

LOYALIST 2020

Loyalist College Strategic Plan 2015–2020 Discussion Paper

May 2015

Introduction

Founded in 1967, Loyalist College has come a long way from our origins in a local secondary school. As we plan celebrations to recognize our 50th anniversary, we are very proud of what we've accomplished! Today Loyalist operates two campuses, in Belleville and Bancroft, with more than 700,000 square feet of space and has an annual budget of \$60 million. The College provides high-quality programs and services to close to 3,000 full-time and thousands more part-time students each year. Our Community Employment Services location in downtown Belleville provides a satellite centre for additional outreach. Bancroft also provides significant CES initiatives.

Loyalist College is the only public post-secondary portal serving a population of 250,000 people throughout this region of Ontario. About half of our students enrol from outside East-Central Ontario.

In provincial Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Loyalist consistently achieves above the provincial average in Graduate Employment (89.3% – the top result of all Ontario Colleges for 2015 – vs 84% for the province) and Student Satisfaction (80.5% vs 76.2% for the province). Through more than 60 programs, we provide students with the skills they need to succeed in the challenging economy of today and tomorrow. Loyalist has a strong positive impact on our regional economy, contributing 5.4% to the Gross Regional Product, representing additional income of \$530 million, based on a 2014 Report by EMSI Consultants. View the [Economic Impact Executive Summary](#). The College offers more than 500 online, distance and in-class courses, as well as opportunities for graduates to extend their diplomas into degrees through more than 70 university transfer agreements. In reviewing outcomes of our previous strategic plan, we can be proud of the key results:

- We secured \$16.6M in funding from the provincial and federal governments and completed our Sustainable Skills, Technology and Life Sciences Centre, which features 121,800 square feet of leading-edge space dedicated for teaching, laboratories, shops, research labs, classrooms and green space.
- We subsequently proposed and conducted a highly successful \$6M Capital Campaign to complete and equip the Centre and provide financial assistance for our students. The results engaged community partners, municipalities, staff, students, and alumni to produce very exciting results well in excess of the goal.
- The Skills Centre was awarded LEED® Silver Certification from the Canada Green Building Council in recognition of the College's achievements in energy-efficient design, construction and operation.
- Loyalist achieved eligibility status for the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), one of Canada's three research granting agencies. This new funding eligibility will allow us advance our campus-wide commitment to innovation and applied research.
- The College redeveloped our website through extensive consultation and launched a new, fully-responsive website, in June 2014.

- We renewed and/or introduced more than 20 programs ranging from Journalism – Online, Print and Broadcast, to Human Resources Management, College Technology and Trades Preparation, International Trade and Logistics Management and Entrepreneurial Studies.
- We introduced the W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship program – a pilot project at Loyalist – the first in Canada, to encourage students to enter careers in Skilled Trades.

For the next five years, we are re-committing ourselves to our three Priority Areas. First, **Academic Excellence**: students choose Loyalist for the quality and breadth of our program offerings, and we will continue to work to ensure that students are receiving the best education we can offer them, and that they are gaining the skills demanded by today's, and tomorrow's employers. Supporting this overarching goal are two additional Priority Areas: **Service and Systems Excellence** and **Sustainability and Capacity-Building**. This means both a multi-disciplinary approach to student success and a focus on efficiency and effectiveness, to make sure that Loyalist continues to be strong and vibrant for generations to come.

We have seen real success with our *Centre of Excellence*-driven approach, and in the next five years, we will leverage this as a way to continue to position ourselves at the forefront of innovation. We see a particular opportunity to focus on the strategic concept of **Lifelong Health and Wellness**: demographic and economic trends in our region, and indeed our province, mean that Loyalist must continue to play a key role in training graduates for the health, allied health and wellness professions of the future, in support of communities that are healthy and accessible for all age groups of society. This concept is also flexible, and can be expanded readily to include program areas which are involved in designing the built environment, developing or manufacturing products to support lifelong health and wellness, and other areas.

