Strategic Mandate Agreement

(2014-17)

Between:

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

&

Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology

ONTARIO'S VISION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Ontario's colleges and universities will drive creativity, innovation, knowledge, and community engagement through teaching and research. They will put students first by providing the best possible learning experience for all qualified learners in an affordable and financially sustainable way, ensuring high quality and globally competitive outcomes for students and Ontario's creative economy.

SENECA COLLEGE VISION/MANDATE

Vision

Seneca is building a different kind of school with a different kind of graduate. We are driven by our values of excellence, innovation, community, and diversity. Seneca will be the preferred partner for colleges and universities, offering students the most innovative pathways in Ontario in a number of distinct academic clusters. With an enviable reputation for academic excellence, Seneca will continue to offer career-relevant programming at the certificate, diploma, baccalaureate, and graduate certificate levels. The College will consistently renew and refresh its programs, driven by a focus on student mobility and market demand.

Every program at Seneca will embed cross-disciplinary and experiential learning, and provide flexible learning options that enable students to learn during the day, in the evening, on weekends, in person, and online. More students and faculty will be supported in international study, work, and volunteer opportunities designed to enrich their own Seneca experiences. Students will benefit from a comprehensive set of integrated advising services, from pre-application through to graduation, that will help them match their educational and career pathways with their interests and skills.

A different kind of school will produce a Seneca graduate with distinctive qualities: highly attractive to employers; ethical, engaged and confident; and adaptable and capable of addressing the challenges of the future in a global context. Our focus on the Seneca Core Literacies will ensure that graduates from every program have the broad range of skills that are key to success: communication, problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration – the skills required to navigate change at work and in society.

Mission/Mandate

As one of Canada's largest colleges, Seneca is a leader in full-time and continuing education, and online learning. Located in one of the fastest growing regions in the province, Seneca is meeting the demand for postsecondary education through innovative, career-oriented programming at the certificate, diploma, baccalaureate, and post-graduate levels. Characterized by our strong links to employers, Seneca's programs are designed to keep students at the forefront of the latest developments in their sector and propel graduates into meaningful careers. Seneca is a leader in pathways and is as committed to preparing students to continue their education as it is to welcoming

students from other postsecondary institutions into its high-quality programs. Seneca's applied research program is contributing to the growth of Ontario's creative and information economy, and is producing solution-focused, high-impact research that is improving local productivity, competitiveness, and capacity for innovation.

This Strategic Mandate Agreement was developed in the context of Seneca's Strategic Plan (2013-2017) approved by the College's Board of Governors.

PREAMBLE

This Strategic Mandate Agreement between the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (the Ministry) and Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology (the College) outlines the role the College currently performs in the postsecondary education system and how it will build on its current strengths to achieve its vision and help drive system-wide objectives articulated by the Ministry's Differentiation Policy Framework.

The Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA):

- Identifies the College's existing institutional strengths;
- Supports the current vision, mission, and mandate of the College within the context of the *Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002*, and outlines how the College's priorities align with Ontario's vision and Differentiation Policy Framework; and
- Informs Ministry decision making through greater alignment of Ministry policies and processes to further support and guide the College's areas of strength.

The term of the SMA is from April 1, 2014, to March 31, 2017. The SMA proposal submitted by the College to the Ministry has been used to inform the SMA and is appended to the agreement.

The agreement may be amended in the event of substantive policy or program changes that would significantly affect commitments made in the SMA. Any such amendment would be mutually agreed to in writing, dated, and signed by both signatories.

SENECA COLLEGE KEY AREAS OF DIFFERENTIATION

Seneca is a large urban comprehensive college with campuses in Toronto, York Region and aviation programs in Peterborough. It offers leadership in three distinct areas:

Pathways: Seneca is Ontario's leader in credit transfer and college-university collaboration, with a successful track record in developing, delivering, and sustaining distinctive programs with built-in pathways. Seneca facilitates the transfer of more students to university each year than any other Ontario college and offers a growing number of degree completion opportunities, including its innovative Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program.

Flexible programs: At the forefront of year-round, flexible learning, Seneca has the largest summer enrolment and the largest number of continuing education (CE)

registrants across all Ontario colleges. Seneca is committed to a coordinated and connected approach to learning that enables students to study when and where they want.

