and opportunities.

This six-course program is offered asynchronously online via OntarioLearn (with Fanshawe College hosting the courses).

In the program, students investigate career transition, counselling and change management theories and explore ethical standards and considerations in career development. They examine the evolving nature of the labour market and

enhance their ability to assess employment trends as well as the work and skill requirements for a wide range of jobs. Students explore a range of assessment, interviewing and counselling strategies to support clients in career planning and career transitions.

As per the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' Minister's Binding Policy Directive 3.0, Programs, Framework for Programs of Instruction, the Board of Governors is responsible for approving programs of instruction the college will offer.

It is the role of the Durham College Board of Governors to ensure that programs of instruction are developed and implemented in conformity with the Credentials Framework, and are consistent with provincial program standards where they exist. It is also the responsibility of the Board to ensure that all new and modified post-secondary programs of instruction lead to one of the following credentials: Durham College Certificate, Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, Ontario College Graduate Certificate or Bachelor Degree.

We confirm that Durham College is in compliance with all Minister's Binding Policy Directives as noted above, for this new program of instruction.

4. Discussion

The evolution and transformation of the labour market - influenced by trends such as automation and digitization, aging of the population, climate change and remote work – will continue to shape the need for upskilling to fulfill employer requirements¹. As a result, those transitioning within the labour market may benefit from guidance and support to empower them to make informed decisions about their career changes or pathway(s).

Employment opportunities for graduates may be situated within:

- the post-secondary sector
- the private sector
- the not-for-profit/charitable sectors
- specialized jobs such as career counsellors
- job development
- employment support workers

¹ OECD. (2022). *Career Guidance for Adults in Canada*, Getting Skills Right, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/0e596882-en>

-
- vocational counsellors²

5. Financial/Human Resource Implications

This is an OntarioLearn pick-up; therefore, there is no implication for human resources or budgetary concerns.

6. Implications for the Joint Campus Master Plan

There are no implications for the joint campus master plan.

7. Implications for Ontario Tech University

There are no anticipated implications for Ontario Tech University resulting from the implementation of this new program recommendation.

8. Strategic Alignment

8.1 Strategic Fit

The proposed program aligns with the following objectives/goals of the Academic, Strategic, and Business plans.

Academic Plan

Goal 1: Ensure Exceptional Quality in our Academic Programs

Strategic Plan and Business Plan

Pillar: Our Students

Goal: To educate and inspire students to realize success in their careers and communities

² Bimrose, J. & Goddard, T. Future Skills Centre. (2021). The Career Development Profession in Canada and the emergence of multi-modal practice delivery. <https://fsc-ccf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FSC-RCP-Profession-EN.pdf>

General Program Information

Proposed Program Title: Career Development Practitioner Foundations

Proposed Credential: Durham College Certificate (DCC)

Academic Dean(s): Nora Simpson

Faculty: Professional and Part-time Learning (PPL)

Date of Review by PPRC: November 8, 2023

MTCU Code: N/A

Weight and Funding Unit (as per APS table): OntarioLearn Pick-up

Proposed Tuition: Year 1: N/A

Proposed Implementation: January 2024

Year 1 Enrolment: 10

Number of Sections, Y1: 1

International Students Seat Allocation: n/a

Number of Semesters: n/a

Total Hours: 270

New or Replacement Program: New

Number of New FT Faculty: n/a

Program Delivery Methods: Asynchronous online (via OntarioLearn)

Laptop Requirement: No

New or Renovated Space Requirements: No

Total Capital Costs: Year 1: n/a

1. Approval Stages

The following approval stages have been assessed for this program:

- Labour Market
- Student Demand
- Budget reviewed and approved by the Chief Financial Officer and the Vice President, Academic
- Presented to the Program Proposal Review Committee (DATE: Nov. 8, 2023)
- New Program Proposal Summary reviewed by the Associate Dean, Centre for Teaching and Learning (DATE: November 28, 2023)
- New Program Proposal Summary reviewed by the Executive Dean, Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Approved by Executive Vice-President, Academic (DATE: November 29, 2023)
- Reviewed and approved by President (DATE: November 29, 2023)

2. Program Overview

Professional & Part-time Learning (PPL) is proposing to offer a new Durham College Certificate (DCC), *Career Development Practitioner Foundations*, designed for individuals looking to work in career services. This credential will be of particular interest to those working in social and community services who may be keen to specialize or upskill to better support clients in navigating career pathways and opportunities.

Program Description

In the *Career Development Practitioner Foundations* program, students investigate career transition, counselling and change management theories and explore ethical standards and considerations in career development. They examine the evolving nature of the labour market and enhance their ability to assess employment trends as well as the work and skill requirements for a wide range of jobs. Students explore a range of assessment, interviewing and counselling strategies to support clients in career planning and career transitions.

This six-course program is offered asynchronously online via Ontario Learn (with Fanshawe College hosting the courses).

2.1 Career Outcomes

Employment opportunities for graduates may be situated within the post-secondary sector, private sector, and the not-for-profit/charitable sectors and

may include specialized jobs such as career counsellors, job developers, employment support workers and vocational counsellors¹.

2.2 Program Learning Outcomes

Students successfully completing the program will be able to:

1. Apply evidence-informed career development practices when advising clients and planning programs, interventions, referrals, and resources for diverse client groups.
2. Incorporate ethical standards and approaches and self-reflective practice in the provision of career development services.
3. Analyze labour market information and trends to design and provide evidence-informed counsel, resources and interventions to support clients in job searches and career transitions.
4. Integrate appropriate career information, resources and tools with career and employment strategies to enable a diverse range of clients to understand career transitions and cycles.
5. Perform needs assessments and develop interventions using case management strategies, counselling techniques and assessment tools that enable diverse client groups to meet their employment goals.
6. Use current work search tools and strategies to facilitate successful client job searches.

Note these Program Learning Outcomes are adapted from Fanshawe College, who hosts these courses via OntarioLearn.

2.3 Admission Requirements

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) including Grade 12 English (C or U)
OR
- Grade 12 equivalency certificate achieved through College academic upgrading
OR
- Mature Student Status (19 years of age or older) with Grade 12 English (C or U)

¹ Bimrose, J. & Goddard, T. Future Skills Centre. (2021). The Career Development Profession in Canada and the emergence of multi-modal practice delivery. <https://fsc-ccf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FSC-RCP-Profession-EN.pdf>

3. Program of Study/Course Descriptions

Course Title: Orientation to Employment Counselling

Host College: Fanshawe College

Course Code: COUN1588

Description: This course provides the student with an overview of introductory theory and skills pertaining to the helping relationship process. Specifically, the student will engage in learning projects, which allows for skill development related to self-understanding, listening, non-verbal and verbal communication, assessment and constructive feedback. Students will have the opportunity to conduct a basic employment interview session.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO):

1. Demonstrate understanding of professional ethics in employment counselling.
2. Integrate the appropriate use of adult learning principles and practices for his or her own professional growth and development, as well as the empowerment of others.
3. Utilize self-reflective and critical thinking skills to enhance counselling, teaching and learning strategies with groups and individuals.
4. Apply both theoretical and practical methods with consideration to the needs of under-represented and diverse groups including women, Indigenous communities, visible minorities, immigrants, the disadvantaged and marginalized.
5. Describe the historical and theoretical basis of career development studies, including the social, economic, and personal benefits of career development practices for various groups in Canadian society.
6. Demonstrate proficiency in basic interviewing skills as well as appropriate professional boundaries.

Pre-requisites: n/a

Co-requisites: n/a

Instructional Setting: Online (asynchronous)

Total Hours: 45

Course Title: The Role of Assessment Instruments

Host College: Fanshawe College

Course Code: COUN1589

Description: The student will develop skills in the application of descriptive and inferential statistics in the field of career counselling. The student will practice using assessment tools, to examine the procedures for using and interpreting data using a variety of other tests/tools. Ethics, limitations and cautions of administering standardized tests will be discussed.

CLOs:

1. Identify the purpose, principles and correct use of a variety of different assessment tools.
2. Identify procedures for integrating assessment outcomes into the counselling process.

3. Recognize and articulate the ethical implications of testing along with the cautions and limitations related to the use of standardized testing.
4. Describe and apply statistical measures and core concepts in test development.
5. Describe the types of career counselling instruments available.
6. Participate in a personal assessment using a recognized assessment tool.
7. Demonstrate how various assessment profiles impact work preferences (e.g., interest, personality, aptitude and career decision making).
8. Utilize the results of an assessment process in a career counselling situation.

Pre-requisites: n/a

Co-requisites: n/a

Instructional Setting: Online (asynchronous)

Total Hours: 45

Course Title: Career Transition & Change Management

Host College: Fanshawe College

Course Code: CARR1582

Description: This course will provide an opportunity for the student to acquire and refine knowledge, skills and abilities concerning several aspects of change and life transitions. The student will gain an understanding of how change affects the working population through the examination and review of selected theories and models of planned change.

CLOs:

1. Explain strategies to effectively manage change.
2. Demonstrate application of the career transition and change management theories to the career counselling process.
3. Design counselling strategies which incorporate trends and issues of the changing labour market.
4. Apply the stages of adult development and learning as well as theories of career development, which together lay the foundations for counselling and facilitation in career development work.
5. Develop an awareness of the impact of career development practices in Canada.
6. Describe the historical and theoretical basis of career development studies, including the social, economic, and personal benefits of career development practices for various groups in Canadian Society.

Pre-requisites: n/a

Co-requisites: n/a

Instructional Setting: Online (asynchronous)

Total Hours: 45

Course Title: Ethics in Career Development

Host College: Fanshawe College

Course Code: CARR1518

Description: This course reviews the Canadian Standards and Guidelines of the code of ethics of career development with special emphasis on the professional behaviour, interpersonal competence, needs assessment and referral associated within the role. Students will also understand the code of ethics, within client facilitations and counselling, community building, and information and resource management.

CLOs:

1. Articulate the Canadian Code of Ethics for Career Development Practitioners.
2. Understand the role of ethics in Career Development.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical frameworks.
4. Identify and analyze ethical pitfalls and dilemmas.
5. Discuss the role of ethics in the delivery and analysis of career assessments.
6. Discuss the role of values in ethics.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical standards.
8. Discuss the importance of wellness and ethics

Pre-requisites: n/a

Co-requisites: n/a

Instructional Setting: Online (asynchronous)

Total Hours: 45

Course Title: Labour Market Career Development

Host College: Fanshawe College

Course Code: CARR1583

Description: This course will provide a global approach to the dramatic changes in the workplace and its fluid reactive trends. Course topics include; the globalization of the economy, the diffusion of micro technologies, industrial shifts, the growth of non-standard employment, cultural diversity and demographic shifts on future work will all be examined in their inter-relational context. This course will also examine permanent economic change; new work patterns, and promote the development of critical analysis for the career decision-making process.

CLOs:

1. Demonstrate the ability to access labour market information from a wide range of sources.
2. Demonstrate the integration of identified labour market trends in the Career Development and Counselling Process.
3. Analyze labour market information.
4. Identify labour market trends from a social, political, educational, cultural, environmental, economical and technological perspectives.
5. Discuss economic trends as they relate to changes in hiring, work patterns, employment growth areas, types of employment i.e., full time, part time, contract, etc.
6. Demonstrate through case study analysis the development of client action plans utilizing labour market information and emerging trends.

Pre-requisites: n/a

Co-requisites: n/a

Instructional Setting: Online (asynchronous)

Total Hours: 45

Course Title: Career Counselling

Host College: Fanshawe College

Course Code: CARR1580

Description: The principles of the career counselling process are explored in this course. Theory is linked to practice and students are exposed to a variety of strategies to use with clients in both the individual and group settings. Students will have the opportunity to work with and practice a model of career counselling in which they will be discussing their experiences with their classmates.

CLOs:

1. Discuss job loss theory and job loss stages in relation to different client groups.
2. Describe the counselling skills required to assess client job readiness and assist in the job search process.
3. Describe the stages of the job search process and the relationship of the counsellor, client and employer.
4. Describe the process of assessing the training/educational needs of various clients and assist them in assessing these options.
5. Explain the nature of career options in the new economy.
6. Identify, analyse and problem solve career issues and strategies.
7. Demonstrate appropriate community referrals to services that provide prerequisite career entry skills.

Pre-requisites: n/a

Co-requisites: n/a

Instructional Setting: Online (asynchronous)

Total Hours: 45

4.0 Strategic Alignment

4.1 Strategic Fit

The proposed program aligns with the following goals of the [Academic](#), [Strategic](#), and [Business](#) plans.

Academic Plan

Goal 1: Ensure Exceptional Quality in our Academic Programs

Strategic & Business plans

Pillar: Our Students

Goal: To educate and inspire students to realize success in their careers and communities

4.2 Fit with Existing Programs

The program expands the breadth of upskilling offerings via PPL, creating an opportunity for those working in social and community services to specialize in career development to better serve individuals in the community as they enter the workforce or pursue career transitions.

5. Labour Demand and Graduate Employment Possibilities

Job prospects in Ontario are projected to be “good” over the next three years for career development practitioners/counsellors, and balanced between 2022-2031².

Using the search terms “career” and “vocational” in the job title, along with “career counselling” as a skill, a review of job postings (October 10, 2023) in Ontario revealed 96 unique postings between January 2022-September 2023³.

6. Analysis of Competition

There are other colleges offering programs with a similar focus in career development. Launching a program in career development will ensure Durham College remains competitive in the range of part-time course and program offerings for potential students.

7. Student Interest

Launching this program will provide individuals with an upskilling opportunity in career development within a variety of sectors, while helping to address workforce needs for professionals with these skills. Delivered asynchronously online and the opportunity to complete the program quickly, it provides students with the flexibility to rapidly upskill while balancing learning with life commitments.

8. Target Market

The program may be of particular interest to graduates of human resources management programs and social and community service programs.

9. Operating Revenue and Expenses

OntarioLearn pick-up; no budget required.

² Government of Canada. (2023, September 19). Job prospects: career development practitioner. <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/outlook-occupation/5157/ca>

³ Lightcast. (2023). <https://analyst.lightcast.io/login/login.php>

Report Number: BOG-2023-94

To: Board of Governors

From: Don Lovisa, President

Date of Report: December 4, 2023

Date of Meeting: December 13, 2023

Subject: Government Relations Update – Blue Ribbon Panel Edition

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the Blue-Ribbon Panel's report and provide an update on the College's advocacy.

2. Recommendation

This report is being presented for information only.

3. Background

On November 15, 2023, the government of Ontario released the Blue-Ribbon Panel's report on post-secondary fiscal sustainability. This summary provides an introduction to the report that was released, as well as Durham College's briefing note and an update on the advocacy efforts underway.

4. Discussion/Options

Attachments

There are three documents included with this report:

1. The Blue-Ribbon's Report, *Ensuring Financial Sustainability for Ontario's Postsecondary Sector*
2. Colleges Ontario's briefing note
3. Durham College's briefing note

Panel's Report

The report includes recommendations to increase operating grants, tuition fees, and student financial assistance. The report also suggests governance measures

to enhance transparency, accountability, and sustainability. However, the government still needs to commit to implementing these recommendations. The province is reviewing the report and will collaborate with postsecondary institutions to improve efficiency, program offerings, and sustainability. The government emphasizes the need for colleges and universities to demonstrate efficient operations for any consideration of tuition fee increases.

While the panel report aligns with Colleges Ontario's advocacy priorities, it needs to meet practical needs for achieving financial stability. The report recognizes the underfunding of postsecondary education in Ontario compared to other provinces, highlighting distinctions between colleges and universities, including tuition fees and overall funding per student. The panel takes a balanced approach to international students, acknowledging the financial risks colleges face.

There are many recommendations in this report, some of which will take years of collaboration with the province to address. Colleges Ontario is focused on three high-priority asks:

1. Unfreeze tuition
 - a. The panel recommends a common increase of 5% in 2024-25, followed by annual increases of the greater of 2% or CPI across all PSE (with a further 3% in 2024-25 for professional programs in universities and high demand programs in colleges).
2. Increase the college student grant by 10%.
 - a. The panel recommends increasing per-student operating grants by at least 10% in the first year (2024-25), and by the greater of 2% or CPI in subsequent years.
 - b. The report specifically recommends increasing the value of the Weighted Funding Unit (WFU) – meaning that funding increases would be program-weighted.
3. Remove the disincentive for enrolling part-time students.
 - a. The panel recommends changing the funding model for part-time college students, noting the disincentive to enroll part-time students, the disparity between college and university funding approaches, and the economic advantages of greater part-time enrollment.

Advocacy

Since the document was released, Colleges Ontario has coordinated a system-wide approach to advocate for support for the recommendations. This includes content for news releases, social media, industry support letters and materials for meeting with political leaders.

For Durham College, a briefing note has been prepared that is included with this board submission. This briefing note is intended for community partners and political leaders, summarizing the report, and the main advocacy priorities. It is written specifically for an audience outside the sector and has been shared with all local boards of trade/chambers of commerce, the Region of Durham, all local MPP's and the Minister of Labour, David Piccini.

On Friday, November 24, the College was invited to a roundtable with Minister Piccini through the Clarington Board of Trade. At this meeting, Minister Piccini was presented with the blue-ribbon briefing, which received support from attending businesses who agreed further investments in post-secondary were warranted given the need for talent.

The briefing note has been shared with local boards of trade/chambers of commerce, and will be presented to three advocacy committees across the region. The Durham Business Alliance which represents all boards and chambers has agreed to endorse a letter of support. Letters of support have gone out to several industry partners as well – the intent being for Colleges Ontario to collect letters of support from industry and community partners across the province to substantiate the need for the government to act on the panel's recommendations.

For the remainder of 2023 the advocacy plan is to present the briefing note to MPP's Peter Bethlenfalvy (Pickering-Uxbridge, Minister of Finance), Patrice Barnes (Ajax-PA to Minister of Education), Lorne Coe (Whitby, PA to the Premier), Todd McCarthy (Durham, Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery). At the time of writing, most of these meetings are scheduled.

Conversations with elected officials will continue in 2024. If recommendations are not brought forward in the 2024 budget, the advocacy campaign will continue through the year with a focus on building industry support.

5. Financial/Human Resource Implications

There are no financial/human resource implications in this update.

6. Implications for the Joint Campus Master Plan

There are no implications for the joint campus master plan.

7. Implications for Ontario Tech University

There are no implications for Ontario Tech University at this time.

8. Relationship to the Strategic Plan/Business Plan

This government relations update supports the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan including the Mission, Vision and Values outlined in the Strategic Plan.

1. **Our Students** – To educate and inspire students to realize success in their careers and communities.
2. **Our People** – To invest in our employees and empower them to be entrepreneurial, innovative and strategic.
3. **Our Work** - To be a leader in teaching and learning while responsibly managing resources, ensuring good governance and strategically investing in the future.
4. **Our Community** - To drive the economic, social and environmental success of our community, locally and globally.



Ensuring Financial Sustainability for Ontario's Postsecondary Sector

Submitted by
Alan Harrison, Chair

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Acknowledgements

Dear Minister Dunlop,

It is my pleasure to submit to you the final report of the Blue-Ribbon Panel on Financial Sustainability in the Postsecondary Education Sector. Our Terms of Reference asked that we make recommendations with respect to Ontario's colleges and universities. The sector does of course also include Indigenous Institutes (IIs), regarding which we were asked to provide discussion points for bilateral discussions between your ministry and the IIs. Our report fulfils both responsibilities.

Every panel member made important contributions to this report, which is truly a team effort. That we were able to submit our report, as requested, within six months of our first meeting demonstrates the commitment of panel members to the task at hand. This commitment was matched by the panel members' common sense of purpose, which is exemplified by the unanimous support for virtually all the report's recommendations.

This is not to suggest that our task was an easy one: the sector's financial sustainability is currently at serious risk, and it will take a concerted effort to right the ship. Our recommendations, if implemented in their entirety, will, we believe, set the sector on the path to a financially sustainable future. Moreover, the provincial government, colleges and universities, and students all have a significant part to play in ensuring this sustainable future.

I should like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the sterling support we received from Paddy Buckley and the secretariat she led. I know I speak for all panel members when I say that the secretariat made an important contribution to the timely completion of our report.



Alan Harrison, on behalf of:

*Bonnie Patterson
Brent Tookenay
Cindy Forbes
Eddy Avila
MaryLynn West-Moynes
Maxim Jean-Louis
Robert Luke*

Executive Summary

Ontario's Publicly Assisted Postsecondary Education Sector

The panel was established to provide advice and recommendations that would ensure the long-run financial sustainability of Ontario's postsecondary education sector, specifically publicly assisted colleges and universities. Laurentian University's recent financial difficulties served as an impetus for the panel's establishment. More generally, it was reflective of several audits of publicly assisted colleges and universities conducted by the Auditor General, which, in the words of our terms of reference, "highlighted broader sustainability concerns for Ontario's publicly assisted postsecondary system".

The panel quickly realized that success in this endeavour will only come from a comprehensive set of recommendations. Where funding support is concerned, success also demands a shared and coherent approach on the part of government, institutions, and students. Accordingly, a foundational recommendation of the panel, if implemented, would increase direct provincial support for colleges and universities, providing for both more money per student and more

students. Students would be asked to play their part through higher tuition, and colleges and universities, together with the provincial government, would ensure a sufficiency of needs-based financial aid for students, and pursue further efficiencies.

The panel recognized too that accountability is a prerequisite for sustainability, given which several recommendations address the role of boards of colleges and universities, and the importance of board members' financial literacy. Relatedly, the sector's dependence on international students, particularly, but not only, in Ontario's publicly assisted colleges, needs to be recognized explicitly as a financial risk and incorporated into analyses of institutions' sustainability.

Several of the panel's recommendations stress the importance of recognizing that some parts of the postsecondary sector face special challenges, which therefore demand flexibility of support to ensure long-run financial sustainability and support regional economic growth. For example, some recommendations propose different approaches for colleges vis-à-vis universities, while others suggest distinctions for northern institutions. The panel's recommendations also include three options for restructuring French-language universities and colleges.

We acknowledge that, although most of our recommendations address the financial sustainability of the sector, a few are a stretch within our terms of reference. This notwithstanding, we are confident that our recommendations, when applied in concert with one another, will move the sector firmly in the direction of long-term financial sustainability. It is together that our recommendations will solve a large part of the problem, and mitigate the significant risks that triggered the need for our panel. If fully implemented, everyone will have played their part in a shared and balanced approach to the associated investments needed in a financially sustainable postsecondary sector that responds to labour market and student needs.

Lest anyone reading this summary presumes otherwise, the panel recognized that the postsecondary sector in Ontario also includes nine Indigenous Institutes (IIs). Our terms of reference did, however, preclude recommendations pertaining to IIs. Instead, we were asked to work to understand and identify the issues pertinent to IIs preparatory to bilateral discussion between the IIs and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. A section of our report provides considerable context for five major areas for this dialogue, which will, we understand, begin within the next few months.

Background and Context

Our panel was established to provide the province's Minister of Colleges and Universities with advice and recommendations that would, if implemented, ensure the long-term financial sustainability of Ontario's publicly assisted colleges and universities. Besides the 24 colleges and 23 universities, the province's postsecondary sector also includes nine Indigenous Institutes (IIs),¹ which have a different funding arrangement and governance structure. In recognition of this, the panel's terms of reference asked that we "work to understand and identify issues pertinent to IIs".²

The establishment of the panel was timely: the province's colleges and universities have faced significant challenges to their financial sustainability in recent years. In 2017, as part of that year's Strategic Mandate Agreement³ (SMA) process, direct provincial funding to support domestic enrolment at colleges and universities was

effectively frozen. The number of funded domestic students a college or university could admit was fixed⁴ as was the funding per student.⁵ Two years later, the finances of Ontario's colleges and universities were further challenged by the province's decision to reduce by 10% the tuition rates paid by students at these institutions, subsequent to which tuition rates were frozen. This freeze is still in effect,⁶ and the province has announced it will continue for the 2023-2024 academic year, which began in September.

As time goes on, this situation is ever more likely to pose a significant threat to the financial sustainability of a major part of the province's postsecondary sector. Higher rates of price inflation in the last two or three years exacerbate this threat.

The province's Auditor General has also expressed concerns regarding the sector's financial sustainability. In December 2021, a value-for-money audit of Ontario's

1 The *Indigenous Institutes Act* provides the legislative framework for Indigenous Institutes to offer their own postsecondary credentials.

2 Our Terms of Reference explained that the "identification of issues will be used to support follow-up bilateral discussions between the IIs and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU), beginning in Fall/Winter 2023".

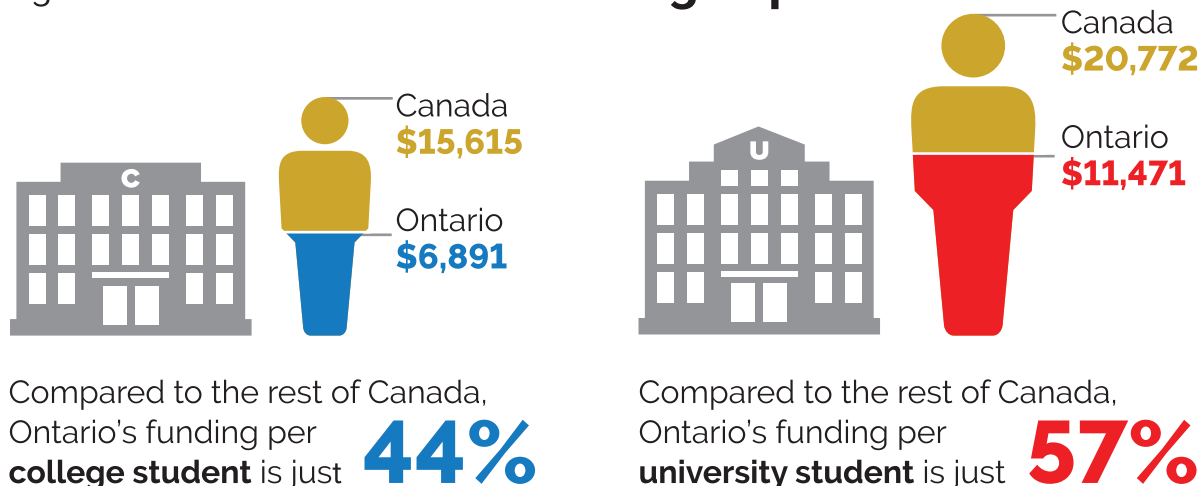
3 Strategic Mandate Agreements are bilateral agreements between MCU and the colleges and universities that receive direct operating funding from the province. The current agreements are in place until 2025.

4 This was justified with reference to demographic data that at the time indicated little if any growth for several years to come in the relevant age group.

5 The freeze on the funding per student was actually a continuation of a freeze that had been in place for a considerable number of years prior to 2017.

6 For completeness, it is important to note that as of 2021, tuition rates paid by domestic students from provinces other than Ontario were not any longer frozen.

Figure 1: **2021-2022 Government Funding Gap**



public colleges included the observation that funding for public colleges' full-time domestic students is lower in Ontario than in any other Canadian province.⁷ In another report, dated November 2022, the Auditor General addressed the financial difficulties that led to Laurentian University's declaration of insolvency early in 2021 and its decision to file for creditor protection.⁸ In the same month, a separate value-for-money audit of four universities (Algoma, Nipissing, Ontario Tech and Windsor) noted that "although the universities we audited were in a positive financial position at the time of our audit, some issues, if left unaddressed, could put the future financial sustainability of the universities at risk".⁹

A recent report broadly substantiated the Auditor General's comments on the paucity of provincial funding for colleges, and indicated that funding for Ontario's universities was also low when compared with support in other provinces. The figure above illustrates the large funding gap between Ontario and the rest of Canada for colleges and universities. In 2021-2022, Ontario's funding per college student was \$6,891, 44% of the figure for the rest of Canada (\$15,615). The universities received \$11,471 per student, which represented 57% of the figure for the rest of Canada (\$20,772).¹⁰

The Auditor General's value-for-money audit of Ontario's public colleges also noted that, as a consequence of the low level of provincial funding, colleges are increasingly

7 Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, *Value-for-Money Audit: Public Colleges Oversight*, December 2021.

8 Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, *Special Report on Laurentian University*, November 2022.

9 Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, *Financial Management in Ontario Universities*, November 2022.

10 See *The State of Postsecondary Education in Canada 2023*, Appendix C, Ontario Provincial Profile, Figure ON6, and also <https://higherstrategy.com/spec-2023/>.

Process

reliant on international students' tuition fees to remain financially sustainable. The audit added that because colleges finances are consolidated on the province's financial statements, the associated risk from a reliance on international students is also borne by the province.

Data shared with the panel confirm that colleges and universities have come to rely more and more on international student tuition fees to the point where the revenue from this source is fundamental to the sector's financial sustainability. This increased reliance raises the postsecondary institutions' risk exposure.

We believe the foregoing strongly supports our assertion that the establishment of the panel was timely.

Our timeline was short. We first met at the end of March 2023 and were asked to submit our report within six months. The panel has stayed focussed on its terms of reference, paying particular attention to the issues that underlie the financial sustainability of institutions, while also considering both the learner experience and the needs of Ontario's economy in the short and medium term. In the time provided for the panel's work, it was not thought possible to do the fundamental analysis that might lead to recommendations of major changes to the sector.

We did benefit from helpful presentations by various officials from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU), and we also sought wider input by inviting written submissions from within and beyond the

sector. We received a total of 95 written responses and met with a subset of stakeholders.¹¹ Our invitation encouraged due consideration of our Terms of Reference, and the questions posed therein, as well as the provincial government's five key principles:

1. Enhancing student experience and access
2. Rewarding excellence and financial sustainability
3. Improving labour market alignment
4. Promoting economic growth and prosperity
5. Keeping education affordable for lower and middle-income families.

Our advice and recommendations focus primarily on measures that will support financial sustainability in the short term, while helping also to ensure medium and long term sustainability.

