



# Student Services Strategic Planning Framework

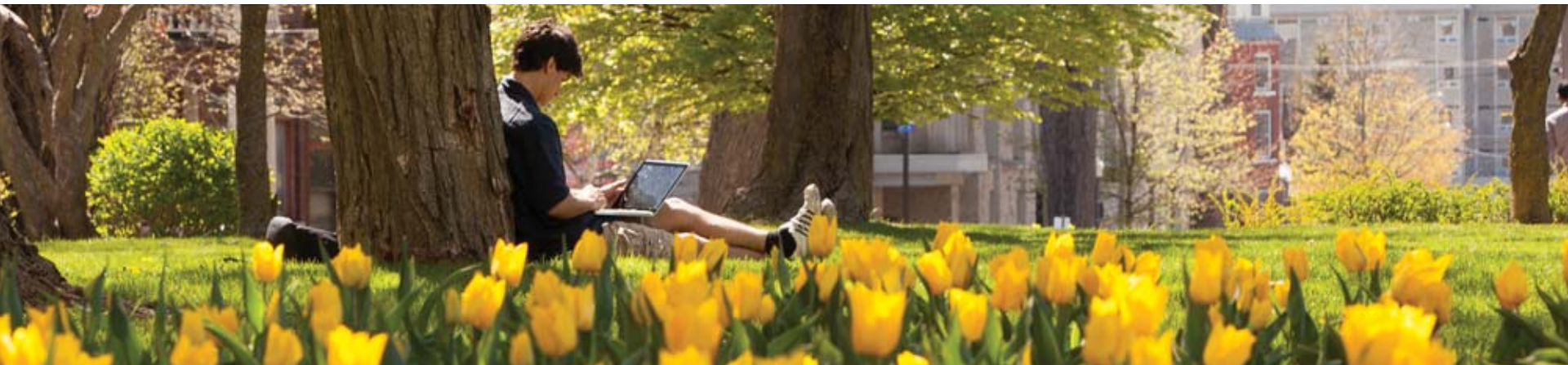


# Introduction

Student services, defined as services, programs and supports that promote academic and personal success, are a vital part of the Queen's student learning experience. The university currently has a strong network of services designed to foster student success, skill development and student engagement. To ensure that services continue to be delivered and developed in an integrated fashion that meets students' needs, now and in the future, the Student Services Strategic Framework outlines key priorities and actions to build capacity and provide the best possible support for students. Aligned with the university's strategic enrolment management process, the Strategic Framework and the Academic Plan, the Student Services Strategic Framework

is structured around the pillars of Health and Wellness, Transition Support, Academic Support and Skill Development, and Student Engagement.

The framework was developed, following broad consultation, by a multi-disciplinary ad-hoc advisory committee established by the Provost. It looks to the future, drawing on input from students, staff, faculty and community. It considers all student services, including those provided by Faculties and Schools, the Library, Student Governments and Student Affairs; it identifies areas of strength and areas where there may be gaps in service, and it determines where opportunities exist to improve or expand.



# Context

As a largely residential university, the quality of student support services is critical to fostering student wellness and academic success while facilitating a well-rounded and high quality student learning experience.

The framework takes into consideration that students' needs and goals evolve over time and recognizes that support services and programs must respond to those changes in an integrated and innovative manner. Using a five-year planning horizon, the framework focuses on services that support and promote academic and personal success and the emerging needs of students in a context that recognizes the pre-eminence of the student learning experience, the university's focus on internationalization and the need for long-term financial sustainability.

While individual faculties and schools, departments or units are responsible for developing their own strategic actions and tactics to support strategic framework priorities, enhancing the student learning experience is seen as a collective responsibility.

The framework builds on existing strengths, such as the university's strong culture of engagement, a long standing focus on health and wellness and the comprehensive financial aid and student support structures in place. Additional considerations include respect for the diverse needs of students; the importance of providing sustainable, accessible and holistic services and supports; the need to respect tradition while embracing opportunities for innovation and growth; and, ensuring collaboration and communication to eliminate redundancies and inefficiencies to facilitate future growth.







# Emerging trends and expectations

The Canadian post-secondary landscape is shaped and influenced by numerous social, economic and political factors that impact how student services are structured and delivered on campus. This adds a level of complexity to determining the suite of services and supports that will best respond to students' current and emerging needs. To develop the framework, the contextual influences listed below were considered, along with the potential impact and implications for enrolment and access decisions, resource allocations and program delivery methods.

## Access and Diversity

- Growing numbers of students accessing appropriate accommodations and supports to remove barriers to learning.
- Expanding customized supports and services to facilitate success and wellbeing, as the student population continues to diversify, including increasing Aboriginal, International and first generation enrolment.
- Expanding technologies that allow remote access to academics, and heighten expectations for remote access to support services.

## External Influences

- Additional regulatory and accountability reporting requirements designed to demonstrate effectiveness and compliance with government guidelines and policies, combined with constrained government funding.
- Greater societal interest in how universities are credentialing students and preparing them for future careers.
- Declining number/demographic of traditional age student population in Canada.
- Expanded family interest and involvement in students' personal and academic affairs.