Innovative teaching and learning: Seneca is focused on ensuring all of its students have cross-disciplinary and experiential learning opportunities. All programs will incorporate the 10 Seneca Core Literacies, competencies that go beyond the traditional definitions of literacy and are designed to prepare graduates to be successful in our rapidly changing, increasingly diverse workplace and society.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE DIFFERENTIATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

The following outlines areas of strength agreed upon by the College and the Ministry, and the alignment of these areas of strength with the Ministry's Differentiation Policy Framework.

1.   JOBS, INNOVATION, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This component highlights institutions' collaborative work with employers, community partners, and regions, or at a global level, to establish their role in fostering social and economic development, and serving the needs of the economy and labour market.

1.1   Areas of Institutional Strength

Seneca College focuses on jobs, innovation, and economic development in the areas of:

- Applied research through its Applied Research Centres:
    - Centre for Development of Open Technology (CDOT) - Open Web, low-energy data centre computing, 3D web graphics, and Connected Wellness
    - Aviation
    - Animation Arts
    - Big Data and Business Analytics – in collaboration with IBM
    - Health Technology – as a founding member of CreateIT Now at Southlake Hospital
    - Creative Thinking
- Sector-specific Centres providing industry training and development:
    - Financial Services
    - Emerging Digital Technologies
    - Built Environment - Building Environmental Systems
- Graduate Certificate programs providing students with specialized skills to meet labour market demands.
- Continuing Education and Online Learning
- Centres for Community Development:
    - Yorkgate Campus
    - Employment services centres in York Region
- Aviation campus hub in Peterborough

- Awarded an Industrial Research Chair for Colleges (IRCC) by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Council of Canada (NSERC) in open source technology for emerging platforms.
- Seneca's Building Environmental Systems – BES program is offered at 10 colleges and is a standard for building operator certification in Canada.

1.2   Additional Comments

- 2012-13 Ministry data notes lower employment rates (77.1%, below the sector average of 83.1%) and average employment rates in a related field six months after graduation (43.4%, below the sector average of 45.1%)

Institutional Strategies

- The College is working with York Region to establish a Technology Access Centre to assist local manufacturers across a number of sectors to grow their businesses.
- Seneca will develop its Business School to leverage expert faculty and academic programming to address the growing interest in 'big data' and business intelligence.
- The College has joined the Eastern Ontario Research and Education Cloud (OREC) and is contributing to a repository of best-practice teaching material for business analytics at the postsecondary level.
- Seneca is developing the Centre for Creative Thinking to promote cross-disciplinary undergraduate programming, research activity, and experiential learning.
- Through the Centre for Development of Open Technology, Seneca will expand its applied research and industry/community partnerships into Health Technology, Emerging Digital Technologies, and Design Thinking.
- Seneca is developing an On-Campus Incubator to engage students in entrepreneurial activities and experiential learning, while providing local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with ideas and services.
- Seneca will continue to expand its alumni program, enabling graduates to serve as career resources for current students through social media, networking events, and mentoring activities, including a new online mentoring program.

1.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics[1]
• Number of students, faculty, and industry partners engaged in applied research • Total annual funding received for applied research • Number of registrants enrolled in part-time studies • Number of students enrolled in Graduate Certificate programs	• Graduate employment rates • Employer satisfaction rates • Number of graduates employed full-time in a related job

2. TEACHING AND LEARNING

This component captures institutional strengths in program delivery methods that expand learning options for students, and improve their learning experience and career preparedness. This may include, but is not limited to, experiential learning, online learning, entrepreneurial learning, work integrated learning, and international exchange opportunities.

2.1 Areas of Institutional Strength

Seneca College offers programs through a number of delivery methods, including:

- Year-round, flexible delivery providing multiple entry and exit points for students, including extensive Continuing Education and online offerings.
- A strong history of experiential learning, including:
  - Cooperative education placements
  - Applied research opportunities
  - Field placements
  - Internships
  - Externships
  - International work/study
  - Class projects and field trips
- Cross-disciplinary programs and learning experiences.
- Industry and community partnerships engaging students and faculty in entrepreneurship, applied research, and service learning:
  - Centre for Development of Open Technology

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[1] Additional system-wide metrics focused on applied research, commercialization, entrepreneurial activity, and community impact will be developed in consultation with the sector.

