

College Tactical Plan

The objectives in this plan will be implemented over a three year period, 1998/99 to 2000/01. The availability of new funds will, in some instances, determine when implementation begins.

1. DEMONSTRABLY INCREASE LEARNERS' ACCESS TO, AND SUCCESS AT, DOUGLAS COLLEGE BY:

A. Providing enhanced orientation and support services for first-term College learners;

The College will apply "student success" and "first year experience" philosophies when implementing the following:

- Provide more support for learners prior to, and immediately upon, entry to Douglas College through such means as redesigning the student orientation conducted by the Registrar's Office to ensure broader participation by college departments.
- Provide a variety of supports for students as they proceed through their studies at Douglas College in areas such as enhanced communication skills, education and career counselling, reading and study skills, employment possibilities, etc.

B. Providing "user-friendly" application, admission, financial aid, registration and course scheduling;

- Establish a cross-college task force to review admission and registration policies and practices.
- Develop a process for "open learning" admission which will allow easier access for specific client groups, e.g. make provisions for certain students such as seniors or "casual learners" to enter the College without providing a secondary school transcript.
- Make more block and package registration available for full-time students, and ensure part-time students are able to complete their programs in evenings and weekends.
- Redesign the timetable matrix to make it more learner centred.
- Establish an annual timetable, i.e. specify which courses and sections will be offered over a three semester period.
- Develop self-help approaches, including the use of technology, for students to access various services and information.
- Enhance payment options for students
- Rewrite and redesign as necessary the College calendar and registration instructions to make them more user friendly.
- Review assessment test scheduling and facilities to ensure they are appropriate for diverse learners.

C. Providing improved assessment and advising for appropriate placement of students according to clear entry standards for each program;

- Implement the Language Competency Policy, with immediate emphasis on language assessment for entry to all college programs/disciplines.
- Provide more interpretation and advice to learners, e.g. how to upgrade skills, when distributing assessment results.
- Monitor more closely the relationship between assessment results and subsequent success within courses and programs so that more placements can be made mandatory, rather than advisory recommendations.
- Improve the Douglas College Writing Assessment mechanisms and review standards.
- Develop candidate profiles which consolidate existing documentation about admission requirements, entry assessments, desirable values and attitudes, course prerequisites, etc. for each program.

D. Structuring College curriculum and instruction to enable students to become responsible, self-directed, life-long learners;

- Increase students' information literacy skills by developing formal and informal programs, separate from classroom learning.
- Expand the resources, including employee time and appropriate space, available to the Learning Centre and other areas to meet increased demand by students for assistance with tutoring, self-help resources, study skills seminars and peer-tutor led study groups.
- Develop more citation-level and continuing education programs for entry-level training that ladders into existing diploma programs.

E. Providing maximum recognition of previous formal and informal learning;

- Establish a college center for the assessment of prior learning for college credits and/or for recognition in professional fields (for licensure/professional standards)
- Expand articulation agreements with secondary schools, public and private postsecondary institutions and corporate training.
- Review and modify College policy regarding residency credit, e.g. desirability of having residency policies at the faculty or program level rather than college-wide.
- Establish an implementation plan to ensure that access to assessment of prior learning is an entitlement of all students and potential students, thus integrating PLA into all relevant college systems.
- Develop and communicate curriculum support materials to guide PLA candidates, stressing a continuum of assessment approaches and methods.

F. Making greater use of effective technology in support of learning and administrative processes.

- Develop and implement an educational technology plan.
- Develop a college Management Information System which brings together data from a variety of administrative systems in format which is accessible for users.
- Provide support services to assist employees in incorporating new technologies in the classroom and in using the Web for instructional and administrative purposes that provide curriculum and services to learners.
- Improve intercampus connectivity and provide a good electronic communications infrastructure within the College.
- Develop policy and procedures regarding the provision of courses via a distributed learning mode.

