

LEARNING FOR IMPACT

A strategic plan for
the future of teaching
and learning

2025-2030

CONCORDIA

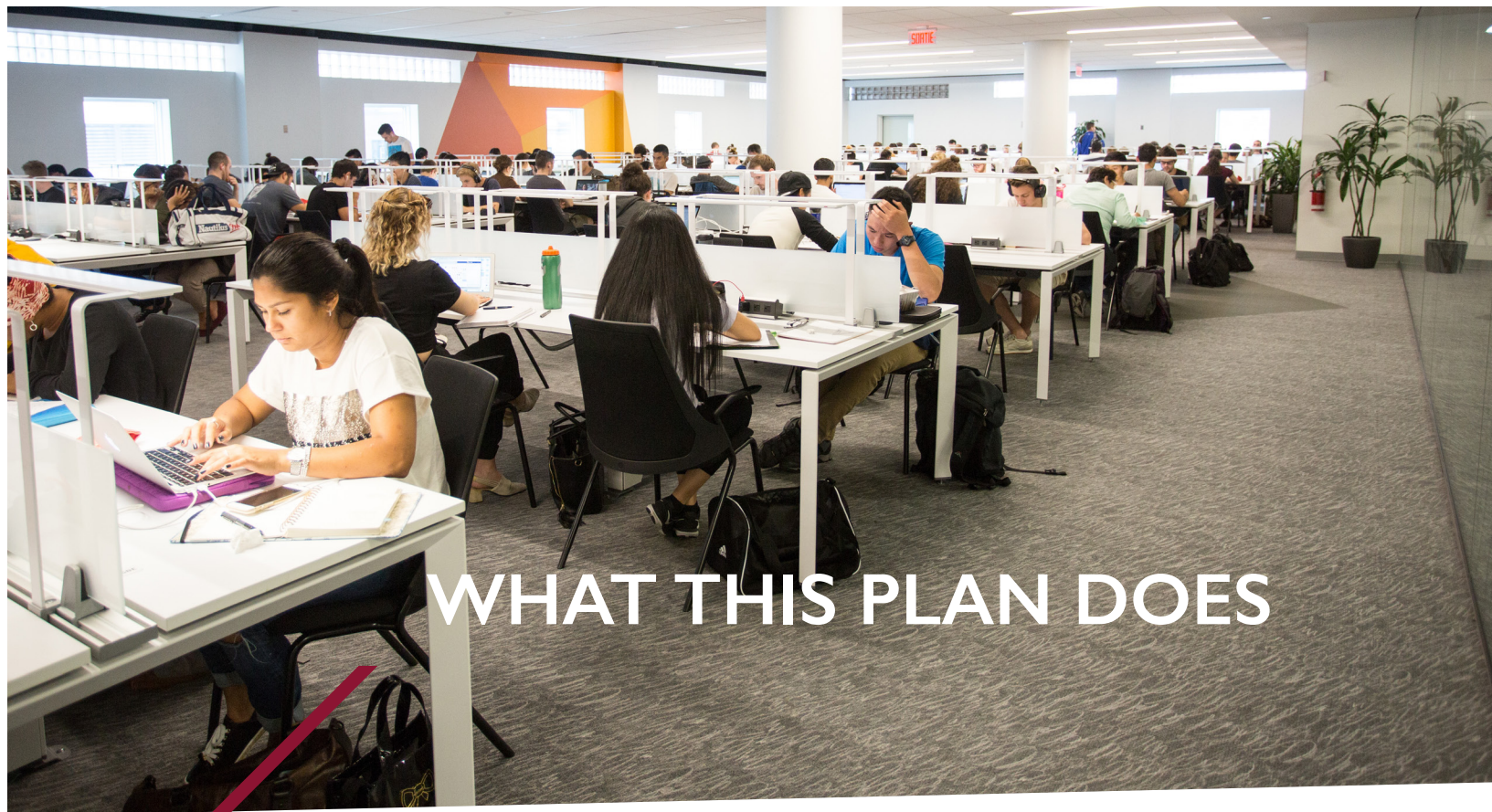


NOVEMBER 2024



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. Learning at university can take many forms and involves different kinds of encounters with knowledge, 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 change the world around them in positive ways.



WHAT THIS PLAN DOES

1

Articulates Concordia's vision and priorities for teaching and learning over the next five years, recognizing some of our ambitions will take longer to fulfill.

2

Provides guidance on how we will know if we are successful in fulfilling this vision.

Teaching along with the learning that comes with it, and the production of new knowledge and innovation, is the core work 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

Welcoming learners is at the heart of Concordia's mission. Through a holistic and curiosity-driven education, we empower every learner to develop their agency and create positive societal impact.