- – Ontario Centre for Entrepreneurial Activities
  - – Centre for Big Data and Business Analytics
  - – Centre for Creative Thinking
- Cross-cultural and international experiences:
  - – Seneca MILEs (Mobile Intensive Learning Experiences) in more than 25 countries.
  - – Development projects in St. Lucia and Jamaica.
  - – Placements with international partners.
- Integrated learning services, including assessment, tutoring, mentoring, and workshops.
- To support faculty in the important work they do, Seneca is committed to:
  - – Developing standards of teaching excellence.
  - – Enhancing the faculty performance review model to incorporate reflective practice and peer evaluation.
  - – Encouraging faculty to participate in scholarly activities, including professional development symposia and applied research.
  - – Continuing to require that all new full-time faculty complete the faculty development program within their first two years of teaching.
  - – Developing a modular version of the faculty development program to increase access to all faculty as required.

2.2   Additional Comments

- 2012-13 data notes low graduation rates (59.4%, below the sector average of 64.8%).
- Based on system-wide metrics, Seneca has a large number of programs with a co-operative component (52 in 2012-13, the highest among all colleges).

Institutional Strategies

- Seneca is committed to implementing the 10 Seneca Core Literacies (targeted for full implementation by 2017) to ensure that graduates are adequately prepared to enter the workforce or pursue further study.
- Seneca plans to further enhance student choice in the modalities and approaches to learning through flexible course and credential structures.
- Seneca is increasing its focus on improving the graduation rate through its program review process and major enhancements to student support services. The College is committed to realizing a graduation rate of 70%, beginning with achieving a first-year retention rate of 80% by the end of 2017. Starting in 2014-15, all programs with a graduation rate of less than 70% will be subject to a second level of program review leading to a targeted action plan to address concerns.
- Seneca is transforming the student experience by streamlining its administrative processes and support services, enhancing all communications to applicants and students, and implementing an integrated student advising model by 2017.

- Building on its experience in flexible programming and online learning, Seneca is establishing cFLEX, the Centre for Flexible Learning and Development, to accelerate the development of online and hybrid courseware for delivery in all college education and training offerings.

2.3   Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
- Number of courses including experiential learning components - Number of students enrolled in year-round learning - Number of new hybrid and online courses developed - Number of students engaged in international experiences - Number of students served annually by Learning Services	- Student Satisfaction Survey results - Graduation rates - Retention rates - Number of students enrolled in a co-op program at institution - Number of online course registrants, programs, and courses

3.   STUDENT POPULATION

This component recognizes the unique institutional missions that improve access, retention, and success for underrepresented groups (Aboriginal, first generation, students with disabilities) and francophones. This component also highlights other important student groups that institutions serve that link to their institutional strength. This may include, but is not limited to, international students, mature students, or indirect entrants.

3.1   Areas of Institutional Strength

Seneca College focuses on improving access and success for underrepresented groups in the areas of:

- Serving a range of non- traditional full time learners – incorporating flexible learning options to better serve its student population.
- Attracting a diverse population of international students from more than 100 countries.
- Facilitating the transition of secondary school students into college through dual-credit offerings under the School-College-Work Initiative (SCWI).

Seneca's diverse student population reflects the College's commitment to access and to reflecting the demographics of the communities it serves.

3.2   Additional Comments

- Seneca characterizes access more broadly, using various delivery modes to appeal to its growing base of mature students and working professionals.
- 2012-13 data notes that Seneca has a high number of full-time Aboriginal students (620); however, this reflects 3.9% of its total enrolment (below the sector average of 4.2%).
- Students with disabilities represent 17.3% of Seneca's total enrolment (above the sector average of 15.2%) and first generation students represent 21.2% of total enrolment (below the sector average of 30.3%).
- 2012-13 data indicates a large number of full-time international students (2,558), which represents 15.7% of total enrolment (above the sector average of 11.3%).

Institutional Strategies

Seneca's Yorkgate Campus recently expanded its programming to include Practical Nursing and Social Service Worker programs. Continued expansion of postsecondary programming to community campuses in Newmarket and Vaughan is planned for 2014-15.

Programming continues to be expanded to help transition students into college and through successful completion of their studies, including such initiatives as:

- SMILE (Student Mentoring in Life and Education), a unique peer mentoring program.
- First in Family, providing tutoring, workshops, and other activities specifically for first generation students.
- First Peoples@Seneca, a resource area providing advising and career counselling services, as well as facilitating cultural and social activities, including an on-campus teepee and sweat lodge.