In the material that follows, we outline the background research that forms the basis for our work, as we explore future opportunities in our three Priority Areas: Academic Excellence, Service and Systems Excellence and Sustainability and Capacity-Building.

Mission

Loyalist College offers a comprehensive range of career-oriented education and training opportunities to support and enhance the economic and social development of individuals and our communities.

Vision

Loyalist will be an outstanding Ontario college for applied learning, innovation, and entrepreneurship, demonstrating excellence, sustainability, and responsiveness.

Values

The following values guide us daily to create a caring culture focused on the success of our learners, staff and community. To support, sustain and fulfill our mission, we act with:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Transparency
- Commitment to excellence
- Innovation
- Responsibility/Accountability
- Sustainable stewardship of economic, human, and environmental resources
- Responsiveness and flexibility

Our Approach

To begin this process of renewing our five year (2015–2020) strategic plan the College established a Strategic Plan Steering Committee to help review information and guide the overall processes. The college also retained Academica Group Consultants to assist with the project. Throughout this process we were guided by three key principles:

Loyalist 2020 is:

Stakeholder Shaped. In the initial stages of this plan, interviews were conducted with the key Loyalist leaders and decision makers. We met with the Board of Governors members, and staff across the college. We are conducting outreach to external stakeholders, including the Quinte Economic Development Commission, local chambers of commerce, employers and regional councils and community partners.

Data-Driven and Evidence-Based. The pace of change in higher education is unprecedented. The trends affecting Ontario colleges include internationalization, rapidly evolving technology, provincial policy directions, shifting demographics and competitive market conditions. Moreover, all these factors are playing out in an environment of continuing fiscal constraint. This ever-shifting landscape poses challenges as well as opportunities for Loyalist and it is critical that we are objective and deliberate in our review of these factors. This research was synthesized in an extensive environmental scan, conducted in the fall of 2014.

Strategic Continuity. While looking forward to new directions, we are mindful of the foundations, achievements, and traditions of excellence which Loyalist has established. We have been and will continue to be a key enabler of success for our graduates in the region and beyond – this plan should be seen as a continuation of the previous plan, which governed our directions from 2009-2014. The extensive process of inquiry and reflection which informed that plan identified three clear, priority Strategic Directions:

1. Academic Excellence
2. Services and Systems Excellence
3. Sustainability and Capacity-Building

The Board of Governors and Senior Management have confirmed that these will continue to be our guiding principles to guide **Loyalist 2020**.

1. Academic Excellence

Through Loyalist 2020, we recommit our focus on academic excellence. This means a commitment to be “Ontario’s premier community college for applied learning, innovation, and entrepreneurship”, understanding that academic excellence is not achieved in isolation, but requires broad-based support.

- At Loyalist, this means that our Service and Systems goals alongside our Sustainability and Capacity-Building goals combine to bring Academic Excellence to the forefront.

In recent years, we have seen particular success with our Centres of Excellence. By unifying related disciplines, and focusing on the latest trends and technologies, we are able to deliver an education focused on the skills students need to succeed. For instance, our Digital Media Centre, a state of the art facility unique in Ontario, gives our students the opportunity to gain hands-on fluency with next-generation communication skills. Our Sustainable Skills, Technology and Life Sciences Centre brings this same focused approach to workforce retraining, applied science and technology, and skilled trades.

This “Centres of Excellence” approach aligns well with our focus on Academic Excellence, with the provincial government’s focus on institutional differentiation by areas of strength and with regional economic development objectives. Going forward we will examine the opportunity to develop an area of Excellence targeting a broad Health and Wellness theme, within the framework of our Academic Plan.

Lifelong Health and Wellness Excellence

Loyalist finds itself at a watershed moment in the history of our region—we are on the precipice of some significant demographic shifts, which will bring both challenges and opportunities. An aging population is one of the most significant challenges facing Ontario over the next two decades, requiring that the province focus increasing resources on health and wellness.