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.

Having a seamless experience is a pillar of student belonging. This experience only occurs when programs and processes are designed to pay 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 curiosity, a desire to keep learning and resilience that prepares our learners for a changing world. Diverse learning experiences – no matter where they take place – should allow opportunity for growth.

OUR COMMITMENTS

To achieve our vision while respecting our values, we make four commitments:

1



Teach for impact

2



**Learner well-being
& success**

3



Value teaching

4



**Promote human-centred
systems**

The recognition that partnerships are key to the success of these initiatives weaves through all four commitments. This includes 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. This document uses the term “Key Collaborators” to identify units that will be critical to the success of the commitment, in addition to faculty members and Faculty teams.

IMPLEMENTATION

To reach the goals set out in this document, the Faculties, in partnership with the Provost's office, the School of Graduate Studies, and the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) have each built an implementation plan. Care was taken to align this plan with existing Faculty strategic plans, and to ensure that this plan's implementation focuses on achievable outcomes that will produce meaningful change, while respecting our fiscal realities.

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 learners with disabilities; support the flourishing of Black knowledges; and to advance meaningfully on our commitments to the Indigenous Directions Plan, Sustainable Development Goals, and the Sustainability Action Plan, among others.

With agreed-upon measures of success, Faculties have the flexibility and some of the budgetary support required to be responsive to local needs and to catalyze existing initiatives. 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. After this reflection, we will update our measures of success accordingly. This is important since several units are undertaking strategic reflections and will soon have their own plans.

OUR PROCESS

Starting with a series of guided conversations that began in November 2021, the Advisory Committee on Teaching and Learning (ACTL) built a vision for the future. Our community consultation included over forty focus groups with students, faculty, and teaching staff; fifteen interviews with student-facing staff and five with executive administration; a survey on the changing landscape of higher education; and two validation exercises that garnered over 1000 responses.

This feedback has been essential in preparing the plan for the future of teaching and learning and prioritizing actions. To ensure the coherence and sustainability of our efforts, the draft plan has also been informed by other strategic initiatives such as the Indigenous Directions Action Plan; the strategic implementation plan on decolonizing and Indigenizing curriculum and pedagogy; 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 enacted 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 I TEACH FOR IMPACT

We commit to offer relevant, flexible, hands-on, innovative programs that prepare learners for the challenges they currently face and those to come. These programs will help learners build the necessary knowledge and 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 as partners in the co-creation of knowledge to build agency and ensure deep learning.





OUR 5 GOALS

1. Our classes respect the diversity of our learners and encourage their sense of belonging and well-being through inclusive teaching methods, including decolonization and Indigenization.
2. We will reimagine the structures, curricular pathways and delivery modes we use to better engage students and prepare them for the shifting demands of work, study, and citizenship.
3. Using high-impact teaching practices, we encourage the development of curiosity, agency, resiliency, and other key skills in our learners so that they are equipped to face the world's challenges.
4. All programs offer effective, engaging, and experiential learning experiences using a variety of techniques.
5. We build more partnerships in learning across the Faculties, with industry, community and civic groups, Indigenous communities, and other higher education institutions.

Accomplishing these goals will require us to use a variety of tools and establish collaborations.

OTHER TOOLS WE WILL USE TO ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS

- An enhanced and clearly communicated digital learning strategy that will appropriately increase access and flexibility within programs, while using best-in-class standards to maintain high quality standards.
- Identifying learning outcomes for all courses and programs to provide clarity and enhance the agency of our learners.



OUR KEY COLLABORATORS¹

Academic advising
Black Perspectives Office
Centre for Teaching & Learning
Concordia Library
Coop and Experiential Learning teams
Curriculum Innovation team
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

Centre for Teaching and Learning strategic plan
Decolonizing and Indigenizing Curriculum and Pedagogy implementation plan
EDI Working Group Final Report
Equity office census
Indigenous Directions Action Plan
IT Strategic Plan and Roadmap
President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism recommendations
Sustainability Action Plan
Strategic Research Plan

¹ Key collaborators are those units who provide services that support the activities of teaching and 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 learning experiences, creating 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 health and wellness services and student services, along with the staff in the Faculties, to ensure our services prioritize learner well-being and create conditions of success for them.





OUR 5 GOALS

1. Our learners feel welcomed and receive timely academic support so that they get the help they need when they need it.
2. Processes and program structures that are unduly complex and delay learners completing their degrees are significantly reduced.
3. Learners have access to more mentorship opportunities as both mentors and mentees to grow their leadership skills.
4. Greater adoption of inclusive teaching practices and diverse knowledge in the curriculum to prepare learners for a complex world.
5. Learners will leave Concordia able to translate their knowledge, skills and experiences to new environments, so they feel confident and hopeful about their futures.