3.3   Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
- Percentage of full-time and part-time students whose first language is not English - Number of source countries for international students - Number of secondary school students enrolled in dual-credit offerings	- Number and proportion of Aboriginal, first generation, students with disabilities, and Francophone students at an institution - Number and proportion of international students enrolled in Ontario (as reported in annual institutional enrolment reporting) - Proportion of an institution's enrolment that receives OSAP

4.   PROGRAM OFFERINGS

This component articulates the breadth of programming, enrolment, and credentials offered, along with program areas of institutional strength/specialization, including any vocationally oriented mandates. This component also recognizes institutions that provide bilingual and/or French-language programming for students.

4.1   Areas of Institutional Strength

Current program areas of strength include:

1. Media, Fashion and Design
2. Community Service
3. Information and Communications Technology
4. Business Management
5. Accounting and Finance
6. Marketing
7. Health and Wellness
8. Chemical/Biological Sciences
9. Engineering Technology
10. Aviation

Proposed program areas for growth include:

1. Media, Fashion and Design
2. Business Management and Marketing
3. Community Health and Wellness
4. Chemical/ Biological Sciences
5. Engineering Technology

4.2   Additional Comments

- Seneca's plans to expand its total credential offerings in existing areas of program strength by more than 30 programs are generally supported by student outcomes and program infrastructure in these areas.

Institutional Strategies
Seneca plans to build on its experience and expertise in Business, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Design, and Health to establish a Centre for Big Data and Business Analytics. The Seneca Centre for Big Data and Business Analytics will respond to industry needs for ICT professionals who can manage increasingly vast and often real-time volumes of data, designers who can create more effective visualizations, and business professionals who can analyze and use data to support evidence-based decision-making and forecasting.

4.3   Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
• Number of proposals for new programs submitted annually to the Ministry • Number of new programs launched annually	• Proportion of enrolment at colleges by occupational cluster and by credential • Institution's system share of enrolment by occupational cluster and by credential • Number of apprentices in each trade

5.   INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION TO SUPPORT STUDENT MOBILITY

This component profiles partnerships between institutions that ensure students have access to a continuum of learning opportunities in a coordinated system. This may include, but is not limited to, credit transfer pathways and collaborative or joint programs between or within sectors.

5.1   Areas of Institutional Strength

Seneca College focuses on improving collaboration, pathways, and student mobility in the areas of:

- Seneca is a leader in credit transfer and college-university collaboration through its:
  - Dedicated Degree and Credit Transfer Office, which provides student advising, advocacy, and assessment of quality pathways for students.
  - Numerous pathways from college to university to support laddering options for students, including agreements with both the University of Toronto and York University.
  - Ongoing participation with the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) by: co-chairing a provincial group to establish equivalencies of liberal arts courses between colleges and universities; being among the first colleges to participate in the course-for-course equivalency database; regularly receiving funding for research; regularly receiving funding for new pathway development; and individual staff members acting as expert members for various task groups and committees.
- Seneca's programs are organized in academic clusters that reflect the industry/employer sectors they serve. These clusters are characterized by a family of credentials: typically one or more degree offerings, related two- and three-year diplomas and graduate certificates, along with appropriate continuing education and corporate training offerings.

5.2 Additional Comments

- In March 2014, Seneca had 417 pathways listed on the ONCAT website involving 12 Ontario universities and nine colleges.

Institutional Strategies

- The Ministry notes Seneca's plans to increase or intensify its partnerships in support of improving pathways for students, including collaborations with York University , Mohawk College, Humber College, Fleming College, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, and the University of Toronto Scarborough.
- Seneca College plans to build on its leadership role in pathways and student mobility by establishing the Ontario Centre for Research in Student Mobility to pursue new research in student mobility, focusing initially on Ontario data to inform college and system policy, program and pathway development, student advising, student support services, and institutional partnerships.

