TRU *Flexible Learning Spectrum*

Evolving Opportunities

THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

Thompson Rivers University campuses are on the traditional lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (Kamloops campus) and the T'exelc (Williams Lake campus) within Secwepemcúlucw, the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc. The region TRU serves also extends into the territories of the St'át'imc, Nlaka'pamux, Nuxalk, Tŝilhqot'in, Dakelh, and Syilx peoples.

TRU's History

In 2005, as part of the provincial government's *Access for All Initiative*, a "unique institution" (Fortems, 2004a, para. 1) was established in the interior of British Columbia (BC).

Thompson Rivers University's uniqueness is indisputable.

With community college origins and deep connections to Tk'emlups te Secwepemc and T'exelc within Secwepemcúlucw, TRU is mandated to serve the educational and training needs of the region as well as served the open learning needs of the province.

TRU's Evolution

TRU has addressed this mandate well, but the post-secondary world has changed significantly and continues to shift rapidly. **We need to evolve as an institution so that we meet the needs of students and communities in new way.**

Definition of open learning

Open learning is based on a philosophy of learner-centeredness where education is designed to meet the needs of the learner, as perceived by the learner.

For example, delivering programming at a time and place that meets learners' needs (e.g., in community, online, any time of the day).

Open learning can be offered as asynchronous, synchronous, blended, or face-to-face depending on where the learners' needs are, at a given time.

TRU's Strategic Change Goals

In other words, we can employ open learning methods in **any course we teach, anywhere along the *Flexible Learning Spectrum***.

Open education is based on reducing barriers to accessing education – a.k.a **"eliminating achievement gaps".**

So… shouldn't we ALL be doing this??

Open Pedagogy – "open learning methods"

Learner centred environments
- The role of the student is to become "increasingly autonomous and to develop critical social consciousness in an open ecosystem"

Open educational resources
- Low-cost or no cost resources with minimal restrictions (e.g., textbooks, videos, software and other digital materials)