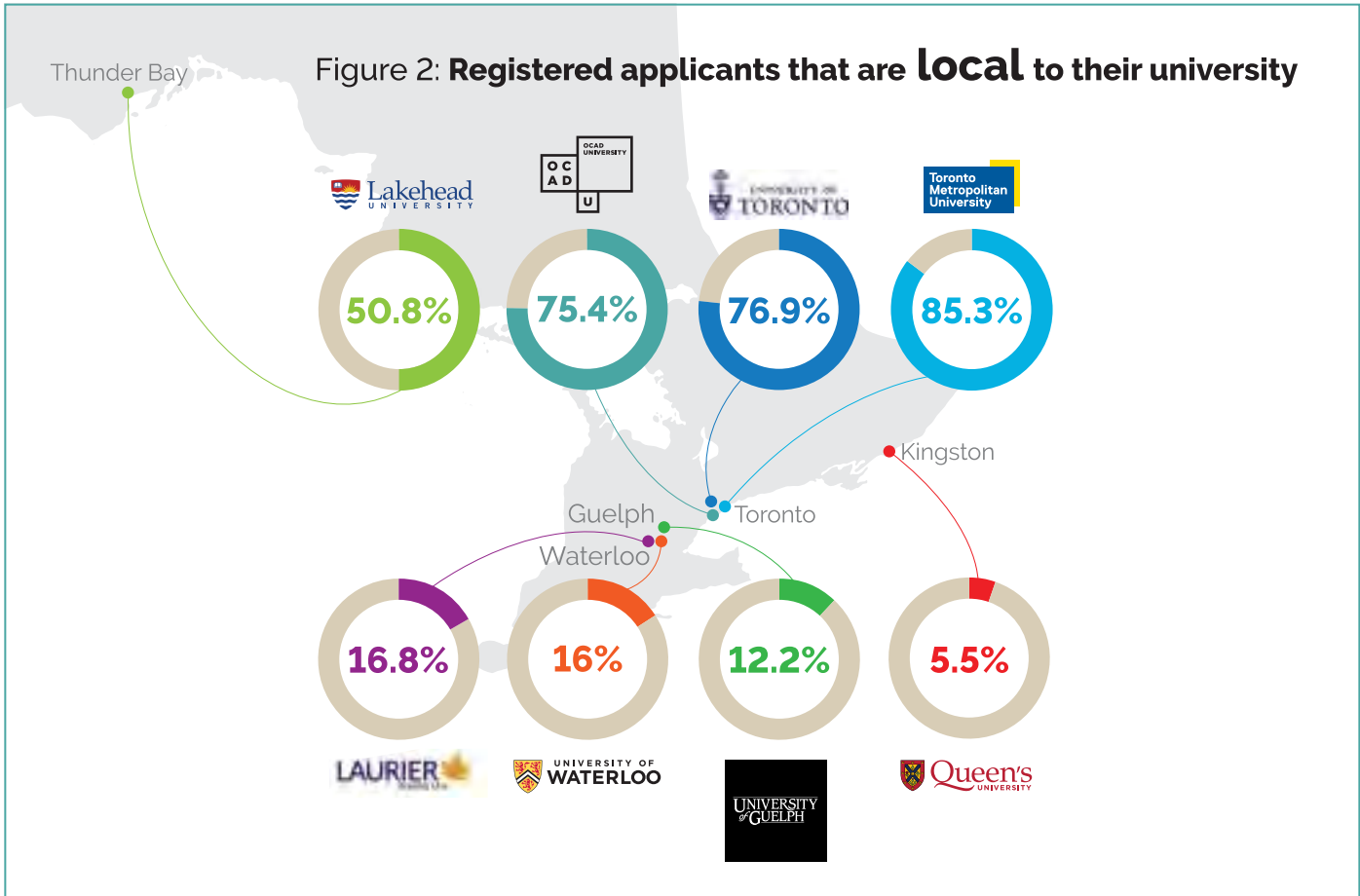
There was broad agreement among panel members that continued differentiation within the sector is highly desirable. Obvious benefits include a focus on institutional strengths, greater choice for students, and the avoidance of duplication. Experience in the sector does though suggest that being too differentiated

can increase risk for institutions when public policy changes leave them more vulnerable. We therefore suggest that the principle of differentiation should apply most fundamentally across the postsecondary sector, maintaining distinctions between colleges and universities where mandates differ.

Colleges and universities both offer degree programs. This notwithstanding, the value of differentiation includes the focus of colleges on skills, trades and applied diploma training, all of which need particular attention in today's economy. For universities, the delivery of high-quality graduate programs that fuel the province's competitiveness in innovation needs similar attention. Additionally, the distinction between IIs and colleges and universities should continue, while also encouraging colleges and universities to continue and, where possible, increase collaborations with the IIs and their delivery of programs and support for Indigenous learners.

Colleges and universities that serve northern, rural and remote communities should be encouraged to meet evolving regional labour market needs as a priority. Distinctions will exist based on size, differentiated mandates, and the extent to which each institution relies on recruiting students from outside its region to meet

11 See Appendix II for a list of respondents. The list also identifies those respondents with whom we met.



domestic enrolment objectives. There is significant variability in the proportion of applicants these institutions attract from their region. This variability supports a recurring theme in the panel's thinking – one size does not fit all for financial sustainability, and the panel's report makes recommendations that are pertinent in this context.

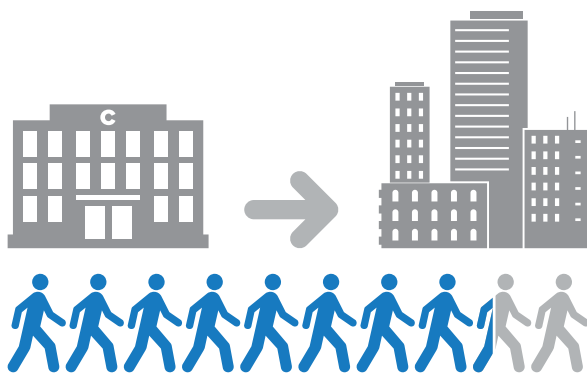
To illustrate the variability, we offer the following. In 2020, 85.3% of registered applicants to Toronto Metropolitan University were from its local zone (Metro Toronto, Peel and Simcoe). The percentage was slightly lower for the University of Toronto (76.9%) and the Ontario College of Art & Design University (OCADU) (75.4%).

These numbers are in stark contrast to those for Queen's (5.5%), Guelph (12.2%), Waterloo (16.0%) and Wilfrid Laurier (16.8%).¹²

Data for colleges paint a similar, but less stark, picture. Across the sector, on average, 59% of a college's domestic enrolments comes from the local catchment area, and 17 of the 24 colleges are at 50% or higher. The figures for individual colleges range from a low of 16% (George Brown and Humber) to 80% or more for College Boréal. Clearly, universities and colleges support the labour market needs in their

¹² These data were collected by the Ontario Universities' Application Centre and provided to us by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU).

Figure 3: **Employment rate 6 months after graduation**



83.4% of **college graduates** are employed within 6 months

Key Performance Indicators survey results (2022)



90.4% of **university graduates** are employed within 6 months

MCU graduate survey results (2022)

***Note:** Students who graduated from an Ontario university in 2019 have an employment rate of 94.3% after two years in the workforce; this information is not available for the colleges.*

local regions and more broadly across the province.¹³

Many submissions we received had different points of view, but all, including those from employer groups, emphasized the value of postsecondary education in creating and maintaining a highly qualified and relevant talent pipeline in Ontario, and one that responds to a changing economy. Several submissions suggested a focus on forecasting future workforce needs. Such an approach could support current and future students by providing information about career prospects across

programs of study, or inspiring students to take advanced degrees or certifications in burgeoning areas of the economy such as artificial intelligence or data sciences.

Submissions from both employers and the postsecondary institutions stressed the value of the sector's role in equipping a workforce that is resilient and committed to continuous learning and developing enhanced skills – priorities if Ontario is to remain competitive in its future. This positive commentary extended to the importance of work-integrated learning (WIL), and the broader purpose of postsecondary education to generate new knowledge and develop engaged and active citizens.

¹³ These data were provided to us by Colleges Ontario.

Student success is at the core of college and university missions, and investments in it have delivered impressive results for the workforce. The most recent Key Performance Indicators survey results for colleges indicated that 83.4% of 2020-2021 college graduates were employed within six months of graduation.¹⁴ The most recent MCU graduate survey results (2022) indicated that students who graduated from universities in 2019 had employment rates of 90.4% six months after graduating and 94.3% after two years in the workforce.¹⁵ These results affirm the value employers place on Ontario college and university graduates.

Institutions continue to transform their methods of delivering courses and their programs to respond to labour market demands. Submissions to the panel identified numerous examples – increases in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs, business and health programs, and in response to specific industry needs such as aerospace, and information and communications technology (ICT).

We examined changes in college programs and credentials that were reflective of

labour market needs. Between 2012-2013 and 2021-2022, and across all colleges, business and business-related programs increased by 47%, health-related programs rose by 20%, and there was an increase of 25% in technology-related programming. From a credentials perspective, the greatest increase occurred in the number of one-year College Graduate Certificates that were offered (an increase of 222% since 2012-2013) followed by two-year College Diploma programs (an increase of 16% since 2012-2013). International students were a large part of these increases. While relatively few in number, the large colleges have increased their four-year undergraduate degree programming in applied areas of study by 75% since 2012-2013. The panel noted that the colleges designated as Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning¹⁶ (ITALs) have not surpassed the 20% maximum in the number of degree programs these colleges are permitted to offer by policy (the highest is 14.9%). Non-ITAL colleges, which have a lower threshold of 10% for degree granting, are also below their maximum threshold allowed. As a result, no recommendations are made for change in this respect.

14 Retrieved at https://cdn.agilitycms.com/colleges-ontario/documents-library/document-files/CO_KPI_2022_EN_20230119142540_O.pdf.

15 Retrieved at <https://www.iaccess.gov.on.ca/OsapRatesWeb/enterapp/overview.xhtml>.

16 In 2003, five colleges were thus designated and permitted to offer up to 15% of their programs at the baccalaureate degree level. In 2022, this cap was raised to 20%.

We looked at developments in university degree programming and learned that in 2021-2022, 63 new programs were approved through the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance.¹⁷ Nearly 75% of these (47 of 63) were in health and STEM fields, an area of high labour market demand. Areas other than health sciences, public health and health policy with new programming included engineering, data analytics, business, AI, financial technologies and biomedical innovation. All these programs identified career pathways and strong ties to business and industry, including WIL, at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels.

In short, institutions are responding to changing needs in the workplace with new and modified programming that responds to both labour market demands and student interests.

Based on the considerable input the panel read and heard – and after extensive discussions among panel members – a consensus emerged on the areas our report should address. We agreed to focus on what brought institutions to their current financially fragile situation, and also

17 This information, and much more besides, comes from the *2021-22 Annual Report of the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance*. See <https://oucqa.ca/resources-publications/quality-council-annual-reports/> for several years of Quality Council annual reports.

pay attention to considerations that will shape the future context for institutions in the sector. The panel is convinced that circumstances have changed quite dramatically from the situation that prevailed when government implemented its last funding model. Three examples illustrate this point.

First, **demographic projections**, notably the number in Ontario aged 18 to 20, are very different over the next five years from those in 2017 when the decision was made to hold constant the number of domestic students eligible for direct provincial funding at each institution. Within the next two or three years, the 18 to 20 age group in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Southwest Ontario and Central Ontario will be larger than at any time between 2013 and 2023. Among the remaining areas (Northern Ontario, Eastern Ontario and Toronto), only in Northern Ontario will the 18 to 20 age group continue to stay below the 2013 figure for the next 20 years.¹⁸

Projections of increased numbers in the 18-20 age group are not the only consideration. For colleges, this age group represents a smaller share of their students than it does

18 These projections were provided to us by COU, and were developed by the Committee on Enrolment Statistics, Projections and Analysis (CESPA) using Ministry of Finance data for 2022.

for those entering universities because the age profile of college students is typically older. Ontario's high employment rates in recent years have also led to reductions in the number of domestic students in college diploma programs. When jobs are plentiful, interest in, and applications for, college diploma programs decline, indicating that this interest and the associated applications vary counter-cyclically.

A second important consideration is **immigration**. The number of people settling in Canada each year from other countries almost doubled between 2000-2001 and 2020-2021, with half a million individuals now arriving each year.¹⁹ A large proportion of these immigrants settle in Ontario, and the postsecondary sector plays an

important role helping many individuals improve their language abilities and upgrade their skills to meet the economy's future needs.

Third, the recent pandemic had a disruptive and then useful effect of institutions becoming more adept at providing and supporting **online learning**. Online learning supports the development of micro-credentials, a fast-growing component of the postsecondary sector. Today, Ontario's public colleges, universities and Indigenous Institutes offer more than 2,500 courses in almost 400 programs that are identified as micro-credentials. These programs provide highly valued reskilling and upskilling opportunities that represent a cost-efficient and rapid response to the needs of the labour market.

¹⁹ See <https://www.statista.com/statistics/443063/number-of-immigrants-in-canada/>.

Financial Sustainability

Our Terms of Reference sought advice and recommendations from the panel to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of Ontario's publicly assisted postsecondary sector, given which we must be clear about what it means for the sector to be "financially sustainable".

For Ontario's postsecondary sector and the panel's purposes, a useful definition of public sector financial sustainability is "the financial capacity of the public sector to meet its current obligations, to withstand shocks, and to maintain service, debt, and commitment...at reasonable levels relative to both national expectations and likely future income, while maintaining public confidence".²⁰

This definition begs the bigger question of how to measure financial sustainability. A critical distinction between Ontario's colleges and universities, as already noted, is that colleges' finances are consolidated within the province's financial statements. In consequence, Ontario's publicly assisted colleges provide detailed financial information to MCU several times each year. This information allows MCU to generate seven financial performance indicators and

an associated financial sustainability score for each college, thereby enabling MCU to monitor each college's financial health and when necessary to work with the college to initiate corrective action.

The finances of Ontario's universities are not consolidated. The universities have for the past 10 years assumed the responsibility of assessing their financial health, based on a set of indicators that are, in the words of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), reflective of "cash levels/liquidity, revenue and expense management, financial strength and flexibility, and debt management and affordability".²¹ Each university has been able to see its own results and those of other universities by institutional category of small, medium and large. These results have also been routinely shared with MCU.

More recently, MCU has been working with the COU to formalize a process for a financial accountability framework for universities. The framework has two primary components: financial health indicators (previously noted) that will be reported publicly each year, and the outcomes of third-party credit rating

²⁰ This definition comes from *Public Sector Financial Sustainability*, a 10-year-old publication from New Zealand's Office of the Auditor General, retrieved at <https://oag.parliament.nz/2013/financial-sustainability/docs/public-sector-financial-sustainability.pdf>.

²¹ See <https://ontariosuniversities.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Financial-Health-and-Transparency-Framework-Plan-COU.pdf>.

reviews.²² The framework will also trigger action plans and, in extreme circumstances, an independent advisor to help develop a recovery plan.

Measures of financial sustainability also demonstrate another consideration worth mentioning. With few if any exceptions, smaller universities (measured by enrolment numbers) tend to have lower financial health scores and, if they even have a credit rating (several currently do not), lower ratings.

There are benefits to determining the prospective long-term financial sustainability of both colleges and universities, while annually flagging areas of vulnerability in overall financial health. Given that MCU is a key stakeholder in the ongoing viability of all publicly assisted postsecondary institutions in Ontario, these exercises provide the transparency and opportunity for MCU to monitor the financial

condition of institutions and identify areas of concern for possible communication and discussion with relevant institutions. MCU's responsiveness in working with the sector on financial sustainability – and treating the financial health metrics with a seriousness not seen before Laurentian University's need for creditor protection is a good idea in all respects.

With that background, we turn to our recommendations. Our Terms of Reference indicated that anything we recommended "should be considered through the lens of fiscally responsible and affordable actions". We believe our recommendations are fiscally responsible and suggest actions the government must take if financial sustainability is the goal. Our overarching goal was to make recommendations that will place accountabilities and responsibilities where they need to be to ensure continued excellence in a publicly assisted sector, while also contributing to financial sustainability. For these recommendations, we have tried to explain what led to each recommendation, and the expected outcomes, if adopted.

²² In the past, some publicly assisted universities have elected not to seek an external credit rating. Our understanding is that all universities are now committed to doing so on an annual basis.

Recommendations

1. Implement an Integrated Funding Framework

Ontario has a comprehensive funding framework with three related components: the corridor model, funding envelopes, and tuition with accompanying student aid. Together, these have critical implications for an institution's financial sustainability. We address them separately for clarity but note the importance of their interdependence.

The Corridor Funding Model

Corridors provide upper and lower enrolment limits for an institution. Each institution has a corridor midpoint, which determines funding-eligible enrolment. Funding remains stable so long as enrolment stays within the corridor. When the corridor funding model was originally introduced, the intention was that it would adjust over time. Every institution, as part of each SMA cycle, would be able to negotiate a modified corridor midpoint and compete for additional student spaces or adjust downwards. When used effectively, the corridor model would be able to respond appropriately to demographic changes.

In 2017, the provincial government, in its SMA negotiations with institutions, precluded any possibility of changes to corridor midpoints, indicating that such changes were "not in scope". Instead, the province focused on performance-based

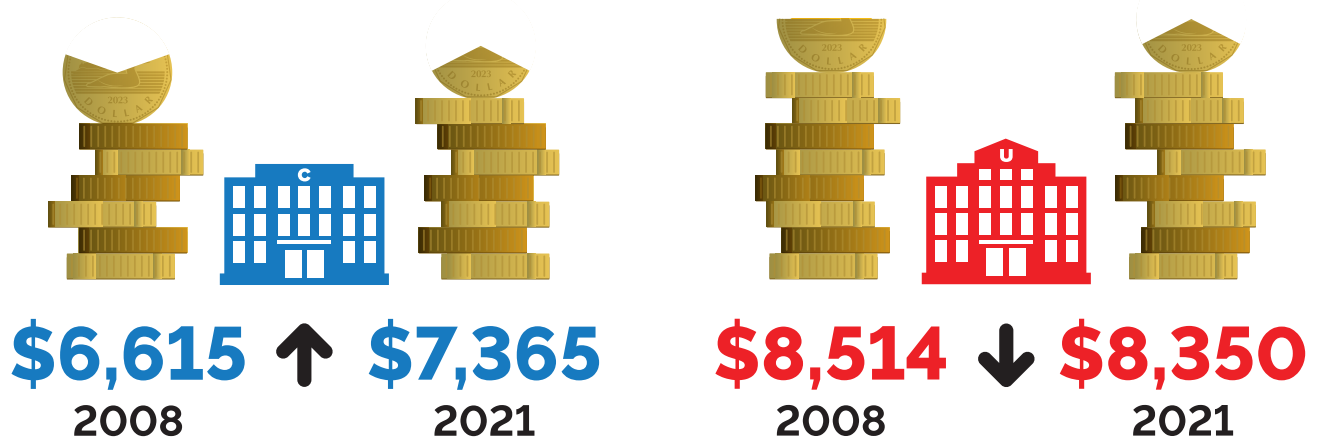
funding, and additionally cited demographic projections that indicated an absence of growth in the 18 to 20 age group. Relatedly, the freeze reflected a desire to offer some level of protection to northern institutions that might otherwise be adversely affected financially by unfettered growth in institutions in the GTA and Southern Ontario.

The funding in the corridor model is expressed in weighted grant units (WGUs) for universities and weighted funding units (WFUs) for colleges. WGU and WFU values vary across programs of study to reflect relative cost of program delivery: when more resources are required to deliver a program, the WGU/WFU value is appropriately higher.²³

The WGU and WFU values had been frozen for some time prior to 2017. There was a formula redesign in 2016-2017, but that was revenue-neutral by design. The last increase to what were then called Basic Income Units (BIUs) was through General Quality funding, which was linked to the Multi-Year Accountability Agreements (MYAA) under the government's Reaching Higher investments from 2006-2007

²³ A laudable attempt to cast some light on this system is to be found on page 32 of Ken Snowdon's HEQCO publication entitled *College and University Baccalaureate Degrees: Another Look at Costs, 2022* (see https://heqco.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Costing-Report-College-and-University-Baccalaureate-Degrees_FINAL.pdf).

Figure 4: **Nominal Operating Grants**
per college student and per university student



Note: The real value of these grants was further reduced by inflation over the same period of time. According to the Bank of Canada's inflation calculator, a basket of goods that cost \$100 in 2008 would have cost \$122.88 in 2021.

through 2008-2009. No justification was ever provided for the freeze over many years of the funding weights.

Without corridor midpoint adjustments, institutions were facing inflationary cost increases but no commensurate increase in revenue. Government expenditures were contained, and institutions were required to seek additional efficiencies and alternative sources of revenue every year as their only solution to the increasing costs of program delivery.

MCU data indicate that the effect of this lengthy freeze has been significant. Universities' nominal operating grant per full-time student declined from \$8,514

in 2008 to \$8,350 by 2021. For colleges, nominal operating grants did rise, but only modestly, from \$6,615 in 2008 to \$7,365 in 2021. According to the Bank of Canada's inflation calculator,²⁴ a basket of goods that cost \$100 in 2008 would have cost \$122.88 in 2021, which meant universities, and to a lesser extent colleges, were experiencing considerable reductions in the real value of their revenue.

Inflation can be combatted to some extent by increased efficiency and cost containment, many examples of which were

24 See <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>,

noted in submissions to the panel from stakeholders in the sector.²⁵ We have more to say on these topics later in the report.

Institutions have also been entrepreneurial in their search for additional revenues, but the benefits only last so long and can take attention away from delivering the best learning experience for students. This is why K-12 education and the health care sector receive annual increases in their operating funding.

A similar approach is warranted for the postsecondary sector, and is most easily achieved by using the corridor model more effectively, based on the most current demographic projections. Currently, 14 universities have collectively enrolled more than 20,000 domestic students above the combined total of their corridor midpoints. The tuition fees paid by these 20,000 students are the only source of additional revenue institutions receive for these students. If these additional students were grant-funded, they would yield additional revenue of \$175 million. To put it another

way, these universities are foregoing grant funding to ensure that 20,000 qualified students will receive a university education.

Five public colleges are in a similar situation, but the numbers are much smaller. Just over 2,500 students above the combined midpoints of the corridor for these colleges were admitted, yielding only tuition revenue of slightly more than \$3 million.

We have noted earlier that demographic projections indicate the need to admit more students in the future. The demographic low point for all six Ontario regions²⁶ except one (Toronto) was 2021; for Toronto it is 2023. The projections indicate growth until at least 2028, with modest differences in projected growth rates across the six regions. The longer run demographic projections suggest that by 2047, spaces will be needed in Ontario's universities and colleges for an additional 119,000 domestic students, and 168,000 international students.

Allowing upward adjustments to midpoints in cyclical SMA corridor negotiations is critical. We believe this is fully justified by both past experience and the latest demographic projections. Such adjustments are precisely why the corridor model was originally instituted by government. Allowing unchanged corridor

²⁵ The submission from Ontario's universities demonstrated that their expenditures on salaries and benefits per Full-time Equivalent (FTE) are among the lowest in the country. Ontario's colleges pointed to the important role played by their College Employer Council, which represents Ontario's 24 public colleges in negotiating collective agreements, managing and administering group benefits, and constraining costs of arbitrations.

²⁶ The regions are Toronto, the GTA, Southwest, Central, East, and North.

midpoints for institutions that believe they cannot or should not grow is also possible in this process. If institutions were to fall below their corridor floor, a reduction in midpoints would be negotiated. The corridor model can effectively respond to and manage each of these scenarios. The notion of changes from one SMA cycle to the next – after negotiations with, and the approval of, the provincial government – makes eminent sense.

An additional and significant benefit of adjustments at each SMA cycle is that they contribute to institutions' financial sustainability, especially if these adjustments are accompanied by modifications to per student funding through an adjustment upwards to the value of WGUs/WFUs used in enrolment funding. It bears mentioning that failure to act will also exacerbate what is already a heavy reliance on revenue from international students.

With these considerations in mind, we recommend:

- A one-time significant adjustment in per student funding for colleges and universities to recognize unusually high inflationary cost increases over the past several years.
- A commitment to more modest annual adjustments over the next three to five years.

Specifically, we recommend a one-time increase of 10%, which represents partial recognition of inflation since 2017,²⁷ and adjustments in line with increases in the consumer price index, or a minimum of 2% per annum, thereafter. Taken together, these two measures will greatly enhance institutions' financial sustainability.

The panel has suggestions for how the government might implement this change. The panel favours increasing the value of the WGUs and WFUs as a way to recognize two important factors. WGUs and WFUs assign different amounts of grant funding to different programs based on the relative cost of delivery of a program. The more resources required, the higher the WGU/WFU weight whether based on a greater number of teaching hours, a lower student/faculty ratio because of the nature of the program, or a need for specialized equipment. Applying the increase to these units would reflect the enrolment distribution as it exists today and recognize that costs to deliver programs have increased since 2009.

27 According to the Bank of Canada's inflation calculator, a basket of goods that cost \$100 in 2017 would today cost \$120, which means that the recommended adjustment would account for about half the actual inflation over the past six years. Our proposal therefore represents an equal sharing of the cost of inflation between government (through funding) and institutions (through efficiencies, cost savings and revenue generation).

At a more granular level, we recommend consideration of two immediate actions. First, northern institutions, as part of SMA negotiations, should be offered the possibility to reduce their corridors' lower boundaries. This will privilege these institutions, but that is precisely the reason for the recommendation. These institutions are more precariously situated because of differences in both costs and the competition for students. Here is an example of these differences.

Northern institutions are typically smaller than southern counterparts, and scale is an important factor in cost efficiency (though not the only one). Access to markets can pose even greater challenges – institutions seeking to employ highly qualified personnel will typically be searching in thinner labour markets.

Student recruitment can also be challenging. In the north, postsecondary participation in the relevant age group has typically been proportionately lower, lagging behind larger urban centres in the south. This is compounded by demographic projections for the north that indicate declines in absolute numbers. As a result, northern institutions find themselves competing in the north and south to recruit and retain students, with implications for their ability to maintain enrolments. Our recommendation for downward

adjustments to the lower boundaries of northern institutions' corridors, from -7% to -10% for colleges and -3% to -6% for universities, represents an opportunity for the government to acknowledge these challenges explicitly. We believe this is preferable to a more piecemeal approach.

Second, the panel was made aware that, based on corridor assessments, a number of colleges and universities may fall below their corridor floors in 2023-2024. If this occurs, it will trigger an in-year reduction in core operating grant funding (calculated as dollars per WGU/WFU below the corridor floor). Such reductions are subject to ministerial approval within an annual process. We recommend that funds normally clawed back for what is called in-year "assessed enrolment" be retained by that institution as a transition support to provide time for restructuring, with the goal of sustainability in 2024-2025 at a lower enrolment level.

Funding Envelopes

There are actually three funding envelopes. The enrolment envelope, which we have already discussed, is the largest. The other two are the differentiation envelope, which is allocated according to metric performance, data collection, evaluation and the public posting of results, and the special purpose envelope, which is based on unique accountabilities through what are

called transfer payment agreements. We reviewed the approach currently taken to determine the allocation of funding across the three envelopes.

The enrolment and differentiation envelopes together account for more than 90% of the total funding, and in 2020-2021 the enrolment envelope was almost three times the size of the differentiation envelope. The government's stated intention was that over three years, funds would move from the enrolment envelope to the differentiation envelope to the point where the differentiation envelope would be slightly larger than the enrolment envelope. For various reasons, notably the pandemic, this movement of funds was delayed for three years.

The same three-year delay was also applied to the intention to make the differentiation envelope more explicitly based on performance – activating a system-wide proportion for performance-based funding of 10% in 2023-2024. Increases in this proportion were envisaged for 2024-2025 but any changes have now been deferred pending the recommendations from our panel.²⁸

²⁸ For completeness, we should perhaps explain that moving funds from the enrolment envelope to the differentiation envelope does not in and of itself necessarily imply a greater proportion of performance-based funding. The ministry refers to "activation" when indicating the percentage of performance-based funding.

The panel supports the continued distinction and stated purposes of the three envelopes. We do not though view the envisaged shift of funding from enrolment-based to performance-based as being in the best interests of either postsecondary institutions or their students. Instead, we recommend that the shift should occur more slowly. We also believe it would be appropriate, as the changes occur, to give due consideration to the effects on the postsecondary system of these changes.

Our recommendation reflects several interrelated considerations. First, demographic projections indicate considerable growth in the numbers of individuals seeking a postsecondary education. Second, significant changes are occurring in the labour market and the outcomes are still uncertain. Third, the economy is experiencing an elongated recovery from the pandemic. This is particularly true for postsecondary institutions where any decline in the number of students enrolled during the pandemic will be reflected in lower student numbers for at least as long as the students' programs – two to five years – depending on the program.

More generally, the uncertain times in which we live underscore the benefit of certainty of stable funding. Financial health indicators in the sector give cause for concern regarding the financial

sustainability of some postsecondary institutions. Major changes could exacerbate the appropriateness of this concern.

The original plan for performance-based funding was for significant increases from the initially proposed figure of 10% in 2023-2024, specifically 25% the following year, rising to 60% after four years. The slower and more modest progression we recommend would start at 10%, add five percentage points in each of the following three years, and stop at 25%.

Regardless of the degree of emphasis on performance-based funding in the future, the associated indicators in performance-based funding should be within the power of postsecondary institutions to influence, and should reflect the needs of students and the labour markets they will eventually join.

The corridor funding model was designed to be flexible enough to allow colleges and universities to request permission for some degree of fungibility (that is, flexibility of use) of their WFUs and WGU. The panel believes it is time to allow institutions to take advantage of this fungibility to strengthen their differentiation. For example, a more research-intensive university with strong graduate programs may wish to move some WGUs from undergraduate programs to graduate programs. A college that offers a high proportion of degree

programming, might consider a move of some WFUs from diploma to degree programming. We are not suggesting an open season but encourage consideration of fungibility to a limited degree.

Colleges have a 15% cap on programs that are deemed “high-demand programs”. In the university sector, the equivalent ministry policy refers to “professional programs” and no cap is applied. We recommend the removal of this cap for colleges, and offer two justifications for such action. First, the ministry controls funded spaces in a limited number of programs. Second, one of the government's key guiding principles is to improve labour market alignment where there is demand in the market for talent.

We also noted another distinction between universities and colleges with regard to WGU and WFU values assigned to part-time students. In general, a part-time student at a college is funded at the lowest WFU value regardless of the student's actual program of study. This is not the case for the WGU value assigned to a part-time student at a university.

The effect varies from program to program. At Georgian College's two-year business diploma program, full-time students take six courses each semester or 12 courses each year. The grant funding for a full-time student in this program is \$4,150 per year

or \$345.83 per course. By contrast, a part-time student in the same program yields grant funding of \$178.50. The incentive for colleges is clear: fill spaces in programs with full-time students and offer space to part-time students only as a fall-back position.

This practice, which is not applied to WGU values for part-time students at universities, would appear to be a historical artifact. It represents a disincentive for the colleges to accept part-time students. It is also at odds with the stated importance of continuous learning for workforce preparation and reskilling. An adjustment to the treatment of part-time enrolments in the college sector should be made as soon as possible. We note there was a commitment by MCU several years ago, at the time of the second cycle of SMAs, that would have seen the government working collaboratively with colleges to review this issue, but nothing was resolved.

There is another difference between universities and colleges that warrants description, if not analysis. There is, as noted earlier, a tendency for college enrolments to be counter-cyclical. This may be a consequence of college programs being of shorter duration than university programs and highly responsive to evolving skills in the workplace. Whatever the reason, prospective college students appear to be more interested in a college

credential when the labour market has less to offer, which makes retraining and upskilling more attractive options.

The government's decision to fund targeted enrolment expansion through the special purpose envelope seems to be working well. A case could be made for moving targeted enrolments into the corridor calculations at the beginning of a new SMA cycle, so long as the targets have been consistently met, and are projected to be both needed and in demand in the future.

Several commitments made during the second cycle of SMAs have yet to be fulfilled. Specifically, the province was to work collaboratively with colleges to review the eligibility criteria and allocation methods for the Small, Northern and Rural Grants with the goal of targeting the funding so that it might best meet sustainability challenges. A commitment was made at the same time – in collaboration with relevant universities – to examine whether the criteria for access and allocations of the Northern Grant represent an equitable approach. Neither commitment was fulfilled and work on both should resume as soon as possible.

