

ACADEMIC PLAN

2017-18 TO 2019-20







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Message from the vice-president, Academic

It is with great pride that we launch this new Academic Plan for Durham College (DC). Extensive consultations with faculty, students, support staff and administrators informed its development. The result is a plan that reflects our vision for continued leadership in graduating students who are prepared for meaningful careers and engaged citizenship both locally and globally.

Since 1967, DC has provided a broad range of career-focused credentials. Today, the college offers programs at the apprenticeship, certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, degree and graduate certificate level. As the college continues to develop, we will all need to work together to respond to student and community needs by empowering our academic leaders, both in and out of the classroom, to create dynamic learning experiences that support, prepare and challenge students.

I have every confidence that this plan will guide us forward in achieving these outcomes. Working together to realize our shared goals and objectives through the implementation of meaningful strategies, we will continue to be leaders in postsecondary education and ensure that the student experience comes first at DC.



Elaine Popp, Ph.D.
Vice-president, Academic

Introduction

The Durham College (DC) Academic Plan ensures DC moves confidently into the coming three years and is ready to respond to constantly changing student populations and expectations, employer needs, professional practices and workplace technologies.

The goals and objectives in the following pages are designed to foster and encourage specific and meaningful strategies to support the plan through each academic school and department.

This plan is about DC's commitment to student success through exceptional academic quality, exemplary teaching and learning experiences, strong international engagement, exceptional applied research and the strategic management of enrolment. It is a plan that positions DC for success.



Planning context

DC maintains academic excellence by engaging in a robust planning process that involves all stakeholders. The college's Strategic Plan, finalized in winter 2017, articulates the direction for the college. It, along with the Strategic Mandate Agreement, provides the foundation for the Academic Plan.

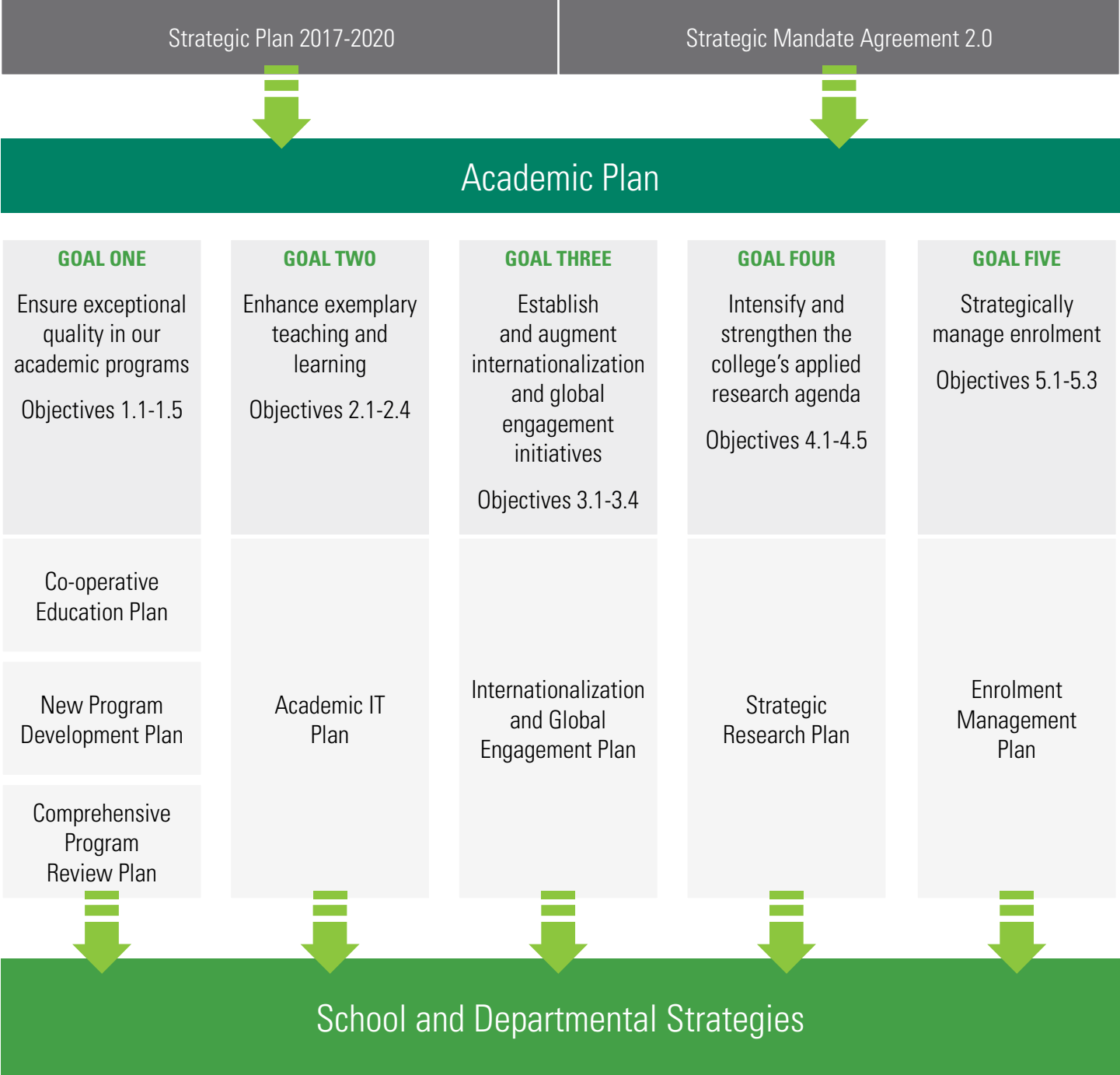
The renewal of the Academic Plan reflects the culmination of a collaborative and consultative planning process. More than 300 students and employees participated in feedback sessions, Academic Council meetings and a dedicated website. The Academic Plan Committee reviewed and considered all input in arriving at a final plan.