Scalable assignments
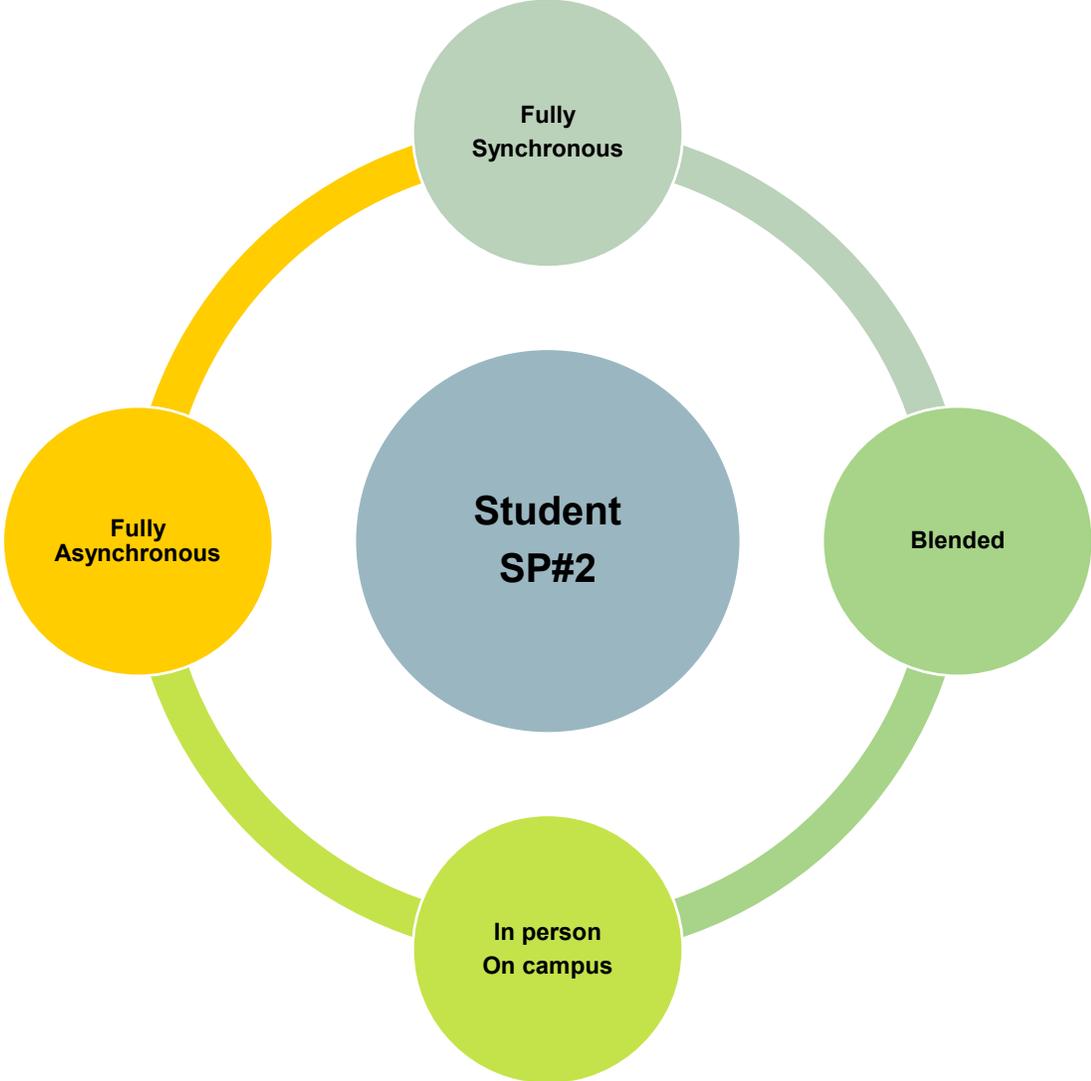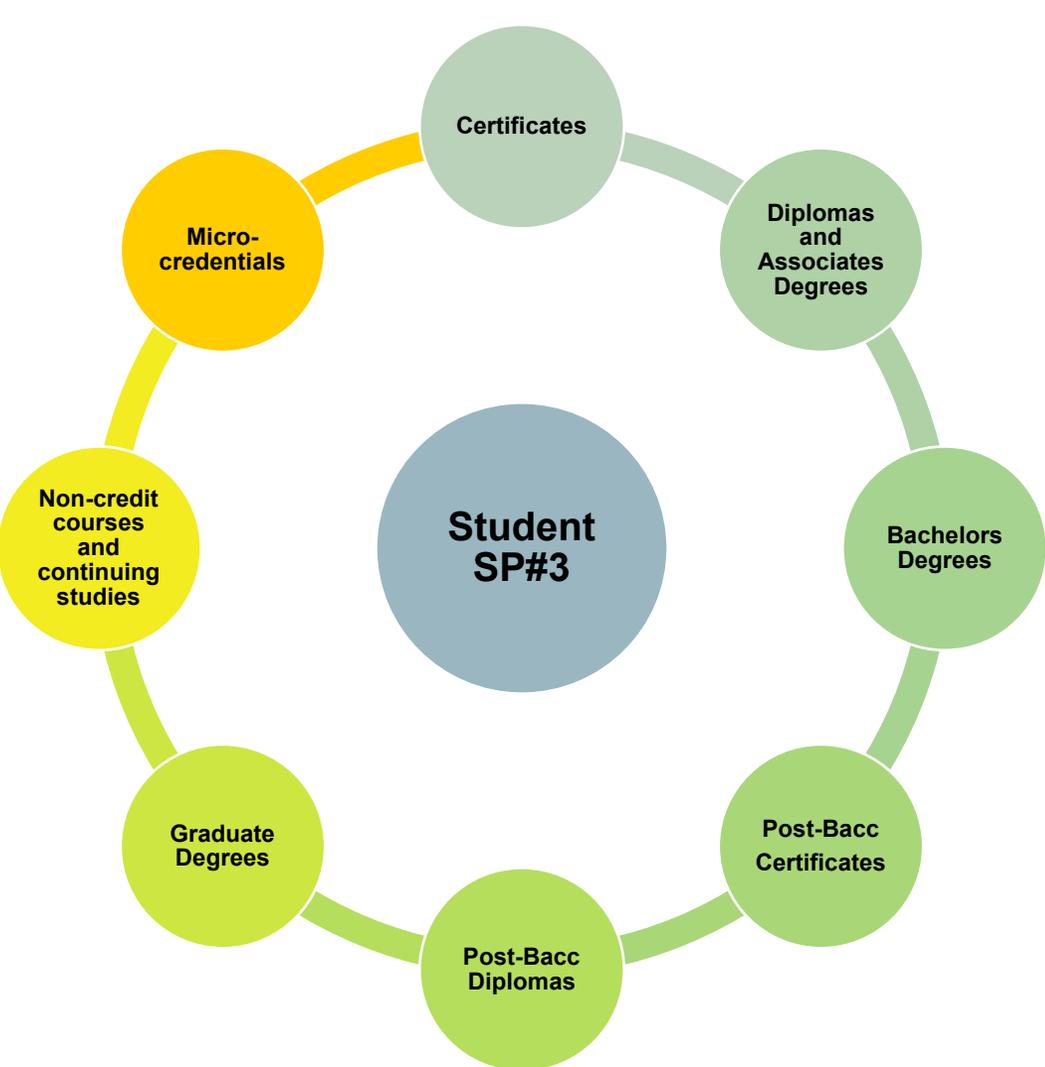- Student work has value beyond the course for applied or scholarly purposes

