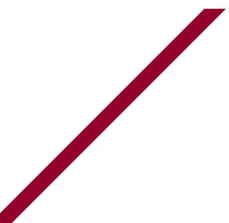




LEARNING FOR IMPACT

A draft strategic plan for the
future of teaching and learning

APRIL 2023



LEARNING FOR IMPACT

This plan is Concordia's first comprehensive teaching and learning strategy resulting from broad consultations with the entire university community. It emerged from the recognition that the higher education landscape is changing as new demands are made on public institutions to meet the evolving needs of society and its citizenry. Learning at university can now take many forms and involves different kinds of encounters with knowledges, cultures, peoples, and histories. Our plan has the bold ambition to place our learners and their needs at the heart of *all* our activities, recentering our mission to provide the foundation for our learners to positively change the world around them.

This plan serves to:

1. articulate Concordia's vision and priorities for teaching and learning over the next 5 years, recognizing some of our ambitions will take longer to fulfill, and
2. provide guidance on how we will know if we are successful in fulfilling this vision.

Teaching and learning, along with research, is the core business of a university. With this plan, we aim to ensure every student who chooses Concordia has a transformational experience with us, no matter the discipline, level, modality, or duration of their study. As a public institution of higher learning, we commit to being a place where learners can connect with others, co-create knowledges, discover who they are and who they want to be *because* of their university education.

Our vision

Concordia University will nurture the capacity of every learner in our community to make a positive impact on the world – big or small, local or international. To do this, we will prioritize a learning experience that is holistic, promotes agency and curiosity, and equips learners to respond to their own needs and those of the world around them.

Our values

This vision builds and expands on the legacies and foundational values that have characterized a Concordia education.

We welcome all learners and ensure they feel like they belong.

Pillars of student belonging include having a seamless experience where programs and processes are designed paying attention to learner well-being. Mentorship is essential, whether from a faculty or staff member, a peer, or one of our alumni. To ensure learners always feel welcome, the university community must work together across silos, placing the learner at the centre of our activities. Community can only be formed when we show respect for each other and recognize that diversity is our strength.

We offer a holistic university experience.

A holistic university experience respects the whole learner, including their academic, social, cultural, and civic development. It recognizes that learning happens inside and outside the classroom and offers

opportunities for growth in all aspects of the learner’s university experience. It develops resilience in our learners and a curiosity to keep learning to be ready for a changing world. Diverse learning experiences – no matter where they take place – should allow opportunity for growth across all aspects of the learner.

Our commitments

To achieve our vision while respecting our values, Concordia will commit to focusing its efforts in 4 areas:

1. Teaching for impact
2. Learner well-being & success
3. Faculty support
4. Promoting people-centred operations

What weaves through all the commitment areas is a recognition that partnerships are key to the success of these initiatives – partnerships across units within the university, but also outside the university with industry, community and civic groups, other educational institutions, and our alumni. Though teaching is central to the mission of the university, teaching cannot happen without the support of countless units that work together to enrich the learner experience. As such, “Key Collaborators” are named throughout this document to identify particular units that will be critical to the success of the commitment, in addition to the faculty members and Faculty teams.

Implementation

To fulfill this plan, the Faculties, with the support of the Provost's office and the School of Graduate Studies, will embark on building an implementation plan to reach the goals set out in this document. With agreed-upon measures of success, Faculties will have the flexibility and some budgetary support required to be responsive to local needs and to catalyze existing initiatives.

As noted throughout, this plan is meant to support and deepen the institutional commitments made over the last several years to decolonize and Indigenize our curriculum, make our institution more accessible and equitable for underrepresented groups such as disabled learners, support the flourishing of Black knowledges, and to act meaningfully on advancing our commitment to the Indigenous Directions Plan, Sustainable Development Goals, and the Sustainability Action Plan, among others.

As part of our objective to proactively evaluate our progress on the plan and to respond to changing circumstances, we will provide the community with an update on progress midway through the implementation period. Upon undertaking this reflection, we will also update our measures of success accordingly. This is important since several units are undertaking strategic reflections and will soon be sharing their plans. Examples include the Decolonizing and Indigenizing curriculum and pedagogy and Student services strategies.