2. CONTINUOUSLY ADAPT COURSES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF LEARNERS BY:

A. Ensuring that every credential has clearly defined learning outcomes, and that assessments and instructional methods are appropriate for those outcomes;

- Implement a framework of clearly articulated learning outcomes including explicit description of skills, competencies, knowledge, understanding and attitudes for all credentials awarded by college. (Learning outcomes specify what learners know and can do outside the classroom.)
- Modify course outlines to identify learning outcomes.
- Publicize learning outcomes, e.g. materials for potential applicants and employers.
- Develop graduate profiles for all college programs, specifying the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes of a learner upon completing a program.

B. Encouraging innovative approaches for facilitating learning in both traditional and non-traditional settings;

- Provide more opportunities for asynchronous learning, including the use of on-line systems.
- Meet specific market driven needs by making greater use of internal college expertise in the delivery of cost recovery programs.
- Develop innovative ways of assisting students to acquire prerequisite skills, e.g. language skills, that have been identified in assessment testing as deficient.
- Support and foster enthusiasm for excellence in teaching and learning through such means as an Excellence in Education committee of Education Council.
- Recognize/reward staff, student and faculty contributions to success in learning.
- Support faculty in identifying and implementing innovative ways of teaching and assessing students' learning through emerging College capabilities in multi-media education and workbased learning delivery and assessment of learning.
- Enhance partnerships of continuing education offerings with other postsecondary institutions.

C. Developing curricula to prepare learners to live in a diverse community and global society;

- Facilitate greater student and faculty participation in international projects, exchange and study abroad activities.
- Require all proposals for new programs to address diversity issues, explaining the extent to which they prepare learners for a global society.
- Create a five-year education plan that identifies areas and priorities for new credit program development.
- Establish a college-wide process to support the development and approval of new programs.
- Identify a list of abilities related to global citizenship for inclusion in as much college curriculum as possible.
- Inventory the extent to which curriculum currently prepares learners to live in a diverse community and global society.

D. Ensuring that timely and responsive formative evaluation keeps all College activity relevant and current;

- Modify the unit review system to incorporate the use of internal indicators and to consider more fully the College's priorities and strategic directions, while maintaining the reflective elements of the current system.
- Develop and implement a consistent employee evaluation model.
- Develop college-wide course and instructor evaluation forms that are learning-focused and learner-centred.
- Develop specific responses to recommendations in the 1997/98 Institutional Self Study and External Audit Team reports, and establish a format for the annual review of progress in implementing the recommendations.

E. Supporting opportunities for integrated, cross disciplinary learning and the application of learning within, across and beyond traditional program/discipline boundaries;

- Ensure that the new programs approval process encourages inter-disciplinary initiatives by explicitly raising the topic.
- Strengthen linkages between Continuing Education/Center 2000 programming and credit programs.
- Remove registration, workload, collective agreement, and scheduling barriers to encourage more experiments in inter-disciplinary offerings, team-teaching and integrated studies options for students.
- Build on existing curriculum and proposals in such areas as Women's Studies and Gender Relations, BC Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, the Integrated Curriculum, and Youth Justice to promote learning across traditional discipline, faculty, and/or divisional boundaries.

F. Facilitating learning through increased involvement of students and faculty members in program-related service to the community ("service-learning").

- Make greater use of capstone courses in programs.
- Develop a framework for service learning course outlines.
- Establish a Social Sciences Research Centre for student and faculty research in the community, including research conducted in collaboration with community agencies.

3. RECOGNIZE AND VALUE THE DIVERSITY OF LEARNERS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITIES BY:

A. Reflecting within its teaching/learning processes sensitivity to the needs of equity groups and learners from diverse backgrounds;

- Develop recruitment, hiring, selection, and support processes that create a more diverse employee group at Douglas College.
- Offer workshops, or other mechanisms, for employees and learners to support the needs of an increasingly diverse college population, e.g. persons with disabilities, students who learned English as a second language, International students, multi-cultural groups, mature students, economically and socially disadvantaged.
- Identify what diversity issues learners perceive and then use that feedback to incorporate diversity considerations in the course/program approval process.
- Offer a range of learning opportunities which respect different learning styles, needs and goals of learners to maintain the College's "open-door" philosophy.
- Hire a Human Rights Coordinator to facilitate the revision of harassment policy and complaint procedures, and to provide educational awareness and training to the College community.