Targeted funding for French-language and bilingual postsecondary institutions is a further component of special purpose grants. These funds, just over half of which

were provided by the federal government in 2022-2023, are not allocated for specific programs. They are mostly intended to compensate for the shortfalls faced by institutions that provide French-language and bilingual programs and services, with a smaller amount being allocated on a project basis.

The University of Ottawa plays an important role in French-language and bilingual programming – hosting 85% of all French-language and bilingual learners in Ontario's universities, and 63% in Ontario's postsecondary sector.²⁹ This contribution to French-language and bilingual learning in Ontario is not matched by a commensurate share of the funding available from the special purpose grant. The University of Ottawa receives 42% of the grant allocated to universities, and 29% of the grant allocated to universities and colleges – roughly half the share it would receive if the allocation were based on student numbers.

Distribution of these funds is based on an allocation formula that was established in 2010. In its submission to the panel, the University of Ottawa argued that its share of the special purpose grant for French-language programs is about \$50 million

²⁹ If Hearst and Université de l'Ontario français were included in this calculation, the University of Ottawa's percentage of university students would fall by only one percentage point.

short of providing fully for the programs' delivery costs. Although panel members are not able to verify this calculation independently, our foregoing observations strongly suggest a prima facie case for a major reconsideration of both the total amount of the grant and the allocation formula. Given its intended purpose, this grant should be considered as a prime candidate for a built-in inflationary factor. Such a reconsideration should not be directed only at the University of Ottawa's share of the available funds. Two French-language colleges, Collège Boréal and Collège La Cité, which together account for just over 25% of Ontario's French-language and bilingual learners, also play an important role.

Finally, building on the achievements in digital learning through the \$70 million invested by Ontario over three years to support content, capacity, delivery and fluency in digital learning for online and hybrid learning environments, we recommend the province consider defined funding within the special purpose envelope to sustain its Virtual Learning Strategy. Keeping Ontario's postsecondary sector globally competitive and able to meet the digital-first needs of today's learners is surely a laudable motive. Such a grant would focus on ensuring new developments in virtual learning

are innovative and collaborative, and encourage partnerships with Ontario's world-class technology developers. Cost savings have been realized through shared content development of materials and programs, educational resources use and pooled services. Past investments in this area of modernization brought an impressive return. Normalizing these activities within the funding envelope will continue along this strategic path and ensure the technology can be evergreen going forward.

Ontario leads Canada in virtual learning in higher education and was well prepared when the pandemic required institutions to move quickly in this direction. With more than 30,000 online courses and 2,300 certificates, diplomas and degree programs available, Ontario's Virtual Learning Strategy already increases access and helps ensure success in postsecondary education, especially for those in rural, remote communities, and for others in the sector who may feel they are otherwise under-represented. The strategy also serves those seeking opportunities to upgrade or reskill. Institutions have invested in infrastructure and professional development to support the rapid growth and development of hybrid and online learning. They now need the capacity to ensure their technology-

based learning systems are well maintained and Ontario continues to be a leader in providing digital options for all learners.

Two other initiatives established by the ministry illustrate the breadth of programming supported by government to address reskilling and upskilling in support of displaced members of the workforce. In 2020, three years of funding enabled the development of micro-credentials in the province through rapid training programs offered by colleges, universities, IIs and other private players in Ontario. The programs, whether completed online or on-the-job, represented a direct response in the province for the type of training to help employees keep their jobs in times of change and upgrade their skills to secure new employment opportunities.

Funding for this initiative flowed through the Ontario Micro-Credentials Challenge Fund. Successful applications resulted in 65 projects to create approximately 250 new micro-credentials in response to regional labour market needs. Various pilot programs were funded along with an online portal to access micro-credential training opportunities. Additionally, changes were made to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) to support students with financial need to pay for micro-credential education geared to in-demand jobs.

In 2022, the province's *Second Career Ontario* program became *Better Jobs Ontario*. The associated changes to the programs on offer – whether through public colleges or private career colleges – promised better support to gig workers,³⁰ young adults, those on social assistance who face challenges finding stable jobs, and those unemployed for six months or longer and part of lower-income households.

The panel recognizes that not all initiatives are classified exclusively as public postsecondary education; those that are not thus classified would not qualify for support from the third funding envelope, special purpose funding. We mention them because of their importance in supporting an evolving workforce, and because we view them as integral parts of a modern learning system in Ontario.

Tuition and Student Assistance

The province reduced college and university tuition rates for domestic students by 10% in 2019, since when these rates have been frozen, and remained frozen in September 2023. The effects

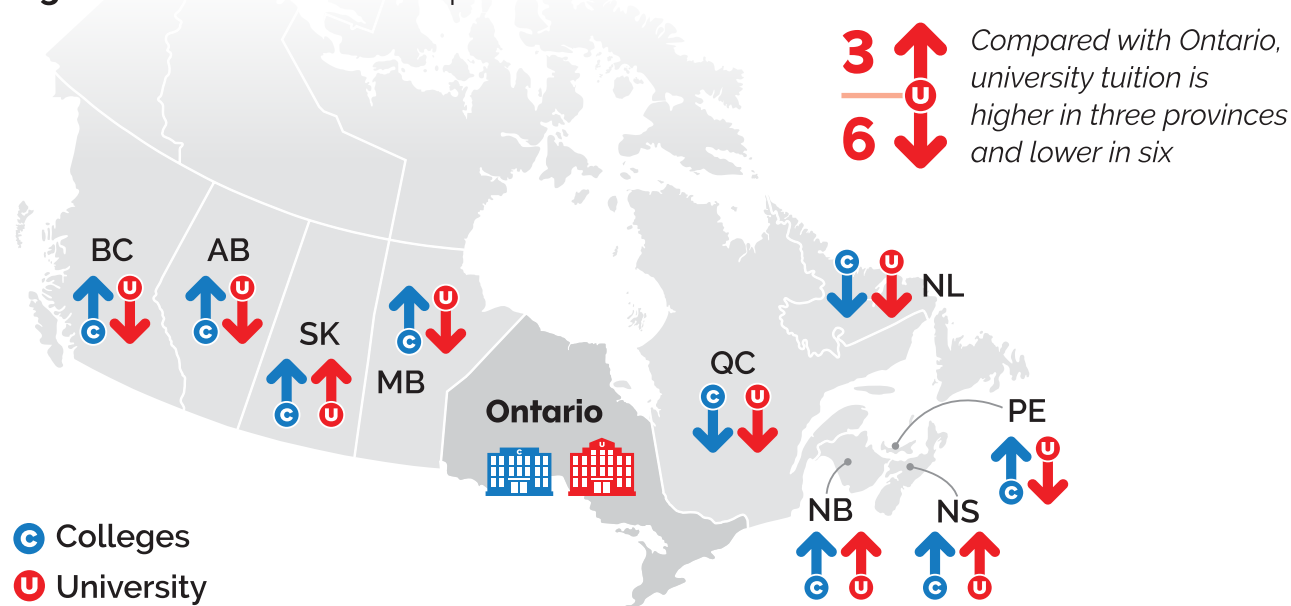
of the reduction and the freeze have challenged postsecondary institutions because consumer price inflation since 2019 has been of the order of about 15%. It would be easy to begin our recommendations by proposing a one-time adjustment of 25%, which would restore the real value of tuition to its level before the 2019 reduction. Any such change would require an equally generous investment by institutions and government in student financial aid to ensure access was not impeded. The panel favours a more nuanced approach.

Public postsecondary education is both a private and a public good. We support a shared and balanced commitment on the part of government, students and institutions to cover the costs of education. It is an investment by all parties – private individuals and government public funds. The Ontario government should increase per student funding, as recommended earlier in this report, and establish a multi-year tuition framework as a primary policy objective. Students and their families should be asked to increase their contribution through higher tuition that is predictable as the students progress through their programs. Institutions should continue a focus on finding efficiencies while providing substantive institutional student assistance to support access.

³⁰ A gig worker is defined by the Government of Canada as someone who enters more casual work arrangements such as short term contracts with firms or individuals to complete specific and often one-off tasks. See <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate-portfolio/labour/programs/labour-standards/reports/gig-workers-what-we-heard.html>.

Figure 5: Average Tuition

Are average tuition rates for domestic students in Ontario's colleges and universities **higher or lower** than in other provinces?



The multi-year tuition framework the panel recommends will allow a one-time upward adjustment to college and university tuition of 5%, effective September 2024, as some acknowledgement of the price inflation over the past several years,³¹ and a commitment to allow further increases in tuition in subsequent years of either 2% or the annual percentage increase in the consumer price index, whichever is greater. This multi-year framework will provide some measure of predictability for students as they move through each year of study.

Additionally, the panel suggests the government allow universities and colleges

the flexibility to increase tuition by an additional 3% in September 2024 in a small number of programs – specifically professional programs in universities and high-demand programs in colleges where graduate earnings are demonstrably higher.

In preparation for making recommendations on tuition, the panel reviewed tuition levels in other provinces. This review revealed significant differences in relative standing between colleges and universities. Average tuition for domestic students in Ontario's colleges is lower than in seven of the other nine provinces. Only Newfoundland and Quebec have lower tuition. By contrast, average tuition for undergraduate domestic students in Ontario's universities is higher than in six of the other nine provinces – only New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and

³¹ It is pertinent to mention that, by September 2024, the consumer price index will inevitably have risen further.

Saskatchewan have higher tuition.³² A simple across-the-board increase in college and university tuition for domestic students serves only to leave the colleges at a competitive disadvantage compared to peers across the country.

A recommendation can be made to treat college and university tuition levels differently, allowing additional upward flexibility for colleges. There are several ways this could occur. College tuition rates could be allowed to evolve over time to the Canadian average. College tuition could be adjusted over time until the revenue it generates reaches a predetermined proportion of total funding per student. Or colleges could make larger percentage increases to tuition initially, for example 5% each year for a limited number of years, and then apply the same increases proposed above for colleges and universities.

Failure to do anything that makes an exception for colleges will undoubtedly have repercussions for program quality. It will also increase the level of risk colleges assume through increased reliance on international student recruitment as a revenue stream, with obvious implications for colleges' long term financial sustainability.

If the province is disinclined to such an approach, a change that would more modestly address sustainability issues for colleges – at least for some number of years – would be to reduce or eliminate the student recovery fee for international students paid by colleges and leave the fee paid by universities unchanged. Both universities and colleges pay a fee of \$375 per semester for each international student, with disproportionately greater consequences for finances of colleges than universities. The panel recommends at least halving the fee for colleges to \$375 per year for each full-time international student and leaving the fee for universities unchanged at \$750 per year.

In conjunction with the proposed tuition adjustments, there would be a continued expectation that universities and colleges make their contribution to access through both increases in institutional student assistance and more efficient operations. There is no denying the government's desire to keep postsecondary education affordable for lower and middle-income families. A one-time increase with annual adjustments to tuition levels must be offset by equally generous commitments to increased investment in needs-based student assistance by universities and colleges, as well as by government.

³² Statistics Canada, Average undergraduate tuition fees for Canadian full-time students, by province or territory, 2022/2023 (statcan.gc.ca).

The fundamental goal of OSAP should be to ensure that, in conjunction with institutional assistance, no qualified student in Ontario who wishes to pursue postsecondary credentials is denied access because of their economic circumstances. Equally important is early awareness of what is available through OSAP so that high-school students can prepare financially and scholastically to achieve their ambitions. Recognizing that access to higher education is a fundamental driver of Ontario's future economic growth, the panel recommends a greater effort be made by government through a communications program to ensure that high-school students are aware of available financial assistance.

These recommendations would signal a commitment by government to provide for students and families least able to fund postsecondary education on their own. This approach requires transparent practices for issues such as debt forgiveness that are aligned between federal and provincial governments. The federal government contributes substantially to student support that benefits Ontario students, distributing \$3.1 billion across Ontario in 2021-2022 in Canada Student Grants and Loans. In the same timeframe, Ontario provided around \$1 billion in student aid to approximately 385,000 students through Ontario Student Grants and Loans. Ontario commits 80% of its aid to students as a grant while the

federal government provided only 54% of its aid as a grant in 2021-2022. We suggest the province propose to the federal government that it match Ontario's 80% commitment.

As part of its review of the 2019 changes to OSAP, the panel noted that predictability of support based on the previous year's experience with OSAP disappeared for some students already at college or university. To avoid this situation for students, the panel suggests that changes with negative effects should apply only to new students and not those already receiving student aid.

Two of the guiding principles set by government for the panel's consideration are "enhancing student experience and access" and "keeping education affordable for lower and middle-income families". With these in mind, the panel acknowledges a number of suggestions regarding OSAP that were included in the submissions it received:

- Reduce the fixed student contribution of \$3,600 used as part of the OSAP needs assessment³³
- Eliminate the minimum 10% loan requirement for low-income students, which would allow grants to cover the full cost of tuition for these students

33 A reduction of \$600 was suggested.

- Eliminate the interest charged on the Ontario portion of student debt
- Provide equitable support for students enrolled in flexible programs (currently, these students are funded as if they were part-time)
- Provide enhanced OSAP support for students studying in the north, and especially those from northern and rural areas of the province
- Remove assets from the determination of the Student Financial Contribution and the Spousal Financial Contribution
- Consider grants for those wishing to study in high-demand programs.

Among these suggestions, the panel is inclined to favour an increase in grants for low-income students through OSAP assessment changes.

Finally, the panel noted that some of the submissions received argued for an unfettered approach to setting tuition fees that would be reflective of market demand and competition for high quality students. This approach would have to be mitigated by a far greater investment in institutional student assistance. For the most part, the panel elected to err on the side of caution.

2. Implement a Financial Accountability Framework

We have discussed already the assessment of the colleges' and universities' financial sustainability. This assessment provides the transparency and opportunity for MCU to monitor the financial condition of institutions and flag areas of concern for possible communication and discussion with the relevant institution. It is the responsibility of the board of each postsecondary institution, through its governance and oversight functions, including the selection and performance monitoring of the president, to ensure the ongoing viability of the institution. Ongoing viability means an organization can maintain its existence, fulfill its mission, achieve its objectives and adapt to changing circumstances, all while remaining financially sustainable and relevant to students.

Given the critical importance of the role of college and university boards with respect to postsecondary institutions' financial sustainability, the panel strongly urges all institutions to follow best practices, which would include ensuring all board members are financially literate and appropriately cognisant of the board's role. The culture of the board should encourage transparency and open dissent. A robust risk management program should be in place to identify

potential threats to ongoing financial sustainability, and boards should engage in an annual self-assessment process to identify areas for continuous improvement.

We believe it would be beneficial for boards to review the performance of their institution on the financial health indicators for universities and financial performance indicators for colleges – relative to other institutions in their sector – and also to trends in the indicators over time. It would also be good governance and risk management for boards to set threshold levels for the financial indicators that would trigger a board discussion of whether action is required to stabilize or reverse the trend in any financial indicator. Boards of colleges should be able to see the financial sustainability scores assigned by MCU for all colleges, and the same level of transparency should be accorded to boards of universities with respect to other universities' financial health.

Best practices for board governance require the oversight of a robust risk management program that identifies potential threats to ongoing viability. We would be remiss if we did not raise the Auditor General's identification of the risk to the financial sustainability of the college sector resulting from the considerable expansion in recent

years of international student recruitment, and particularly the high reliance on India, which accounts for about 60% of all international students in Ontario's colleges. The Auditor General's recommendation was quite specific: "do not further increase dependency on international enrolments without a longer-term strategy in place to address the risks of this approach for financial sustainability".³⁴

This recommendation is almost two years old and as far as we know still awaits a comprehensive response. We have noted that, because of consolidation, this risk is shared with the provincial government. The panel believes MCU should give serious consideration to explicitly incorporating this material risk into the existing financial sustainability monitoring system for colleges.

Finally, we suggest that COU and Colleges Ontario (CO) each create a process to populate an expert panel from their subsector (universities or colleges). When challenges to a particular institution's financial sustainability are identified, the expert panel would be available to the institution to provide analysis, feedback, benchmarking, and support to the institution.

34 Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, *Value-for-Money Audit: Public Colleges Oversight*, December 2021, pages 44-45.

3. Enhance Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

The panel spent time in discussion with representatives of the Nous Group – an international management consultancy with prominent Canadian universities, including several in Ontario, among its clients. Nous uses data from other countries, notably Australia and the United Kingdom, as a standard to benchmark its Canadian university clients. Our discussions with Nous suggest there is considerable room for improvement in these universities' cost efficiency that could reduce administrative costs by as much as 10%. For what it is worth, the panel agrees with Nous. These projected savings presume the university is able to reduce costs without major disruptions. Variations in policies across jurisdictions may skew these types of comparisons, but projected savings can still be informative.

Areas identified by Nous with the potential to reduce costs without having negative effects on institutions' efficacy include administrative services, space utilization, IT services and other non-labour costs. Some of these benefits could be realized through increased levels of automation and advancements in digital service delivery, and through redesigning processes to reduce complexity and duplication. Nous also encourages an

investigation of ways to outsource some university-managed services.

Benchmarking is potentially a powerful tool when the opportunity arises to use the experience of larger universities that are working with Nous to provide guidance to other Ontario universities. The panel encourages institutions to benchmark themselves against those institutions that have successfully achieved higher levels of cost efficiency and effectiveness. Such an approach could be facilitated by COU or CO.

Small- and medium-sized universities could also engage in higher levels of collaboration for greater cost effectiveness including shared service provision and shared course delivery. These collaborative approaches work successfully with consortia models such as Claremont Colleges Services, the Big Ten Academic Alliance and Five Colleges, Incorporated.

There are to be sure potential obstacles in the path of collaborative approaches. Such obstacles would include unwillingness to give up control and differences in the capacity to participate. In this regard, we should acknowledge that Ontario's universities and colleges are already models for other jurisdictions in some areas. Examples include collaborative purchasing, shared library resources, and centralized application centres.

The examples of consortia from other jurisdictions serve as proof of the value of taking the approach to collaboration we are advocating. Best practices elsewhere suggest key factors that need to be kept in mind: leverage existing relationships, establish a neutral entity upfront together with a governance oversight structure that meets frequently, especially in the early days. Last, but certainly not least, there is value in starting with a "coalition of the willing", and looking for possible partnerships among similar kinds of institutions.

In the longer term, leaving collaboration in the hands of the willing may not drive sufficient change for financial sustainability, particularly for small and regional institutions in both the college and the university sector. Smaller to mid-sized universities tend to have lower financial health scores and lower credit ratings. We have all publicly observed the financial challenges and restructuring required of one such university when indications of poor financial health remained unaddressed for a considerable length of time. Financial difficulties in other northern institutions have led the panel to recommend specific recommendations that could position these institutions for stronger sustainability.

Data provided by MCU indicate that enrolment in small colleges³⁵ at all levels of credential, except graduate certificates, has declined between 2012-2013 and 2021-2022:

- 39% reduction in one-year certificates
- 20% reduction in two-year diplomas
- 31% reduction in three-year advanced diplomas
- 100% reduction in four-year applied degrees.

This pattern was only partly replicated in medium-sized colleges:

- 18% reduction in one-year certificates
- 14% reduction in three-year advanced diplomas
- 3% modest growth in four-year degrees
- 35% solid growth in two-year diplomas.

The panel suspects that the growth in four-year degrees and two-year diplomas is a result of the increase in international enrolments.

For medium to longer term financial sustainability, the panel recommends a more formal review of small, remote and

³⁵ Using MCU definitions, a small college has an enrolment below 3,000 and a medium-sized college has an enrolment of 3,000 or more but below 15,000.

rural colleges. The review would give serious consideration to program and operational consolidation and could be extended to medium-sized colleges that have experienced reductions in enrolment of sufficient magnitude to take them below their corridor floors. Adopting the panel's other pertinent recommendations would be required so that sufficient time is available for the review without any institution becoming financially unsustainable.

We are not suggesting a review that would lead to programming in those locations disappearing. A review could yield significant efficiencies through shared course delivery and consolidation of back-office operations and systems. The example of the Nova Scotia Community College – which delivers certificate and diploma programs at campuses situated throughout the province – could be instructive to this review process. Such a fundamental review could be extended to all institutions in the north, bearing in mind the types of options discussed elsewhere in this report for French-language institutions.

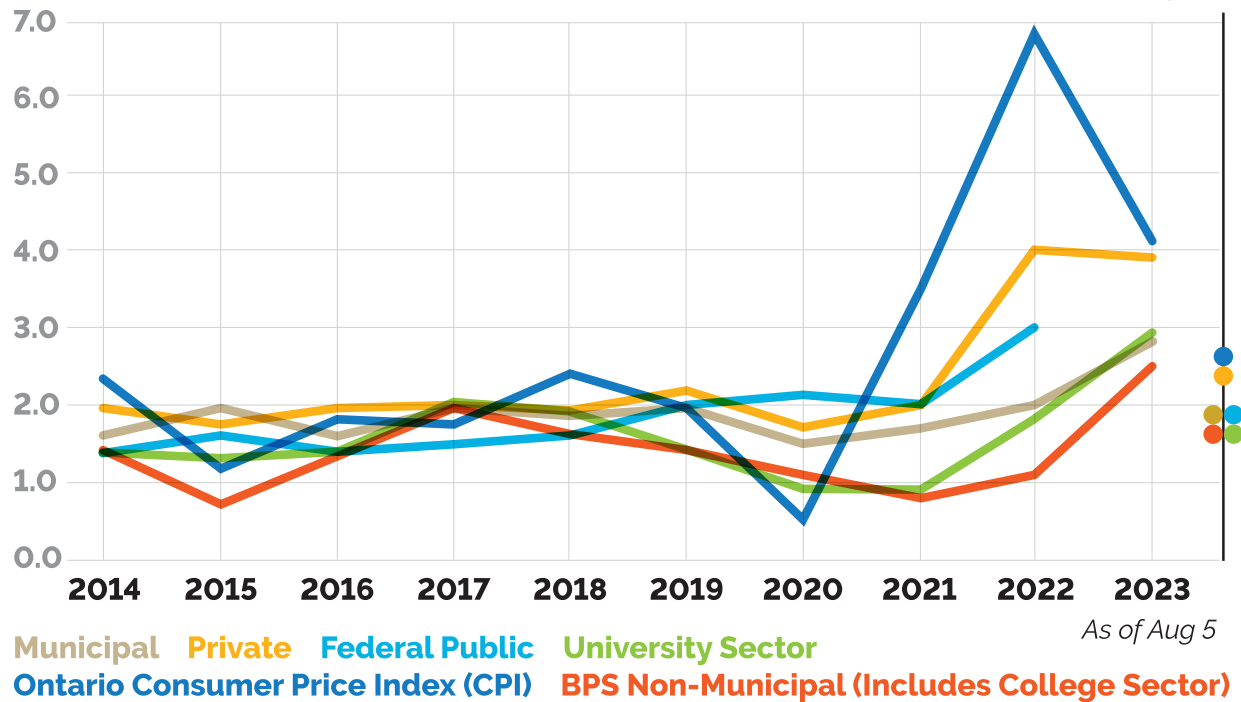
Ontario's colleges have worked together over several decades to create OntarioLearn, a collection of shared online college courses. These mainly serve the continuing education market, but some courses are available to full-time students. OntarioLearn could be a lifelong learning platform if

colleges were to pursue a collaborative recruitment strategy specifically for the working age (25+) market – although we are told the operational and financial framework would also need to change to make this possible. Individual colleges are too often inclined to pursue their own online learning platform. It is appropriate to cite the OntarioLearn initiative that offers valuable competency upgrade courses, funded by government, for internationally educated nurses who wish to qualify as Registered Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses in Ontario.

Before we leave this section on enhancing cost efficiency and effectiveness, we want to address the frequent criticism of the postsecondary sector regarding how much is spent on people, notably faculty members. A fuller analysis tells a different story. For example, salary and benefit costs in Ontario's universities per full-time equivalent student are lower than in almost every other province. We believe past accomplishments at Ontario's universities should be acknowledged while we encourage them to investigate how they might become even more cost efficient. The College Employer Council has yielded a number of notable efficiencies for colleges, demonstrating the value of a collaborative approach. Examples of these efficiencies are cited in the Council's submission to the panel. A comparison

Figure 6: **Average Negotiated Wage Outcomes in Ontario [%]**

Average for 2014-2023



of salary increases with changes in the consumer price index over the past 10 years confirms that both colleges and universities have managed these costs well.³⁶

36 Sources: Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development; 2022 data includes results of agreements up to December, 2022.

2022 Federal Public: Employment and Social Development Canada (Major Wage Settlements > Ontario > Public, All Industries).

CPI: 2023 and 2024 projections by Focus Economics, as at January 30, 2023.

Private: various 2023 compensation surveys including Eckler (4.1% for Ontario); and Normandin Beaudry (4.0% private sector in Canada) See: <https://www.eckler.ca/canadian-employers-are-projecting-the-highest-salary-increase-in-two-decades-eckler-survey-finds/> and <https://www.normandin-beaudry.ca/en/salary-forecast/record-high-salary-increases-for-2023/>.

4. What Proposed Changes Mean Specifically for the North

We have mentioned that demographic projections to 2028 and beyond vary across different parts of Ontario, with the north not seeing the same percentage increases in population expansion. This does not align with the need to provide a highly educated workforce in all areas of the province, but the panel nevertheless believes there is a need to propose measures focused explicitly on Northern Ontario.

One suggestion would be to set a lower floor for the corridor models of universities and colleges in the north for the next SMA cycle. This adjustment would allow reductions in enrolment of up to 10% for colleges, instead of the current 7%. For universities, the maximum reduction could

be 6%, instead of 3% below their midpoints before funding is negatively affected.

Another possibility would be to increase the special purpose grants for northern, rural and remote colleges, and the Northern Grant for northern universities, in recognition of the higher costs of operating these institutions. The panel did not have sufficient time to do a comprehensive analysis of the appropriate level, but ensuring grants are indexed to inflation or 2%, whichever is higher, would seem appropriate and reasoned.

A third approach would be to allow a renegotiation of corridor midpoints downward during an SMA cycle if the institution were to fall below its new floor in the first two years of the cycle (i.e., after the new reduction is implemented). Funds associated with the reduction could serve as transition support for actions related to restructuring for improved financial sustainability prior to the next SMA cycle of negotiations.

For all institutions, ensuring the corridor is part of negotiations at the end of each SMA cycle is important for several reasons — for example, mitigating the effect of students from the north being recruited by institutions in the south, especially in light of the demographic differences identified for northern institutions. Such negotiations could also provide an opportunity to reward an institution that has proven its ability to exceed expectations for its corridor midpoint.

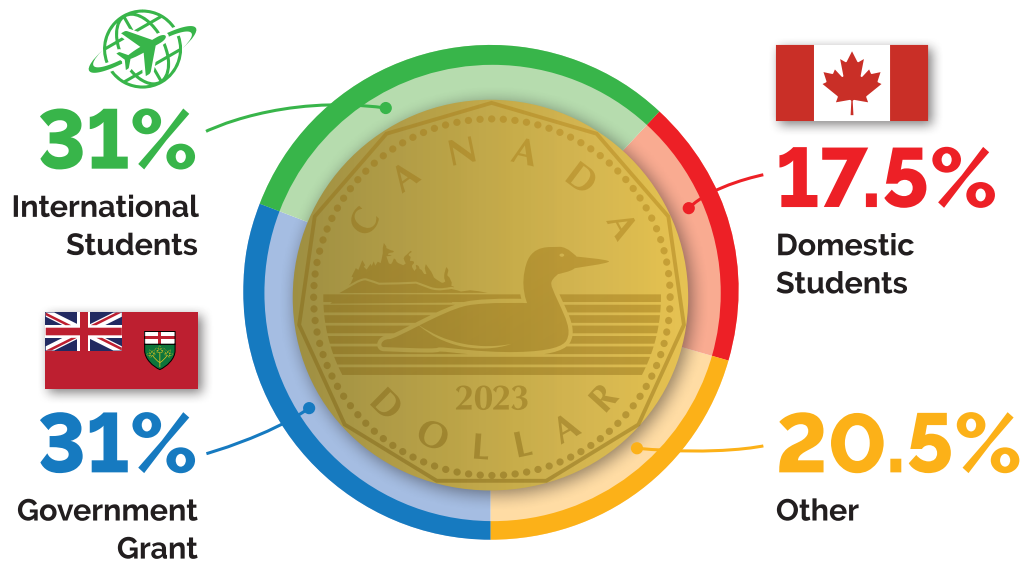
5. International Students

International students are a source of needed talent and desired population growth as well as a significant contributor to GDP growth. They also bring a number of benefits to the on-campus experience for all students and play a critical role for institutions in their international education strategies. Regional, provincial and national availability of highly qualified personnel ensures a workforce that is competitive and of sufficient size. Such a statement represents a compelling vindication of the strategies being pursued by institutions.

The same can be said for the support international students provide to the financial sustainability of institutions, whether for the newest universities created or for long-standing players in both the college and university sectors. These observations notwithstanding, the risk associated with unbridled or unmanaged growth is also very real. As the Auditor General pointed out, colleges' high dependence on international students is a risk for the institutions and the province. The international reputations of both Ontario and its institutions are critically dependent on appropriate levels of support for international students.

Ontario's colleges and universities each enrol more than 100,000 international students and most institutions have

Figure 7:
2020-2021
average
College
Revenue
Sources



aspirations for continued growth. In 2020-2021, tuition from international students generated 31% of colleges' total revenue, with a roughly equal amount coming from the government grant revenue provided to colleges. In the same year, tuition paid by domestic students yielded 17.5%. For universities, revenue from international students as a proportion of total revenue is substantially lower, accounting for less than 20% of total revenue, but still representing a considerable proportion.

These proportions vary from university to university and from college to college. Many colleges and universities have passed the point where they could survive financially with only domestic students. They are financially sustainable only because of international students. Many might question the appropriateness of the word "sustainable" considering potential threats from global factors such as pandemics, geo-political events, and

immigration and foreign policy shifts in Canada or other countries. Panel members acknowledge the risks associated with a strong dependence on international students, but at least some of these risks can be mitigated.

Ontario's colleges and universities have made recent commitments that could make a positive difference. Universities have recently published and committed to Leading Practices in International Student Experience, which cover areas such as recruitment and admissions, tuition and other costs and wrap-around student supports. The colleges (with one exception) have agreed to new sector-wide standards to strengthen programs and supports for international students that cover, for example, marketing of programs, targeted assistance to support students, and agent training.

On the other side of the ledger, significant risk arises when the student experience

suffers because of a lack of suitable housing or student services that do not ensure student success and integration into Canadian society. Such risk is more apparent when campuses cater almost exclusively to international students. These campuses are often associated with public-private college partnerships. The associated risk is that students' experience and integration can be seriously compromised. We have mentioned that colleges are addressing this risk with a quality assurance process that will conduct regular audits of their public college-private partnerships. The importance of this process cannot be overstated.