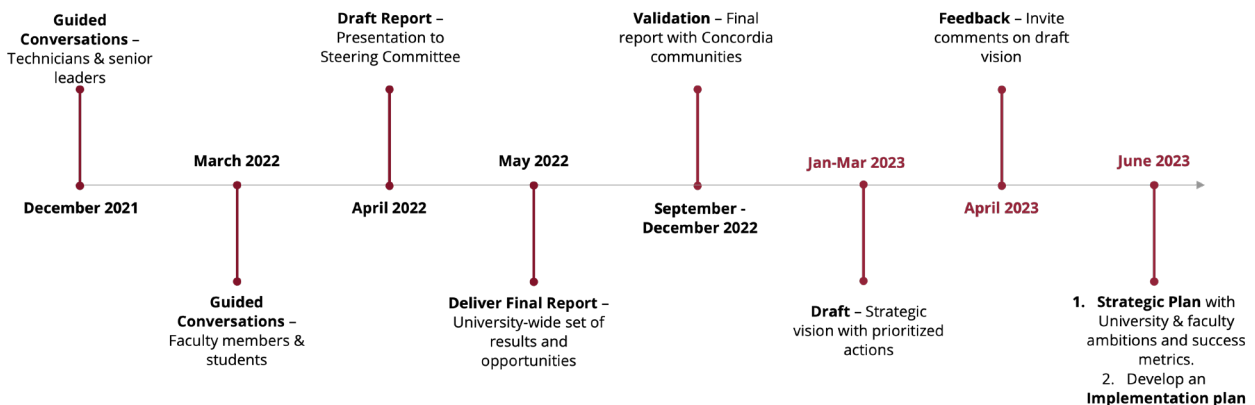
Our Process

The Advisory Committee on Teaching and Learning (ACTL) has been building a [vision for the future](#), starting with a series of guided conversations that began in November 2021. Our community consultation included over 40 focus groups with students, faculty, and teaching staff; 15 interviews with student-facing staff and 5 with executive administration; a survey on the changing landscape of higher education; and a validation exercise that garnered over 600 responses.

This feedback has been essential in prioritizing the actions and preparing the plan for the future of teaching and learning. To ensure coherence and ensure the sustainability of our efforts, the draft plan has also been informed by other strategic initiatives such as the Indigenous Directions Action Plan, President’s Task Force on Anti-Black Racism recommendations, Sustainability Action Plan, Equity office census, and the developing Student Services strategic plan. As metrics for success were added, further consultation with the units most affected were also implemented.

Some of the feedback we received could not be actioned in a teaching and learning plan. However, in the spirit of partnership and respect for members of our communities who took time to provide feedback, we have shared the feedback with the appropriate units. In some cases, we have also revised earlier language on our actions in the spirit of advancing goals that are realistic and sustainable. Recognizing that teaching and learning is a shared responsibility across many units, we have named our partners who will support the Faculties and their faculty members in advancing the goals laid out in this plan.

Timeline of activities





OUR COMMITMENTS

Commitment 1 Teaching for Impact

We commit to offering relevant, flexible, hands-on, and innovative programs that prepare learners for the challenges they currently face and those to come. These programs will develop the needed skills to succeed, including developing a curiosity to learn and the agency needed to act in the world with integrity. Teaching in these programs will rely on evidence-based practices that aim for high student engagement as a key strategy for learning and retention. Where appropriate we will promote interdisciplinary co-teaching since problem solving requires input from a variety of locations.

We commit to advancing our efforts to decolonize curriculum and adopt inclusive pedagogies. Knowledge and creativity emerge from and are fostered in many locations, experiences, and ways of being. We benefit from learning in and through diversity – we are better placed to lead change and to tackle the world’s problems through this lens. Partnerships in learning with community groups, industry, and Indigenous communities are needed. We will engage learners in the co-creation of knowledges that happen as partners to build agency and ensure deep learning.

Goals within this commitment include:

- inclusive teaching that respects the diversity of our learners and encourages their sense of belonging and well-being
- decolonization of our classrooms and programs, including integrating cultural safety for Indigenous students
- developing and rejuvenating programs that build knowledge applicable to the challenges learners may face in a rapidly changing world
- teaching approaches and program structures that foster agency, resiliency & other key skills in our learners
- ensuring all programs offer effective, engaging, and experiential learning experiences
- enhancing partnerships in learning with industry, community groups, other higher education institutions, and learners themselves
- offering an enhanced digital learning strategy that will increase access and flexibility within programs
- identifying learning outcomes for all courses and programs to provide clarity and enhance the agency of our learners
- piloting innovative ways to meet urgent needs for education in our communities

Key Collaborators¹

Academic advising
Black perspectives office
Centre for teaching & learning
Concordia Library
Decolonizing curriculum & pedagogies team
eConcordia
Equity office
Instructional and information technology services (IITS)
Office of community engagement and SHIFT

Supporting strategic frameworks that inform and support our goals

EDI Working Group Final Report
Indigenous Directions Action Plan
President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism recommendations
Sustainable Development Goals
Sustainability Action Plan
Equity office census
Strategic Research Plan
IT Strategic Plan and Roadmap
Decolonizing and Indigenizing Curriculum and Pedagogy Strategy (forthcoming)

¹ Key Collaborators are those units who provide services that support the activities of teaching & learning. Our core collaborators are the Faculties and faculty members.