- Today, seniors make up 15.2% of the Ontario population, but by 2041, this proportion is expected to rise to 25.5%, an increase of 68% (Figure 3). For the Hastings region, the trends are even stronger. Already the population of our region is older—the median age of the Belleville region was 43.5 in 2011, 7.7% higher than the Ontario-wide average of 40.4—and this trend is only expected to increase. Today, seniors make up 23.5% of the Hastings regional population and by 2041; nearly 1 in 3 Hastings residents (32.6%) will be 65 or older.

These demographic and economic realities put Loyalist in an opportune position to address both regional and provincial needs. The economic justification is clear. Over half the total health expenditures during a person’s lifetime come after the age of 65. In Ontario, per-capita health care spending on persons over age 65 is more than triple the overall per-person average. Across the health care sector

there is growing recognition of the need for more focus on preventative healthcare through broader health and wellness initiatives. There is also growing understanding of the need to develop these at the community level and to adopt more holistic and community-based healthcare through increasing use of allied health professions and other skilled resources. The province will be looking for help from its PSE sector both in terms of labour supply and innovative solutions.

Loyalist can drive change in this area through two strategic initiatives: a focus on health education and a commitment to health innovation.

Ontario faces a labour shortage in health professions currently, and, without committed action, this shortage is projected only to increase. By integrating Loyalist’s existing commitment to Nursing, Practical Nursing, Personal Support Workers, Fitness and Health Promotion and synergistic programs within the Lifelong Health and Wellness Centre, we will capitalize on our existing strengths and reputation for success in these important areas. A particular focus must be on the training of allied health professions, health practitioners outside the traditional roles of doctor, nurse and pharmacist, who by some estimates make up 60% of the health workforce. Our strength in Human Services and Recreation areas also positions the College to lead the development of innovative programs and pioneering applied research in areas that bring together recreational, healthcare and mental health solutions for Ontario residents.

Strategic Commitments

Our first aim in structuring and operationalizing our Academic Excellence priority is the development and implementation of an **Academic Plan**. We are the post-secondary education portal in the Quinte Region; our goal is to be the first choice for local students and a draw for students from elsewhere. Through this plan, we will capitalize on our existing **Centre of Excellence** approach, successfully proven with the Sustainable Skills, Technology and Life Sciences Centre and the Digital Media Centre. These Centres work to break down any barriers between fields to bring multi-disciplinary best practices to bear in the education of students for the jobs of the future. Our next focus will be on **Lifelong Health & Wellness**, where we will integrate our strengths in health, recreation and wellness programming. Graduates in these fields are essential to the health of our region, and they will be essential to its continued economic prosperity.

We will continue to leverage best practices in the field of **Teaching and Learning**. For Loyalist, this means a continued commitment to hands-on learning and to employ the latest technologies in areas such as distance learning to ensure our students are efficiently and effectively mastering the appropriate material for their program. Hand-in-hand with this is a commitment to broad **Accessibility**: all qualified students, regardless of their background, must have access to the

1. Academic Excellence – Strategic Commitments
Develop and Implement an Academic Plan
Continue to support and showcase our Centres of Excellence
Establish the Lifelong Health & Wellness Centre
A Broad-Based Commitment to Teaching and Learning
Access for All Qualified Students
A Key Player in the Economic Success of the Quinte Region

advanced training needed to succeed in today’s employment environment. Through continued collaboration with other key players in Post-secondary education, and supported by a focus on Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), we can work to reduce barriers to groups previously barred from higher education.

Finally, Loyalist College is a key player in the **Economic Prosperity and Success** of the Quinte and East-Central Ontario region. As a recent economic impact analysis showed, we contributed over half a billion dollars in added income to the region through college operations, current students and the increased productivity of graduates. As we strengthen our Applied Research activities and work toward rapid commercialization of new cost- and labour-saving developments, these economic impacts will continue to grow.