Ontario's public universities have not engaged in public-private partnerships in the same way as colleges, and have not established new campuses aimed exclusively at recruiting international students. Universities have increased international recruitment, sometimes through the establishment of extension/satellite campuses, but usually with a mix of domestic and international students. One in Brampton has plans that would see a 60:40 mix of international to domestic students. The university has also issued a request for proposals to ensure increased student housing to support enrolment growth. They are signatories to the Brampton Charter for Improving the International Student Experience, which emerged from an International Student Summit in July 2022, led by Sheridan College.

Another university is expanding its satellite campus footprint in Oshawa with an additional building in the downtown. Its target is an additional 600 international students in graduate programming, which would represent approximately 30% of the university's current enrolment associated with its Durham campus. In total, international students currently represent 15% of the university's total enrolment and over time could increase to 20%. This campus caters to domestic and international students, but the new building will predominantly serve international students seeking graduate certificates and graduate degrees, and be run by the university itself. Other universities have established public-private partnerships integrated into their existing campuses. They offer pathway programs to support increasing international student numbers and have governance structures to address program quality, academic standards and employee recruitment. The university provides direct oversight of operations.

Whether through recent commitments to leading practices, standards, directives or charters, the leaders of colleges and universities are pursuing actions to address deficiencies based on important principles that support the student experience and encompass actions and mechanisms for their accountability. The new initiatives are driving towards a positive outcome. As we

have noted already, a considerable degree of accountability in this regard also rests with board members who must exercise appropriate oversight and ensure, within enterprise risk management systems, that there is due consideration given to the mitigation of risk factors. Examples would include setting goals for geographical diversity of international students and requiring predictability of tuition fees for these students.

We suggest that appropriate measures by the province could also include collaboration with the federal government regarding a “trusted institutions” framework for visa issuances, based on, among other things, high student completion rates. The framework could offer expedited visa processing to reinforce the importance of international competitiveness. Studying and adopting appropriate practices that work successfully in the United Kingdom and Australia would be helpful and reward good performance.

The ministry's vigilance in its regulation of new campuses in the GTA that exist to educate international students is important. We strongly recommend that colleges be held accountable to fulfill the ministry's recent (Spring 2023) binding policy directive on public college-private partnerships. This document puts the responsibility firmly on the public colleges to uphold the same academic quality and standards that students experience at their other campuses, and to

integrate current students and graduates into Ontario communities. Government and colleges should collaborate to uphold this new accountability framework.

Within the binding directive, the arbitrary enrolment cap of 7,500 has been questioned by some colleges as not reflective of college size, financial realities or aspirations. The colleges also argue that the cap does not align with the talent needs of various regional economies. The context for these concerns is the absence of any inflationary adjustment to either provincial grants or domestic tuition rates, which serves to encourage individual institutions to go where the money is. The panel strongly urges a review of this part of the policy over the next 12 to 18 months.

We also encourage discussions between the ministry and postsecondary institutions that include a comprehensive review of institutional plans for any further international enrolment expansion. This would ensure the ministry has a future-oriented understanding of international student numbers, and provide an assurance that institutions have the support they need in their communities. Discussions with the college and university sectors should pay close attention to making sure institutions and communities are ready, willing and able to welcome and accommodate international students – and that their regional economy has the talent needed to support these endeavours.

6. French-Language Education System for FSL and Francophone Students

The challenges of delivering breadth in programming for Francophone and Francophile students, including the cost and funding of such delivery, has been a long-standing issue in Ontario. Various reports in 2016 and 2017 led to proposals for the establishment of the Université de l'Ontario français (UOF), which began offering programs in 2021. At the time, the ministry consulted with institutions that had formal mandates for bilingual or French-language education to hear what they had to say about the appropriateness of an additional French-language institution and opportunities for collaboration. Varying views were expressed about the necessity of such an institution.

Around the same time, the University of Ottawa was designated under Ontario's *French Language Services Act* for the delivery of undergraduate programs and associated services, such as libraries, food services and student support systems, in French. This has allowed an expansion of the University of Ottawa's programs and courses delivered entirely in French. Additionally, a considerable expansion of available elective courses has made it possible for students to complete their entire programs in the French language. As a result, the University of Ottawa is now

by far the largest bilingual postsecondary institution in Ontario, with 365 programs entirely in French at the undergraduate, master's and doctoral levels and more than 14,700 French learners.

This leaves unresolved the issue of the financial viability for the province's other French-language postsecondary institutions, especially the two smallest, Université de Hearst and UOF. With respect specifically to these two institutions, MCU informed us that Hearst has 261 enrolled students, of whom 70% are international students; UOF has 29 enrolled students, a substantial majority of whom are international students. Meanwhile, Hearst has indicated that the transition funding provided by the ministry for its newly acquired independent university status is insufficient.

In light of the foregoing, the panel has severe doubts about UOF and Hearst being able to continue as successful and financially sustainable independent institutions. Scale plays a very important factor in financial sustainability, and these two institutions would need to be much larger to reach the scale necessary for long-term viability. Furthermore, the panel has learned of preliminary data that suggest two French-language colleges are in danger of falling below their corridor floors. The panel offers three alternative options that could address this difficult situation.

Option 1

As well as being the largest deliverer of French programs at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels, the University of Ottawa also has the largest French-speaking international student body in Ontario directly supporting the province's Francophone immigration strategy. Furthermore, the university has the greatest capacity for planning, developing analyses of resources and financial needs, researching employment markets for the French and bilingual workforce, and conducting risk analyses of certain programming directions. If Hearst and UOF were to become federated universities of the University of Ottawa, this could secure a future planning capacity relevant to provincial French labour market needs, with complementary institutions working closely together. The model provided by the Université Saint-Paul – which has its own board responsible for overall governance and management – could be replicated. The investments slated for UOF and Hearst could then support the expansion of the University of Ottawa's federated structure, subject to discussions and negotiations with the leaders at UOF and Hearst under a Federated Agreement. This option would allow substantial efficiencies and more significant planning to meet French learners' needs and the needs of employers.

Option 2

The partnership between the University of Guelph and Humber College provides another model for replication. This option would bring UOF and Hearst together with the two long-standing French colleges, Boréal and LaCité. Outside Ontario, Thompson Rivers University (TRU) in British Columbia or British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) represent possible models for such a partnership. They are not French institutions, but offer programs that range from apprenticeships and certificates to bachelor's and master's degrees in a deliberately ladder system for student progress. TRU also incorporates a significant open learning enterprise that could be a model to capture more Francophone members of northern communities. The panel is keenly aware of the difficulties of such an endeavour, including the implications of collective bargaining, but the option may at least be worth exploring. This option could offer an opportunity to invent a university-college option in Ontario with a special mission to offer career-oriented programs. This would create opportunities for college graduates to complete a university degree, serve Francophonie, promote the French language and cultural and linguistic diversity, and be innovative and responsive to market-driven needs of employers.

Option 3

A third possibility is the establishment of an integrated network or consortium for collaboration across Francophone and bilingual postsecondary institutions, linking development to the labour market priorities of Francophones across Ontario. This consortium could be broader than the two small French universities, two French colleges and other bilingual institutions that declare a commitment to French learners in their missions. This type of formal consortium could also have a mandate to serve other communities in Ontario where a large Francophone presence exists. For example, a need has been identified for educated graduates fluent in French in the Windsor area, particularly in support of social services and healthcare. The mandate of the consortium could embrace college transfer for degree programming, much as the legislation that established Ontario Tech University formally included a commitment for pathways for students from college to university. The logical lead institution for such a development would be the University of Ottawa given the differentiated scope and scale it already displays.

The mandate from government could include participation in cross registration and consortium delivery of courses where low enrolments exist, with an overall goal of achieving economies of scale. La Cité, the largest college serving French learners, could play a leading role in defining needed French-language pathways and provide a unique French pathway model for the sector. With supporting financial commitments from government, the consortium could expand academic offerings to include technology, trades and health care areas, contributing to Ontario's skills agenda.

Whichever option is pursued, securing a continuing and appropriate fair share of financial support from the federal government through Canada's French-language funding envelope needs to be a key goal of the province.³⁷

³⁷ Starting in 2024-2025, the federal envelope for postsecondary education in a minority language will be \$128 million over four years. From 2021 to 2023, Ontario received 38% of this funding, and the province could justifiably ask for 40% going forward.

Indigenous Learners and Indigenous Institutes

As we noted already, the terms of reference for the panel indicated that our focus regarding Indigenous Institutes (IIs) should be on the “identification of issues” that “will be used to support follow-up bilateral discussions between the ministry and the IIs beginning in Fall/Winter 2023”.

In 2017, the *Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017* was passed, providing a legislative framework for this part of the sector and a pathway for IIs to offer their own postsecondary credentials. The panel heard from recognized IIs during the stakeholder consultations, and also from the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC), which was recognized by the province in 2018 as “an independent, Indigenous-controlled body to provide quality assurance and student protection for the sector”. Our deliberations also provided the panel with an understanding of the funding history of IIs and higher education for Indigenous learners in Ontario from its beginnings in 1994-1995 through to today.

Before moving to identification of specific issues to be explored in bilateral discussions, we offer a few general comments.

IIs value the relationships they have formed historically with other players in the postsecondary education sector, most

notably the partnerships formed with colleges and universities, and see these as important parts of the future for their students. Several submissions received from partnering institutions committed to the advancement of Indigenous learners and spoke to the important collaborative initiatives and student support systems for Indigenous learners in their future goals. The differences from region to region are quite striking. Continuing to support colleges and universities in their partnerships with IIs, and encouraging opportunities for co-developing and shared resources where appropriate, could serve the province well. Previous funding models in the early 1990s leveraged investments from these sector partners to advance support for Indigenous people pursuing postsecondary education.

Distinct from these partnerships, we were struck by the important role that IIs play in their local communities in fostering language revitalization and cultural learning to support individuals and employers as fundamental outcomes within the sector. The need to include in their mission supports for learners to build confidence to restart their education, in many cases with the goal of completing high school, was poignant and certainly different

from what could ever be accomplished through postsecondary institutional partnerships. Unique costs associated with operationalizing their missions for Indigenous learners include involvement of elders in pedagogical development and program delivery, land-based learning and trauma-informed wrap-around student supports. The importance of the work of IIs is fundamental to an Indigenous population that is growing faster than non-Indigenous populations and where postsecondary attainment is lower than in other areas' populations. An expert in this area serving on the panel stated, "there is much work to be done" and "for many Indigenous people, postsecondary education and training would not be accessible if IIs did not exist".³⁸ Indigenous Institutes emphasized that 70 of the 94 recommendations of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission related to education.

The panel was impressed with the direct labour market focus that the IIs have in their evolving programming for those who study with them, and in the range of support they provide to their local communities and regions. From the submissions made to the panel, we learned of the significant differentiation across

³⁸ Building on 30 years of progress toward a recognized Indigenous Institutes sector in Ontario, by Ogimaabines, Brent Tookenay, CEO, Seven Generations Education Institute.

the IIs, which is in part a reflection of the regions and communities they serve and of the differences across their student populations. This differentiation will have implications for the model of funding that is ultimately developed to support a longer-term funding framework. We also noted a sincere desire and aspiration for many IIs to create rewarding skilled-trades careers, an activity many are already engaged in. While the panel's report is directed to MCU, we note the importance for IIs to be able to engage appropriately with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) in support of their goal to develop pathways to skilled trades for Indigenous learners.

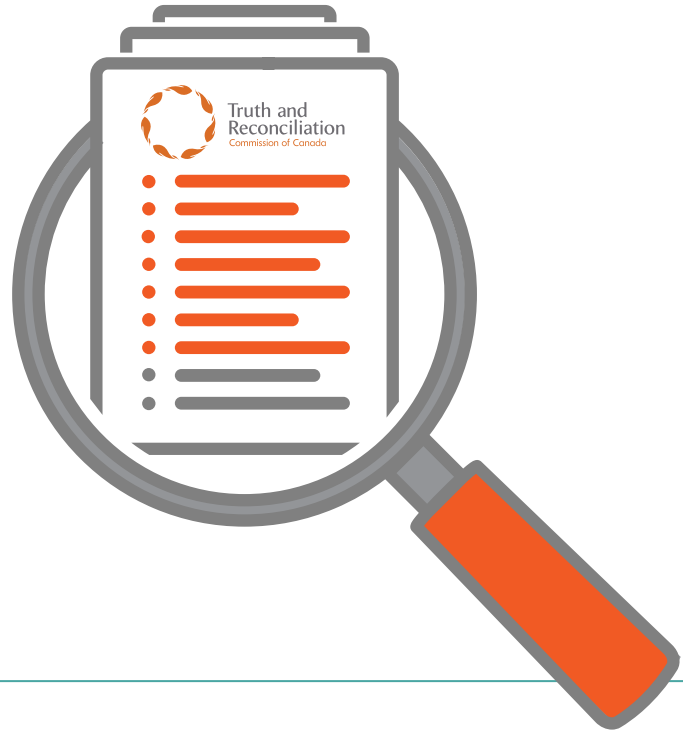
In the pursuit of financial sustainability across all pillars in Ontario's postsecondary sector, we also recognized that opportunities for revenue generation through recruitment of international students – a sustainability strategy for many other postsecondary institutions – is not possible or practical for IIs.

Finally, the important role of the Indigenous-controlled quality assurance system that was established in 2020-2021 under IAESC was not lost on the panel. Our discussion with the council was beneficial in understanding some of the safeguards in place to ensure Ontario can be proud of the

Figure 8:

Indigenous Institutes emphasized that **education** is a primary focus of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, wherein

70 of the **94**
recommendations
relate to education.



quality and evolution of IIs since the act was passed. We heard concerns about the lack of long-term funding for this organization, which in our collective view is fundamental to the evolving standards, strategic growth and development of the sector, and for the mitigation of risk related to the autonomy recognized under the Act.

We turn now to five specific issues that could be the focus of bilateral discussions between the ministry and the IIs beginning later in 2023.

1. In our learning associated with II funding, we were struck by the consistent reference to resource constraints limiting progress, and the issues associated with specific annual workplans and annual allocations in

the absence of any ongoing framework for operational sustainability of IIs. The move to multi-year transfer payment agreements, structured for the first time around three-year timeframes in 2022, was seen as a positive step forward. The exploration of a mechanism that shifts funding from a Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) and project-based funding to one that is more predictable with core funding will enable the establishment of commitments to enrolment targets, relevant metrics to measure progress and eventually to growth with expanded funding to allow for proper longer-term planning. This exploration could also reduce red tape for mature IIs by reducing the administrative burden of TPA reporting.

2. As IIs mature in their development, with a positive track record in quality assurance, student outcomes and autonomous program delivery, it could be fruitful to include in bilateral discussions best practices from elsewhere in the sector, given that there are unlikely to be near-term scale possibilities for IIs. One example is provided by Algoma University, which has a special mission grant to recognize scale, support predictability, and provide incentives for a focus on advancing its special mission.
3. Topics for discussion could include a need for transition funding that acknowledges both the role of IIs in developing training and course offerings as a precursor to postsecondary study and the importance of holistic services to support student success. Examples might include work with other ministries to identify financial support for childcare and temporary housing for Indigenous learners, and for travel stipends where students must move from a remote location to a larger community where an II is located.
4. The role of tuition is an area both broad and diverse and one that is of central importance for determining a path forward. We would only stress that we are talking not about tuition charged by partner institutions but rather tuition as a revenue source for IIs themselves. Both tuition and the associated financial support for Indigenous learners are important areas for forthcoming bilateral discussions.
5. Finally, it would serve the sector well to discuss how to support capacity building at each II, paying due attention to differences in development from one II to another. Examples might include technician support for laboratories and other highly qualified personnel for analysis and planning.

Research

With less than six months between the panel's first meeting and its report in final draft form, we were only able to consider research in Ontario's postsecondary institutions at a superficial level. Its strength and importance are indisputable. The sector's research enterprise contributes in a significant and meaningful way to the development of high-quality talent needed in the workforce to advance innovation and leading-edge knowledge, and is a valuable attraction for investment in Ontario. The research is also crucial to the development of intellectual property (IP) and the creation of new products and services that benefit Ontario, Canada and sometimes the world. With this as context, we would also emphasize that the sector's research endeavours, whether basic or applied, require financial investment and have implications for financial sustainability.

Elsewhere in the report, we have already mentioned our recommendation for limited fungibility of WGUs across undergraduate and graduate programming in universities and of WFUs across diploma and degree programming in colleges. Accepting this recommendation would contribute to the research enterprise and talent development in Ontario. Engaging with more learners in various aspects of the research enterprise will foster and enhance innovation literacy and support downstream economic productivity in the economy.

We support further differentiation and collaboration between all public research institutions to ensure the full spectrum of research – basic, applied and experimental development – is fully mobilized to promote intellectual property (IP) from the germ of an idea to its full effect. The province needs to ensure that ideas emerging from our world-leading basic research institutions can find ready partners in the public research sector. The resulting IP will enhance innovation in Ontario and provide a return on public investment, and also support Ontario's Intellectual Property Action Plan Research and the work of Intellectual Property Ontario.

We also want to stress the importance for the province of leveraging federal funds available to universities and colleges in Ontario so we are competitive with other Canadian jurisdictions, especially with regard to funding for research infrastructure. For example, Quebec matches funding of up to 40% of project costs for Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) awards, and similar support is provided by British Columbia through its Knowledge Development Fund. Given the competitive landscape for research talent, the mobility of Ontario researchers to other jurisdictions, and the desire of the private sector to partner with postsecondary institutions to invest in research, the panel sees research funding as a critically important concern.

Data

Data shared with the panel demonstrate a shrinking Ontario Research Fund over the last number of years, representing a competitive disadvantage for Ontario's postsecondary institutions, the private sector and ultimately for Ontario.

In our interactions with various stakeholders – including the provincial government's Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario – and as a panel seeking data on the postsecondary sector, it was evident there are challenges with obtaining such data, given the absence of an enterprise-wide data management system within the ministry. The issue is not that data are not collected, but rather that obstacles are placed in the path of those wishing to engage in detailed analysis of, and collaborative discussion with, the postsecondary sector. Simply stated, there is a siloed approach within the ministry that undermines attempts to collaborate within the postsecondary sector. We also learned, when seeking data on population projections, that an agreement between Statistics Canada and Ontario's Ministry of Finance will henceforth preclude the ministry from sharing data with COU, and hence prevent the Committee on Enrolment Statistics, Projections and Analysis (CESPA), a COU committee, from providing its calculated population and participation rates. We strongly advocate for a more open approach to data sharing.

Capital Infrastructure

While not an area identified in the panel's Terms of Reference, capital infrastructure will certainly affect financial sustainability if not addressed. We did not have time to consider all the issues associated with much-needed capital investments and infrastructure renewal, but we do have several preliminary observations.

Ontario's colleges and universities are suffering from aging infrastructure with the consequence of high levels of deferred maintenance. Several of the submissions to the panel from colleges and universities emphasized the extent of the challenge posed by the deferred maintenance of facilities and capital. The eventual implication could be that programs and courses are unavailable because of unsafe facilities and a lack of required equipment. Much of Ontario's colleges' infrastructure dates to the mid-1960s, and the average age of facilities is 33 years. The situation is similarly challenging for most of Ontario's universities, aside from a small number that are much older and have even more significant challenges with aging facilities.

Taken overall, the rating of the condition of college and university facilities is fair to poor with the estimated costs to repair, upgrade or renew facilities approaching 16% of their replacement cost. In 2019, total deferred maintenance for colleges and

universities was estimated at \$6.4 billion, of which colleges accounted for \$1.7 billion. Four years on, the numbers are surely higher.

By contrast, provincial funding in 2022-2023 for facilities renewal was \$178.9 million with a further \$30 million for equipment renewal. This is a minimal amount when compared with what is required to refresh existing infrastructure for postsecondary institutions, not to mention investments needed for new technology and facilities to provide a high-quality education in a world of ever faster knowledge expansion. The problem becomes more acute with every passing year. The panel urges the government to consider substantial increases to funding levels for facilities and equipment that will ensure their safety and compliance with new requirements. At the same time, postsecondary institutions will need financial support to catch up on years of unaddressed deferred maintenance and renewal. If the institutions are expected to contribute more to this gap from existing revenue, the absence of any recognition of cost increases through the grant for the delivery of programs will quickly become a major impediment. Providing a current education is paramount, particularly in high-demand and high-impact disciplines where knowledge and practices are evolving at an accelerated rate and where the introduction of technology and hybrid learning cuts across all areas of the curriculum.

Longer term estimates for Ontario suggest that an additional 287,000 students will need to be absorbed into the postsecondary sector by 2047. For colleges, the projected increase is 147,000 students, of which 82,000 will be domestic students. For universities, the projected increase is 140,000, of which 37,000 will be domestic students. Accommodating additional students will require support for expanding campuses, virtual learning systems, and a significant investment in student support services and instruction.

MCU could use the next SMA process to identify the absorption capacity of each institution and the institution's potential growth in advance of when the demand is forecast to increase. Some institutions may not be able to absorb a significant number of new students for a variety of factors including a lack of affordable housing, or an inability to attract new faculty and support staff to their locations. Others potentially could. The panel recommends that future enrolment growth be accommodated primarily by expanding existing institutions rather than creating new institutions, given the importance of scale to achieving financial sustainability in the sector.

As a starting point, MCU should undertake some preliminary analysis of the potential impact of this level of growth on the system, focusing on costs, revenues, people and supports. The government could then make appropriate judgements on the necessity and scope of a new capital program.

In discussions with the Council of Presidents of Colleges Ontario, and in a number of submissions from colleges, Section 28 was raised. We have noted that Ontario's colleges are consolidated on the province's financial statements and any contingent liabilities of the colleges are reflected on the government's books. Even relatively small capital expenditures require MCU approval after the college's board has approved the expenditure. This hampers colleges' ability to respond to emerging opportunities and threats in a timely manner. We believe there may be room to increase the level of capital expenditures that could be approved unconditionally by college boards to enable greater agility in the sector. Faster processes associated with Section 28 approvals would also be helpful to address significant capital issues such as student housing.

Student Wellbeing and Supports

Submissions from students, as well as from colleges, universities and Indigenous Institutes, made it clear that student support services are as important to student success as teaching and assessment. These services include financial support, health and wellbeing supports, easier access to information about labour markets, and housing and support for learning. The ability of some institutions to expand may be constrained by non-postsecondary education factors, such as housing and financing ability.

Recent developments around mental and physical health of students supported by the government must be acknowledged for improving the services provided for students on campuses. Closer co-operation across the system for these kinds of supports should be encouraged by the province, and by institutions providing, where feasible, integrated shared services that include access to round-the-clock mental health support. We say this recognizing that the medical and institutional needs of students in this respect are usually very local.

Commentary on Recommendations

The panel's report contains a significant number of recommendations for the consideration of government. We believe our recommendations are fiscally responsible and affordable – other provinces can do it, with appropriate support students and families can do it, and institutions can play their part in it too. Indeed, the panel is of the view that the costs to the province of failed postsecondary institutions are too high not to do it. Failure to act will threaten the province's reputation, with significantly negative effects for international student recruitment, the advancement of regional economies, the preparedness of our future workforce, and the attraction of foreign investment.

The panel also believes that demographics and economics necessitate a different approach to public funding from what has been in place for quite some number of years and thereby represent an added impetus to our recommendations. Our terms of reference began by noting that "recent experiences ... have highlighted broader sustainability concerns for Ontario's publicly assisted postsecondary system". These concerns serve to magnify the need to act now. Failure to do so will mean it will be more and more difficult for students to find spaces in the programs of their choice. In consequence, the system will

fall considerably short of meeting the needs and expectations for access of a growing Ontario population. At the same time, the postsecondary institutions will find it increasingly difficult to ensure their programs evolve so that they continue to be relevant to the needs of the labour market as it evolves.

While most of our recommendations address the financial sustainability of the sector, a few are, we acknowledge, a stretch within our terms of reference. We are however confident that when these recommendations are applied in concert with one another, they will move the sector firmly in the direction of long-term financial sustainability and stability, thereby strongly mitigating the significant risks that triggered the need for a blue-ribbon panel. They will also ensure that everyone plays their part in a shared and balanced approach to the associated investments.

Finally, the panel also made a number of specific recommendations in support of the belief that one size does not fit all. Some address historical factors that have left parts of the sector uncompetitive nationally or internationally. Viewed in this context, they undoubtedly reinforce the five key guiding principles the government asked us to consider.

View from the Chair

Our goal was to deliver a report that every panel member could support in its entirety. We were close to this goal, which is a testament to considerable debate, discussion, review of data, and the sharing of considerable and diverse experience and expertise that each panel member brought to their role. Where there was an alternative view on a recommendation, this is indicated in an appendix to our report.

The panel spent the majority of its time focussing on the most pressing issues of financial sustainability, which meant that it was difficult for our report to align with the provincial guiding principle of “rewarding excellence and financial sustainability” with institutional pre-eminence.

Every panel member believes in the importance of differentiation across the sector, and accepts the notion of pre-eminence in principle, but some differing perspectives emerged among panel members. It is for this reason that, as the Chair of the panel, I offer some further commentary on this issue. This having been said, the reader should not for a moment presume there is no support among other panel members for my comments on pre-eminence.

Many institutions can justifiably claim pre-eminence in specific areas of excellence. This is clear from many strategic plans, metrics used by institutions to demonstrate progress

in those plans, and in the branding efforts and the strengths the institutions bring to the regions they serve. There is however only one publicly assisted postsecondary institution in Ontario, the University of Toronto, that could be described as covering all the bases in its pre-eminence.

The University of Toronto, which is by far the largest university in Ontario with close to 100,000 students enrolled, plays a pre-eminent role in Ontario and in Canada. For example, Toronto's student population accounts for 20% of all the doctoral students in Canada's U15 universities and 44% within the six U15 universities in Ontario. Among the U15 universities, Toronto's share of doctoral students is as large as the combined total for two other large Canadian universities – the University of British Columbia and the Université de Montréal – each with a 10% share.

The University of Toronto is also very highly ranked internationally – 18th in the world in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, and second only to the University of California, Berkeley among North America's public universities. The University of Toronto is also one of only seven universities to rank among the top 30 institutions worldwide in all 11 subject areas in the THE rankings, and ranks first in Canada. It also places eleventh in the world in the THE's graduate employability ranking.

The University of Toronto's rankings are reflective of the institution's research strength across the board, as befits a university with so many doctoral students. We note too that in June 2023, Nature ranked the University of Toronto third in the world for health sciences research output, behind only Harvard and the National Institutes of Health.

Its pre-eminence across the board comes with higher costs and levels of investment if the excellence is to be maintained, given which I encourage the province to consider treating the University of Toronto differently from other Ontario universities. This different treatment would also serve as a recognition of the university's pre-eminence in other respects. For example, one quarter of all applicants to an Ontario university include an application to the University of Toronto. Should the university opt to open its doors with or without a lowering of its admissions requirements, a catastrophic financial sustainability issue would emerge for the entire system. The university, wisely in my view, is not among those in Ontario that have begun admitting unfunded domestic students above the midpoint in their corridors.

The different treatment I have in mind is to allow the University of Toronto the freedom to set its own tuition fees. This would be accompanied by a very strong commitment to the institutional provision of student aid, but there is little doubt that this would occur: for more than 20 years, it has been a policy of the University's Governing Council that "no student offered admission to a program at the University of Toronto should be unable to enter or complete the program due to lack of financial means". As a consequence of this policy, Toronto already provides student aid of almost \$3,481 per full-time equivalent student, which is \$1,300 more than the figure for all Ontario's universities other than Toronto.

The panel members represent a diversity of perspectives and backgrounds, and some could not endorse my suggestion. Others could, but rather than encourage a rift, albeit probably a modest one, among panel members who have contributed so much to this exercise, I elected after considerable discussion to write this view from the Chair.

Appendices

Appendix I – Blue-Ribbon Panel Terms Of Reference

Context

Ontario looks to its 47 publicly assisted postsecondary institutions (24 colleges and 23 universities) to support Ontario's economy in a number of ways, including preparing people for the labour market, engaging in research and supporting the prosperity of local communities.

Recent experiences with Laurentian University, as well as audits of publicly assisted colleges and universities conducted by the Auditor General, have highlighted broader sustainability concerns for Ontario's publicly assisted postsecondary system.

The blue-ribbon panel is being established to review and provide advice and recommendations in key areas to ensure Ontario's postsecondary sector is financially sustainable over the long run.

Mandate and Guiding Principles

Building on recent successes and recognizing the excellence of Ontario's postsecondary education, the government is focused on advancing the following principles:

- **Enhancing student experience and access**
- **Rewarding excellence and financial sustainability**
- **Improving labour market alignment**
- **Promoting economic growth and prosperity**
- **Keeping education affordable for lower and middle-income families**

The publicly assisted postsecondary system in Ontario consists of 3 pillars: publicly assisted universities, publicly assisted colleges, and Indigenous Institutes (IIs). The mandate of the Blue-Ribbon Panel on Financial Sustainability in the Postsecondary Education Sector ("the blue-ribbon panel") is to provide advice to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities on keeping the postsecondary education sector financially strong and providing the best student experience possible. This includes considering the following questions.

In recognition that IIs have a different funding arrangement and governance structure, the panel should work to understand and identify the issues pertinent to IIs as part of its report. The identification of issues will be used to support follow-up bilateral discussions between the ministry and the IIs beginning in Fall/Winter 2023.

1. How could the Ministry of Colleges and Universities' ("the ministry's") funding approach and associated levers (including operating and special purpose grants, student financial assistance, performance-based funding and Strategic Mandate Agreements) best drive institutional excellence? Consideration should be given to:
 - Increasing program offerings that are labour market relevant and align with employer and local community needs.
 - Providing sufficient labour market information to help students make informed choices and transition into the labour market.
 - Responding to students needs/choice and demonstrating value for money.
2. Recognizing the local, provincial, national, and global context in which institutions operate and the recommendations of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (OAGO), how do we ensure sustainability through sound institutional financial health practices, continuous improvement and healthy competition in the postsecondary education sector? Consideration could be given to, among others:
 - Measures that generate revenue
 - Measures that reduce costs
 - The governance and accountability framework of institutions to ensure ongoing financial viability
 - Compensation, talent attraction and incentivizing productivity gains
 - Credential qualification structures and program architectures
3. What are the criteria and objectives for a long-term tuition fee framework (TFF)? How can a TFF balance student and institutional needs? What other measures, outside of tuition, could be used to address costs, affordability and access for students?

4. What changes to the funding approach could support greater sustainability for northern institutions and students, as well as support specialized institutional excellence amongst northern institutions? In addition to funding considerations, are there innovative delivery/institutional models that should be considered?
5. How do we ensure a financially sustainable French language education system for FSL and Francophone students so that they have access to a range of quality programs and are prepared for a successful career? Are there innovative delivery/institutional models that should be considered? Could the ministry's funding levers be better/differently employed?
6. What is the role of international students within a sustainable and thriving postsecondary sector? Consideration should be given to the overall quality of the student experience including housing, as well as an assessment of the benefits, risks and opportunities for institutions and the province.

Answers should be considered through the lens of fiscally responsible and affordable actions.

