

Thompson Rivers University
Faculty of Student Development
Strategic Plan
2017-2022

As student affairs and services professionals, we acknowledge that TRU Kamloops is situated on the traditional lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc within Secwépemc'ulucw, the traditional territory of the Secwépemc people. TRU Williams Lake is situated on the traditional lands of the T'exelc (Williams Lake Indian Band) within the traditional territory of the Northern Shuswap people. Today, the communities in which TRU campuses are located are home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in these communities. These territorial acknowledgements, while essential, are only the beginning of our work to support reconciliation efforts that will deepen our own understanding of the Indigenous communities on whose land we work and live. We strive to do more and to do better.

Our Mission

The Faculty of Student Development is committed to supporting student success, in all its individual, multifaceted forms. Success can be academic, personal, or social. We promote these different forms of student success by fostering autonomy, worth, and belonging. We do this by providing high quality, evidence-based, sustainable services and programming.

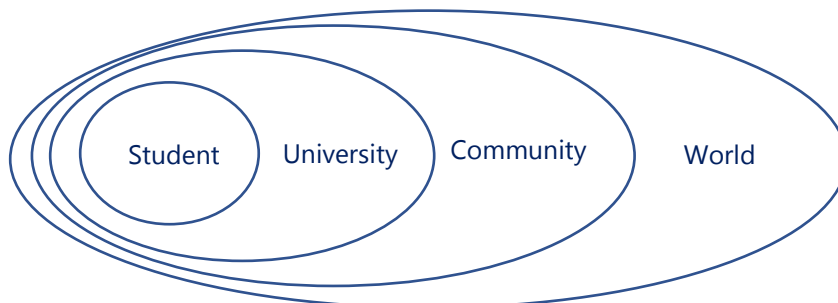
Our Values

The Faculty of Student Development operates according to six core values, which we attempt to model in our work with students, our colleagues, the institution, and the communities in which we work:

- collaboration
- continuous learning
- flexibility
- responsiveness
- accessibility
- thinking from multiple perspectives

Student-Centredness

Student-centredness means that students are at the centre of an ever-widening circle of meaning and engagement. The Faculty of Student Development facilitates connections between the student and every other circle of meaning, which fosters wellness and success.



Our Priority Areas for 2017-2022

In early 2017, FSD Chairs, Directors, Managers, and Coordinators examined various survey data prepared by Integrated Planning and Effectiveness (Canadian University Survey Consortium and the National Survey of Student Engagement), as well as the National College Health Assessment. This group then engaged in a facilitated workshop in early May and identified six priority areas to be addressed in our future work. A key part of this workshop was a commitment to identifying priorities that could be addressed by multiple units across the Student Development. In late June, these priority areas were presented at the Student Development annual retreat and work was done to identify projects that could be initiated in each area.

These are FSD's six priority areas to address in the next five years:

- Increasing students' **sense of belonging**
- Increasing students' understanding of and access to **experiential learning** opportunities
- Improving students' **health and well-being**
- **Indigenization** of our programs and services
- Engaging **diversity and practicing inclusion** in our programs and services
- Increasing visibility of and access to our programs and services through **improved communication**

Year One: Preparing to Set Objectives

An effective strategic plan is built on a solid foundation of information and evidence. For this reason, the Faculty of Student Development will spend the first year of its five-year plan assessing the landscape to be better prepared to set objectives for the subsequent four years.

The purposes of Year 1's activities are to:

- examine currently available data about student enrolments and experiences with our services (both qualitative and quantitative)
- identify gaps in the data needed to understand student needs and develop plans to access that information
- create inventories of current offerings of supports and opportunities
- train FSD staff in the collection and evaluation of data
- come to a collective understanding of key concepts that have an impact on student success
- identify possible program and service initiatives to respond to issues arising

With the skills and information developed in Year 1, we will be well-positioned to establish clear objectives for Years 2 through 5 within each of our six priority areas.

Measuring success within our faculty involves more than simply monitoring and measuring usage of our services. We plan to identify learning outcomes for our students, and for our faculty and staff, which will enable us to effectively assess our progress toward our vision.

Year 1 Activities by Priority Area

Sense of Belonging

Cultivating students' sense of belonging is key to fostering student success. In order to establish objectives within this priority area, we will:

- examine and understand data emerging from several key sources, including CBIE World of Learning, CUSC and NSSE reports;
- understand discrepancies between key metrics, such as that between a low sense of belonging, as reported in CUSC surveys, and high degree of interaction between students and faculty, as reported by NSSE; and
- work closely with Integrated Planning and Effectiveness to explore sense of belonging as it relates to certain programs within student services and to look at changes in sense of belonging throughout the duration of students' post-secondary experiences at TRU.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning has emerged as a top priority in the 21st century post-secondary environment. Before setting objectives for years 2 through 5 of this plan, we aim to:

- work with provincial colleagues to support the Ministry of Advanced Education in its project to compile a comprehensive inventory of experiential learning opportunities on campus; and
- examine ways in which we can partner with other units on campus (e.g., the Office of Sustainability) to promote student volunteerism and service learning.

Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing directly involves the work of the Wellness Centre and Counselling (in partnership with other units on campus such as Recreation, Human Resources and the Medical Clinic); however, the promotion of wellbeing underlies much of what we do throughout the Faculty. Our primary activities during this period will be:

- to collaborate closely with the President's Task Force on Mental Health and be responsive to its recommendations; and
- consider data collected about prevention education work done by the Manager of Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response.

Indigenization

Indigenization is an extremely important priority for the institution as a whole. In Year 1 of our strategic plan, we will:

- strive to create an aggregate picture of our collective understanding in terms of Indigenization as a Faculty;
- administer the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) with supplemental questions related to knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding historical and contemporary colonialism, settler-Indigenous relationships, and reconciliation activities;
- identify professional development goals and opportunities for staff and faculty;
- identify two student Knowledge Makers to work with our team, enabling us to learn more about indigenous students' interactions and experiences within our units; and
- strive to understand and incorporate indigenous approaches to data collection and assessment of learning outcomes in our work.

Diversity and Inclusion

We acknowledge that TRU has a diverse student population, including culture, sexual identity and expression, mobility and physical ability. In order to understand our objectives regarding diversity and inclusion, we will:

- strive to create an aggregate picture of our collective understanding in terms of our ability to be inclusive and to be aware of diversity as a Faculty;
- administer and consider aggregate profiles from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), especially in relation to inclusivity for all culturally diverse students and the multiple world views and experiences that intersect with the student population;
- identify professional development goals and opportunities for staff and faculty; and
- review the representation of diversity in our communications and hiring practices.

Communication and Visibility

Being visible to students within the institution and communicating effectively enables us to carry out the important work of delivering excellence support and service to our students. To that end, in Year 1 we will:

- seek to better understand how students want to receive information;
- undertake staff training on conducting effective focus groups; and
- conduct and report on student focus groups and the recommendations arising from them.