



**CONTINUING
STUDIES** @UVIC

Strategic Priorities 2016-2021



University
of Victoria

The Division of Continuing Studies, University of Victoria

Strategic Priorities 2016-2021

The University of Victoria (UVic) has a legislated obligation to provide a program of continuing education in all academic and cultural fields throughout the province of British Columbia (*The University Act 1996*, Consolidated April 2006, Part 10, Section 47 (e)). The role of the Division of Continuing Studies (the Division), therefore, is to support this obligation and the UVic's mission of enriching its students and society by creating knowledge, fostering academic and experiential learning, and serving communities in British Columbia, Canada, and around the world.

An integral part of UVic since its inception in 1963, the Division of Continuing Studies has provided adult and continuing education programming in co-operation with faculties and community partners. Today we offer a comprehensive portfolio of programs in a range of academic disciplines, using diploma, certificate, degree and other programming models to serve adult, part-time, international and geographically dispersed students.

We share UVic's commitment to the four fundamental and interdependent goals:

- ▶ **People:** To recruit and retain a diverse group of exceptionally talented students, faculty, and staff and to support them in ways that allow them to achieve their highest potential.
- ▶ **Quality:** To offer programs in teaching, research and support of such quality as to place us in the upper 20 per cent of a national set of comparable programs as judged by peer evaluation.
- ▶ **Community:** To establish UVic as a recognized cornerstone of our community, committed to the sustainable social, cultural, economic development of our region and our nation.
- ▶ **Resources:** To generate the resources necessary from both public and private sources to allow us to achieve our objectives and to steward those resources in a sustainable fashion.

The Division's plan to 2021 builds on this broad framework to articulate the fundamental values underlying our work, our vision and the strategic priorities that will provide the focus for our work. Strategic success indicators highlight the activities and metrics that will enable the Division to measure its success going forward. Each program and service area has built their unit plan from this foundation, emphasizing all or some of the priorities embraced by the Division.

OUR VISION

Our vision is a picture of what we aspire to create:

We open doors to possibilities.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is a statement of what we stand for, and what we hope for:

Together, we provide learning opportunities that support the personal and professional growth of our community of learners. Through our dedication to academic and service excellence, we offer a transformative experience to each student.



OUR VALUES

Our **values** are what we stand for. They underlie our vision and guide how we make decisions, perform our work and work with each other.

The primary driving force behind all that we do is our belief in the *transformative and collective nature of learning*.

Underlying this core value are five additional values that give direction to how we make decisions, work with others and perform our work.

▶ Academic & Service Excellence

We believe in creating transformational learning experiences. We achieve this through excellence in program design, student service, teaching and learning, and monitoring and evaluation.

▶ Accessibility

We believe in improving access to post-secondary education for our learners. We achieve this by providing a variety of learning opportunities, seeking ways to minimize the barriers to participation in our programs and services, advocating on behalf of our learners, and promoting inclusion and diversity.

▶ Collaboration

We believe it takes inclusive and diverse networks and relationships to foster innovation and the transmission of ideas. To achieve this we support and build learning communities and partnerships that include the contributions of many and transcend boundaries between programs, disciplines, services and people.

▶ Engagement

We believe commitment to the engagement and development of our people creates an environment that supports respect, integrity and a commitment to the work and success of the Division. We build this culture by engaging people fully in their work, supporting creativity and innovation, recognizing contributions and providing professional development opportunities.

▶ Sustainability

We believe in the need for the Division to be socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. In our work with learners, partners, faculty and staff and other stakeholders, we ensure our programs and services are supportive, relevant and resilient.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our strategic priorities identify our focus and areas of emphasis to 2021.

Recognizing the strengths of our programs, services and staff, we will advance our vision to 2021 through the following initiatives:

1. **Enhancing the student experience.**
2. **Strengthen and expand partnerships and collaboration.**
3. **Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our internal processes.**
4. **Continue efforts to support and optimize our growth and sustainability.**
5. **Continue to build an engaged, supportive and adaptable working environment.**

Strategic Success Indicators & Strategic Initiatives

Our strategic success indicators are measures of specified performance outcomes that lead to the achievement of our strategic priorities. They help us monitor our progress and adjust our overall programs and activities as required.