Appendix II – Consultations

The panel received input from the following organizations/institutions, almost all of which provided written submissions. **Bold font** indicates an organization/institution that met with the panel.

- Algoma University
- Algonquin College
- **Anishinabek Educational Institute**
- Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO)
- Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association (APMA)
- Brock University
- Business Arts
- C.D. Howe Institute
- Cambrian College
- Canadian Council of Innovators (CCI)
- Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses (CFIB)
- **Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario (CFS-O)**
- Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME)
- Canadore College
- **Career Colleges Ontario (CCO)**
- Carleton University
- Centennial College
- Collège Boréal
- College Employer Council
- **College Student Alliance (CSA)**
- **Colleges Ontario (CO)**
- Conestoga College
- Confederation College
- Constant Change Media Group
- **Council of Ontario Universities (COU)**
- Dark Slope
- Durham College
- Eduvation
- Fanshawe College
- **First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI)**
- FutureFit AI
- George Brown College
- Georgian College
- **Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO)**
- **Higher Education Strategy Associates (HESA)**
- Hullmark

- Humber College
- **Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC)**
- **Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC)**
- Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC)
- Interactive Ontario
- **Iohahi:io Akwasasne Education and Training Institute**
- **Kenjgewin Teg**
- La Cité collégiale
- Lakehead University
- Lambton College
- Laurentian University
- Law Society of Ontario (LSO)
- Loyalist College
- McMaster University
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- Mitacs
- Mohawk College
- Niagara College
- Nipissing University
- Northern College
- Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM)
- **NOUS Group**
- OCAD University
- **Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre**
- Ontario Arts Council
- Ontario Bioscience Innovation Organization (OBIO)
- Ontario Chambers of Commerce (OCC)
- **Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA)**
- Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT)
- Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC)
- Ontario Hospital Association (OHA)
- Ontario Medical Association (OMA)
- **Ontario Public Service Employees' Union (OPSEU)**
- Ontario Tech Talent Inc
- Ontario Tech University
- **Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA)**
- **Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute**

- Ottawa Board of Trade
- Queen's University
- **Regroupement étudiant franco-ontarien (RÉFO)**
- Rescon
- Sault College
- Seneca College
- **Seven Generations Educational Institute (SGEI)**
- Sheridan College
- **Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig**
- Sir Sandford Fleming College
- **Six Nations Polytechnic**
- St Clair College
- St Lawrence College
- The Dias-Toronto Metropolitan University
- Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF)
- Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU)
- Toronto Metropolitan University Faculty Association (TMUFA)
- Toronto Region Board of Trade (TRBOT)
- Trent University
- Université de Hearst
- Université de Sudbury
- Université de l'Ontario français
- University of Guelph
- University of Guelph-Humber
- University of Ottawa
- University of Toronto
- University of Waterloo
- University of Western Ontario
- University of Windsor
- University Pension Plan
- Unlimited Media
- Vector Institute
- Virtual and Augmented Reality Toronto
- Wilfrid Laurier University
- World Education Services
- York University

Appendix III – Summary of Recommendations

Note: For each recommendation, the page reference indicates where in the panel's report that recommendation is discussed.

1. Use a shared approach with government, students and institutions to fund postsecondary education institutions and to ensure financial sustainability:

- **Government actions:** a one-time increase of 10% in per student funding applied in 2024-2025 to the value of the Weighted Grant Unit (WGU)/ Weighted Funding Unit (WFU), with subsequent increases each year equal to the increase in the consumer price index or 2%, whichever is greater; and review the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) assessment processes and policies to increase grants for low-income students. *(See page 20)*
- **Student actions:** government to confirm a multi-year tuition framework starting in 2024-2025 that allows a one-time increase in tuition of 5% and subsequent increases each year of the framework equal to the increase in the consumer price index or 2%, whichever is greater; an additional increase in tuition in 2024-2025 of 3% for professional programs in universities and high-demand programs in colleges. *(See page 28)*

- **Institution actions:** offset increased costs of tuition by increasing needs-based institutional student aid, and pursue greater efficiencies and collaboration in operations and program offerings. *(See page 29)*

2. Adapt government policy for the current corridor and envelope funding model to support strategies that impact financial sustainability and labour market responsiveness in a time of demographic growth:

- Commit to an adjustment (up, down or confirmation of no change) of the corridor midpoints in each Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) cycle as the outcome of negotiations between the Ministry of Colleges and Universities ("the ministry") and individual institutions. In the event of a negotiated downward adjustment of a corridor midpoint, the institution should retain its original funding level for the first year after the adjustment as a transition support for sustainability during restructuring. *(See pages 19 and 20)*
- Introduce a slower and more modest progression in the shift of funding from the enrolment envelope to the performance-based differentiation envelope, starting at 10% (already determined for 2023-2024) and an

additional 5% in each subsequent year to a maximum of 25% in 2026-2027. Ensure that the performance-based funding is determined by indicators that are within the power of postsecondary institutions to influence. *(See page 23)*

- Allow universities to modify the allocation of WGU's between undergraduate and graduate programs, and colleges to modify the allocation of WFUs between diploma and degree credentials, while ensuring that the programs thus favoured are justified by labour market demand. *(See page 23)*
- To meet learner expectations, consider defined funding within the special purpose envelope to support both the province's Virtual Learning Strategy and a lengthening of the lifespan of technology-based learning systems across the sector. *(See pages 25 and 26)*

3. Recognize that “one-size fits all” government policies need flexible elements to address financial sustainability in parts of the sector with special challenges, and to meet government’s key guiding principles and implementation practices:

- Extend the floor of the enrolment corridor for northern institutions from -7% to -10% for colleges and from -3% to -6% for universities. *(See page 21)*
- Allow flexibility for increased college tuition fees for a defined period of time to reduce the competitive disadvantage of current fee levels by comparison with the rest of Canada. *(See page 29)*
- Eliminate the 15% cap on enrolment in high-demand programs in colleges wherever the programs are of high quality and aligned with the needs of the labour market, and thereby ensure strong employment outcomes for the programs' graduates. *(See page 23)*
- Change the funding model for part-time college enrolments with effect from the fall of 2024 to eliminate the disincentive for colleges to enrol part-time students. *(See page 24)*

- Explore the three options for restructuring French-language institutions and implement the preferred option; fulfil a commitment made by the provincial government during SMA2 to reconsider the allocation formula for, and the total amount of, French-language/bilingual grants, and increase these grants each year by the rise in the consumer price index, or 2%, whichever is higher. *(See page 25, and pages 42 and 43)*
- Fulfil a commitment made by the provincial government during SMA2 to review eligibility criteria for, and the allocation method applied to, the Small, Northern and Rural Grant for colleges, and the allocation of the Northern Ontario Grant for universities; to ensure an equitable approach; and increase these grants each year by the rise in the consumer price index, or 2%, whichever is higher. *(See pages 24 and 36)*

4. Put stronger accountability measures in place by all parties to ensure a more financially sustainable postsecondary education sector:

- Take whatever steps are required to ensure that the ministry, working in conjunction with the Ministry of Education (EDU) and the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD), communicates comprehensively with high-school students early in their studies regarding opportunities through OSAP and the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program funding to provide support for these students' pursuit of postsecondary education. *(See page 30)*
- When changes to OSAP are made in such a way that they have detrimental effects on students receiving this form of student assistance, apply the changes only to new applicants, thereby ensuring an unchanged level of benefit for existing OSAP-eligible students. *(See page 30)*
- Instruct the ministry to share every college's financial sustainability scores with each of the college boards and leadership teams, to support and encourage transparent practices on how appropriate interpretation of, and reaction to, these indicators will promote financial sustainability. *(See pages 31 and 32)*

- For both colleges and universities, instruct the board of each institution to review its own financial sustainability scores relative to every other institution in its sub-sector (i.e., colleges or universities) and establish threshold levels for achievement. *(See pages 31 and 32)*
- Ensure each institution's board members follow best practices in governance, including a requirement for financial literacy training for any newly appointed board member. *(See pages 31 and 32)*
- Incorporate the material risk associated with colleges' dependency on international enrolments into the assessment of financial sustainability, with appropriate government monitoring through consultations between the ministry and the colleges. *(See pages 31 and 32)*
- Require that colleges expedite the development of a quality assurance process for, and conduct regular audits of, public college-private partnerships for international students. *(See page 39)*
- Require that the ministry be appropriately vigilant in overseeing new campuses for educating international students, and in the implementation of the new *Public College-Private Partnerships: Minister's Binding Policy Directive* for international enrolments. *(See page 40)*
- Review within 12-18 months the enrolment cap of 7,500 on a college's total international enrolments through public college-private partnerships while undertaking a comprehensive review of institutional international student enrolment plans for the future. *(See page 40)*
- Advocate with the federal government to establish a "trusted institution" framework, based on performance, for the approval of international student visas. *(See page 40)*
- Advocate with the federal government to secure a fair share of, and continued financial support for Ontario from, Canada's French-language funding. *(See page 43)*
- Advocate with the federal government to secure full matching support for Ontario's 80% commitment to student aid through grant support. *(See page 30)*

5. Consider the panel's directional suggestions through the policy and capital divisions within the ministry:

- Instruct the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and Colleges Ontario (CO) to establish expert peer panels for the purpose of determining, and providing in a collaborative and supportive manner, the advice and responses the panel deems appropriate for an institution when the panel has concerns regarding that institution's financial sustainability indicators. *(See page 32)*
- Continue to encourage differentiation within the postsecondary sector, and maintain the differences between colleges and universities wherever and whenever mandates are distinctive. *(See page 9)*
- Encourage colleges and universities to continue – and where possible increase – collaborations with the Indigenous Institutes and their delivery of programs and support for Indigenous learners. *(See page 9)*
- Encourage colleges and universities serving northern, rural, and remote communities to address evolving regional labour market needs as a priority. *(See page 9)*
- Conduct a formal review of opportunities for consolidating the programs and administrative operations of small, remote, and rural institutions serving the north in ways that would support long-term financial sustainability, and examine expanding the applicability of this approach to mid-sized colleges falling below their corridor floors. *(See pages 34 and 35)*
- Ensure that information about career prospects and other aspects of the labour market is readily available in support of prospective students' decision making. *(See page 11)*
- Leverage federal research funds by providing competitive matching funds for Ontario postsecondary education institutions that successfully secure federal funding, including consideration for strategic choices identified as most relevant to Ontario's economy. *(See page 48)*
- Consider increasing funding levels for deferred maintenance to ensure the safety of facilities and compliance with new legislative accessibility requirements, and to begin catching up on years of unaddressed deferred maintenance and renewal. *(See page 50)*
- Evaluate needs for capital expansion based on demographic projections for the next decade starting with an analysis of existing physical and virtual "absorption" capacity already in the sector. *(See page 51)*

Appendix IV – Dissenting Opinions

One panel member, Maxim Jean-Louis, could not support two recommendations, specifically:

1. Conduct a formal review of opportunities for consolidating the programs and administrative operations of small, remote, and rural institutions serving the north in ways that would support long-term financial sustainability, and examine expanding the applicability of this approach to mid-sized colleges falling below their corridor floors.
2. Explore the three options for restructuring French-language institutions and implement the preferred option; fulfil a commitment made by the provincial government during SMA2 to reconsider the allocation formula for, and the total amount of, French-language/bilingual grants, and increase these grants each year by the rise in the consumer price index, or 2%, whichever is higher.

Appendix V – Glossary of Terms

- **Board of Governors/Trustees:** The body responsible for the governance of a postsecondary institution, including control of its property and revenues, and the conduct of its business and affairs. Governors/Trustees typically include community members, administrators, staff, faculty, students and alumni, along with some members appointed by the province.
- **Corridor Model:** The primary mechanism to determine enrolment-based funding allocations for institutions in Ontario. The mechanism determines the corridor's minimum and maximum enrolment targets within which the institution receives predictable funding, based on the pre-determined corridor midpoint. An institution's enrolment-based funding only changes if its enrolment falls below the minimum target.
- **Deferred Maintenance:** The postponement of maintenance activities such as property repairs to save money.
- **Differentiation Envelope / Performance-Based Funding:** One of three elements of the model used by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) to determine the government's provision of funding to institutions, the differentiation envelope ties a portion of funding to performance on a set of metrics that measure student and economic outcomes, such as graduate earnings and graduate employment rates.
- **Micro-credentials:** A range of short programs offered by postsecondary education institutions that typically take less time to complete than other credentials offered by institutions, and may often be completed online. Such credentials sometimes include on-the-job training, and it is not uncommon for program development to be preceded by consultation with employers and thereby improve the likelihood of labour market alignment.
- **Ontario Research Fund (ORF):** An Ontario Government program that provides research institutions with funding to support the operational costs of major projects of strategic value to the province.
- **Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP):** OSAP provides financial assistance to support students and their families with the cost of postsecondary studies. It includes grant, loan, bursary, scholarship, and other aid programs. Ontario and Canada have integrated their student financial assistance programs under OSAP. Funding is provided by both governments, and Ontario administers the program, including the federal portion on behalf of Canada.

- **Professional programs:** A university program of advanced learning that leads to a credential often governed by a mandatory regulatory body including, but not limited to, law, medicine, teacher education, dentistry, pharmacy and nursing.
- **Special Purpose Grants:** An element of the Ontario Government's funding model that supports mission-specific and institution-specific projects.
- **Student Financial Contribution:** The expected contribution from a student towards the costs of postsecondary education. It is used in the calculation of the student's financial assistance disbursements.
- **Transfer Payment Agreements (TPAs):** The Ontario Government provides transfer payments to recipients external to government to fund activities that benefit the public and are designed to achieve public policy objectives. The agreement sets out the terms of such a transfer.
- **Tuition Fee Framework (TFF):** Tuition for eligible students in programs approved for funding at publicly assisted universities and colleges is regulated by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) under the TFF.
- **Weighted Grant Unit (WGU) / Weighted Funding Unit (WFU):** The basic units of measurement for per student funding in the Ontario postsecondary system's corridor model. Weighted Grant Units are applied to universities, while Weighted Funding Units are applied to colleges. WGU and WFU values vary from program to program of study to reflect the relative cost of program delivery. (See also the earlier entry in the glossary that briefly describes the corridor model.)
- **Work-Integrated Learning (WIL):** An umbrella term for learning experiences, such as co-ops and internships, in which the workplace is the central site of education. WIL offers a structured work experience that familiarizes the student with the world of work within a postsecondary program. WIL often involves a partnership between a college or university and an employer.

Briefing Note: Blue Ribbon Panel Report

Issue

The government has released the report from the Minister’s Blue-Ribbon Panel on Postsecondary Education Financial Sustainability. The report contains recommendations that government increase operating grants, tuition fees, and financial assistance to students – as well as a variety of other governance measures to improve transparency, accountability, and sustainability in the system.

The government has not committed to enacting any of these recommendations at this time, only stating that it is reviewing the report, and will work with postsecondary institutions to enhance efficiency, program offerings, and sustainability. The government has indicated that colleges and universities will need to demonstrate efficient operations for the government to consider tuition fee increases.

Overall, the panel report supported nearly all of Colleges Ontario’s major college advocacy priorities, though the specific recommendations fell short of what would be practically needed to achieve financial stability. The report acknowledges the underfunding of postsecondary education in Ontario relative to other provinces and draws some key distinctions between college and university circumstances, such as tuition fees and the overall level of funding available per student. The Panel took a balanced approach on international students while noting the escalating financial risks that colleges are exposed to.

It should be noted that, notwithstanding the mandate to be fiscally responsible and affordable, the panel is calling for significant additional provincial investment, noting the financial and economic risks of not doing so and that it is within Ontario’s capabilities since “other provinces can do it.”

It should also be noted that many of these recommendations are at a very high level. If the government were inclined to move forward with many of these recommendations, there would be much further work to develop the details of policy or implementation approaches.

The panel report also provided helpful recommendations on capital infrastructure, section 28 approvals, research, and governance.

In a few cases, primarily regarding international growth, francophone postsecondary education and small, remote and northern institutions, the panel’s recommendations create risks that will require further consideration and management.

Panel Recommendations on Core CO Recommendations to the Panel

1. Unfreezing Tuition

CO Advocacy Goal	Panel Recommendation and Analysis
<p>1.1. End the tuition freeze. Colleges should be able to increase tuition at a faster rate than universities – a flat-dollar amount should be used</p>	<p>While the report ultimately recommends a differentiated approach for college tuition, the report has potentially confusing language on this point with two distinct recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The panel recommends a <u>common</u> increase of 5% in 2024-25, followed by annual increases of the greater of 2% or CPI across all PSE (with a further 3% in 2024-25 for professional programs in universities and high demand programs in colleges). • The panel also specifically recommends allowing flexibility for increased college tuition fees for a defined period of time, warning the government that failure to recognize this will create negative impacts on program quality and increase the risks associated with reliance on international student revenue. They suggest a faster rate increase for colleges. However, if government is disinclined to this approach, as an interim step they recommend reducing or eliminating International Student Recovery (ISR) for colleges (noting this would have a more modest impact on financial stability).
<p>1.2 A multi-year framework is needed – at least three years.</p>	<p>The panel recommends a multi-year framework to support predictability for students and families, and does not recommend a specific time-frame.</p>
<p>1.3 Increase domestic tuition by \$400 per year – to have a material impact on risks and incentives</p>	<p>The report does not address the issue of a flat rate versus percentage increase. The panel’s recommended rate of increase is 5%, followed by the greater of 2% or CPI in subsequent years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With average diploma tuition of \$2,726, this equates to \$136 in the first year, and at least \$57 in each subsequent year.
<p>1.4 Higher tuition increases (e.g., \$650) should also be considered for high-demand programs, in addition to lifting freezes and restrictions on high-demand programs</p>	<p>Additional flexibility of 3% is recommended for high demand college programs.</p> <p>The report recommends lifting the 15% cap on enrollment in college high-demand programs that can charge high demand fees– noting that no such cap exists for universities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a base of \$6,100 (average tuition of a high demand college degree), this equates to \$488 in the first year.

2. Increasing Operating Grants

CO Advocacy Goal	Panel Recommendation and Analysis
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<p>2.1 Recognize that costs increase over time.</p>	<p>The panel recommends increasing per-student operating grants by at least 10% in the first year, and by the greater of 2% or CPI in subsequent years.</p> <p>The report specifically recommends increasing the value of the Weighted Funding Unit (WFU) – meaning that funding increases would be program-weighted.</p>
<p>2.2 Remove the disincentive to part-time enrollment¹</p>	<p>The panel recommends changing the funding model for part-time college students, noting the disincentive to enroll part-time students, the disparity between college and university funding approaches, and the economic advantages of greater part-time enrollment.</p>
<p>2.3 Recognize the need and costs of maintaining institutional presence in communities</p>	<p>The report recognizes demographic differences in some regions of the province, including the north and the importance of ensuring a skilled workforce in all regions of the province. The panel recommends extending the enrollment corridor floor to -10% for northern colleges.</p> <p>The panel also recommends reviewing eligibility criteria for the Small, Northern and Rural Grant for Colleges to ensure a more equitable approach – in addition to increasing these grants by CPI or 2% each year.</p>
<p>2.4 Include a direct incentive to increase domestic enrollment in high labour market demand programs</p>	<p>The panel recommends re-negotiating corridor midpoints each SMA cycle to capture labour market needs and demographic growth. If negative impacts occur as a result, institutions should be given a one-year transition period to adjust to funding declines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: This also implies the Ministry would provide new funding for enrollment growth in high-demand areas. <p>The panel also recommends allowing colleges to modify the allocation of enrollment between diploma and degree credentials – provided they are in programs justified by labour market demand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: While this would be a positive general direction to set for colleges that could be used to support multiple advocacy points, this recommendation is more informed by the university experience. Universities are allocated a certain number of graduate seats, and sometimes argue for fungibility with undergraduate spaces.

¹ The province gives colleges less funding for a part-time student enrolled in a course than for a full-time student enrolled in that same course. For example, a student enrolled in one college’s full-time business program generates \$345.83 per course in government grants. A student enrolled in the same program on a part-time basis generates \$178.50 per course. In the university system, full and part-time students are funded at the same rate.

<p>2.5 Simplify the performance funding model and revisit metrics outside institutional control</p>	<p>The panel recommends slowing the transition of funding to the performance envelope, beginning with 10% in 2023-24, growing by 5% each year, and limiting the transition to 25% of total funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: This would likely be a positive step for most colleges, as the government had planned to transition up to 60% of funding to the performance envelope. If adopted, the majority of MCU funding would remain allocated based on enrollment. <p>The panel has also advocated for the elimination of performance indicators beyond the control of a specific institution, but did not identify specific indicators for elimination.</p>
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3. Other Priorities

CO Advocacy Goal	Panel Recommendation and Analysis
<p>3.1 Review or eliminate the International Student Recovery (ISR)</p>	<p>Eliminating or reducing ISR for colleges is suggested as an additional ‘fix’ for colleges should government not be inclined to adopt a more direct approach to a differentiated increase in college tuition fees. This was the only reference to ISR in the report.</p>
<p>3.2 The apprenticeship student per-diem should be increased by \$1 per day, from the current \$10 per day.</p>	<p>The report does not comment on the apprenticeship per-diem.</p>

Other Areas of Interest

- International Students:** The panel report reflects the role of international students in Ontario’s postsecondary system – noting both the significant benefits of international students to Ontario including the financial benefits. It also highlights the financial dependence on international enrollment (for institutions and in the case of colleges, also for the province), and the risks associated with “unbridled or unmanaged” growth. It also outlines reputational risks if international students do not receive enough support while on campus – underscoring the importance of the college quality assurance standards.

The report notes that risks are heightened when campuses cater exclusively to international students, and when enrolment expansion occurs without consideration of community capacity or labour market needs. It notes that both colleges and universities are engaging with private partners, but colleges are more likely to have international-exclusive PPP campuses. (The report does discuss the development of university branch campuses in Brampton [Algoma] and Oshawa [Trent], with a particular focus on international student recruitment.)

The report contains several recommendations of note:

- Incorporate risk associated with international student dependency into assessments of financial sustainability, with appropriate government monitoring and consultation.
- Require that colleges expedite development of a quality assurance process for PPPs.
- The Ministry must hold colleges accountable for the binding policy on PPPs, and be able to assure that students are receiving the same quality experience.
- Within the binding directive, the Ministry should review the arbitrary cap of 7,500 within the next 12-18 months.
- Support the federal government’s establishment of a “trusted institution” framework.

Overall, the treatment of international student growth in the report is fairly balanced, underscoring the financial and other risks associated with the status quo and recommending greater provincial management and accountability and encouraging the province to be more engaged in discussions with institutions about their plans for growth.

- **French Language Education:** The report expresses concerns about the sustainability of French-language institutions, but this appears to be driven solely by concerns about the Université de Hearst and Université de l’Ontario français (UOF) – not colleges. The only evidence of sustainability challenges provided for French-language colleges was a risk of falling out of the corridor – a risk also noted for some other colleges. The panel provides three options for government consideration:
 1. Have Hearst and UOF become federated universities of the University of Ottawa.
 2. Build on the University of Guelph-Humber College model to bring UOF and Hearst together with Boréal and La Cité, inventing a ‘university-college option in Ontario with a special mission to offer career-oriented programs’.
 3. Establish an integrated consortium for collaboration across Francophone and bilingual postsecondary institutions – under the ‘logical lead institution’ of the University of Ottawa.

It is notable that option 1 does not require any college involvement. The inclusion of either French-language college in a shared governance arrangement is more likely to be financially stabilizing for a university partner at this point, and could create risks for the colleges, including risks to finance, governance and mission. We would not be supportive of this.

The panel also recommends that the province advocate that the federal government provide a fair share for Ontario in federal French-language education funding.

Panel member Maxim Jean-Louis dissented to this recommendation.

- **Small, Remote and Rural Colleges:** The report includes commentary on enhancing cost efficiency and effectiveness – primarily opportunities for the reduction in universities’ administrative costs. With respect to colleges, the panel noted that at small colleges (with enrollment below 3,000) there has been a reduction in the number of programs offered at all credential levels except graduate certificates. The panel recommends a formal review of small,

remote and rural colleges, giving consideration to program and operational consolidation to ensure medium to longer-term sustainability. The report also suggests this could be extended to medium sized colleges (with enrolment below 15,000) that are at risk of falling below corridor and possibly extended to all institutions (presumably inclusive of universities), bearing in mind the options in the report for French language institutions.

The report text posits that any consolidation should be in service of efficiency, such as shared course delivery and consolidation of back-office operations and systems, and not lead to programming in remote locations disappearing. The report notes the opportunities provided to colleges for shared delivery through OntarioLearn.

Panel member Maxim Jean-Louis dissented to this recommendation.

- **Capital:** The panel notes that college and university infrastructure is in a state of poor-to-fair repair, and that government funding does not match the needs. The report encourages the province to increase funding levels for deferred maintenance, and begin planning for the infrastructure needs required to meet projected demographic growth – including capital and technology. (The report suggests that by 2047 the Ontario postsecondary sector will need to absorb an additional 287,000 students, with 147,000 of these in the college sector, of which 82,000 will be domestic. While this projection is presumably based on demographic projections, the source and/or assumptions being used for these projections is unidentified.)
- **Financial Accountability:** Many of the panel’s recommendations call for strengthened governance oversight of university and college finances by governing boards and the Ministry, as well as greater public transparency on financial health. Specific recommendations include:
 - Proactive Ministry sharing of financial sustainability metrics with college boards and leadership teams, for all colleges.
 - Note: Colleges already have access to these scores and system benchmarks through the College Financial Information System (CFIS).
 - Instruct college boards of each institution to review their financial sustainability metrics and establish achievement targets.
 - Require boards members to have best-practice standards and financial literacy training.
 - Note: Colleges have a collaborative training program for board members.
 - Instruct CO and COU to establish expert peer panels to provide internal sector advice related to financial sustainability when concerns about a particular institution arise.
- **Section 28:** The report notes colleges concerns about Section 28 and agreed that the need for government approvals hampers the ability of colleges to respond to emerging opportunities. Though they did not make a formal recommendation, the panel opined that faster approvals and greater exemption capacity could assist colleges in addressing significant capital issues such as student housing.

- **Research:** Although research was not within the panel’s mandate, the report contains several recommendations that encourage the province to invest in research, specifically for the purposes of supporting local IP and commercialization. The panel did not differentiate between college and university research, or mention applied research specifically.
- **Indigenous Institutes:** The panel provides guidance to the Ministry for its next set of bilateral discussions – including predictable core funding and continued capacity building. The report highlights the valuable collaborations that currently exist between Indigenous Institutes and other postsecondary institutions, and encourages colleges and universities to increase collaboration.
- **Virtual Learning and Microcredentials:** The panel recommends providing special-purpose funding to sustain its Virtual Learning Strategy (VLS), arguing that cost savings can be realized through shared content development and pooled services. This would be a continuation of the \$70 million invested over three years. In general, online learning is mentioned as a transformative force by the panel, which also lauds the government’s support of micro-credentials.
- **Student Financial Assistance:** The report treats student financial assistance as an important pillar of postsecondary sustainability, and a necessary companion to tuition fee increases.

The recommendation to increase tuition is accompanied by a call to review OSAP and increase grants for low-income students. The panel report mentions it did not recommend a deregulated tuition approach, as that would create the need for far greater investments in student assistance. The panel also calls for implementation of new OSAP measures to be phased in gradually if they negatively impact students – an approach not taken by the current government when OSAP cuts were implemented in 2019.

The panel also calls for high school students to be informed earlier in their studies about opportunities for financial assistance available through OSAP and Canada Student Assistance.

- **Student Support Services:** The panel encourages closer cooperation across the sector in the provision of support services – particularly regarding student mental or physical health.
- **Special Treatment for the University of Toronto:** Remarks from the chair at the end of the report outline the chair’s view that U of T is unique enough to be treated differently from the rest of the postsecondary system and should be allowed to offer deregulated tuition fees accompanied by a strong commitment to student financial aid.

College Sector Efficiency Review

Via the minister’s statement, the government has indicated that it will require a demonstration of operational efficiency prior to implementing tuition fee increases.

As communicated to the Blue Ribbon Panel in May, colleges are already highly efficient. The panel report specifically notes the College Employer Council's favourable bargaining outcomes. It also references the OntarioLearn model and recent collaboration in the delivery of upgrading options for internationally educated nurses.

CO provided a broader list of examples of efficiencies to the panel, including a province-wide approach to collective bargaining, pension and benefits administration

- Centralized student application services through OCAS.
- A centralized quality assurance service that validates credentials and undertakes quality assurance audits.
- Shared service arrangements to support local operations, such as the Ontario College Library Service and new shared services such as Page One Plus, a shared operating system for referencing.
- Collaborative purchasing through partnerships with other colleges, the Ontario Education Collaborative Marketplace (OECM)
- Collaborative delivery of online learning through OntarioLearn and Contact North.
- Access to expertise and specialized supports through post-secondary entities such as eCampus Ontario and the Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health (CICMH).
- Collaborative curriculum development approaches, such as the current project in hyflex nursing programs and pathways.

Prepared by: Chris Martin

Date: 17/11/23

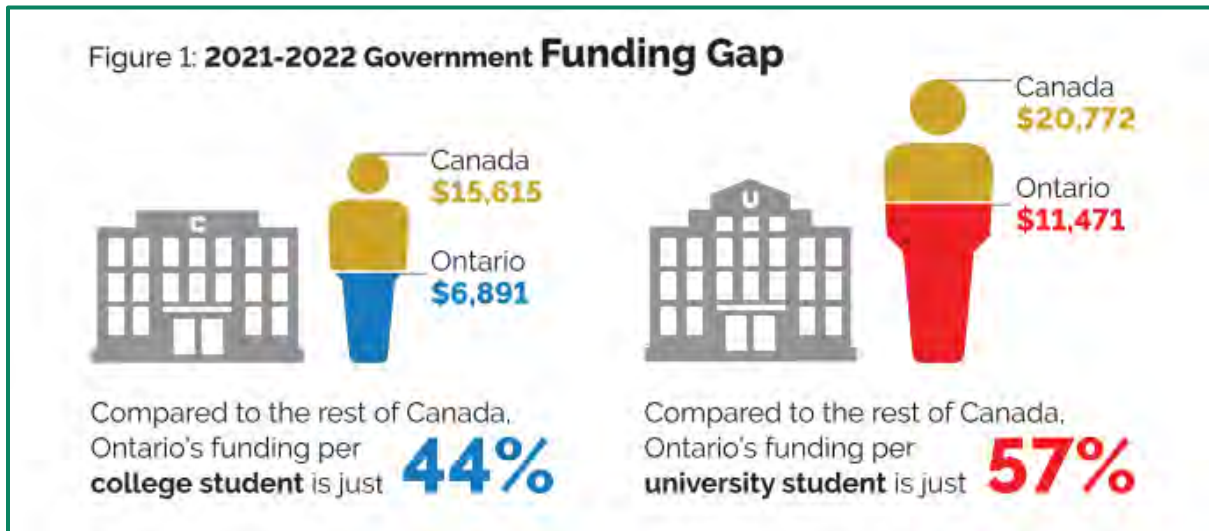
Ensuring Financial Sustainability for Ontario’s Postsecondary Sector

Background

Ontario’s Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) established a Blue-Ribbon Panel of experts to review the fiscal sustainability of the province’s post-secondary education (PSE) system. The eight-member panel was established in March 2023. It has conducted research and consulted on actions Ontario can take to improve the sector’s financial stability. The Blue-Ribbon Panel’s report, [Ensuring Financial Sustainability for Ontario’s Postsecondary Sector](#), was released November 15, 2023. The report suggests increasing operating grants, tuition fees, and financial assistance to students. The government is reviewing the report and working with institutions to enhance efficiency.