Commitment 2 Learner Well-being and Success

Our learners come to Concordia with a wealth of experiences, knowledges, and skills. *Learning for Impact* happens when we create an environment where all learners can have these talents recognized and have new ones emerge. An environment that encourages learner success deepens connections to Concordia by ensuring our learners are respected and can build meaningful relationships with their educators, their peers, and other members of the Concordia community. An environment that prioritizes well-being, pays attention to individual learners, and offers a rich, inclusive and welcoming set of experiences creates lasting impressions on learners. Concordia's success as an institution is only secured when our learners succeed in the ways that are important to them.

We will work with our partners in student, and health and wellness services, along with the staff in the Faculties, to ensure our services prioritize learner well-being and create conditions of success for them.

Goals within this commitment include:

- integrating belonging and well-being in course design
- promoting cultural safety for Indigenous students in course design to address the health and cultural well-being of Indigenous students
- strengthening and further developing academic advising and student supports
- encouraging a more widespread adoption of Universal Design for Learning
- examining program design for structures that create obstacles for learners
- increase programming that welcomes, supports and builds skills in learners
- increasing the number of mentorship opportunities for students as both mentors and mentees

Key Collaborators²

Academic advising across the university

Equity Office

Student services, specifically Campus Wellness and Support Services (Health Services, Counselling and Psychological Services, the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities), the Dean of Students, the Student Success Centre, and Residence staff.

Office of institutional planning and analysis

Instructional and Information Technology Services (IITS)

² Key Collaborators are those units who provide services that support the activities of teaching & learning. Our core collaborators are the Faculties and faculty members.

Supporting strategic frameworks that inform and support our goals

Student Services strategic plan

Faculty strategic plans

Indigenous Directions Action Plan

President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism recommendations

IT Strategic Plan and Roadmap

Decolonizing and indigenizing curriculum and pedagogy (forthcoming)

Commitment 3 Faculty Support

Learning for impact requires a deep commitment to the continual professional development of our teaching faculty and staff. But it also requires that we value this commitment as much as we value research since supporting learning by sharing and co-creating knowledges and creative activities with learners is central to our mission.

Our consultations have indicated that learners greatly value the mentorship they receive from committed and engaged educators who can share industry and research insights that enhance their learning.

Goals within this commitment include:

- increasing the nature and ways of developing teaching excellence and career investment in teaching
- implementing a process for understanding faculty needs to deliver programming for faculty support
- facilitating adoption of appropriate high-impact teaching practices in sustainable ways
- enabling faculty to decolonize their courses
- supporting faculty to include diverse, under-represented perspectives and knowledges
- elucidating the process of learning to better inform teaching approaches
- increasing our support for faculty well-being
- improving our teaching evaluation process to better reflect the important aspects of the learning experience
- establishing clear paths for the recognition of teaching activities in tenure and promotion
- delivering improved and harmonized technical support for classroom teaching, digital teaching, and innovation
- promoting pedagogical and curricular innovation through new initiatives that mobilize faculty expertise
- greater recognition of experimentation and excellence in teaching and supervision
- advancing interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning

Key collaborators³

Black Perspectives office
Centre for Teaching & Learning
Concordia Library
Decolonizing pedagogies & curriculum team
Instructional and information technology services (IITS)

Supporting strategic frameworks that inform and support our goals

Faculty strategic plans
Decolonizing and indigenizing curriculum and pedagogy (forthcoming)
Indigenous Directions Action Plan
President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism recommendations
IT Strategic Plan and Roadmap

³ Key Collaborators are those units who provide services that support the activities of teaching & learning. Our core collaborators are the Faculties and faculty members.