The Academic Plan has two intentions. First, it identifies the academic goals and objectives that will realize the academic priorities identified in the Strategic Plan. Goals are major initiatives that lead to the college's desired future; they are broad statements of institutional direction. Objectives enunciate the steps that operationally define and lead to the attainment of each goal.

Second, the Academic Plan provides a planning framework for the academic schools and departments. They will each develop implementation strategies to support the success of the objectives in the plan. Each strategy will include a timeline and clear lines of responsibility.

Current departmental plans, including the Comprehensive Program Review Plan, the New Program Development Plan, the Internationalization and Global Engagement Plan, the Enrolment Management Plan, the Strategic Research Plan, and others, will also inform the strategies of each school and department.

This three-year Academic Plan builds on DC's strengths, anticipates trends that will impact the future and generally ensures a clearly articulated vision for where academic planning and actions must go in the years ahead.





Academic Plan goals and objectives

GOAL 1: ENSURE EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY IN OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

DC has developed a reputation for providing the right education for a vast range of student and industry needs. By continuously assessing, developing and renewing programs, DC responds to the changing needs of employers, broader industry and the community. This commitment to exceptional quality impacts our ability to recruit, retain and graduate outstanding students.

OBJECTIVES:

1.1 Introduce new programs to meet evolving student, societal and workforce needs.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Focus on the provision of a range of credentials, including degrees.

1.2 Continually review and renew academic programs to ensure they remain relevant.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Embed Indigenous peoples' cultures, traditions and ways of knowing into curricula.
- Strengthen connections with relevant industry and community partners.
- Explore innovative approaches to curricula and flexible delivery strategies.
- Embed sustainability content and practices into curricula.

1.3 Maximize bridging and pathway opportunities internally and with institutional partners.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Increase the number of students and graduates accessing these pathways.

1.4 Provide career-focused learning.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Increase the breadth and number of experiential and work-integrated-learning opportunities.
- Develop learning opportunities emphasizing entrepreneurship.

1.5 Continually renew learning spaces and resources.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Focus on the implementation of twenty-first-century learning spaces and learning technologies.



GOAL 2: ENHANCE EXEMPLARY TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES

DC's faculty members are recognized for their teaching excellence. The college has a deep commitment to professional development that supports faculty growth and development in leading-edge teaching techniques and approaches. This commitment to enhancing exemplary teaching and learning practices is a high priority since it is fundamental to the delivery of relevant academic programs that are preparing our students to succeed.

OBJECTIVES:

2.1 Establish a faculty development plan that recognizes the importance of continual skill development in all stages of a faculty member's career.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Ensure inclusion of Indigenous content knowledge and practices in faculty development.
- Recognize the importance of ongoing opportunities for faculty to engage with industry.
- Strengthen comprehensive orientation programs for new contract and full-time faculty.
- Engage in and expand opportunities for general and discipline-specific professional development including scholarship and applied research.

2.2 Develop and provide a formalized mentoring program for contract and full-time faculty.

2.3 Ensure teaching practices and training provisions keep pace with technology and industry trends.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Develop standards and ensure consistent practices regarding the use of DC Connect.

2.4 Recognize and support innovation and quality in teaching and learning.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Ensure inclusion of Indigenous content knowledge and practices in teaching and learning.
- Provide opportunities for faculty to share best practices and leverage teaching strengths.
- Engage in interdisciplinary and inter-professional teaching and learning opportunities.
- Support initiatives that enhance student-faculty interaction and foster student engagement.
- Celebrate exemplary teaching.



GOAL 3: ESTABLISH AND AUGMENT INTERNATIONALIZATION AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

DC students and graduates are members of a global community. In fall 2017, DC welcomed 1,100 students from 55 countries. Increases in international student enrolment, domestic students' opportunities for education abroad, and globally aware programming are all integral to the DC educational experience. Together, these elements create opportunities for the college to internationalize its programs and to develop training and resources for our employees and students. This commitment to establish and augment internationalization and global engagement initiatives is a definite priority. Our graduates live and work in a globalized society; we must provide them with the tools, understanding and experience required to succeed in this changing world.

OBJECTIVES:

3.1 Develop an institutional community that embraces and encourages positive international and intercultural learning inside and outside the classroom.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Ensure that employees are equipped to support internationalization initiatives.