Durham College acknowledges the significance of this report, its public release and the leadership the province has taken to review the PSE system. As such, the college will work with the provincial association, Colleges Ontario (CO), to advocate for continued policy reform in the long-run, and more immediately for policy changes to tuition and grants.

The province’s Auditor General expressed concerns regarding the sector’s financial sustainability in December 2021. In a report on the value-for-money audit of Ontario’s public colleges, the Auditor General concluded that funding for public colleges’ full-time domestic students is lower in Ontario than in any other Canadian province.



Ensuring Financial Sustainability for Ontario’s Postsecondary Sector, 2023

The figure above demonstrates the large funding gap between Ontario and the rest of Canada for colleges and universities.

Grants and tuition sit at 2005/2004 levels, creating an unhealthy reliance on international tuitions to fund institutions. At a time when global tensions are on the rise, this reliance is no longer sustainable. As a result of international tuition, some colleges and universities in the province have amassed outsized surpluses. However, it is crucial to emphasize that this only reflects the reality for some post-secondary institutions within the system. In growing our international enrolments, Durham College has been strategic and responsive to the capacity of the college and communities that we serve, capping international enrolment at 30%.

Recommendation Highlights

The report contains numerous recommendations for the government to support PSE in Ontario. These recommendations include areas like tuition, grants, capital infrastructure, section 28 approvals, research, and governance.

Durham College supports our colleagues across the province in advocating specifically for the following recommendations to be considered in Budget 2024:

- 1) Unfreeze tuition
 - a. The panel recommends a common increase of 5% in 2024-25, followed by annual increases of the greater of 2% or CPI across all PSE (with a further 3% in 2024-25 for professional programs in universities and high demand programs in colleges).
- 2) Increase the college student grant by 10%.
 - a. The panel recommends increasing per-student operating grants by at least 10% in the first year (2024-25), and by the greater of 2% or CPI in subsequent years.
 - b. The report specifically recommends increasing the value of the Weighted Funding Unit (WFU) – meaning that funding increases would be program-weighted.
- 3) Remove the disincentive for enrolling part-time students.
 - a. The panel recommends changing the funding model for part-time college students, noting the disincentive to enroll part-time students, the disparity between college and university funding approaches, and the economic advantages of greater part-time enrollment.

The proposal to unfreeze tuition, followed by annual increases, ensures a stable college revenue stream. Additionally, the suggested 10% increase in the college student grant provides financial support crucial for enhancing the quality of education and resources. Removing disincentives for part-time student enrollment, as recommended by adjusting the funding model, addresses existing disparities between college and university funding and offers economic benefits by promoting greater flexibility in education, potentially increasing enrollment numbers and contributing to a more dynamic and adaptable workforce.

Overall, these measures align with Ontario's economic interests by fostering a financially sustainable and robust public college system that is vital in preparing students for the workforce.



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COLLEGE QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT PROCESS (CQAAP)

AUDIT REPORT

DURHAM COLLEGE

DATE OF SITE VISIT: June 19 – 21, 2023

PREPARATION DATE: July 28, 2023

SUBMISSION DATE: July 28, 2023

**PREPARED BY: Geoffrey Cudmore, Loretta Howard,
Helen Pearce**



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APPROVAL OF THE AUDIT REPORT


This report represents the findings of the College Quality Assurance Audit Process for Durham College.

This report has been prepared, reviewed, and accepted by all parties to the Audit, including the college President, members of the audit panel, and the Chair of the OCQAS Management Board. The signatures of the representative parties demonstrate their acceptance of the content of this report.




COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Signature: 	Date: October 13, 2023
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CHAIR- OCQAS MANAGEMENT BOARD

Charles Pankratz Signature: 	Date: October 3, 2023
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AUDIT PANEL MEMBERS

Chair- Geoffrey Cudmore Signature: 	Date: August 9, 2023
Panelist- Helen Pearce Signature: 	Date: August 9, 2023
Panelist – Loretta Howard Signature: 	Date: August 9, 2023



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Conclusions

General comments and summary of the findings of the audit panel.

It is the finding of the audit panel that Durham College has demonstrated an overarching dedication to quality that permeates everything that they do. The panel was, time and time again throughout the virtual site-visit, impressed by the authentic understanding of, and commitment to, quality and quality processes that was shared by all levels and parts of the organization.

The College submitted an excellent and very comprehensive Self-Study report. The thoroughness of the narrative, the volume of appropriate evidence provided offered the panel a compelling snapshot of an institution that truly is “Leading the Way, Together”.

The Current State of Quality Assurance Activities contained in the Self-Study, shows a college that in the last audit, embraced continual quality improvement through a challenging set of 22 Affirmations touching almost every part of College operations. The majority of these were completed since the audit and the few, still “in process” are mostly completed and following a schedule and a plan. AS well, the 3 Recommendations from the last audit are reported as 100% complete. The current Self-Study sets out a further way forward though 7 new Affirmations that have been noted by the audit panel.

Although mentioned in the last audit report, the “culture of collaboration” continues to impress as a major strength. This authentic sharing of institutional knowledge meant that every stakeholder group that the audit panel met during the virtual site-visit was able to share their role in the College’s quality assurance processes. The most compelling example of this was the wide range of people across the college that spoke of their engagement with the Program Proposal and Review Committee (PPRC).

During the exit interview the audit panel shared Commendations relating to the overall culture of the organization. The audit panel was impressed with the positive, “can-do” mindset that we encountered at all levels. The framing of the challenges brought about by the pandemic as “opportunities”, leading to positive developments was characterized as “a big win” for the organization. The panel also commended the College on the quality of the faculty interactions with students. The students we spoke to provided compelling examples of how faculty were caring, how they reached out during the pandemic, how they were innovative in supporting student learning, and how they were seen as going “above and beyond” student



expectations to provide support and guidance. Finally, the College was commended on the value it places on the authentic evaluation of all full and other than full-time faculty in accordance with DC policy. The audit panel heard from students, faculty and associate and executive deans how the evaluation process supported teaching and learning in a meaningful way, how it supported faculty development and departmental goals, and how it made faculty feel valued and supported in being as good as they can be.

Through the careful assessment of the Self-Study, the Additional Evidence provided, and the information gathered during the virtual site visit, the Audit Panel is pleased to advise that Durham College has continued to meet all of the OCQAS Standards and congratulates the College on its exemplary quality assurance approaches and practices.

2. Results

a. Audit Results

Standard	Result		
1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met

Audit Decision: *(select one)*

- Mature Effort
- Organized Effort
- Formal Effort



STIPULATIONS

1. Commendations

Provide clear statements that articulate areas where the college has shown exemplary or leadership in the field of quality assurance and improvement. These are mechanisms that are especially good and may be worthy of emulation by other colleges in the system. (Ensure that the commendable quality assurance mechanisms are provided within their context and have sufficient detail to be clear to any reader.)

1. **Commendation #1 (College Submission of Self-Study)** The audit team would like to commend Durham College on a well-researched, well-presented, and probably the most evidence-rich Self-Study that the auditors have encountered to date.
2. **Commendation #2 (R1.1)** The audit panel commends the College on their Board of Governors level of engagement with Quality Assurance processes at Durham, and the enthusiastic way they approached their roles. They were proud of the diverse make-up of the Board, as well as their processes and activities to engage with their own members and the rest of the college. They used Quality Assurance terminology naturally, and they clearly understood the Quality Assurance processes at Durham.
3. **Commendation #3 (R3.3)** The audit panel commends the College on the many ways that PAC members were engaged and enthusiastic about their roles. Many of them mentioned that they felt valued and that they saw evidence of their recommendations being followed up on by the program teams. Several members mentioned that the Durham students they took on for work experience performed better than students from the same program from other colleges in the same region.
4. **Commendation #4 (R6.1)** The audit panel commends the College on the value it places on the authentic evaluation of all full and other than full-time faculty in accordance with DC policy, which clearly demonstrates the College's deep commitment to teaching and learning as the centre of all you do.
5. **Commendation #5 (R6.2)** The audit panel commends the college on your excellent faculty. The panel saw clear evidence of the dedication faculty have to their practice and their students. Student success was at the forefront of what they do and all the professional development they are involved in. The panel heard it clearly from the students --- they felt supported by their faculty and listened to. As one student put it, "They don't just teach the course, they actually want us to learn!" Another student agreed and said, "And not only do they want us to learn, they want us to have our mental health as well." The panel also had some great conversations with faculty. Clearly, they are committed to their practice and to their students. They are dedicated, creative, and inspiring.



- 6. Commendation #6 (R6.3)** The audit panel commends the College on the overall culture of the organization which came across as very positive, collaborative, and aligned with best practices of quality assurance processes. This positive mind set was best demonstrated by the framing of the challenges brought about by the pandemic as “opportunities”, leading to positive developments which were characterized as “a big win” for the organization. At each level of the audit - from students and alumni to faculty, administration at all levels, and service areas - there was a clear and demonstrated understanding of how each specific “piece” of QA fit within the overall organizational “pie”.

7. Affirmations

Provide clear statements that articulate areas where the college itself has found a weakness, identified the weakness, and intends to correct it (a plan of action has already been articulated). In effect, this is affirming the college’s judgment and findings of its own self-study.

- 1. Affirmation #1 (R1.4)** Revise comprehensive program review processes and timelines to better align with external accreditation and/or governing professional bodies or associations, to ensure programs continue to meet standards and requirements and support efficient workload for program teams.
- 2. Affirmation #2 (R1.5)** Develop a means by which faculty and program teams reflect upon and share program progress towards EDI initiatives and generate ideas and strategies for development and implementation in alignment with commitments for which DC is a signatory.
- 3. Affirmation #3 (R2.3)** Enhance the PLAR process by expanding curricular and evaluation resources, guidelines, and templates to support equitable and consistent assessment of PLAR applications to ensure relevant and meaningful achievement of PVLOs through experiences outside of formal education.
- 4. Affirmation #4 (R3.2)** The General Education committee will refresh their membership and processes to ensure relevant, current, and high-quality GNED courses are offered to all programs across the institution.
- 5. Affirmation #5 (R4.2)** Assemble a taskforce comprising various institutional stakeholders to explore the wants, needs, and opportunities for both faculty and students pertaining to the use of generative artificial intelligence in teaching and learning in higher education. This will inform the subsequent development of a suite of professional development resources for faculty, and appropriate workshops and aligned resources for students.



6. **Affirmation #6 (R4.3)** Development of an Assessment and Evaluation policy to guide assessment opportunities, grade allocation and weighting, and creation of evaluation plans that are equitable, transparent, and consistent with industry requirements or guidelines, while maintaining appropriate academic rigor and alignment with CLOs and PVLOs.
7. **Affirmation #7 (6.2)** Developing a framework and set of best practices to be leveraged for Faculty Orientations held at semester start to ensure all faculty are apprised of new or revised policies, supports, resources and procedures, as well as institutional initiatives, professional development opportunities and issues trending in higher education. A consistent approach will help to ensure information is transparent, current, consistent, and supportive of innovative teaching and learning practice for both full-time and part-time faculty.

8. Recommendations

Provide clear statements that articulate areas as needing improvement. Recommendations may also be made in relation to areas of concern identified by the college in its self-study, and for which no plan of action has been articulated by the college.

1. **Recommendation 1 (R1.3)** The audit panel recommends that the College continue to refine the Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) to respond to the request made by both students and faculty that the SFQ provide more opportunities for written feedback, and that the College will continue to develop strategies to improve the response rate for the SFQ.
2. **Recommendation #2 (R1.7)** That the College continue to proceed with the timely completion of the project undertaken as Affirmation #3 in the last audit, to ensure that all program maintenance records arising from program lifecycle QA processes, especially all final APR and CPR reports, are maintained in a central, secure, and accessible repository.
3. **Recommendation #3 (R4.3)** The audit panel recommends that the College proceed as planned with the development of a comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation policy that strongly supports the provision of timely and useful feedback on student performance.

Revised requirements to better protect international students

From: [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#)

News release

December 7, 2023—Ottawa—Canada is a top destination for international students, thanks to our high-quality educational institutions; our welcoming, diverse society; and the opportunities for some to work or immigrate permanently after graduation. While international students have contributed to life on campuses and innovation across the country, they have also experienced some serious challenges, such as finding adequate housing, as they pursue their studies in Canada.

The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, announced today that starting January 1, 2024, the cost-of-living financial requirement for study permit applicants will be raised so that international students are financially prepared for life in Canada. Moving forward, this threshold will be adjusted each year when Statistics Canada updates the low-income cut-off (LICO). LICO represents the minimum income necessary to ensure that an individual does not have to spend a greater than average portion of income on necessities.

The cost-of-living requirement for study permit applicants has not changed since the early 2000s, when it was set at \$10,000 for a single applicant. As such, the financial requirement hasn't kept up with the cost of living over time, resulting in students arriving in Canada only to learn that their funds aren't adequate. For 2024, a single applicant will need to show they have \$20,635, representing 75% of LICO, in addition to their first year of tuition and travel costs. This change will apply to new study permit applications received on or after January 1, 2024.

While this will help prevent student vulnerability and exploitation, we recognize that the impact of the change could vary depending on the applicant. Next year, in collaboration with partners, we intend to implement targeted pilots that will test new ideas aimed at helping underrepresented cohorts of international students pursue their studies in Canada.

Today's announcement follows important reforms to the International Student Program announced on October 27, 2023, regarding the development of a new framework to recognize learning institutions that provide top-quality services and support, including housing, to international students. We expect learning institutions to only accept the number of students that they can provide adequate supports for, including housing options.

In welcoming international students, we have a responsibility to make sure that students are supported when they come to our country. Ahead of the September 2024 semester, we are prepared to take necessary measures, including limiting visas, to ensure that designated learning institutions provide adequate and sufficient student supports as part of the academic experience. In order to achieve this result, it is imperative to work together with provincial and territorial

governments, learning institutions and other education stakeholders, so we can ensure international students are set up for success in Canada.

Minister Miller also provided an update on 3 temporary policies affecting international students that were all set to expire at the end of 2023, including the following:

- The waiver on the 20-hour-per-week limit on the number of hours international students are allowed to work off campus while class is in session will be extended to April 30, 2024. International students already in Canada, as well as applicants who have already submitted an application for a study permit as of December 7, 2023, will be able to work off campus more than 20 hours per week until that time. We continue to examine options for this policy in the future, such as expanding off-campus work hours for international students to 30 hours per week while class is in session.
- The facilitative measure that has allowed international students to count time spent studying online towards the length of a future post-graduation work permit, as long as it constitutes less than 50% of the program of study, will continue to be in place for students who begin a study program before September 1, 2024. This measure will no longer apply to students who begin a study program on or after that date. Distance learning facilitation measures were first implemented in 2020 in response to travel restrictions during the pandemic, and were [reduced in scope in September 2022](#). At this point, the vast majority of international students are studying in person in Canada.
- In response to labour market disruptions during the pandemic and post-pandemic recovery, a temporary policy was introduced on 3 occasions to provide an additional 18-month work permit to post-graduation work permit holders as their initial work permit was expiring. Foreign nationals with a post-graduation work permit expiring up to December 31, 2023, remain eligible to apply. However, this temporary policy will not be extended further.

We value the significant social, cultural and economic benefits that international students bring to Canada, and for those benefits to continue, we must tackle issues that have made some students vulnerable and have challenged the integrity of the International Student Program. With the long-overdue increase to the cost-of-living threshold, students arriving in Canada will be on a stronger financial footing as they begin their studies.

Quotes

“International students provide significant cultural, social and economic benefits to their communities, but they have also faced challenges navigating life in Canada. We are revising the cost-of-living threshold so that international students understand the true cost of living here. This measure is key to their success in Canada. We are also exploring options to ensure that students find adequate housing. These long-overdue changes will protect international students from financially vulnerable situations and exploitation.”

– The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Quick facts

- International education accounts for more than \$22 billion in economic activity annually, greater than Canada's exports of auto parts, lumber or aircraft, and supports more than 200,000 jobs in Canada.
- Quebec establishes its own cost-of-living threshold for international students destined for Quebec's learning institutions and has continued to raise this threshold periodically.
- The new financial guidelines are also being applied to the Student Direct Stream, a special study permit application process available to residents of 14 countries that requires additional up-front information from the applicant and provides priority processing.

Associated links

- [News release: Changes to International Student Program aim to protect students](#)
- [News release: Transforming our immigration system to build a stronger Canada](#)
- [News release: Stabilizing Canada's immigration targets to support sustainable growth](#)

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Report Number: BOG-2023-91

To: Board of Governors

From: Don Lovisa, President

Date of Report: December 4, 2023

Date of Meeting: December 13, 2023

Subject: Update on the College's Social Commitments

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Governors with an overview of the key social commitments that the College has signed and committed to.

2. Recommendation

This report is being submitted for information only.

3. Background

This report is developed in collaboration between the President's, Academic, Diversity & Inclusion, Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Student Affairs offices to promote Durham College's (DC) social commitments and processes that will:

- Ensure that DC is meeting our social commitments.
- Assist with the identification and implementation of actions to support this work.
- Maintain annual reporting to support the business plan, signed agreements and reputation-building opportunities.

This process will continue to evolve as the College is dedicated to being responsive to our communities and proactive in building a welcoming, healthy and safe learning environment.

4. Discussion/Options

DC's social commitments capture our values of collaboration, diversity and inclusion, excellence, innovation, integrity, respect, and social responsibility. The Indigenous Education Protocol, the Dimensions Charter, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Accord are just a few of DC's commitments to this end.

The three key social commitments identified comprise many actions already in progress. These commitments have been highlighted specifically because they are publicly signed and committed documents. Below is a high-level summary of the commitments themselves.

Last year's report included the BlackNorth Initiative (BNI). On July 22, 2020, DC became a proud signatory of the BNI, joining more than 200 organizations and leaders across Canada in committing their organizations to specific actions and targets designed to dismantle anti-Black systemic racism and create opportunities for Black, racialized, and Indigenous communities. Over time, the mandate of BNI has changed. After both an internal and external review of the changes, DC is reviewing other avenues to continue our commitment to and pursuit of addressing anti-Black racism. As such, the BNI is no longer included in this report.

Indigenous Education Protocol

Driven by Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan), the Indigenous Education Protocol underscores the importance of structures and approaches required to address Indigenous peoples' learning needs and support Indigenous communities' self-determination and socio-economic development. DC signed on to the protocol on October 16, 2015. The protocol is founded on seven principles that aim to guide the institutions, which are:

- 1) Commit to making Indigenous education a priority.
- 2) Ensure governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples.
- 3) Implement intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities.
- 4) Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
- 5) Commit to increasing the number of Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments throughout the institution, including Indigenous senior administrators.

-
- 6) Establish Indigenous-centred holistic services and learning environments for learner success.
 - 7) Build relationships and be accountable to Indigenous communities in support of self-determination through education, training and applied research.

In December 2022, the Indigenization Council, led by the First Peoples Indigenous Centre (FPIC), realigned working groups based on Indigenous Education Protocol objectives and Durham College Indigenous Advisory Circle recommendations. In February 2023, a new objectives document was provided. Below are highlights from the work so far this year:

Communication and Events

- Produced a Land Acknowledgement video for use at the fall 2023 convocation.
- Added Indigenous days of significance to the college calendar.
- Provided Indigenous graduates with Smudge Kits at convocation ceremonies.
- Hosted events for Orange Shirt Day and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
- Supported community cultural event "Odibaadodaan: A Celebration of Indigenous Storytellers."

Curriculum Development and Academic Upgrading

- Received approval to hire an Indigenous Learning Specialist.
- Integrated Land Acknowledgement onto Course page with DC Connect.
- Expanded General Education initiatives for First Nations, Inuit, and Metis courses.
- Planned Indigenous breadth elective course for 2024-2025.

Employee Recruitment, Onboarding, and Professional Development

- Human Resources (HR) has researched recruitment practices that promote inclusivity in job postings and the interview process. HR has identified additional locations to promote job opportunities to broaden our applicant pool, including Indigenous communities.

-
- Collaborated with Indigenous Advisory Circle to review position descriptions and hiring processes for First Peoples Indigenous Centre employee recruitment and the Centre for Teaching and Learning.
 - Added Indigenous Histories and Reconciliation modules to Brightspace portal for employee professional development and training. Also, now promote these modules during onboarding process with new employees.

Dimensions Charter

This charter, signed by DC on July 10, 2019, speaks to our commitment to increasing research excellence, innovation and creativity within the post-secondary sector across all disciplines through greater equity, diversity and inclusion. This commitment is governed by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). The Dimensions Charter is of particular political importance, as the previous Minister of Science and Sport, Kirsty Duncan, attended DC's campus in July of 2019 to promote the initiative and encourage the College to join.

To date, ORSIE has spent considerable time on training for employees and student research assistants to build awareness and understanding, and to work towards building an inclusive research environment. In addition, ORSIE team members are participating in sector-level collaborative efforts to learn about best practices and provide input on the college sector's needs. Recent grant applications, which now require content addressing actions for diverse teams and training environments, are creating opportunities for new discussions and strategies to strengthen our research.

Ongoing initiatives:

Resource sharing:

- ORSIE maintains an EDI-focused resource page on the College's intranet site, ICE, which contains content that describes EDI-related expectations from the granting agencies with respect to applications for funding, information on DC's commitment to the Dimensions Charter as well as links to EDI in research resources of use to faculty researchers.
- Ensuring inclusion of research-related EDI content in the ORSIE Extract, a monthly e-newsletter that is distributed to DC faculty.

Hiring process:

- ORSIE has taken steps to increase the visibility of vacancies for student research assistant positions, with standardized postings and distribution and recruitment practices have been improved to attract a diverse research team;
- An EDI Considerations for Research Hires tip sheet was developed and continues to be used by hiring managers.

Events:

- In recognition of the calls for action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, all ORSIE events regularly include a land acknowledgement and often include space for an Indigenous Elder to speak.

Committees:

- Two ORSIE staff continue to sit on DC's EDI Committee, the Manager of the Social Impact Hub and the Director of Institutional Research and Planning, helping to inform, support and share EDI-related plans at the College.

Data Collection:

- The Institutional Research and Planning staff collaborated with the Office of EDI to lead the administration and reporting of DC's *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Census* for employees and students. Information from the census will be used to inform the action plans for EDI initiatives at the College.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Accord

Presented by the United Nations, the SDG Accord is meant to inspire, celebrate and advance education's critical role in delivering the SDGs and the value it brings to governments, businesses and wider society. DC signed the SDG Accord on February 23, 2022.

CICan has identified five SDGs that the college system can focus on based on their relevancy to work on nationwide campuses. These include:

- 1) SDG 4 – Quality education
- 2) SDG 5 – Gender equality
- 3) SDG 8 – Decent work & economic growth
- 4) SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities
- 5) SDG 13 – Climate action

When it comes to DC, there are many projects taking place on campus that may speak to the SDG's listed above, or from the broader list itself. Many of the International Office's projects speak to these goals on an ongoing basis and the College itself has been named one of Canada's Greenest Employer's multiple

years in a row (Goal 13 – Climate Action) due to our ongoing investment in sustainable infrastructure and programs.

Furthermore, campus organizations like Enactus DC promote the SDG's in their programming. One example includes the Founders Drive project. A podcast designed to inspire young entrepreneurs. It focuses on personal stories of founders who have overcome financial, educational and personal barriers to achieve their goals. This project impacted 750+ students, created 22 jobs, 4 businesses and involved colleagues from 7 countries. The Enactus team aligned this project with two SDG's; Goal 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 1, No Poverty. This program is going into its second season of shows, continuing its progress in building a strong global network of young, innovative entrepreneurs.

5. **Financial/Human Resource Implications**

There are no financial or human resource implications associated with this report, although some initiatives mentioned do receive government funding.

6. **Implications for the Joint Campus Master Plan**

There are no implications for the joint campus master plan.

7. **Implications for Ontario Tech University**

There are no implications for Ontario Tech University.

8. **Relationship to the Strategic Plan/Business Plan**

This report was developed with governance in mind, to provide an overview to the board of governors with the College's progress on key initiatives that speak to many actions within the Business Plan, and are directly related to the goals set out in the Strategic Plan, specifically:

1. **Our Students** – To educate and inspire students to realize success in their careers and communities.
2. **Our People** - To invest in our employees and empower them to be entrepreneurial, innovative and strategic.
3. **Our Work** - To be a leader in teaching and learning while responsibly managing resources, ensuring good governance and strategically investing in the future.
4. **Our Community** - To drive the economic, social and environmental success of our community, locally and globally.

Report Number: BOG-2023-98

To: Board of Governors

From: Don Lovisa, President

Date of Report: December 4, 2023

Date of Meeting: December 13, 2023

Subject: President's Report – October to December 2023

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the President's activities and significant college initiatives from mid-October 2023 to December 2023.

1. Our Students

Lucky winner gets \$5,000 tuition credit

Justin Hooton, a first-year student in the Broadcasting – Radio and Contemporary Media program, is the lucky winner of a \$5,000 tuition credit. The annual contest is open to all Durham College (DC) applicants who register at various events.



Justin entered the draw while attending Spring Open House in April and was thrilled to receive a phone call from DC sharing the good news. Even before winning the contest, he knew he'd made the right choice in attending DC. "I'd heard good things about the school, and it was also one of the closer schools to me, so it was a no-brainer," said the Peterborough native, who is aiming for a career in the burgeoning field of sports analytics.

Durham College celebrates career-ready graduates at Fall Convocation



Durham College celebrated the academic achievements of nearly 2,000 career-ready graduates this week at Fall Convocation. Graduates from DC's eight faculties received their diplomas and graduate certificates. Guest speakers at the ceremonies included:

- **Lauren Bull**, DC Alumna and founder & CEO, Canoe & Lake.
- **Brandon Bird**, DC Alumnus and CEO, Bird Mechanical Ltd., who was recently named one of On-Site Magazine's 40 Under 40 in Canadian Construction.

During the evening ceremony on October 26, the college also recognized Stephanie Ball, retired executive dean, with the honorary designation of Emeritus in recognition of her many years of outstanding service to DC students and the community.

DC Students Cook up Gold Medal Finish in Culinary Competition

For the second year in a row, Durham College students have struck gold as they were crowned Canada's best new student chefs at Taste Canada's **Cooks the Books** Student Culinary Competition.

This year, second-year **Culinary Management** students Miguel Alves Dos Santos Fonseca and Jess Dalziel were selected to represent DC and they plated up their winning dish of Brazilian beef hearts, farofa, pickled beets, glazed carrots, crispy tripe and chimichurri on October 29.

Before facing off in the competition kitchen, Miguel and Jess spent long hours perfecting their dish in DC's state-of-the-art culinary labs to ensure they could execute it in the 45-minute time limit. They looked to their peers in the Culinary Management program to offer honest feedback as they developed their recipe. Part of the challenge was using sponsored ingredients including Canadian beef, California prunes, Club House spices and Tabasco sauce. Miguel incorporated aspects of his Brazilian heritage while Jess brought inspiration from Hungarian cuisine.



For example, when incorporating the prunes, Miguel turned to a traditional Brazilian side-dish called farofa, which is a cassava flour toasted with a fat like butter or oil. But there are a thousand versions of the recipe including one that incorporates

Miguel credits the Culinary Management program for setting him up for success.

10 Durham College students receive a total of \$300,000 through Schulich Builders Scholarships for Skilled Trades

Ten Durham College students who are passionate about careers in the trades have received a massive boost of support through the inaugural Schulich Builders Scholarships for the Skilled Trades.

Five students received \$20,000 scholarships for one-year programs and five received \$40,000



scholarships for two-year programs. By launching the **Builder Scholarships** for 100 Ontario students in 2023, The Schulich Foundation is helping to combat the shortage of skilled trades in the province and amplifying their importance and value

to the community. Applications for a second round of scholarships will open to students in 2024.

DC Schulich Builders Scholarships two-year recipients (\$40,000): Sacha Bertossini (Carpentry and Renovation Technician); Noah DeCicco (Carpentry – Building Construction Technician); Tristan Flint (Carpentry and Renovation Technician); Fara Shea (Automotive Technician – Service and Management); Boden Somerville (Electrical Engineering Technician)

DC Schulich Builders Scholarships one-year recipients (\$20,000): Travis Honey (Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning Techniques); Inara McConnell (Electrical Techniques); Mason Raymond (Crane Operation, Rigging & Construction Techniques); Melissa Scanlan (Trades Fundamentals); Roswell Virgo (Electrical Techniques)

Durham Lords enjoy dominant Fall Season

The **Durham Lords** took the Ontario College Athletic Association (OCAA) by storm this fall.

For the first time in Durham College history, five teams won provincial medals. The women's rugby squad rode another

undefeated season to a gold medal. Women's softball won silver at the provincial level and added another silver at nationals. Men's baseball, men's rugby and women's soccer all brought home provincial bronze.

We are #DCProud of all our student-athletes, coaches, and the entire athletics team.



DC Faculty of Business students win second place in national Sports Case Competition



A group of five students from the **Faculty of Business** made Durham College history recently during the 2023 Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment (MLSE) PrimeTime Sports Case Competition. The team placed second – ranking above competitors from across Canada with their strategic and innovative business solution.

Sheldon Koufman and Ian Ellis, **Sport Management** faculty and DC's Case Competition coaches said the experience of competing at this event is a great way for students to hone their skills, develop and improve their network, enhance their teamwork and resilience, and to try to solve real-world problems they may encounter in the sports business industry after graduation.

The MLSE PrimeTime Sports Case Competition is run by seasoned sports executives Brian Burke and Trevor Whiffen and attracts students from post-secondary institutions across Canada. This year, students were challenged with developing a digital engagement project – focused on increasing customer engagement and loyalty for MLSE and its brands.

The DC team strategized and pitched a loyalty program that connects to all MLSE apps and their associated sponsors. Through their proposed idea, customers and corporate sponsors would be rewarded with points for future purchases.

Dylan Foster, a **Sport Business Management** student and the team's captain, attributes the team's success in part to their classroom experience.

Journalism students gain new perspective at Community Listening event

First-year **Journalism – Mass Media** students had a valuable opportunity for experiential learning at Durham College earlier this month.

The 'Community Listening' event, held at the [new Centre for Innovation and Research](#), was part of the Voices in Durham project, a partnership between the Regional Municipality of Durham and DC. The theme of the event was 'reporting on fair and equitable stories in the diverse region of Durham.'

By simulating a press conference, the event allowed students to experience the work of a professional journalist, and each of them had a unique role to play, from moderating the discussion to taking notes and snapping photographs.

One of the guest speakers was Dr. Vidal Chavannes, Director of Strategy, Research and Organizational Performance at Durham Regional Police Service. He saw the event as an ideal opportunity to speak to the future reporters who will shed light on important news and issues.