Accomplishing these goals will require us to use a variety of tools and establish collaborations.

OTHER TOOLS WE WILL USE TO ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS

- Integrating belonging and well-being in course design
- Integrating cultural safety in course design to address the health and cultural well-being of Indigenous students
- Encouraging a more widespread adoption of Universal Design for Learning



OUR KEY COLLABORATORS

Academic advising across the university

Equity Office

Instructional and Information Technology Services (IITS)

Office of institutional planning and analysis

Student services – specifically, Campus Wellness and Support Services, the Dean of Students office, the Student Success Centre, Otsenhákta Student Centre, NouLa Student centre, FRANCOncordia, International Students office, and Residence staff.

SUPPORTING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS THAT INFORM AND SUPPORT OUR GOALS

Centre for Teaching and Learning strategic plan

Decolonizing and Indigenizing Curriculum and Pedagogy implementation plan

Faculty strategic plans

Indigenous Directions Action Plan

IT Strategic Plan and Roadmap

President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism recommendations

Student Services strategic plan

COMMITMENT 3 VALUE TEACHING

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 knowledge and creative activities with learners is central to our mission. Our instructors have a tremendous influence on the quality of learning, which affects the ability of our learners to make a significant positive impact on the world. Investment in our teaching is an investment in our learners and their futures.

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.





OUR 5 GOALS

1. Teaching excellence and career investment in teaching are prioritized through effective, evidence-based programming co-developed by the CTL and the Faculties.
2. Teaching excellence is a well-defined path to tenure and promotion.
3. We celebrate our in-house teaching excellence by mobilizing faculty expertise to promote pedagogical and curricular innovation.
4. Scholarship on teaching and learning is better supported so that we can showcase our teaching excellence.
5. Build more opportunities for faculty camaraderie to support a culture of teaching excellence and well-being.

Accomplishing these goals will require us to use a variety of tools and establish collaborations.

OTHER TOOLS WE WILL USE TO ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS

- Implementing a process for understanding faculty needs to deliver appropriate development programming.
- Elucidating the process of learning to better inform teaching approaches.
- Greater recognition of experimentation and excellence in teaching and supervision.
- Advancing interest in the scholarship of teaching and learning.



OUR KEY COLLABORATORS

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

SUPPORTING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS THAT INFORM AND SUPPORT OUR GOALS

Centre for Teaching and Learning strategic plan
Decolonizing and Indigenizing Curriculum and Pedagogy implementation plan
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COMMITMENT 4 **PROMOTE HUMAN-CENTRED SYSTEMS**

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.





OUR 5 GOALS

1. Track and resolve identified issues through regular community feedback to enhance teaching processes, services, and spaces.
2. Establish mechanisms for data sharing to make strategic improvements that will enhance learner outcomes.
3. Streamline procedures for faculty to initiate and manage co-teaching arrangements
4. Create an efficient, transparent curriculum revision system that empowers departments to implement innovative changes.
5. Develop clear guidelines and simplified procedures for evaluating and adopting new educational technologies.

Accomplishing these goals will require us to establish a variety of collaborations.



OUR KEY COLLABORATORS

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

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 and outside the University over time. By keeping an eye on what's happening on our campuses and in our classrooms, we will know if our interventions are having the right effect. It is also important to have clear measures of success because this Plan will be decentralized in its implementation. Though each Faculty has differing implementation plans, our aim is for collective impact. We recognize some changes will take time – perhaps longer than the five-year scope of this strategy. A lack of progress on our measures of success will help us to understand if it's time to try a different approach to achieve our goals.

In the pages that follow, measures of success have been identified for each goal in the four commitments. Specific targets for the goals are laid out in the Implementation Plans which articulate a plan in two year intervals, with a final plan for year five.