Commitment 4 Promoting People-centred Operations

Concordia is a big, complex place with many moving parts. This means that it can be hard for each part to be in sync with others, sometimes leading to processes that feel inefficient, complex, opaque, and impersonal. When processes are designed with people first – rather than institutional imperatives – efficiency, transparency, and accountability become hallmarks of institutional culture. Efficient processes allow individuals to focus their energies and talents in places where they can make the most impact. As much as possible, processes should be transparent so that individuals following them understand why they are necessary. Finally, if issues arise, being accountable means addressing them in a timely way to build trust and respect within our institution. Committing to and acting on an ethos of continually improving our processes humanizes our institution and enhances opportunities for belonging.

Goals within this commitment include:

- revising the curriculum change process and providing greater documentation of the process to make it more efficient and transparent wherever possible
- simplifying the process to support co-teaching opportunities
- implementing greater supports so that departments with great ideas to change their curriculum and support learners are not alone in the process
- making more transparent and simplifying the process of adopting new technologies and software for use in our courses and programs
- enhancing the process of providing technological support in teaching
- implementing greater sharing of data so that they can be used to build supports and make changes where most needed
- asking our community how we can do better to ensure we continually improve our processes and services

Key collaborators⁴

Alumni Relations

Centre for Teaching and Learning

Facilities Management

Instructional and Information Technology Services (IITS)

Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis

Office of the Registrar

Supporting strategic frameworks that inform and support our goals

Future Concordia

IT Strategic Plan and Roadmap

⁴ Key Collaborators are those units who provide services that support the activities of teaching & learning. Our core collaborators are the Faculties and faculty members.



MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Measures of Success

How will we know we have successfully achieved our goals?

To ensure we are holding ourselves accountable, we will need to keep track of our goals by watching for trends within the University over time. By measuring what's happening on our campuses and in our classrooms, we will have a way to know if our interventions are having the right effect by reaching our goals. Having clear measures of success are also important since this Plan will be decentralized in its implementation. Though each Faculty will have the needed flexibility to prioritize the goals in each commitment, it is necessary that we all keep track of our progress on the goals in the same way. In this sense, our measures of success are critical to a successful implementation plan that includes evaluating the impact of our interventions on institutional culture.

In the pages that follow, measures of success have been identified for each goal in the four commitments.

Teaching for Impact	
Goal	Measures of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inclusive teaching that respects the diversity of our learners and encourages their sense of belonging and well-being • decolonization of our classrooms and programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop robust data collection and analysis to track improvements in admission, retention and completion rates of underrepresented learners, as permitted by law • number of courses adopting at least two UDL principles • number of courses incorporating approaches to well-being • rate of curriculum refreshes & subsequent enrolment changes, especially in the areas of decolonization, Black knowledges, and sustainability. • improved time to completion rates, especially for underrepresented learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and rejuvenate programs that build knowledge applicable to the challenges learners may face in a rapidly changing world • teaching approaches and program structures that foster agency, resiliency & other key skills in our learners • ensure all programs offer effective, engaging, and experiential learning experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment outcomes over time • number of interdisciplinary problem-based courses & enrolments • number of courses using high-impact teaching methods, including active learning and problem/case-based learning among others • increased number of flexible course offerings, including (but not limited to) accelerated or concentrated course/program offerings • number of experiential learning opportunities for each learner • number of students returning for another program upon graduation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance partnerships in learning with industry, community groups, other higher education institutions, and learners themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of students as partners projects • number of partnerships built with other institutions • number of partnerships with industry, community groups, Elders or regional communities/nations in courses • number of courses co-taught • number of cross-department, unit or Faculty collaborations on programs or courses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an enhanced digital learning strategy that will increase access and flexibility within programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased opportunities for training to use digital tools • increased number of hybrid or online courses & programs • increased use of digital teaching approaches • enhanced Moodle experience that meets learner and instructor needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify learning outcomes for all courses and programs to provide clarity and enhance the agency of our learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning outcomes and skills maps for every program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pilot innovative ways to meet urgent needs for education in our communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce competency-based learning • pilot a more robust approach to prior learning assessment and recognition-reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences (PLAR-RAC) in one program