B. Coordinating activities and services which support learners from non-traditional or culturally diverse backgrounds;

- Develop a college-wide, college supported action plan for addressing issues of multiculturalism, diversity and employment and educational equity at Douglas College. Build on work of Employment and Educational Equity Committee and the Change Team's 1997 document, *Nine Goals for Change: Addressing Intercultural, Multicultural and Diversity Issues at Douglas College*.
- Establish the first phase of a diversity service, with a steering committee, to provide direction to the College and to coordinate the implementation of the multiculturalism, diversity and equity action plan.
- Expand the availability of peer support services, and other services available to learners from economically or socially disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Develop flexible methods of delivering learning opportunities and assessing learning in response to diverse cultural characteristics.
- Provide multicultural counselling
- Implement the Language Competency policy so that English language requirements are clear. Based on student success research, identify steps so that entering students achieve threshold requirements with respect to English language skills.

C. Supplementing traditional instruction and services by encouraging, supporting and recognizing innovative delivery strategies;

- All new program proposals will incorporate innovative delivery strategies.
- Encourage flexible instructional formats to accommodate adults who cannot build their lives around lock-step scheduling of classroom delivery.

D. Strengthening the assessment of diverse community and employer needs.

- Establish an annual policy-level, cross-ministry forum to provide long-term direction to health, human service and related programs.
- Ensure the active participation of advisory committees.
- Establish a Thomas Haney Centre campus advisory committee to ensure community involvement in the operations of the Centre.

4. ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO LEARNERS' MOBILITY WITHIN THE POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM BY:

A. Improving secondary school students' transition to college through formal arrangements for concurrent studies, dual credit courses and linked programs;

- Grant Douglas College credit for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate studies completed in secondary schools.
- Develop new articulation agreements/new programs with school districts that incorporate dual credit, concurrent studies, and preferred entry arrangements for secondary school students.

B. Encouraging wider use of block transfer arrangements;

- Develop block transfer agreements for Douglas College applied programs to baccalaureate degrees, and for Associate Degrees in Arts and Science.
- Expand transfer arrangements with universities and university colleges to provide more degree options in applied programs.

C. Promoting the portability of credits earned through the flexible assessment of all prior formal and non-traditional learning;

- Establish transfer arrangements with selected private training institutions.
- Integrate continuing education and contract programs within departments/faculties.
- Establish an assessment model that allows students to use their learning acquired through continuing education offerings at Douglas College for possible credits in a College/course program of studies. (This credit bridge will initially be internal to Douglas College, but will be expanded to other continuing education departments in public post-secondary institutions as soon as possible.)

D. Cooperating with community organizations and employers to assist Douglas College graduates in career entry;

- Develop educational programs/services in response to the need for multi-skilling in existing workers.
- Expand opportunities for experiential learning within programs.
- Establish a service to coordinate job placement functions within programs, such as Cooperative Education, and upon exit from the College.

E. Cooperating with professional associations and employer groups to enhance recognition and transfer of credits between College programs and workplace-based training.

- Identify and build new opportunities for industry-based credentials by working closely with industry groups, college program areas and the new Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC).
- Market selected credit programs to employment sectoral councils, employers, and licencing agencies so that a partnership is established to meet the needs of potential students and their employers for specific and new areas of learning. (This may involve repackaging existing course content.)