2. Service and Systems Excellence

Our commitment to Service and Systems Excellence brings further focus to Academic Excellence. As we continue through a period of economic and demographic challenges, we must ensure that we are being as efficient and effective as possible. These are key components of broad accessibility and enablers of student success.

First and foremost, we make a commitment to a **Holistic Approach to Student Success**. As we learn more about the importance of mental and physical health for college students, we can see them clearly as factors key to academic success. Furthermore, students arrive at Loyalist from varied backgrounds with different levels of preparation—we must support them by ensuring that they have the support they need to succeed in challenging programs. This is fundamental to our commitment to accessibility.

2. Service and Systems Excellence – Strategic Commitments
A Holistic and Multi-disciplinary Approach to Student Success
Strategic Enrolment Planning and Management
Renewal of the Campus Master Plan

Over the next five years, we will continue to draw on the work and research drawn together in our **Strategic Enrolment Plan**; this will continue to shape our branding, positioning and outreach to current and future members of the Loyalist community. As the postsecondary space becomes ever more competitive, and the impact of disruptive technologies is felt ever more strongly, we must speak with a strong voice about the unique benefits we have to offer.

Finally we will renew our **Campus Master Plan**, a strategic guide to optimizing efficiency and effectiveness of campus operations and facilities. We must ensure that every dollar possible goes to supporting student learning.

3. Sustainability and Capacity-Building

In 2017, Loyalist will celebrate its 50th anniversary. It is our responsibility to ensure that the College remains strong and vital for the next 50 years, and this will require continuing attention to sustainability and capacity building. While demographic and financial forecasts suggest that higher education in Ontario will face significant challenges, there will also be opportunities to access and generate new sources of revenue. A focus on partnership development and fundraising, as well as enhancing revenue from non-funded and entrepreneurial sources will be essential to the College's sustainability and success in the future.

At all times, our planning and implementation must be **Evidence-Based and Data-Driven**. This goal is a basic theme of this plan, and has particular relevance for sustainability and capacity-building. We will continue to learn from best practices and draw on external research and reporting to support us in this mission.

3. Sustainability and Capacity-Building – Strategic Commitments
Alternative Revenue Generation
Evidence-Based Planning
Workforce Development and Retention
Development and Implementation of a Sustainability Plan

Loyalist's strength is derived from the strength of our team, and we will continue to work to offer best-in-class **Workforce Development and Retention** initiatives. Closely related to academic excellence, our program offerings must continue to attract the best in faculty and our college staff need to feel at home at Loyalist, and that this is a college that supports them and offers opportunities for growth and development. We will be an employer of choice for a high-performing and diverse workforce while fostering a close-knit supportive community.

Finally these actions will be guided through the continued development and implementation of a **Sustainability Plan**. As we consider both financial and infrastructure challenges, and develop solutions, these must be guided with a strategic eye to the long-term success of the institution. In our capital planning, we will continue to account for the environmental effects of new development while also leveraging areas where we already outperform, including utility cost and total facility cost. In short, we commit to being economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.

MOVING FORWARD: NEXT STEPS

Once this plan has been approved by the College Board of Governors, it will form the foundational departure point for our operations over the next five years, through our 50th Anniversary and into the year 2020. It will drive our annual reporting and accountability, shaping the efforts across campus to improve student outcomes and program goals.

The first goal in the implementation of this broad strategic plan is the development and delivery of three key policy documents: an **Academic Plan**, a **Campus Master Plan** and a **Sustainability Plan**. Together, these three guiding documents will shape the detailed operationalization of their respective Priority Areas.

As we look ahead, we have chosen several broad measures of success. Key to our continued sustainability is building **Net Revenue Growth**, both through traditional and alternative sources. We also plan to see an Increase in **Full-Time and Full-Time-Equivalent Enrolments** and a commensurate **Increase in Market Share**. An important part of our continued success is measured by **Key Performance Indicators**, building on our strong *Graduate Employment, Graduate and Student Satisfaction Rates*, and growing our *Employer Satisfaction Rate*.