Learner Well-being and Success	
Goal	Measures of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluation of programs to support student success to ensure impact on student outcomes expand programs that have proven effectivity, especially for underrepresented groups number of students returning for another program improvement in completion of degrees analysis of attrition rates to identify areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integrate belonging and well-being in course design promote cultural safety for Indigenous students in course design to address the health and cultural well-being of Indigenous students encourage a more widespread adoption of Universal Design for Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased training to support well-being in courses number of courses implementing well-being or contemplative pedagogies number of courses that implement cultural safety measures in the classroom to support Indigenous students' health and cultural well-being number of participants in wellness programming (e.g., ZenDens, Mindful Campus Initiative, etc.) decrease wait times for intake and to see a counsellor at Counselling & Psychological Services decrease wait times for intake at Access Centre for Students & Disabilities number of students with membership in a student group or association number of courses adopting UDL principles number of Moodle sites that are WCAG 2.0 AA compliant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen and further develop academic advising and student supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase training and support for academic Advisors improved rates of learner satisfaction with advising services improvement in National Survey in Student Engagement (NSSE) scores for both undergraduate and graduate learners number of faculty who activate the student service Moodle block in their courses and reference it in their course outlines greater training for thesis supervisors in supporting academic advising and mentorship of graduate learners

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine program design for structures that create hardships for learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased partnerships/information sharing between academic advisors, learners and departments to identify blocks • changes to curriculum, rules or course offerings that are common barriers completion of studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase programming that welcomes, supports and builds skills in learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation of student support programs (e.g., Homeroom, GradPro Skills, Future Bound, etc) for impact on expected outcomes (as defined by the program) • improved student outcomes for participants in these programs, including employability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the number of mentorship opportunities for students as both mentors and mentees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased number of opportunities for mentorship with alumni, industry, peer-to-peer • number of offers to mentor students from alumni

Faculty Support	
Goal	Measures of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase the nature and ways of developing teaching excellence and career investment in teaching implement a process for understanding faculty needs to deliver programming for faculty support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> needs analysis conducted by CTL on professional development needs of faculty number of peer-led workshops offered on aspects of teaching number of participants in CTL events, workshops, faculty interest groups number of formal mentorship opportunities to support teaching development/growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitate adoption of appropriate high-impact teaching practices in sustainable ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of courses adopting high-impact teaching practices that are aligned to disciplinary needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable faculty to decolonize their courses support faculty to include more diverse knowledges across the curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of courses that have undertaken process of reflection and decolonization number of resources, including workshops, to support understanding and application of Indigenous decolonizing principles in curriculum and teaching approaches number of workshops offered and participants attending inclusive teaching workshops number of courses reflecting diverse knowledges, including Black and Indigenous knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> elucidate the process of learning to better inform teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CTL offerings that explain neuroscience of learning and connection to teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase our support for faculty well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of workshops, events and faculty interest groups to promote well-being and attendees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve our teaching evaluation process to better reflect the important aspects of the learning experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementation of new teaching evaluation/student learning experience evaluation process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish clear paths for the recognition of teaching in tenure and promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number of faculty successfully securing promotion through teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deliver improved and harmonized technical support for classroom teaching, digital teaching and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> greater support at IT Service Centres to provide more classroom support enhanced training for IT Service Centre staff to better equip them in troubleshooting issues, increased programming (e.g., workshops, interest

	<p>groups) to support adoption of technology to enhance teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved response time from IITS when support requests are made
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote pedagogical and curricular innovation through new initiatives that mobilize faculty expertise • greater recognition of experimentation and excellence in teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased partnerships between Lab for Innovation in Teaching & Learning and faculty • number of 3M nominees and winners • number of students as partners involved in curricular initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of projects focused on advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning

Promoting People-centred Operations	
Goal	Measures of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise the curriculum change process and provide greater documentation of the process to make it more efficient and transparent wherever possible • implement greater supports so that departments with great ideas to change their curriculum and support learners are not alone in the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publication of curriculum guides to support department work • decreased time for approval on Letters of Intent for new programs • review curriculum change process to streamline and simplify • increased access to curriculum support for program development and revision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simplify the process to support co-teaching opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of co-teaching opportunities • number of faculty participants • number of enrolments in co-taught courses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make more transparent and simplify the process of adopting new technologies and software for use in our courses and programs • enhance the process of providing technological support in teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more timely resolutions of technological issues • implementing a clear and easy-to-use classroom technology and teaching software adoption process with transparency on the progress of requests • establishing mechanisms that incorporate community feedback into the continuous improvement of our technology designs, without overloading the community • building and updating classrooms to harmonize with new ways of teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement greater sharing of data so that they can be used to build supports and make changes where most needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased sharing of data across units to support decision-making (eg., dashboard for admissions) • number of available data sets, in easily understandable formats, that meet specific needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask our community how we can do better to ensure we continually improve our processes and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish mechanisms for continuous improvement that do not overburden the community