5. BUILD COLLEGE-WIDE COMMITMENT TO CHANGE AND ACCOUNTABILITY BY:

A. Ensuring support for change through involvement and ongoing professional development of employees to support College strategic directions;

- Use themes in *Strategic Directions* to establish priorities for professional development activities, and ensure all employees at all campuses are encouraged and supported to participate in those activities.
- Provide development activities for college managers and employees that facilitate the development of “best practices” in relation to human resources and labour relations practices.
- Provide professional development and training for all personnel about the assessment of learning and the use of program learning outcomes in developing assessments.
- Encourage the sharing of information and collaboration across departmental boundaries and employee groups.
- Provide educational and discussion opportunities for Faculty regarding the Learning Outcomes approach.
- Increase the emphasis on shifting to the learning paradigm, rather than emphasizing teaching.
- Provide professional development that goes beyond merely developing skill in using software to focusing on ways to use technology to facilitate learning.

B. Facilitating development of departmental and faculty action plans which are consistent with College strategic directions, values and goals;

- Prepare a college-wide Multi-Year Tactical Plan for Educational Technology to guide every department in preparing its own educational technology plan.
- As supporting information for regularly updated college-wide strategic and tactical plans, each department will annually submit to Senior Management Team a summary describing its progress on the previous year’s objectives and identifying its main initiatives, priorities, and changes in practice or philosophy for the coming year.
- Utilize the Strategic Development Fund to help implement Douglas College’s strategic directions.

C. Where appropriate, revising governance and administrative structures, College policies, and collective agreements to provide greater flexibility and responsiveness to learners;

- Review and rewrite administrative and educational policy statements to provide greater flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of learners.
- Restructure education council committee’s to reflect/emphasize council’s role in promoting quality education for students.
- Promote a problem-solving approach to labour relations through “interest-based” negotiations and discussions, and then work with all employees to improve continuity and equity in the interpretation and application of collective agreements.
- Allow seniority to accrue institution-wide, to encourage cross disciplinary teaching.

D. Implementing appropriate performance criteria and assessment practices throughout the College to provide evidence of accountability to stakeholders;

- Identify some initial core indicators and benchmarks for administration, instructional and service areas, refining and modifying them through open discussion for use in subsequent years.
- Participate in provincial accountability and assessment initiatives so as to help establish frameworks and definitions that are appropriate for the mission of community colleges.

E. Structuring program and service evaluation, annual reporting and institutional research to assess progress in strategic directions and in meeting performance criteria.

- Issue a public update on progress in achieving college-wide strategic and tactical plans.
- Develop unit self-assessment models specific to this task (not to repeat the whole of a unit review.)

6. ENSURE ONGOING INSTITUTIONAL VIABILITY BY:

A. Achieving more cost-effective operations through administrative, service and programming efficiencies and innovative approaches;

- Enhance accounting and reporting systems for contract training and other self-funded activities.
- Develop a budget process to ensure the college community understands the process and has opportunity for input.
- Implement the plan for ongoing operations at the Thomas Haney Centre.
- Involve the college community in identifying potential savings/efficiencies.
- Review laboratory operations to determine whether their efficiency can be improved.

B. Expanding alternative, non-Ministry sources of funding, including cost-recoverable contract training, international education, continuing professional education programs and services, partnerships and fundraising;

- Implement policy and guidelines for revenue sharing and cost recoverable activities.
- Increase and diversify international student enrolment.
- Enhance Foundation operations to focus on increased college fundraising, development of corporate partnerships, and effective use of community expertise and contracts.
- Involve department members in contract training opportunities and in developing entrepreneurial activities such as professional assessment services.
- Increase Centre 2000 programming at the Thomas Haney Centre.
- Inventory all services provided by the College in order to identify which should involve user-fees (and specify under what circumstances fees are appropriate.)

C. Developing strategies and means for administrators, faculty and staff to become more active communicators of College merits to the community at-large;

- Develop resource materials, such as an economic impact statement, about the College for employees to consult and distribute when dealing with the external community.
- Establish a contact management system to prevent external people from receiving duplicate or uncoordinated contacts from College employees.
- A consistent and contemporary image of the College will be provided through updated informational and promotional materials and media.

D. Achieving College-wide enrolment targets set by the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training.

- Establish, and update annually, a college-wide enrolment management plan.
- Increase enrolment in under-enrolled second-year courses.