Our strategic initiatives are our major committed activities leading to the accomplishment of our strategic priorities and strategic success indicators.



Strategic Priority 1: Enhance the Student Experience

Strategic Success Indicators

Continuing Studies students come to UVic from all over the world for many reasons. In order to *offer a transformative experience to each student* we need to have a deep understanding of who our students are, what they need, and how we can distinguish ourselves from other colleges and universities by doing an exemplary job of meeting those needs. Over the course of this plan we will increase our understanding of our students and develop and enhance our programs so that UVic is the place where students want to come for their continuing studies education.

Strategic Initiatives for Strategic Priority 1

1.1 Understanding our Students

By 2021 the Division will:

- have clear student profiles for each of our student demographics
- have comprehensive knowledge of the student's experience in the Division
- have integrated processes that enable us to make use of the data that we have

Strategic Initiative Process

1. Survey students and alumni.
2. Develop data tools that will help us to better understand our students.
3. Conduct focus groups with students regarding their needs and experience with the Division through the entire process with us.
4. Refresh the market research of prospective students.
5. Develop metrics that evaluate the student experience.

1.2 Enhanced Division Programming

By 2021 the Division will:

- have enhanced programming to more closely align with student needs
- have maintained the registration rates for the international, academic, community and professional programs

Strategic Initiative Process

1. Ensure that program level learning outcomes are in place for all programs.
2. Determine support needs for Division instructors (Pro-D, orientation, opportunities to connect, etc.).
3. Continue to explore credit for non-credit programs.
4. Develop a re-engagement process for Division alumni (e.g. recognize learners who have taken 75+ courses, provide incentives to re-engage, provide links with English Language Centre [ELC] students, etc.).

1.3 Grow Career Programming

By 2021 the Division will:

- have grown career focused registrations by 10-20%
- develop new offerings for emerging careers each year

Strategic Initiative Process

1. Explore options for moving additional courses into an online format.
2. Formalize a process around new program development (e.g. big idea sessions, targeted roles to assist in new program development, etc.).
3. Formalize a process around environmental scanning to stay abreast of changing learner needs.



1.4 Strategically Develop English “Plus” Programming

By 2021 the Division will:

- have diversified student (nationality) enrolment through new program offerings
- have strategically developed English “Plus” programming to ensure a balance of available resources with new programming

Strategic Initiative Process

1. Scan the environment to identify constituency needs for potential programs that build on our existing ELC programs but add programming “plus” to attract new student groups.
2. Approach faculties and departments to see what types of English “Plus” programs can be offered.
3. Identify business/governments who may be interested in customized focus for programs.
4. Develop customized program templates and post on the website to let our partners (and others) know the scope of customized programming available.



Strategic Priority 2: Strengthen and Expand Partnerships & Collaboration

Strategic Success Indicators

In our last strategic plan, we were successful in inspiring UVic faculty to collaborate with us and have many successful relationships and joint ventures to show for it. Going forward we will continue our efforts to gain transferrable credit for non-credit courses and we will strengthen our partnership with UVic service units to better meet the needs of our students. We will work together within Continuing Studies to provide an integrated face to our external partners.

Strategic Initiatives for Strategic Priority 2

2.1 Strong Partnerships within UVic

By 2021 the Division will:

- have non-credit credentials and higher level ELC courses that will be accepted for credit by select faculties and departments
- have stronger relationships with Service Units: they know who we are, what we do, and seek to consult us before making decisions that impact us/our students

Strategic Initiative Process

1. Explore opportunities to obtain credit for non-credit programs with faculties/departments.
2. Provide “Understand the Division” information to targeted service units/areas.
3. Develop working groups with specific service units to develop the working relationship.
4. Bring staff level groups (Division service units) together to discuss: what is working well, what can improve, what we need to know about each other, etc.