3.2 Expand opportunities and support for students and employees to participate in education abroad opportunities.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Identify a variety of options for education abroad destinations and logistical and funding mechanisms to support program development and student participation.

3.3 Strategically grow and develop an active network of international partnerships, including partnership opportunities realized through delivery of quality international development projects.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Broaden involvement of employees and students in international projects and contract training delivery.

3.4 Recruit, support and retain an increasingly diverse group of students including an increased number of international students.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Continue to evaluate new regional markets.



GOAL 4: INTENSIFY AND STRENGTHEN THE COLLEGE'S APPLIED RESEARCH AGENDA

Canada needs more graduates who can foster innovation. DC's applied research agenda is focused on opportunities for students to engage with faculty members and industry/community partners to participate in practical workplace and social innovation projects. This commitment to a strong and thriving applied research agenda supports the call from government, funding agencies and employers for increased innovation and recognizes the leading role colleges are playing in research innovation and scholarly activities.

OBJECTIVES:

4.1 Increase opportunities for students to engage in applied research and social innovation projects both within and outside curricula.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Develop connections and linkages between research projects and teaching/curricula.

4.2 Implement strategies to develop and strengthen faculty research capabilities.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Establish mentoring for faculty research development.
- Invest in professional development aimed at building research leadership capabilities.
- Ensure hiring practices include consideration of faculty research capabilities.
- Continue to develop the role of the research coordinator.

4.3 Increase the profile and awareness of applied research and social innovation activities.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Increase faculty engagement in applied research and social innovation projects.
- Increase internal and external communications regarding participation in applied research and social innovation projects.
- Celebrate faculty participation and achievements with applied research and social innovation projects.

4.4 Establish research collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Establish collaborations with industry, business and community organizations.
- Establish partnerships with complementary research groups.

4.5 Continue to leverage the college's current strengths as identified in the applied research themes of the DC Strategic Research Plan.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Increase research opportunities for the exploration of the scholarship of teaching and learning.



GOAL 5: STRATEGICALLY MANAGE ENROLMENT

The post-secondary landscape is in the process of significant change. While DC has been one of the fastest-growing colleges in Ontario over the past 10 years, the growth rate has slowly declined. This decline in enrolment can be attributed to several external factors, such as changing student demographics and competition, a growing global market, changing government policy and a changing government funding model. A commitment to strategically manage enrolment will ensure a sustainable future for the college. It was with this in mind that the college's Enrolment Advisory Committee developed an Enrolment Management Plan for 2017-2020.

OBJECTIVES:

5.1 Achieve enrolment targets for domestic and international students.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Increase full-time post-secondary domestic student enrolment by approximately 210 to 415 students over three semesters in 2017-2018. By 2018-19 and 2019-20, full-time post-secondary domestic student enrolment will be targeted to 2017-18 levels.
- Increase full-time post-secondary international student enrolment by approximately 408 students over three semesters in 2017-2018. By 2019-20, full-time post-secondary international student enrolment will increase by 922 students over 2017-18 levels.

5.2 Achieve fall recruitment and conversion targets for domestic and international applicants.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Increase the total number of domestic applications from approximately 20,147 to between 20,250 and 21,000 by 2019-2020.
- Increase the number of first-choice domestic applications from 7,369 to between 7,400 and 7,700 by 2019-2020.
- Increase the conversion ratio of qualified domestic applicants from 34.1 per cent to between 34.5 per cent and 36 per cent by 2019-20.
- Increase the number of countries represented by international students from 55 to 63 by 2019-2020.

5.3 Realize retention, graduation and employment rate targets for domestic and international students.

Strategy considerations to keep in mind:

- Increase overall retention of full-time post-secondary domestic students from semester one to semester two from 81.4 per cent to between 82.0 per cent and 85.0 per cent by 2019-2020.
- Increase overall retention of full-time post-secondary international students from semester one to semester two from 87.6 per cent to between 88.0 per cent and 94.0 per cent by 2019-2020.
- Increase KPI graduation rate for domestic students from 68.0 per cent to between 68.2 per cent and 70.0 per cent by 2019-2020.
- Increase the graduation rate for international students from 84.7 per cent to between 85.0 per cent and 90.0 per cent by 2019-2020.
- Maintain the proportion of our graduates working six months after graduation at least one percentage point above the provincial average for each of the three years of the plan.



Implementing the plan

The goals and objectives in the Academic Plan identify our academic priorities for the next three years. Additionally, the plan provides the foundation for strategies to be developed and implemented during this time period, which will impact everything we do as a college well beyond 2020.

As a next step, each academic school and department will have the opportunity to develop implementation strategies to realize these goals and objectives. To ensure consistency throughout the strategy planning process, a template has been created for the schools and departments to follow. These implementation strategy templates will then evolve into the Implementation Plan.

The Implementation Plan will be communicated, actioned, progress-monitored and reviewed annually. Adjustments will be made as necessary to refocus the strategies and respond to factors such as funding changes, demographic shifts, government priorities or other external influences.