TEACH FOR IMPACT

GOAL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
<p>Our classes respect the diversity of our learners and encourage their sense of belonging and well-being through inclusive teaching methods, including decolonization and Indigenization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • admission, retention and completion rates of underrepresented learners • courses adopt at least two UDL principles • courses undergo curriculum refreshes in the areas of decolonization, Black knowledges, and sustainability • student survey data showing stronger sense of belonging
<p>We will reimagine the structures, curricular pathways and delivery modes we use to better engage students and prepare them for the shifting demands of work, study, and citizenship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment outcomes over time (time to job; job satisfaction) • flexible course offerings initiated, including (but not limited to) online, accelerated or concentrated course/program offerings • number of students returning for another program upon graduation • introduce prior learning assessment and recognition-reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences (PLAR-RAC) in programs
<p>Using high-impact teaching practices, we encourage the development of curiosity, agency, resiliency, and other key skills in our learners so that they are equipped to face the world's challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • courses using high-impact teaching methods, including active learning and problem/case-based learning among others • perception of readiness to enter workforce in exit graduation surveys
<p>All programs offer effective, engaging, and experiential learning experiences using a variety of techniques.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • every learner graduates with two experiential learning opportunities • cross-department, unit or Faculty collaborations on programs or courses
<p>We build more partnerships in learning across the Faculties, with industry, community and civic groups, Indigenous communities, and other higher education institutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students-as-partners projects across the university • meaningful partnerships built with other institutions to support teaching • meaningful partnerships with industry, community groups, Indigenous communities/nations in courses



LEARNER WELL-BEING AND SUCCESS

GOAL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
<p>Our learners feel welcomed and receive timely academic support so that they get the help they need when they need it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvement in experience with academic advising • improvement in experience with academic supports across the University • improvement in National Survey in Student Engagement (NSSE) scores for both undergraduate and graduate learners
<p>Processes and program structures that are unduly complex and delay learners completing their degrees are significantly reduced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creation of formalized modes for exchange between academic advisors, learners and departments to identify common barriers to completion of studies • Implementation of curriculum, process or Calendar changes as the result of modes of exchange • time to completion rates based on completed curriculum changes
<p>Greater adoption of inclusive teaching practices and diverse knowledge in the curriculum to prepare learners for a complex world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of faculty who activate the student service Moodle block in their courses and reference it in their course outlines • participation in CTL trainings on UDL • participation in CTL trainings on managing difficult conversations • number of courses that have undertaken process of reflection and decolonization
<p>Learners will leave Concordia able to translate their knowledge, skills, and experiences to new environments, so they feel confident and hopeful about their futures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidence of graduates entering the workforce based on graduation exit surveys
<p>Learners have access to more mentorship opportunities as both mentors and mentees to grow their leadership skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of alumni mentors • greater sense of belonging on graduation exit surveys



VALUE TEACHING

GOAL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
<p>Teaching excellence and career investment in teaching are prioritized through effective, evidence-based programming co-developed by the CTL and the Faculties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of co-developed initiatives • number of participants in events, workshops, faculty interest groups • number of returning participants to events, workshops, faculty interest groups • number of peer-led workshops offered on aspects of teaching • number of formal mentorship opportunities to support teaching development/growth • number of 3M nominees and winners
<p>Teaching excellence is a well-defined path to tenure and promotion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of Departments with tenure and promotion guidelines for teaching excellence • number of faculty receiving tenure or promotion through teaching excellence
<p>We celebrate our in-house teaching excellence by mobilizing faculty expertise to promote pedagogical and curricular innovation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • partnerships between Lab for Innovation in Teaching & Learning and faculty • number of 3M nominees and winners • number of events highlighting faculty expertise in teaching • number of attendees at peer-led talks about teaching • number of attendees at new PETA award winner speaker series
<p>Build more opportunities for faculty camaraderie to support a culture of teaching excellence and well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • department retreats facilitated based on needs, not pre-defined service offering • attendees at workshops, events and faculty interest groups to promote well-being • satisfaction with workshops, events and faculty interest groups to promote well-being
<p>learning is better supported so that we can showcase our teaching excellence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of alumni mentors • greater sense of belonging on graduation exit surveys



PROMOTE HUMAN-CENTRED SYSTEMS

GOAL	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
<p>Track and resolve identified issues through regular community feedback to enhance teaching processes, services, and spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • satisfaction with response to requests • sense of transparency about requests by community members • response time to reported issues • request resolution rate
<p>Streamline procedures for faculty to initiate and manage co-teaching arrangements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of co-teaching opportunities successfully taught per academic year • number of faculty participants • number of enrolments in co-taught courses
<p>Establish mechanisms for data sharing to make strategic improvements that will enhance learner outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of available data sets, in easily understandable formats, that meet specific needs • enhanced Moodle system provides integration of data for learner analytics • improved student performance (perseverance, grades) in courses adopting enhanced Moodle • improved instructor awareness of student engagement in courses adopting enhanced Moodle • improved adoption rate of enhanced Moodle
<p>Develop clear guidelines and simplified procedures for evaluating and adopting new educational technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish mechanisms for greater faculty participation in educational technology assessment • establish simple request mechanism to communicate teaching needs
<p>Create an efficient, transparent curriculum revision system that empowers departments to implement innovative changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community members agree that curriculum changes have adequate support • community members agree that curriculum process is clearly explained • established service level for new program Letter of Intent approval



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