First-year students Bryson Betts and Sunmeet Kour served as the event hosts, leading the discussion before turning the microphone over to their assembled classmates. The panelists touched on a variety of topics, from the importance of inclusive local news to the best way for reporters to approach their communities.

DC's young journalists will benefit greatly from the experience.

2. Our People

Michelle Pigeon recognized with prestigious award

Durham College employee Michelle Pigeon has received the prestigious Golden Quill award from the Committee of Registrars, Admissions & Liaison Officers (CRALO).

Michelle, manager, reporting and systems initiatives, Enrolment Services, has served as CRALO's treasurer since 2017 on a volunteer basis. In that role, she serves as caretaker of all of CRALO's accounting requirements, has worked extensively with the executive committee, regularly contributed to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) provincial reporting groups, and much more.



The Golden Quill is CRALO's highest award and is based on:

- Prolonged, continuous and outstanding contribution to the college system by an individual
- Contributions which are usually provincial in their impact
- Contributions which are above and beyond the candidate's day-to-day accountabilities

Michelle would like to acknowledge the support of DC's Finance and Accounting department in executing her duties with CRALO.

Congratulations Michelle!

3. Our Work

Durham College Tech Talk educates guests on the power of Intellectual Property

Durham College hosted an event on October 27 to educate local business owners and founders about the importance of an intellectual property (IP) strategy. The event featured an industry expert panel, a Q&A session, and networking opportunities. Joshua Cohen, a commercialization specialist at DC, emphasized the significance of IP knowledge in today's competitive business landscape.



The event followed the announcement of a \$300,000 grant from Intellectual Property Ontario (IPON) to DC's Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ORSIE). This grant aims to help small businesses and start-ups bring their products and services to market. DC plans to use this funding to enhance its services and provide commercialization expertise, thereby educating its clients and student entrepreneurs on developing an IP strategy and understanding the commercialization process.

The Tech Talk expert panelists, including Dr. Chris Webb from IPON, Tony Orsi from Bereskin & Parr, and Michael Stanfield from Inventing Future Technology Inc. (IFTech), discussed industry challenges and the importance of a strong IP strategy, especially in attracting potential investors.

In collaboration with IPON, ORSIE will continue to foster innovation and economic growth by offering free IP consultancy services, market research analyses, and investment opportunities. A recording of the Tech Talk is available online, along with more information about DC's ORSIE and IP services.

Students develop global skills and awareness at Durham College

Students at Durham College can become true citizens of the world with a unique Global Competency Recognition program that is now available on DC Connect.



'Get Global' invites all students to expand their knowledge in

four key areas: cultural awareness, global connections, global learning and global sustainability. By developing global skills and awareness, students will prepare themselves to thrive in our rapidly changing and increasingly connected world.

Participants in the program can complete a variety of activities to earn points. There are many different options, from taking part in a [Faculty-Led Classroom Abroad \(FLCA\) trip](#) to attending a cultural event on or off campus or learning a new language. Once they've collected 100 points, students will earn a Global Learner digital badge and a certificate at graduation.

All students who take part in the program must start with a module on Indigenous Histories and Reconciliation. For students who want to expand their knowledge and appreciation of other cultures, [the Get Global program is available now.](#)

Celebrating 30 years of our Whitby Campus

Time flies when you're leading the way. Tuesday, November 21, 2023 marks the 30th anniversary of the Durham College Whitby campus. Over the last three decades, what started as a converted chocolate factory has grown into a high-demand campus that is addressing the training needs in the Durham Region and beyond with a range of post-secondary, apprenticeship and corporate training programs across multiple disciplines. Since its inception, the campus has produced thousands of skilled graduates who have gone on to support our local, provincial and national economies.



With a special focus on skilled trades, hospitality and horticulture, the campus's classrooms, labs, shops and training facilities provide a dynamic, experiential-learning environment for DC students and community partners. The campus is home to many unique learning environments including an urban farm, outdoor classroom, learning living labs and Bistro '67, to name a few.

For me, the expansion of the Whitby campus has been a true passion project. I have overseen the creation of state-of-the-art new facilities like the W. Galen Weston Centre for Food, the Ontario Power Generation Centre for Skilled Trades and Technology, and [the brand new PROTO and Electric Vehicle Lab](#).

Throughout my tenure, it has been truly remarkable to witness the growth of our Whitby campus. What began 30 years ago as a modest offshoot of our main campus has evolved into a destination for over 4,000 students each year. I'd like to thank everyone, employees, community and students alike, who have played a part in the last three decades of success at the Whitby campus. I can't wait to see what the future holds for this remarkable learning space.

4. Our Community

Mental health advocate Mike Shoreman speaks at Durham College

Durham College hosted a renowned speaker and mental health advocate, Mike Shoreman, in recognition of World Mental Health Day.



Mike shared his inspiring story of recovery, triumph, and advocacy with students and employees at DC. After being diagnosed with Ramsay Hunt Syndrome and struggling with depression, he rebuilt his mental health and his life in order to become

the first person with a disability to cross all five Great Lakes.

At the Campus Health and Wellness Centre, he shared the highs and lows of his inspiring story while encouraging members of the campus community to develop their own mental health resilience, perseverance, and drive.

He reflected on his own time as a post-secondary student, recalling the immense pressure he felt to succeed. That pressure followed him into adulthood when he built a successful business as a paddleboarding coach. Although he was doing what he loved, the long hours and constant demands on his time and energy pushed him to his breaking point.

The life he had built came crashing down with his Ramsay Hunt diagnosis in 2018, and a dark period of depression followed. But with the support of his family, he sought treatment for his mental health challenges.

In the process of restoring his own health, he discovered a passion for showing others how to improve their lives from the inside out.

Visitors fall for Durham College at Open House

At Fall Open House, future students learned why Durham College is the best choice for their post-secondary education.

The Oshawa and Whitby campuses were filled with more than 2,300 visitors on Saturday, November

4. The DC community was out in full force at both campuses, with alumni, faculty, current students and employees sharing their knowledge and experience.



Attendees got a taste of everything DC has to offer, from state-of-the-art facilities like the Campus Recreation and Wellness Centre and the Centre for Skilled Trades and Technology to our **145+ career-driven programs** and support services.

Prospective students spoke to members of our expert faculty and explored labs and learning spaces. Registered attendees were **entered into a draw to win a \$5,000 tuition credit**, and students were able to apply for their chosen program during the event.

Visitors to the Whitby campus were treated to culinary demonstrations by faculty members and students. In Oshawa, cosmetic techniques were on display at the Centre for Collaborative Education, while future paramedic students benefited from live patient care demonstrations.

Durham College raising funds to support students experiencing food insecurity

With the rising cost of food across Ontario, supporting students experiencing food insecurity is more important than ever.



DC is currently raising funds to support the Food Insecurity Bursary which helps provide immediate assistance to students who are navigating these unforeseen financial challenges. Each year, the DC community comes together to support this valuable initiative that helps students and their families during the holiday season.

Last year, the bursary distributed more than \$80,000 to support 457 students and their families.

This year, the need is expected to be even greater. The Durham College Alumni Association is matching the first \$10,000 raised so every dollar contributed has twice the power to make a positive change in students' lives.

Donations are welcome until December 31 and gifts of more than \$20 are eligible for a charitable donation receipt for income tax purposes in the 2023 tax year. Donations are now being accepted [online](#).

International Education Week proves to be a feast for the senses with music, food and cultural connections

Durham College (DC) joined global International Education Week celebrations with crowd-pleasing performances for students and a mouth-watering street food festival.

Held during the third week of November each year, International Education Week was celebrated in more than 100 countries this year.



At DC's Oshawa Campus, events included the Community Cultural Mosaic in The Pit on November 14. It featured music and dance performances, booths from culturally-focused community groups and snacks for students including warm samosas.

Spike Universe, a second-year student in the [Music Business Management](#) program, was among the performers. Spike, who is known by his stage name, got the crowd excited, waving their hands and dancing as he performed his original music.

Students at DC's Whitby Campus also looked for cultural inspiration at the International Street Food Festival held on November 17.

Nine teams of second-year **Culinary Management** students served up street food-style samples inspired by culinary traditions in Mexico, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, India, Italy and Pakistan.

After trying all the flavours, attendees voted for their favourite dish with students Paulo Delgado and Jonathan Castillo taking the top spot with their arancini—Italian rice balls—served with Romanesco sauce and aioli. The dish was topped with cheese developed through DC culinary programs.

Paulo said the pair were inspired by their upcoming trip to Italy in February which is a DC **Faculty-led Classroom Abroad** trip.

Paulo and Jonathan gave kudos to their fellow students who produced a tasty sampling of street food. They included Taiwanese pork buns, Sri Lankan chicken kottu, Mexican chilaquiles and Indian chicken kondattam.

5. Key Meetings Involving the President's Office (October 12, 2023 to November 21, 2023)

- Committee of Presidents, Colleges Ontario – October 16, 2023
- Durham Region Mayors Gala – October 18, 2023
- Ontario College Fair – October 19, 2023
- Rotary Club World Polio Day Event – October 19, 2023
- MPP Barnes, Barrett Centre Ajax Urban Farm Tour – October 27, 2023
- CiCan Governance Committee meeting – October 31, 2023
- Tour of Whitby Campus, Town of Whitby Staff – November 1, 2023
- CCVPHR President's Panel – November 2, 2023
- Young Africa Works Project, Kenya – November 4 – 11, 2023
- Colleges Ontario discussion with Deputy Minister Wai – November 21, 2023
- Higher Education Summit – November 25 – 27, 2023
- COP Meeting – November 26, 2023
- CEC Board of Directors Meeting – November 28, 2023
- Meeting with Deputy Minister David Wai – November 30, 2023

Report Number: BOG-2023-96

To: Board of Governors

From: Scott Blakey, Chief Administrative Officer

Date of Report: November 23, 2023

Date of Meeting: December 13, 2023

Subject: Report of the Chief Administrative Officer – December 2023

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board an update on College employee-related issues.

2. Recommendation

This report is being presented for information only.

3. Background

The Chief Administrative Officer report provides information and updates on college, student and employee related topics as well as current legal compliance and labour relations related items.

4. Human Resources and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Staff/Faculty Complement

As of	Full-Time			Contract				Students	Total
	Admin	Faculty	Support	Admin	Faculty	Support	Regular PT		
December 31, 2021	140	307	329	68	946	420	27	174	2411
February 28, 2022	141	312	332	73	941	392	30	210	2431
July 31, 2022	149	308	338	65	525	326	32	120	1863
December 31, 2022	155	308	340	58	65	245	36	203	1410
April 30, 2023	165	299	346	53	142	205	37	22	1269
October 31, 2023	176	294	370	76	952	510	38	229	2645

Turnover Rate:

Full-Time											
As of	Total Ft Head Count	Admin	Turn over	%	Faculty	Turn over	%	Support	Turn over	%	Total
2018-2019	841	150	9	6.00%	336	3	0.89%	355	7	1.97%	2.26%
2019-2020	848	151	6	3.97%	337	1	0.30%	360	9	2.50%	1.89%
2020-2021	789	140	17	12.14%	321	1	0.31%	328	7	2.13%	3.17%
2021-2022	785	141	10	7.09%	312	2	0.64%	332	34	10.24%	5.86%
2022-2023	803	158	16	10.13%	300	3	1.00%	345	27	7.83%	5.73%
Total			58			10			84		
2023-2024											
As of Apr 30, 2023	810	165	0	0.00%	299	0	0.00%	346	1	0.29%	0.12%
As of October 31, 2023	840	176	5	2.84%	294	3	1.02%	370	12	3.24%	2.38%
YTD Total			5			3			13		

Projected Retirements - 2022-2026 For Durham College



Durham College Projected Retirements															
Occupation	DBprime Retirements					DBplus Retirements					All Retirements				
	Calendar Year					Calendar Year					Calendar Year				
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Administration	6	6	7	7	6	1	-	1	1	1	7	6	8	8	7
Faculty	14	14	15	16	18	16	17	20	20	23	30	31	35	36	41
Support	8	9	9	11	11	3	3	4	3	4	11	12	13	14	15
Total	28	29	31	34	35	20	20	25	24	28	48	49	56	58	63

Notes

- Retirements have been projected using active member data as of December 31, 2021 and are based on the overall plan retirement experience over the past 5 years, reflected by the retirement scale used in the plan's actuarial valuation.
- Year by year experience may differ from projections for various reasons including but not limited to, retirement programs being offered or eligible members settling their benefit by lump sum payout.

**Projected Retirements:
Durham College – Actual Retirements:**

Full-Time				
As of March 31	Total Ft Count	Admin Retirements	Faculty Retirements	Support Retirements
2018-2019	841	3	2	7
*2019-2020	848	8	29	18
2020-2021	789	3	12	6
2021-2022	785	3	14	12
2022-2023	803	10	14	10
2023-2024				
As of Apr 30, 2023	810	0	0	0
As of October 31, 2023	840	1	9	4
YTD Total		1	9	4

*voluntary retirement incentive program year

Durham College – Pending Retirements:

Pending Retirements for 2023-2024					
	November	December	January	February	March
Administration	0	0	1	0	1
Faculty	0	5	0	0	0
Support	0	2	3	0	0
Total	0	7	4	0	1

Additional HRIS team activities:

- Applied minimum wage increase to eligible employees effective October 1, 2023
- Applied the October 1, 2023 contractual increase to full-time faculty and partial load employees
- Applied the September 1, 2023 contractual increase and special allowance to Full-time support and appendix D employees
- Completed the Bill 124 retroactive increases for full-time faculty, partial load faculty, full-time support staff, appendix D support staff and full-time administrative employees.

Employee + Organizational Development

- 131 employees were celebrated for reaching a significant milestone of full-time service at Durham College. The Employee Appreciation events were held on September 28 and October 4, 2023. Proud to share that 33 employees were recognized for either 20, 25, 30 or 35 years of full-time service!
- In recognition of the National Mental Health Awareness Day, Human Resources, Office of Student Development and Office of Alumni Affairs collaborated to welcome keynote speaker, Mike Shoreman for an event for employees and students on October 11, 2023. While we had in person attendees, over 145 people watched the keynote via livestream.
- National Take Your Kids to Work Day on November 1, 2023. DC hosted 31 grade 9 students who job shadowed their parent/host and participated in tours of the Oshawa and Whitby campus, conducted by the Student Recruitment team.
- Conducted our second employee pulse survey, The Pulse from November 6 to 15, 2023. Results will be available in early December.
- The fall semester Professional Development and Wellness programming was announced with 14 wellness and 3 professional development offerings available for employees to attend. New this year, HR is collaborating with Athletics to offer Staff Activity Days! Employees can come on their own or as a team and join in a fun game of Pickleball, Table Tennis and Badminton. (see PD newsletter)
- HR's online Employee Development Platform continues to add new modules to support employees. Modules recently added include the Indigenous Histories and Reconciliation, Sun Life Benefits, CAAT Pension Plan, Office of the Registrar (overview of services), and Responsible Conduct of Research. HR continues to collaborate with departments to create new modules to promote services, programs and processes.



Employee Onboarding Program:

- Human Resources has concluded the initial investigation of the employee onboarding and offboarding review project, which involved discussion and documentation through the support of multiple working committees with members from all staffing groups and various departments at DC.
- In addition, surveys were distributed to new employees and users involved in the process requesting feedback on their experience and providing the opportunity to outline potential areas for improvement. As a result, we have documented, developed and mapped out current processes for each staffing group, both full-time and contract, for onboarding, offboarding and internal movements at DC, and investigated and analyzed gaps, and identified options for process improvement.
- The project steering committee approved 11 recommendations, and 8 will be implemented by December 2023. Some notable initiatives include: the HR pages on ICE including the For Managers and New Employee sites have all been updated, new onboarding, offboarding and internal movement resources have been developed and existing new employee checklists redeveloped.
- The remaining 3 initiatives will continue to be explored into 2024 and the next fiscal year, which include exploring amalgamating and condensing forms, and re-developing the online orientation module in Brightspace.

Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

- New Contract EDI Coordinator hired and began with OEDI in November.
- Participated 15 orientation events between Oshawa and Whitby campuses.
- EDI recommendations/support provided to the Innovation & Disruption Catalyst Group (IDCG) – September.
- EDI Presentation to new faculty cohort for CTL – September.
- EDI Presentation for CTS Leadership Team – October.
- EDI Tabling at College Open House – November.
- EDI Tabling at International Education Week event in the Pit – November.
- Participated on ORSIE EDI Committee – November.

Update Concerns Management

- EDI is working in conjunction with Facilities to identify new space for a larger multi-faith room – The campus community has outgrown the current space C160.

Update Training

- In February 2024, On campus Black Wellness Fair is being planned with the support of community partners including AIDS Committee of Durham Region (BACCO program), Ontario Tech University, and others.
- EDI is working with the planning committee for Social Justice Week to support January 2024 activities – (Tentatively booking 6 speakers).
- Black History Month planning for PD workshops is underway.

Sexual Violence Awareness & Supports

- **“Let’s Talk Sex” Series:** Collaborative partnership with The AIDS Committee of Durham Region, OnTech University and Trent University. Between June and November 2023 five virtual workshops were offered.
- **September 2023:** Targeted education and awareness outreach completed in all on-campus residences throughout Consent Awareness Week. Students who engaged with the table and activities received consent, sexting, healthy relationships, on-campus and off-campus sexual violence resources and support information.
- **October 11 2023:** National Coming Out Day - EDI promoted a safe and inclusive campus for all by hosting a pop-up event in The Vendors Alley to provide resource sharing for students focused on 2SLGBTQIA+ supports and resources that are available.
- **The annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence (GBV) campaign for 2023.** The Government of Canada’s theme for 2023 is Listen. Learn. Act. It addresses the key steps to tackling gender-based violence (GBV). In keeping with this theme, the Office of EDI has planned DC’s 16 Days of Activism against GBV to incorporate these elements. We enable listening, learning and action through two resource information sharing tabling events, five learning workshops open to staff and students (separately in virtual and in person formats), a Podcast interview at RIOT radio focused on wellness culminating with our December 6th memorial event.
- **December 6th memorial in honor of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women:** OEDI plans a short memorial focused on the women who lost their lives in 1989. It will include volunteers from STEM programs placing a single white rose and reading out the names of the 14 women, followed by a moment of silence and a brief musical performance. OEDI Director and SV Coordinator to provide opening and closing remarks for the event. Events noted above will occur at both Oshawa and Whitby campuses.

Update Outreach Highlights:

- OYAP - Welcome night on November 22, 2023, for OYAP students at Whitby Campus information sharing regarding resources students have available to them.
- Cypher Conference with RISE and Durham Black Educators Network is scheduled for May 2024.

5. Facilities Management & Ancillary Services

Durham College Support Unit Relocation Project

- Construction is now complete on several campus projects as we wrap-up the relocation of several college service units currently occupying space at Campus Corners, a building under lease by On Tech University and Durham College.
- **Relocation of Finance and IT to Simcoe Village Residence (3rd floor):** We have decided to pause this part of the project pending an in-depth review of other possible campus locations for our finance and IT teams. This conclusion came after a structural engineering review confirmed that the building was unable to sustain ideal occupancy requirements. Y6 now been vacated.
- **Relocation of Human Resources to C-Wing (2nd floor):** Renovation work is complete and our Human Resources team has now moved into the old Faculty of Business office space on the second floor of C-wing. This renovation included new flooring, lighting, some HVAC upgrades, a new kitchenette, new furniture, as well as the creation of some additional offices within the space. This new space has been occupied since October 30 and the previously occupied leased space on the first floor of Campus Corners has now been vacated.
- **Relocation of Communications & Marketing to A-Wing (3rd floor):** Our team worked to renovate two existing classrooms, four additional office spaces and a meeting room on the third floor of the A-Wing. Work is now complete, and this space received occupancy on October 30 with our Communication and Marketing team moving in on the same day. The previous location of our Communications and Marketing team on the first floor of Campus Corners has now been vacated.
- **Renovation of C-Wing (1st floor) – New home of EDI:** Our team worked with Grace Wang Architects to renovate existing space in C-wing for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Team (EDI) as well as additional faculty offices and classroom space. Construction wrapped up in July and this space is now occupied.

- **Renovation of H-Wing (2nd floor) – New student space:** Our team worked with BSN Architects on the development of a new design for H-wing level 2. Previously used as CICE space, this new space has been transformed into new student study and common space. This space is expected to be fully open for use at the end of November.



New H Wing (Level 2) Student Space – As of October 28, 2023

- **Landscape/Grounds Team:** Our grounds team has recently completed a complete revitalization of the area which surrounds our storm water pond. In collaboration with the University, this outdoor trail space has also now been paved with new benches added at various locations along the route.



New Paved Trail System – As of November 16, 2023

- **Food Services:** We re-opened our C-Wing Tim Horton's location on October 30 for the first time since the pandemic with the hope of increasing service capacity to our students.



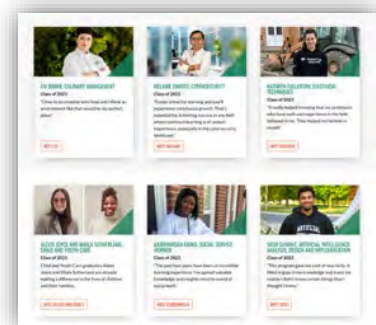
C-Wing Tim Horton's Location

- After a successful first year for our Starbucks location, we added an outdoor patio in order to increase seating capacity for students. The new patio was an overwhelming success this year and we're exploring the possibility of expanding the footprint for next season.



6. Communications & Marketing

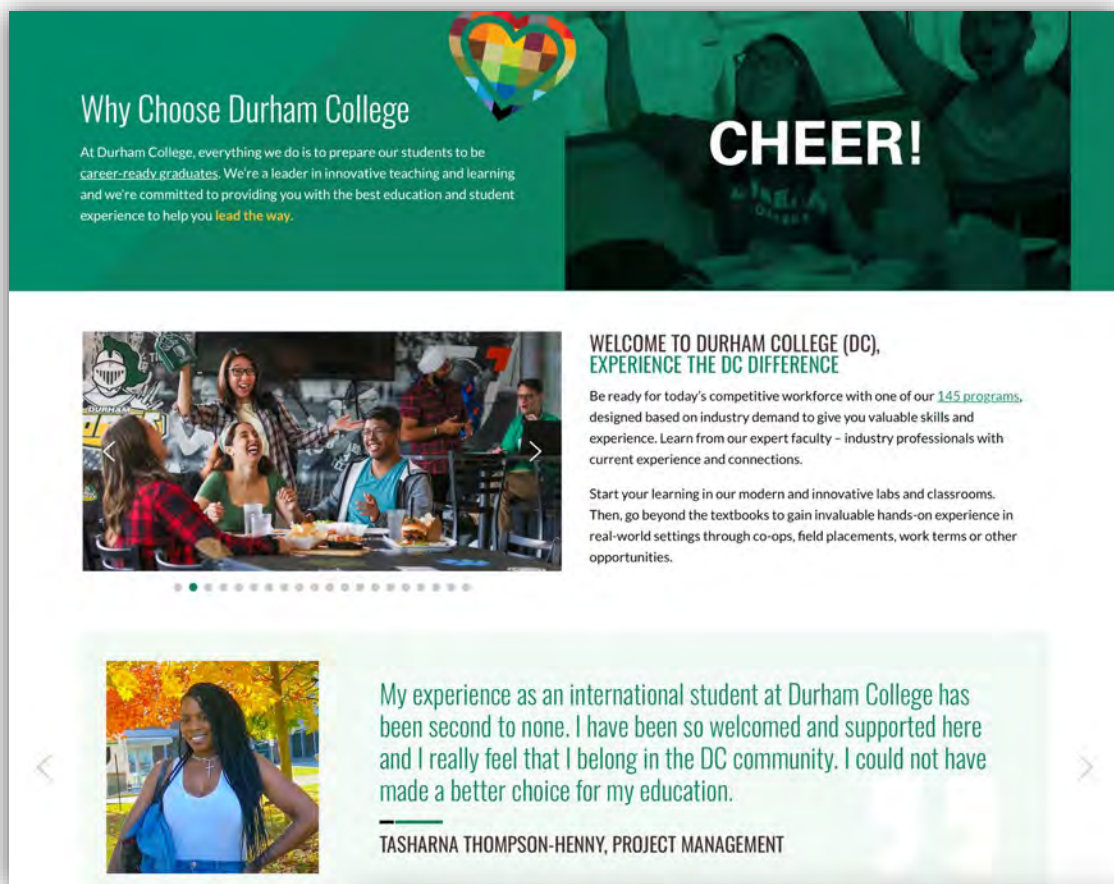
- **C&M wins five [Education Digital Marketing Awards](#).**
 - **Gold:**
 - Annual or Community Report: [Annual Report 2023](#)
 - Blogs: [Durham College Blogs](#)
 - **Silver:**
 - Digital Special Video (under two minutes): [Welcome to DC](#)
 - Microsite: [Celebrating our career-ready graduates](#)
 - **Bronze:**
 - Microsite: [Why Choose Durham College](#)



Communications + Digital:

New Microsites

- We launched two new websites to strategically promote and showcase DC to build our reputation and connect with and engage our key stakeholders, including prospective students.
 - The [Celebrating our career-ready graduates](#) webpage highlights graduating students set to cross the stage during convocation and is an inspiring collection of how our graduates are leading the way.
 - The [Why Choose DC](#) webpage highlights all the amazing aspects of DC with a specific focus on why a prospective student would want to enrol here. It's a visual and dynamic page, featuring photos, video, testimonials and great soundbites about life at DC.



Media Coverage

From June 1 to October 31:

- Secured 128 media stories, plus 240 mentions
- Reach for print was 246M and for broadcast 60.3M

Notable coverage:

- [Durham College's farm and food innovation zone hopes to bring food security to the region.](#) (Global News)
- [#TheMoment an Ontario mother graduated in her late son's place](#) (CBC The National)
- [Johnson Controls offering grants to electromechanical engineering students in Oshawa and Whitby](#) (inDurham)

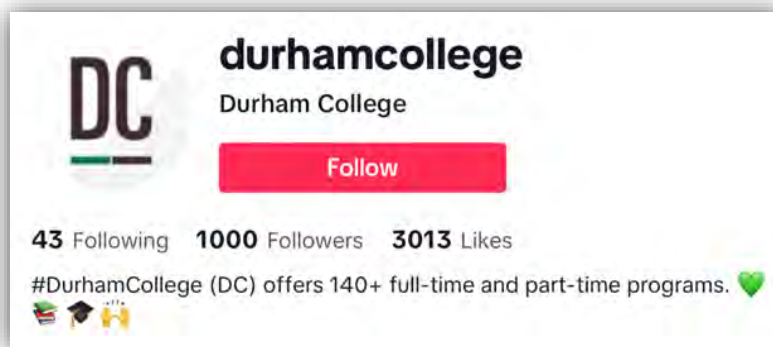
Social Media

May 1, 2023 to present:

- 20 M Impressions, 387 K Engagements, 150.7 K Link Clicks, 14 K New followers, 10 K Messages (DMs and comments) [this does not include activity related to the viral social media video]

Other Notable stats:

- Tiktok – We've reached 1,000 followers!



- 3,733 published posts (increase of 65% from last year) across all channels.

Events

- In collaboration with campus teams, we successfully planned and executed **23 events** between June and the first weekend in November, including the Spring and Fall Convocations, Employee BBQs and Recognition events at both campuses, Academic Kick-off, grand openings for the EV Lab/PROTO and Barrett Centre Urban Farm, and Fall Open House.
- Ran a strategic event marketing campaign that resulted in more than 2,300 guests attending Fall Open House, our most successful **Fall Open House** ever. Event highlights included:
 - A new layout at the Whitby campus, driving traffic to all buildings and showcasing newer spaces like EV/PROTO and the CSTT.
 - Hosting Apply Now workshops at both campuses, resulting in 371 applications during the event.



Marketing

- As part of the Metrolinx partnership, we had a number of assets in-market to promote our intakes, Professional and Part-time Learning and Open House. Assets include: interior train posters, transit shelters, platform posters, digital information screens and monthly e-newsletters.



- Marketing campaigns executed and in-market during the summer and fall months include:
 - Degrees
 - New Programs
 - Start this January, May and September
 - Signature and Priority programs digital marketing
 - Fall Open House
 - Professional and Part-time Learning (PPL)
- C&M worked with corporate Training Services to develop their new brand and provided technical website assistance as they embarked on launching their new website in October 2023, which can [be accessed here.](#)



Recruitment

- The recruitment team have attended and hosted 228 on and off-campus events, seeing over 25,000 attendees.
- The above activities generated over 3,000 new prospective student leads.

7. Student Affairs

Athletics and Recreation

- **Varsity Program success:** The Durham Lords' fall teams have emerged as leaders in the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA), achieving unprecedented success in the school's history. For the first time, our fall sport teams secured five provincial medals. The women's rugby team, in particular, had a flawless season with a 16-0 record, triumphing over St. Lawrence College in the finals to claim their second consecutive OCAA championship. Adding to the triumph, the women's softball team earned two medals, securing silver at both the national and provincial championships. The men's rugby, baseball, and women's soccer teams each secured bronze at their respective provincial championships. Collectively, the fall teams amassed an impressive 70-9-2 record in OCAA conference play.

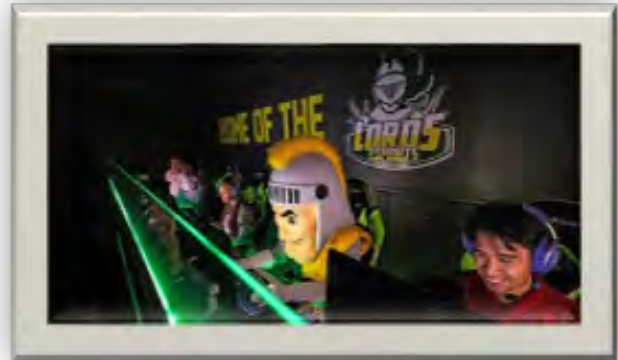




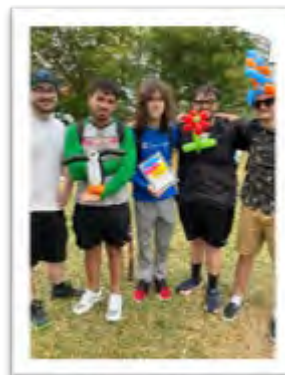
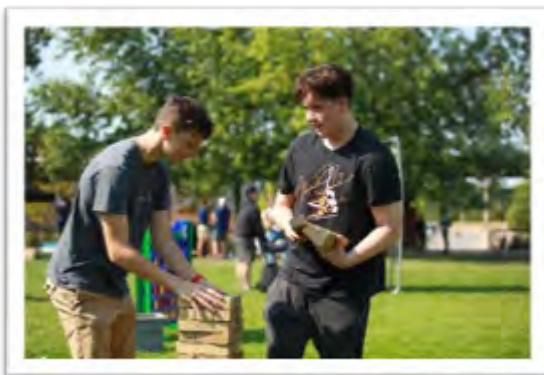
- **Campus Cup:** Durham College (DC) welcomed students back to campus during Orientation Week and a large crowd saw the Lords men's soccer team bringing home the Campus Cup with a win in penalty kicks over Ontario Tech University (OTU).