2.2 Coordination of Partnerships outside UVic

By 2021 the Division will have:

- developed coordinated efforts internally towards building external partnerships
- a strategy for building external partnerships

Strategic Initiative Process

1. Determine the steps required to understand partnership needs (communication, Constituent Relationship Management [CRM], sustainability, succession) and plan an integrated approach for the Division.



Strategic Priority 3: Improve the Efficiency and Effectiveness of our Internal Processes

Strategic Success Indicators

As part of our commitment to provide excellence in service to our students/learners, we will ensure that our application and registration processes are streamlined and, where possible, integrated between program areas.

Strategic Initiatives for Strategic Priority 3

3.1 Improve the Efficiency and Effectiveness of our Internal Processes

By 2021 the Division will have:

- streamlined, personalized application and registration process for students
- coordinated application process between Division programs

Strategic Initiative Process

1. Review our current registration process and design/implement the required improvements.
2. Implement a CRM solution.
3. Develop a more formalized process for dealing with student accommodations.

► Strategic Priority 4: Optimize Growth & Sustainability

Strategic Success Indicators

Financial strength and program viability continue to be the cornerstones of Division operations. We will grow in targeted areas and continue to operate our programs so that the Division can sustain itself financially. We also value being effective stewards of our environment and as such we want to minimize our environmental footprint where it is feasible to do so.

Strategic Initiatives for Strategic Priority 4

4.1 Optimize Program Growth & Financial Sustainability

By 2021 the Division will:

- have programs that will be sustainable
- have a net income that will exceed our baseline
- have paid for the new building expansion

Strategic Initiative Process

Review all programs for viability and sustainability—with a particular focus on those programs and courses that are not reviewed elsewhere—for factors that include currency, content and instructors' depth of knowledge and update the programs and courses accordingly.



4.2 Enhance Environmental Sustainability

By 2021 the Division will:

- have decreased our environmental footprint

Strategic Initiative Process

1. Put actions in place to maximize utilization of our building space.
2. Explore opportunities to decrease our environmental footprint.



► Strategic Priority 5: Build an Engaging, Supportive and Adaptable Work Environment

Strategic Success Indicators

We are proud of our progress in creating a positive culture and work environment where our staff have the opportunity to be and do their best. We will build upon our successes from the last plan by focusing on the transparency, clarity and inclusiveness of our decision making processes, broadening professional development opportunities and ensuring that we retain our commitment towards the activities that connect us (blogs, coffees, lunch and learns, Q&A's, birthday celebrations, etc.).

Strategic Initiatives for Strategic Priority 5

5.1 Engaged Work Environment

By 2021 the Division will:

- have improved the transparency of our decision making (measured on Culture Survey)
- have encouraged increased professional development participation for all staff (specific focus on the measurement of participation rate of CUPE 951 staff)
- have built upon the strengths in our culture and relationships

Strategic Initiative Process

1. The executive members will each communicate a précis of the decisions and actions from each of their meetings to their staff and discuss the implications for the unit.
2. We will explore with staff the meaning of the 'transparency of decision making' scores on the Culture Survey and develop a plan to address the gap.



3. For professional development:
 - a. Educate staff on the options available;
 - b. Increase the number of CUPE 951 staff accessing Division professional development funds;
 - c. Expand methods for making professional development available to staff.
4. To build upon strengths in our culture and relationships we will keep doing what has been successful to date: dean's blog, lunch & learn, social activities, coffee & conversation with the dean, soup and game clubs, birthdays, long service recognition, posting of minutes of executive and management council meetings, AND we will develop a 'celebration of lifelong learning' recognition event.

Guiding Principles For Our Work Environment

1. We are committed to Division Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Priorities.
2. We share ongoing, constructive feedback on our progress.
3. We provide clear and transparent communication of information, ideas and decisions throughout the Division.
4. We support and encourage innovation and responsible risk-taking that is consistent with our Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Priorities.
5. Our actions reflect trust and respect for each other.
6. We value and support each staff member in their contributions to the success of our Vision and Strategic Priorities.
7. We recognize and support the need for effective organizational leadership that is constantly demonstrated through modeling our Values.
8. We are a workplace of choice because we provide opportunities for social engagement, celebrate individual and collective achievements, and encourage professional development.