Key to our important role in the community is a continuing strong **Economic Impact on our Region**. Finally, we will continue to **engage** our faculty and staff while **recruiting** talented new members of our team.

Working together, as Team Loyalist, in 2020 we will be stronger for our students, our region and our future.

APPENDIX

Environmental Scan Highlights: Challenges and Opportunities

In addition to the extensive stakeholder consultations noted above, we undertook a broad environmental scan as part of the background research to support this Strategic Planning process. This scan included a review of recent applicant research¹, government policy and financial literature, and provincial and regional demographic data analyses. The following links provide key findings and trends that are most relevant and that should be considered in relation to our strategic discussions and plans.

- [Mowat Report - *Where Are the Hardest Places to Live in Canada?*](#) – Statistics provided are taken from this report.
- [Economic Modeling Specialists International \(EMSI\)](#)
- [Key Performance Indicators \(KPI\)](#)
- [Colleges Ontario Environmental Scan](#)

Policy Considerations

In the appointment letter for the new Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities from September 2014, Premier Kathleen Wynne wrote:

Balancing government stewardship of postsecondary education with institutional leadership. Your goal is to continue to build a postsecondary education system that is both high-quality and sustainable. I ask that you strengthen transparency and accountability between the government, institutions and the public.

The crucial underlying motivation for this is the government's intention to improve the overall efficiency of the entire PSE system. This approach hinges on looking at the system as a whole, rather than as 45 independent institutions. From this system perspective the objective is to reduce redundancy and strive to maximise the synergies across the system. Within this broad purpose, the government has introduced the term "differentiation," which has become an important policy consideration for all Ontario institutions (Ontario, 2013). The government and institutions of course must balance differentiation objectives against other vital and core mandates, including: a) Access—ensuring all eligible students have access to a wide variety of high quality and, in the case of the colleges, employment-focused programming; and b) Economic development—ensuring the institutions continue to be closely integrated with regional economic development.

That being said, some important directives are in place already. In particular, the province has conducted discussions with all schools to identify particular institutional strengths and plans. These discussions have been articulated in writing through the Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) process. As of August 2014, the province has

¹ This applicant research is based on the perceptions of 264 Loyalist College applicants collected through Academica Group's 2014 provincial University and College Applicant Survey UCAS™.

negotiated SMAs with all 45 publicly assisted colleges and universities, which identify the unique strengths and directions for each institution. Loyalist foregrounded several areas in our Agreement with the province. *As the primary postsecondary institution in the Quinte region, our community-based accessibility-driven mandate is a strong part of our identity. We are invested in the economic health of the region, and seek to empower graduates with a career-ready education, leveraging our many community partners.*

Additional policy directives that we must be mindful of include the provincial government's continuing emphasis on accountability and transparency. As suggested, these are not new considerations, however, they are inextricably related to the fiscal pressures, discussed below, and as such we can expect a growing influence on our operations. Specifically, the government is exploring opportunities to improve the development and use of metrics with the goal of increasing evidence-based decision making, improving outcome measures and accountability for key directives such as those outlined in individual SMAs.

One of the primary ways in which colleges have been and are continuing to be benchmarked is through a series of Key Performance Indicators, or KPIs. At Loyalist, we're proud of our 89.3% graduate employment rate, the highest rate in the province, and above the provincial average of 84%. We are also above average in graduate satisfaction and student satisfaction but continue to work for improvement in all areas.

Financial Constraints

A significant component of funding for college education in Ontario comes via the provincial government, and conversely, education and training is one of the key drivers of demand for public services. As Ontario works to eliminate its deficit, significant pressure will continue to be exerted on all public sector organizations, forcing colleges to be ever more aggressive in developing non-traditional revenue sources. Efficiency in program development and service delivery will also play an increasing role—more and more we must ensure that every dollar spent is being spent in accordance with our goals and mandate.