Digital technologies
- Evolving educational technologies (e.g., AI, digital tools, and social media)
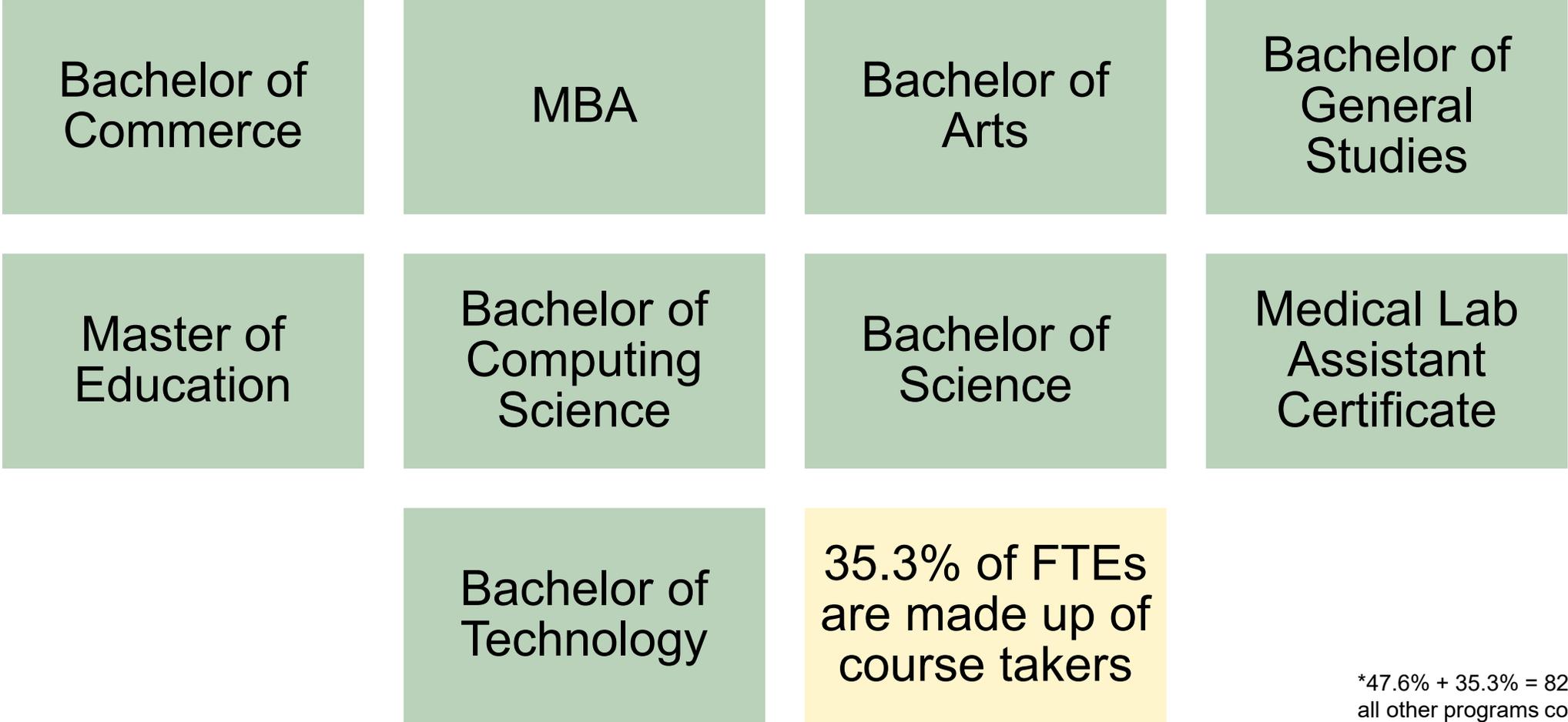
Open Research
- Contributions of openly accessible research in Scholarly Teaching and SoTL (also other forms of research not linked directly to pedagogy, but increasing student access to research in all disciplines)

Life-long Flexible Learning Spectrum

Most popular asynchronous programs (by a lot)

Bachelor of Commerce

MBA

Bachelor of Arts

Bachelor of General Studies

Master of Education

Bachelor of Computing Science

Bachelor of Science

Medical Lab Assistant Certificate

Bachelor of Technology

35.3% of FTEs are made up of course takers

*47.6% + 35.3% = 82.9%; 17% to all other programs combined

First Steps

1. Build and/or create programs and courses with student interest

2. Deans, Associate Deans and Chairs directly responsible for their own schedules of course/program renewal and development

3. Review and streamline process for course renewal/development

Next Big Steps

Language

Internal Communications

External Communications

Marketing

Website

Calendar

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