5.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
- Number of applicants/students served annually by the Degree and Credit Transfer Office - Number of university students who enrol annually at Seneca - Number of courses reviewed for the ONCAT database	- Number of college and university pathways and/or articulation agreements (college-college, college-university, university-college) - Number of transfer applicants and registrants - Number of college graduates enrolled in university programs

ASPIRATIONS

The Ministry recognizes the importance of supporting institutions to evolve and acknowledges the strategic aspirations of its postsecondary education institutions; the SMA is not intended to capture all decisions and issues in the postsecondary education system, as many will be addressed through the Ministry's policies and standard processes.

a) Expanded Credentials

The Ministry has noted the College's aspirations to expand degree-granting activity and this will be examined as part of the Ministry's policy review of Ontario's credential options. The Ministry has also noted the College's desire to offer a standalone Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing; however, any decision on this issue will be made only following the tripartite work currently underway.

b) Capital Expansion

The Ministry notes the College's plans to expand its partnership with York University through the creation of a new University of York – Seneca satellite campus. Requests for capital project funding are outside the scope of the SMA process. However, future capital projects should be aligned with the College's areas of strength highlighted in its SMA. Decisions regarding approval and/or funding for capital projects will be made within the context of the Ministry's long-term capital planning process and the Major Capacity Expansion Policy Framework, released December 20th, 2013.

ENROLMENT GROWTH

The strategic enrolment and planning exercise is in the context of a public commitment in the 2011 Budget to increase postsecondary education enrolment by 60,000 additional students over 2010-11 levels. This government has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to ensuring access to postsecondary education for all qualified students.

Seneca College's planned enrolment forecast as expressed in this baseline eligible enrolment scenario is considered reasonable and in line with Ministry expectations, based on the current and projected demographic and fiscal environments.

Baseline Projected Eligible Full-Time Headcounts

Level	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Certificate/Diploma	15,440	15,590	15,743
Degree	2,300	2,323	2,346
Seneca Total	**17,740**	**17,913**	**18,089**

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Ministry and the College recognize that financial sustainability and accountability are critical to achieving institutional mandates and realizing Ontario's vision for the postsecondary education system. To this end, it is agreed that:

- It is the responsibility of the governing board and Senior Administrators of the College to identify, track, and address financial pressures and sustainability issues. At the same time, the Ministry has a financial stewardship role. The Ministry and the College agree to work collaboratively to achieve the common goal of financial sustainability, and to ensure that Ontarians have access to a full range of affordable, high-quality postsecondary education options, now and in the future; and
- The College remains accountable to the Ministry with respect to effective and efficient use of resources to maximize the value and impact of investments made in the postsecondary education system.

The Ministry and the College agree to use the following metrics to assess the financial health and sustainability of the institution:

1. Annual surplus/deficit
2. Accumulated surplus/deficit
3. Net Assets to Expense Ratio
4. Debt Servicing Ratio
5. Quick Ratio
6. Debt to Asset Ratio
7. Net Income to Revenue Ratio

MINISTRY/GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS

Over time, the Ministry commits to align many of its policy, process, and funding levers with the Differentiation Policy Framework and SMAs in order to support the strengths of institutions and implement differentiation. To this end, the Ministry will:

- Engage with both the college and university sectors around potential changes to the funding formula, beginning with the university sector in 2014-15;
- Update the college and university program funding approval process to improve transparency and align with institutional strengths as outlined in the SMAs;
- Streamline reporting requirements across Ministry business lines with the goals of (1) creating greater consistency of reporting requirements across separate initiatives, (2) increasing automation of reporting processes, and (3) reducing the amount of data required from institutions without compromising accountability. In the interim, the Multi-Year Accountability Report Backs will be adjusted and used as the annual reporting mechanism for metrics set out in the SMAs;

- Consult on the definition, development, and utilization of metrics;
- Undertake a review of Ontario's credential options; and
- Continue the work of the Nursing Tripartite Committee.

The Ministry and the College are committed to continuing to work together to:

- Support student access, quality, and success;
- Drive creativity, innovation, knowledge, and community engagement through teaching and research;
- Increase the competitiveness of Ontario's postsecondary education system;
- Focus the strengths of Ontario's institutions; and
- Maintain a financially sustainable postsecondary education system.

SIGNED for and on behalf of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities by:	SIGNED for and on behalf of The Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology by:
ORIGINAL SIGNED BY	*ORIGINAL SIGNED BY*
Deborah Newman	David Agnew
Deputy Minister	President
March 31, 2014	April 14, 2014
Date	Date