## Evolving Expectations

- Accelerated speed of communications from increased use of social media and related technologies that impacts how institutions interact and respond to students.
- Intensified pressure to provide individualized and expanded services, supports and opportunities, many on a 24/7 basis.
- Greater proportion of students presenting with anxiety, difficulties associated with the transition to university and/or mental health issues, which may require a level of support that is beyond the capacity of the institution.

# Student Services Strategic Planning Priorities 2016-2021

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## Health and Wellness

- Provide high-quality programs and resources to promote health and wellness, and accessible health and wellness services, responsive to a broad range and severity of issues, in a coordinated resource-effective manner.
  - Ensure streamlined academic accommodation policies and practices that promote student success and wellbeing.
  - Enable front line personnel (faculty, staff, TA's, peer mentors) to recognize and respond to a broad range of student issues and needs through the provision of comprehensive supports and education.
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## Transition Support

- Provide viable, coherent graduate and undergraduate co-curricular programming and services to facilitate student transition into university, through their program, and on to their chosen career or path.
  - Ensure holistic, integrated, career, academic and personal advising structures that facilitate personal and academic achievement are in place.
  - Ensure policies, procedures and programs are accessible and respond to and reflect differing abilities, cultural expectations, and financial needs.
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## Academic Support and Skill Development

- Increase the number of opportunities available to students to develop new skills and learning strategies through practices such as experiential learning activities.
  - Provide students with the knowledge and resources to proactively build capacity for self-actualization and resiliency to help facilitate their own academic and personal success.
  - Facilitate co-curricular activities and opportunities for intentional learning, reflective practices, skill development and personal growth.
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## Student Engagement

- Leverage best practices, new technologies and program innovation to provide appropriate year-round accessible supports and opportunities for all students regardless of their program or access to campus.
- Foster co-curricular activities that are inclusive and encourage interaction among diverse communities.
- Continue to engage students in the development and delivery of co-curricular programs and services that promote peer and group leadership and learning.



# Performance Indicators

Individual faculties and schools, departments or units are responsible for developing strategic actions and tactics to support strategic framework priorities. Progress under each of the framework's four pillars will be assessed by employing both existing and new survey and reporting tools. As required, new survey/assessment tools may be developed to respond to specific elements or issues. Existing survey tools are outlined below.

## **Health and Wellness**

The National College Health Assessment (NCHA), Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS), University Applicant Equity Census, Omnibus Survey (currently under development)

## **Transition Support**

National Survey of Student Engagement/Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE/BCSSE), International Student Barometer (ISB/iGraduate), Q Success Intake Survey, First Year Orientation and Transition Survey, Residence Feedback Survey, Second Year Transition Survey, Omnibus Survey (currently under development).

## **Academic Support**

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS), National Baccalaureate Graduate Outcomes Survey (NBGOS) Omnibus Survey (currently under development)

## **Student Engagement**

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS), Omnibus Survey (currently under development)



# Next Steps/Looking Ahead

The Student Services Strategic Framework will reinforce integrated planning already underway in various units to help ensure optimal service levels, awareness and access, and responsive and relevant services and programs that align with the needs and goals of an evolving student population.

The framework is designed to provide the structure within which services will adapt to changing trends and expectations in student services and in the post-secondary environment. Alignment with the priorities will be assessed by the Principal and Provost as part of regular and on-going university reporting and planning processes, and shared on an annual basis with the Board of Trustees, the Senate and the Queen's community.



# Terms of Reference

One of the four pillars of Queen's Strategic Framework is "enhancing our student learning experience."

Support services for undergraduate and graduate students are an integral part of the student experience and are key to promoting academic and personal success. Effective student services are also essential to supporting the internationalization pillar of the framework.

At Queen's, these services are delivered in Faculty offices and academic departments; in the Library; across the Division of Student Affairs (including Residences, Student Wellness Services, Athletics and Recreation, Student Academic Success Services, Career Services, the Queen's University International Centre, and the Office of the University Registrar, among others); and through student associations, and peer-led clubs and groups.

Linked with ongoing strategic enrolment management, the university will develop a strategic plan for student services that will reinforce integrated planning already underway in various units to help ensure

optimal service levels, awareness and access, and responsive and relevant services and programs that align with the needs and goals of an evolving student population.

An advisory committee to the Provost will be convened to:

- Define the scope of "student services" for the purposes of the plan;
- Articulate the roles and responsibilities of various contributors to student services across the institution;
- Conduct a SWOT analysis of student services at Queen's;
- Review best practices for capacity-building and delivery of post-secondary student services;
- Identify gaps that should be addressed; and
- Develop a student services strategic planning document that aligns with the Strategic Framework.

The committee will submit the planning document to the Provost by July 1, 2015.

## Committee Membership

- Ann Tierney, Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs and chair
- Teresa Alm, Associate University Registrar – Student Awards
- Brenda Brouwer, Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies
- Janice Hill, Director, Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre
- Cathy Keates, Director, Career Services
- Susan Korba, Director, SASS
- Philip Lloyd/Catherine Wright, AMS Vice-President of University Affairs

- Susan Mumm, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Kathy O'Brien, Associate Vice-Principal (International)
- Kevin Weiner, Christopher Cochrane, SGPS President
- Martha Whitehead, Vice-Provost and University Librarian
- Kim Woodhouse, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science
- Mike Young, Rector





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