Over the past two decades, funding from the province has made up an increasingly shrinking share of postsecondary funding in Ontario. Since the inflation-adjusted cost of operations has steadily increased without specific allocations in funding, the shortfall from provincial grants has been increasingly offset by increases in student tuition and fees. At Loyalist, where the rate of students accessing financial assistance through the Ontario Student Assistance Program is the third highest in the province, we must continue to advocate for elimination of financial barriers to access. The College's stewardship of endowed funds, held through the Loyalist Foundation (\$9.3M at March 31, 2015), and its provision of more than \$1M annually in bursaries and Work Study opportunities to support students, will continue to be important sources of support.

Market Trends

Over the next two decades, while the overall population of Ontario will continue to experience robust growth, the share of the population represented by prospective PSE students in the traditional age range will decrease significantly. The Quinte region, which already has a lower percentage of the population in the 15–24 age range, is forecast to see a drop, from 12.4% in 2013 to 10.2% by 2020 (the timeline of this strategic plan). These trends are driven in part by youth out-migration. We can do more to show young people that they can receive a high quality education and go on to find fulfilling employment right here in the Quinte region.

PSE enrolment levels are unevenly distributed across the province. Growth is largely concentrated in large urban centres, primarily the GTHA. Loyalist and other small to medium-sized colleges are experiencing significant challenges in achieving enrolment growth. While this represents a significant challenge, we can see an opportunity in the targeting of non-traditional students. In recent years, the number of Loyalist applicants with previous postsecondary education has steadily increased – our focus on relevant, career-ready education that places students in good jobs can continue to drive this trend. It will be important to continue to reach out to historically under-represented groups, such as Aboriginal and first-generation students, who are less likely to seek to acquire PSE. A particular opportunity presents itself with respect to international students.

Hand-in-hand with a provincial mandate for differentiation is increased competition between Ontario postsecondary institutions. An increasingly broader target market means the need for stronger branding, marketing and positioning.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES SUMMARY

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:

Loyalist College embraces a learning-centred approach in offering excellence in applied education. We provide learners with an exceptional experience guided by highly-skilled employees and supported by curriculum and resources reflecting industry trends.

Our Strategic Commitments:

1. We will plan and manage our academic offerings to ensure excellent programs relevant to workforce and community needs
2. We will establish the Lifelong Health and Wellness Centre, integrating a range of Loyalist programs and activities
3. We will continue to build our reputation through Centres of Excellence including the Sustainable Skills, Technology and Life Sciences Centre, and Digital Media Centre
4. We will respond to the marketplace with highly-integrated, technology-enabled, experiential and entrepreneurial teaching and learning
5. Through leadership and collaboration, we will optimize access for all learners, and student and graduate mobility
6. We will champion innovative program development, entrepreneurship education, and partnerships that contribute to the health and prosperity of Eastern Ontario

SERVICE AND SYSTEMS EXCELLENCE:

Loyalist is committed to ensuring that all members of the Loyalist community experience the highest standards of professional support through excellent, effective services and systems delivered by knowledgeable and caring staff working collaboratively to ensure data-based decisions and continuous improvement.

Our Strategic Commitments:

7. We will offer exceptional Student Care strategies that meet students where they are and support them in meeting their academic individual goals
8. We will build on our integrated Strategic Enrolment Plan and Process to optimize enrolment, opportunities, and achievement for all learners

9. We will enhance the Loyalist Experience by renewing and implementing a Campus Master Plan in alignment with the Academic Plan

SUSTAINABILITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING:

Loyalist is committed to the effective management of our human, economic and environmental resources ensuring that learners today and in the future can benefit from these resources.

Our Strategic Commitments:

10. We will enhance net revenue from funded and non-funded entrepreneurial sources and fundraising, and improve efficiencies and optimize asset utilization to ensure long-term viability
11. We will be an Employer of Choice for a high-performing and diverse workforce which has opportunities for continuous learning
12. We will continue to develop and apply responsible solutions with respect to all College programs, operations and facilities through the implementation of a Sustainability Plan.