- **eSports Gaming Arena:** With the reopening of the esports arena in September, the student body may once again experience the gaming facility in the way it was meant to be experienced. It was a huge success in the opening months with the combination of it being the perfect varsity training facility and a lowered barrier entry to gaming to students across campus. With more and more unique registrations every day, the arena is once again growing and we're excited for the future of eSports here at DC



- **Campus Recreation:** Campus Recreation kicked off the school year at Campus Rec Day with hundreds of students joining Athletics & Recreation, the Durham College Student Association (DCSA) and the Ontario Tech Student Union (OTSU) for outdoor games, sports and activities, including axe throwing, cool treats, prizes and giveaways, a live DJ and more. Intramural programming commenced in late September with over 900 registrants and over 100 teams, with new programming such as Intramural Pickleball being a success with the students.



- **Introduction of a Dance Club:** Athletics and Recreation is excited to introduce an extramural dance team this year. The team will compete against other colleges/universities as well as host a showcase in the winter. The team will feature exciting dance styles that include, but are not limited to, ballet, contemporary, hip hop, and jazz.

- **Babcock Field:** The Lords held a ceremony during their regular season finale to officially name the softball diamond at DC, Babcock Field. Alumni, staff, students and community members all gathered at the diamond to celebrate the 36-year career of former athletic director, Ken Babcock.



- **Free Fitness Classes:** FLEX Fitness Centre was excited to offer a number of free fitness classes this semester to employees and students. Classes included Pilates, Yoga, Bollywood, Spin, and more. Through this initiative, we saw significantly increased participation.
- **Whitby Campus:** As a way to engage students, our first collaborative outdoor activity event was hosted by Athletics & Recreation, Campus Health and Wellness Centre (CHWC) and the DCSA. The Whitby Fitness Centre also had personal trainers assist students with workouts throughout the fall and handed out giveaways to increase awareness about the facility.
- **Medical Days:** Introduced a streamlined medical clearance process that offered athletes a discounted rate for physicals and provided a computer lab to work through required education modules which helped students efficiently complete all pre-participation requirements in one day rather than over the course of several weeks.

Campus Health and Wellness Centre (CHWC)

- **Food IQ:** The CHWC launched the Food IQ: Growing Minds, Growing Plates initiative to address food insecurity initiatives were launched between June and October 2023.



- Every Wednesday CHWC staff, in collaboration with The Barrett Centre, hosted a Farmer's Market at the Oshawa campus and offered resources to address food literacy/insecurity as well as coupons for free produce (sponsored by the DCSA). All unsold produce was donated by the Barrett Centre for CHWC to utilize in programming (cooking classes) and/or to the DCSA Foodbank.
- CHWC onboarded an Eating Disorders Psychotherapist to address the needs of students suffering from eating disorders and disordered eating. Along with 1:1 counselling, the ED Psychotherapist offers groups such as 'One meal at a time' and works directly with CHWC staff to offer seamless care.
- CHWC Wellness Coaches offers programs such as Munchie Mondays and Mindful Farm Fridays to raise awareness and improve basic food literacy skills of students at DC.
- **Camp Wellness & Nature Programming:** To enhance overall student health and well-being, the CHWC introduced campus wellness and nature-based programming. Examples of such programs include Forest Bathing, a sensory experience led by a Forest Therapy Guide and Wellness Coach. This guided immersion in nature aims to promote the well-being of both individuals and the environment. Additionally, Nature Play offers a variety of sensory-based explorations and creations in nature. Each week, different activities are provided to encourage students to slow down, open their senses, and deepen their reciprocal relationship with the environment.



- **Sexual Health Campaign:** There has been an increase in Sexual Health Campaigns across campus with the aim of enhancing sexual health education, providing resources, and normalizing regular testing. Some examples of these campaigns include "Pee for Pizza," a collaborative event in partnership with the OTSU, the DCSA, and CHWC, where students provided a urine sample in exchange for a slice of pizza. Another initiative, "Trich or Treat," was a month-long campaign throughout October. During this campaign, students could provide a urine sample and, in return, receive a full-sized chocolate bar. This campaign was also conducted in partnership with DCSA and the OTSU



- **Enhancing Health Promotion:** Developed a centralized [Service Offerings](#) page that aims to be a “go-to” for all health and wellness programming, events, workshops and campaigns.
- **Recovery College:** Partnership with Ontario Shores peer-led programming with the goal to increase mental health and wellness supports on campus. Examples of programming include: “It’s Okay not to be okay” and “College Life 101.”

Career Development

- CIBC Employer event saw 40 students attend to learn about future job opportunities.

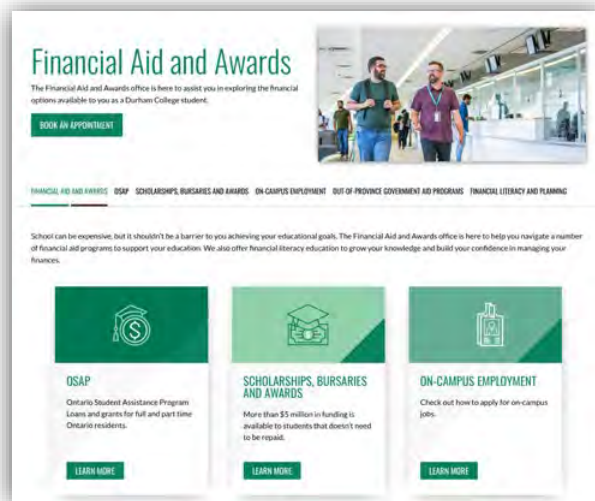


- Hosted International **Student Drop-in Resume Day** in September and saw a total of 43 students.

Financial Aid and Awards (FAA)

- **Summer Employment:** 138 returning students participated in the DC summer employment program; working for 37 DC departments; earning over 1.5 million dollars and gaining valuable work experience.

- **OSAP:** 5,000 applications for Full Time OSAP for the 23/24 academic year; FAA administered over 23 million dollars of Full-Time OSAP funds to DC students during the first 5 weeks of school.
- **Launch of the redesigned FAA website:** FAA has successfully launched the improved and redesigned webpage offering visitors more robust financial aid information. Phase 2 of this project is underway and will add an additional level of information based on unique student status/type. We are also in conversation with C+M regarding obtaining social accounts so we can enhance our presence in an online capacity with the intention of reaching more prospective and current students about financial aid events, offerings and important details.
- **Conversion initiative:** Outreach to convert paid but not registered students with OSAP applications in an effort to increase fall semester registration; reached out to approximately 300 students with a 60% response rate.
- **Campus Collaboration:** Developed and delivered the first FAA presentation/workshop for SEIT staff, with approximately 30 participants. The objective of the presentation was sharing financial struggles our students are facing, how staff/faculty can recognize students need for support and where to refer them to access appropriate resources. The presentation was extremely well received and we hope to deliver similar presentations in the future campus wide.



Residence

- Residence has seen a higher turnout for events with residents eager to participate. For example, over 200 students joined for “Capture the Flag”.



Student Development

- **Orientation:** Our Whitby Welcome event took place the last week of August, and about 600 students enjoyed the day, which included a welcome, program orientation, a trades fair and orientation fun.
- Start Strong Saturday took place on Labour Day weekend at Oshawa campus. It was well attended with about 600 participants and featured popular “Find My Class” personalized campus tours. We hope to make this a signature event and grow it with added campus support in the fall of 2024.



- DC Fest at the Oshawa campus featured President Don Lovisa and his band, along with a variety of food trucks and fun, welcomed 3,200 new students in September 2023.



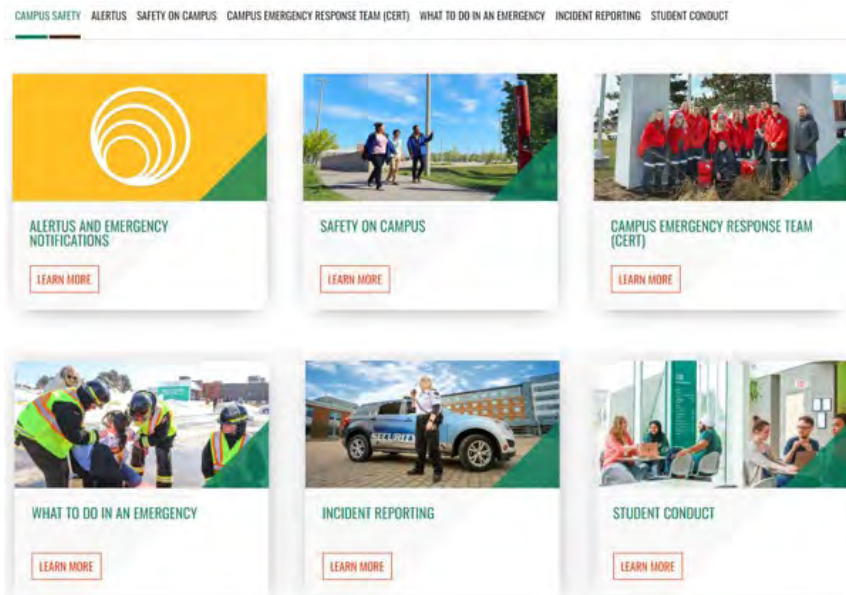
- Movie Night was a full house with 800 students in Gyms 1 & 2, movie watchers enjoyed Spider-man: Across the Spider-Verse.
- **Get involved and Services Fairs:**
Whitby campus Get Involved and Services Fair – Employees, **20 attendees**
Whitby campus Get Involved and Services Fair – Students, **400 attendees**
Oshawa campus Get Involved and Services Fair – Employees, **12 attendees**
Oshawa campus Get Involved and Services Fair – Students, **2,000 attendees**
- Sweet welcome back from reading week by the numbers:
 - 250 beavertails handed out at Whitby campus
 - 350 beavertails handing out at Oshawa Campus



- **PREP 1000:** Out of the 5,842 students registered into PREP 1000, 4,053 have accessed and completed content within the course.
- **Institute of Student Leadership (ISL) Highlights:** Since August 2023, 129 students joined ISL.

8. Campus Safety

- **Refresh of Office of Campus Safety (OCS) Website – Fall 2023:** Members of the OCS worked with the Web team from DC C+M to update and enhance the landing page. C+M did an amazing job, and the site is extremely user-friendly and accessible.



- **Incident Command Exercise and Interoperability - June 27, 2023:** Office of Campus Safety (OCS) in partnership with Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) Incident Command Leadership Team conducted a table-top exercise to ensure operational response preparedness, mitigation strategy planning, and designated a site quick reaction force plan/standard operating procedure. DRPS now has a collaborative, interoperable response to our campuses with the OCS.
- **Community Collaboration and Media Training – September 15, 2023 – September 17, 2023:** OCS and Campus Emergency Response Team (CERT) assisted the Region of Durham and all emergency services within, by providing training and exercises to empower young women whom want to join emergency services within the Region. OCS/CERT provided formal emergency medical training to the 142 participating young women to support our local emergency services event. Camp Molly was the name of the event.
- **Strategic Incident Action Planning – September 14, 2023:** OCS assisted Oshawa Fire and Durham EMS with a training exercise focused on hazardous goods and decontamination for hazardous goods emergency responses to Durham College. This exercise assisted in the development of a Strategic Incident Response/Action Plan (SIAP) for Durham College properties and overall campus preparedness/safety.

- Mass Casualty Incident Planning and Response Planning – October 31, 2023 – November 3, 2023:** The OCS in partnership with DRPS, Durham EMS, Oshawa Fire, Whitby Fire, Lakeridge Health, Emergency Management Ontario and Durham Emergency Social Service, have formulated Ontario’s first formal Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) working group. Durham College’s OCS EM is the Chair of the group (2-year period), which brings all response agencies together to create a formal MCI program Region wide. Emphasis on Durham College is being used as the guiding principle location for emergency MCI response planning. Further, the group is also assisting Lakeridge Health in their application to become a Level 3 Trauma Centre in Ontario in partnership with Durham College and the working group.
- Hazardous Material Emergency Response Planning – October 31, 2023 – November 3, 2023:** The OCS has worked with Oshawa Fire Service in providing scenario-based hands-on learning and campus familiarization to confined spaces with the campus’s facilities. Every fire crew/platoon within the City of Oshawa participated in full day training on campus and ran real life scenarios based on possible emergency response calls to Durham College.

9. IT Services

This report provides an overview of the progress on the IT Services project portfolio for the first five months of the 2023/24 fiscal year. Between April 1 and September 5, 61 projects have been completed. 29 of these projects were for Durham College, 9 for Ontario Tech, and 23 were shared projects. The following table provides more detail on the projects completed by the Enterprise Systems (ES) team, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) team, IT User Support Services (USS) team, Information Security (InfoSec) team, and IT Service Management (ITSM) team.

Projects Completed between April 01, 2023 – September 05, 2023

Institution/Team	ES	ICT	USS	InfoSec	ITSM	Total
Durham College	10	8	11	0	0	29
Shared	7	9	5	0	2	23
Ontario Tech	5	1	3	0	0	9
Total	22	18	19	0	2	61
<i>Projects in total (above) started before April</i>	13	9	13	0	0	35

- The **Enterprise Systems (ES)** team focused on priorities identified by the Institutional Project Prioritization Council. Since April 2023, the team completed several Banner related projects including go-live of a multi-year project for a Banner 9 Self-Service solution to address block based registration, advising and program planning (CAPP) to support DC’s requirements; the new Common Matching process checks for existing person and company identification records before a new record is added to the Banner database; and completed a data security review which included enhancements to views and processes to restrict key data to authorized functional staff. Multiple

workflows and reporting automations were developed to support operational processes for business teams. ES developed enhancements to DC's HR Upskilling deployment, to address legislated training and reporting, and to support LMS integration to Banner and reporting. ES and the Office of the Registrar collaborated to bring DC into MyCreds as a document issuing and receiving organization to allow students to access and share documents such as transcripts via MyCreds portal. Following on from last fiscal's successful prototype testing database for CTS, ES created a database application and registration portal that securely houses the CTS Life Insurance candidate registration and examination data.

- The **IT User Support Services (USS)** area completed the annual academic lab refresh for hardware for all labs. Faculty refresh activities were completed where user scheduling permitted. The team also performed an upgrade for AppsAnywhere (DC Apps). The USS team continued to support campus expansion, relocations and renovations, including the Whitby expansion for PROTO and the Automotive Training Space, and development of the Event Space and MRC Recording Studio at the Oshawa campus. The USS team also changed podiums and installed new digitized AV in key learning spaces across the Whitby and Oshawa campuses. USS enhanced the equipment reservation process and supporting toolset for use when loaning out equipment.
- The **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** team completed several shared projects for improving and maintaining back-end systems including a key activity working closely with Facilities to replace the UPS in the data centre. In the Microsoft 365 space, ICT supported C+M's activity to upgrade the on-premises SharePoint to 2019, worked closely with CTL to set a plan to migrate M365 Stream videos from Stream (Classic) to Stream on SharePoint. ICT supported RIM's direction to review and delete historical user accounts, including the related email and H-drive accounts and content. ICT deployed a new server to host the Connect2 commercial solution to track equipment and studio rentals for the Faculty of MAD. The Five9 virtual contact centre cloud-based solution was expanded to include DC's Admissions Services. Username updates for authentication were made to prepare DC employees for future enhanced functionality in Microsoft 365 cloud services. In addition, the USS and ICT teams supported numerous Facilities projects across campus locations.
- The **IT Service Management (ITSM)** and **Information Security (InfoSec)** teams supported quarterly Approved Scanning Vendor (ASV) scanning for PCI compliance and upgraded to a more advanced system used for the scanning of security vulnerabilities. Progress was also made on a new ransomware policy and reaching an agreement with an incident response partner for both the college and the university.

10. Relationship to the Strategic Plan/Business Plan

The report relates to Governance and Accountability and the "Our People" pillar of the strategic plan.



The Barrett Centre of
Innovation in Sustainable
Urban Agriculture

THE BARRETT CENTRE OF INNOVATION IN SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE

SEPTEMBER 2023



OUTCOMES

- **Establish** a model for a sustainable and secure food system.
- **Become** an internationally recognized Centre of Knowledge and Education around sustainable urban agriculture
- **Create** vibrant communities with local food production integrated into municipal planning.
- **Address** Food Insecurity by championing coordinated food systems to provide access to a stable supply of safe and nutritious food
- **Develop** curriculum and credentials to build the agriculture workforce of tomorrow.
- **Create** new and expanded work integrated learning opportunities
- **Generate** support for Indigenous food systems.
- **Model** new sustainable practices for reducing food waste
- **Advocate** for improved governance for local food systems and provincial urban agriculture policies.



— INITIATIVES 2023

BARRETT CENTRE AJAX URBAN FARM

1355 Harwood Ave N, Ajax

This farm serves as a demonstration space for urban agriculture and as a community living lab addressing food insecurity. Relationships and partnerships are underway with schools, community organizations, and families within the area and beyond.

To include but not limited to:

- New program development & delivery
- Extra-curricular activities
- Co-ops/internships/work integrated learning
- Edible and therapeutic gardens
- Food Literacy Innovation Zone
- Community give-back
- Entrepreneurship opportunities





BARRETT CENTRE AJAX URBAN FARM

Timeline, 2023

- *Site Planning Permissions and Farm Preparations (Complete)*
- *Land Preparations and Spring Planting (Complete)*
- **Barrett Centre Ajax Urban Farm Grand Opening (October 2nd)**
- Community Engagement Portal Launch (October 2nd)
- Harvest of First Year Crops (Fall)
- Community Tours & Open House (Fall)
- Farm Winterization (Fall-Winter)
- Continued Onsite Activations (Spring 2024)



FARM INNOVATIONS, EQUIPMENT, STANDARDIZED OPERATING PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES

- Apiary and Processing Tools (e.g., Extractor)
- Greenhouse Benching
- Aquaponic Chiller
- Food Literacy Resources (including Recipes, How-To-Guides, Fact Sheets, and Articles)
- Best Practices and Standardized Operating Procedures (SOP) for farm operations, post-harvest, and value-add processing



THERAPY GARDEN AT DC'S WESTON CENTRE URBAN FARM

Timeline, 2023

- *Site Planning (Complete)*
- *Garden Opens To DC (Fall)*
(Complete)
- Land Preparations and
Planting (Ongoing with
Fall'23 Horticulture
Technician Classes)
- Winter Maintenance and
Accessibility (Fall-Winter)



BARRETT CENTRE URBAN AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY PORTAL

An internally recognized centre of knowledge and excellence around sustainable urban agriculture.

It will connect community members, urban farmers, policy makers, experts, and educational leaders to learn, build, and grow urban agriculture.



URBAN AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY PORTAL

Features

- Shared models of best practice and resources
- Community-to-community member engagement
- Ask the Expert
- Share events, news, and articles
- Capacity to reach local, national, and global audiences

Timeline, 2023

- *UX Design and wireframing (Complete)*
- *Content development (Complete)*
- *User Experience Testing & Feedback (Complete)*
- Portal build and testing (Ongoing)
- **Portal Go-Live (October 2nd)**
- User Feedback & Updates (Fall'23-Spring'24)



URBAN AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY PORTAL

The Barrett Centre
Urban Agriculture
Community

Your Path to Sustainable Urban Agriculture.

The Barrett Centre unites communities and supports food security, education, innovation, and sustainability.

Want to get updates? Sign up for our newsletter:

[Subscribe](#)

THINKING OF STARTING AN URBAN FARM?

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Barrett Centre Urban Agriculture Community Portal. It features a green navigation bar with links for Home, About Us, Knowledge Centre, Community Forum, Ask an Expert, and More. The main content area includes a large image of hands holding a seedling, a newsletter sign-up button, and a section titled 'THINKING OF STARTING AN URBAN FARM?' with a photo of a woman in a garden.

COMMUNITY FORUM

ASK AN EXPERT

KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

Land Acknowledgement

Barrett Centre Ajax Urban Farm
144 Roseland Rd E.
Ajax, ON, Canada L1T 4V2

DURHAM COLLEGE
SUCCESS MATTERS

The Barrett Centre of Innovation in Sustainable Urban Agriculture

The screenshot displays the navigation menu of the Barrett Centre Urban Agriculture Community Portal. It features three main sections: 'COMMUNITY FORUM' with a description of connecting with other members; 'ASK AN EXPERT' with a description of finding FAQs and connecting with staff; and 'KNOWLEDGE CENTRE' with a description of searching for resources. Below these is a 'Land Acknowledgement' section. The footer includes contact information for the Barrett Centre Ajax Urban Farm and the Durham College logo.

LAUNCHING OCTOBER 2nd, 2023
PORTAL ACCESS [HERE](#)

— RELATIONSHIPS & THEIR IMPACT

ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES & COLLABORATIONS

Collaborations include:

- DC’s Campus Health & Wellness Centre: address student food insecurity by launching a pop-up farmer’s market at DC’s Oshawa campus and an expanded farmer’s market at DC’s Whitby Campus
- Apiary: learning opportunity for students about food science, pollinator habitats, sustainable farming, and value-add processing
- New & continued operations of
 - Greenhouse Bays
 - Apple Orchard
 - Hydroponic “Leafy Green Machine”
 - Aquaponics
 - Arboretum and Food Forest
 - Apiary (New!)



CENTRE FOR ORGANIC REGENERATION

1,500-sq. ft. facility and composting system that will enable DC to:

- Complete the field-to-fork loop
- Process food waste and return it to the earth
- Reduce food waste on campus by 90%
- Create research and work-integrated-learning opportunities for faculty and staff
- Incorporate aspects of organic regeneration into the curriculum for related programs



— COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

DC & COMMUNITY CARE DURHAM (CCD) LAUNCH THE MOBILE FOOD MARKET

Highlights:

- Address food insecurity that exists in Durham Region via:
 - Joint-pilot project running from June 2023 – October 2023: “Mobile Food Market” aimed at bringing food directly to the community and lowering the barrier to access
 - Located at the Ajax Community Centre
 - Access to fresh and high-quality food products at a reasonable cost
 - Access to food literacy resources about how and why to eat fresh food
 - Goals: understand it’s impact, feasibility, and organizational capacity, with the aim of potential future expansions
- The Barret Centre, Whitby Campus Urban Farm, and CCD have identified that access to health and fresh food is a barrier to many individuals who are traditionally underserved and marginalized



TOWN OF AJAX – AJAX PARTNERSHIP FUND

The Barrett Centre’s Food Literacy Innovation Zone at the Barrett Centre Ajax Urban Farm is building a strong foundation where the Town of Ajax, Durham College, and The Barrett Centre collaborate to address challenges in food security, supply chains, and sustainability within The Town of Ajax through the lens of urban agriculture.

Elements include:

- Community Engagement & Needs Assessment
- Garden Model Demonstration Zone
- Food Literacy Resources (including recipes, how to guides, and nutritional guidance)



BIOENTERPRISE, 1855, AND DC

We continue to work with Bioenterprise Canada and 1855 Whitby, a local technology accelerator, to consult and share our expertise working towards becoming the face of Agri-tech and food innovation for Durham Region.

Highlights

- Delivering commercialization services for Canada (and beyond) to enhance the contribution technology can make to agricultural sector.
- Industries such as:
 - Cleantech
 - Agri-tech
 - Veterinary technologies related to agriculture
 - Food-tech



RBC URBAN AGRICULTURE WIL PROGRAM

In 2023, the Barrett Centre launched the inaugural RBC Urban Agriculture Work Integrated Learning Program.

Highlights

- Over 21 applications from DC students across several Faculties
- Each student received \$5,000 to lead a project that supports urban agriculture
- 8 DC student-led projects were chosen in April 2023 and ran April – September 2023
- Examples of the projects include:
 - How To Grow Yams And African Crops In Ontario
 - Micro-Garden Design
 - Community Seedling Program
 - Value-Add Processing Of Diverse Produce
 - Farmer's Markets



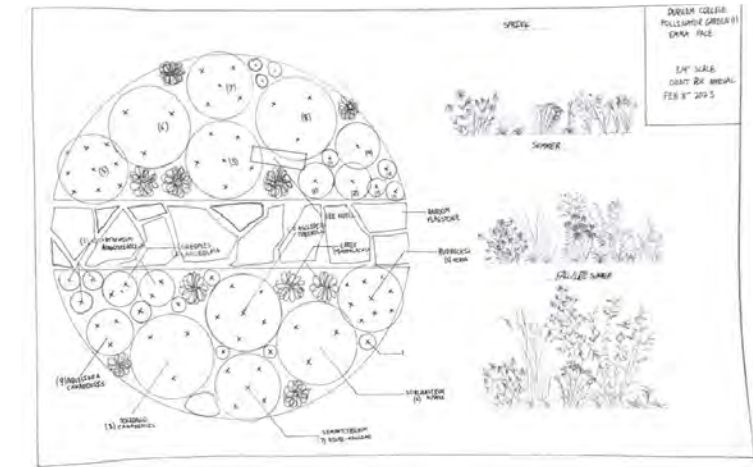
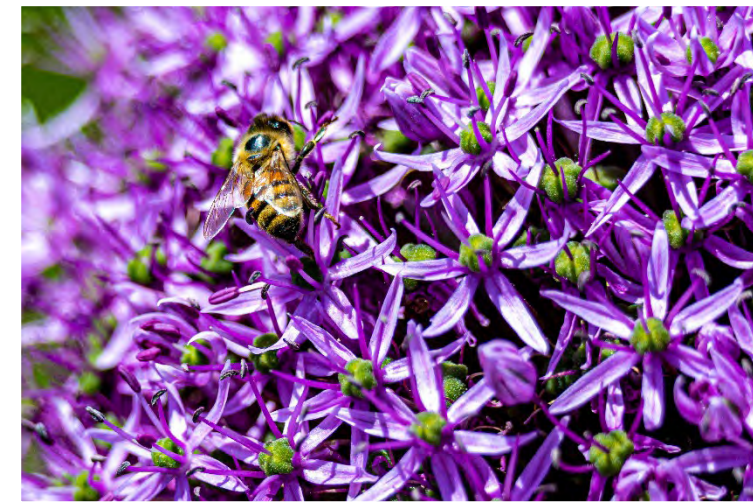
The Barrett Centre of
Innovation in Sustainable
Urban Agriculture



WORLD WILDLIFE FOUNDATION (WWF) CANADA

Creation of two Pollinator Gardens at the
Barrett Centre Ajax Urban Farm and Whitby
Campus Urban Farm to support:

- On-Farm Productivity
- Habitats for Pollinators
- Urban Agriculture & Native Plant Educational Resources
- Sustainable Urban Farming Methods
- Hands-On Student Learning Experiences



COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS

- **The Regional Municipality of Durham**
- **Town of Ajax**
- **Community Care Durham**
- Nourish and Develop Foundation
- **Campus Farms Network**
- **Anchor Food Aggregator Committee**
- Durham Region Food Strategy Committee
- Toronto District School Board (TDSB)
- **Community Development Council Durham**
- Sheridan Nurseries
- Thermea Spa
- Ontario Tech University
- City Studio Durham

- **Big Brothers Big Sisters**
- Durham District School Board (DDSB)
- **Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB): Notre Dame Catholic High School & Outdoor Education**
- **David and Mary Thomson Collegiate Urban Farm**
- **Bioenterprise & 1855**
- **Lakefield College School**
- Colliers
- **Growcer**
- **WWF Canada**

— 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES & RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

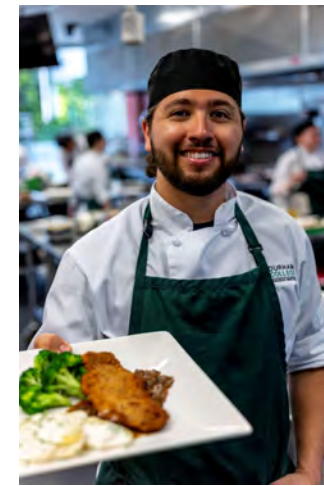
BARRETT CENTRE WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Graphic Designer
- Photographer
- Administrative Support Associate
- Writing Associate
- Social Media Associate
- Student Ambassador and Community Engagement Associate
- Culinary Sustainability Systems Support
- Standardized Operating Procedures (SOP) Development & Support
- Urban Farm Operations Support
- Garden Planning and Modeling Strategies Associate
- Organic Regeneration & Soil Health Coordinator



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- Launch of the **Nutrition and Food Service Management program** with a focus on local food. This program has received Ministry approval and will have its first intake in September 2024. It will equip graduates with:
 - The knowledge required to manage the supply chain
 - A better understanding of accessing local food and an awareness of the growing urban agriculture environment
 - Ideas about how care providers can play a role in the production of their own food for clients
 - Tools to develop nutritional care plans that access a regular and consistent supply of local food and food products
- Continue to develop **Urban Agriculture Education Resources** with a focus on elementary and secondary level students, as well as community groups. These resources will be shared with teachers and community leaders via the Barrett Centre Urban Agriculture Community Portal and will include lesson plans and worksheets to encourage youth's involvement in urban agriculture. Focused on ten urban agriculture themes, such as:
 - Composting & Soil Management
 - Food Literacy & Healthy Eating
 - Indoor Agriculture
 - Pollinators & Gardens
- Continue to work on the development of micro-credentials, dual credits, and certificates related to urban agriculture.



RESEARCH PROJECTS

AT THE BARRETT CENTRE URBAN FARM

Indoor Farm

Goals:

- Research the potential for the indoor cultivation of crops not traditionally grown in a hydroponic setting (e.g., berries, tomatoes).
- Understand the impact of food production with growing more than one crop at a time.
- Showcase hydroponic growth techniques and their impact on urban agriculture and food supply.
- Create an accessible space where all can participate – one of the first AODA compliant Growcer hydroponic units in Canada.



RESEARCH PROJECTS

AT THE BARRETT CENTRE URBAN FARM

Season Extension Hoop houses – Installation Spring/Summer 2023

Four hoop houses will allow for:

- The utilization of the urban farm for longer periods than the standard Southern Ontario growing season typically allows.
- Research into the production and harvesting of crops that are not typically viable in our growing season & climate (e.g., subtropical crops).
- Experimentation within different controlled growing environments with student learning opportunities & resource development.
- The creation and demonstration of models for farming outside of traditional planting environments, seasons and plant constraints.



NEXT STEPS

Other projects and partnerships we continue to explore include:

- Research:
 - “Pomato” (Potato and Tomato hybrid plant): options for growth in North American climates and its impact on food security (Fall 2023-Winter 2024)
 - New ag-tech for on farm efficiencies that can add social, economic, and ecological efficiencies to urban farms.
- New work integrated learning opportunities for students.
- Community Partnership Engagement: connecting and bringing together people who are leaders in urban agriculture to share knowledge.
- Development of an Urban Agriculture Paper to share with policy makers about urban agriculture.
- Review and implementation of new Barrett Centre positions to expand community engagement and achieve strategic priorities





THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?

Brenna Bizley

Partnership Manager

The Barrett Centre of Innovation in Sustainable Urban Agriculture
Durham College

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