

Strategic Mandate Agreement (2014-17)

Between:

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

&

St. Lawrence 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.

ST. LAWRENCE COLLEGE VISION/MANDATE

Vision

Rooted in our communities, we will be a globally recognized college delivering innovative learning opportunities and preparing career-ready graduates to be leaders in their fields.

Mission/Mandate

- We are dedicated to student success, academic excellence, and leadership in our communities.
- We meet the learning needs of postsecondary students in Eastern Ontario and support, through education and training, the economic, social, and cultural needs of the communities we serve. As the primary provider of quality and accessible education in our region, we are our communities' pathway to educational opportunities. We are committed to our strategic directions:
 - Student Experience – Provide outstanding campus communities, support services, and engagement opportunities that enhance the success of our students.
 - Contemporary Learners – Foster digital and foundational literacies in our students through academic grounding and real world experience.
 - Sustainability – Be accountable for our decisions and actions to ensure our long-term viability, reduce our environmental impact, and foster a healthy and dynamic college.

PREAMBLE

This Strategic Mandate Agreement between the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (the Ministry) and St. Lawrence 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.

ST. LAWRENCE COLLEGE KEY AREAS OF DIFFERENTIATION

St. Lawrence promotes student success, academic excellence, and leadership in its communities. Through its campuses in Brockville, Cornwall, and Kingston, St. Lawrence is focused on meeting the learning needs of postsecondary students and supporting the economic, social, and cultural needs of Eastern Ontario.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE DIFFERENTIATION 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

St. Lawrence College focuses on jobs, innovation, and economic development in the areas of:

- St. Lawrence plays an important role in driving prosperity through responsive labour force development and innovation, including:
 - Career relevant and labour market ready programs and graduates that contribute to the communities where St. Lawrence has a presence.

- The Centre for Learning and Performance Improvement – supporting regional municipalities in strategic planning and transformation.
- Applied research that supports local industry in increasing productivity while providing opportunities for students to engage with entrepreneurial or management decision-makers.
- The Sustainable Energy Applied Research Centre.
- Broad and highly integrated industry relationships serving industry along the St. Lawrence River Seaway corridor from Napanee to the Quebec border.

1.2 Additional Comments

- The Ministry notes that in 2012-13 St. Lawrence had the highest graduate employment rate in the sector (90.1%, above the sector average of 83.1%), a high employer satisfaction rate (93.8%, above the sector average of 93.2%), and an above average employment rate in a related field (47.4%, above the sector average in 45.1%).
- Qualitative descriptions of St. Lawrence’s activities suggest the College does place emphasis on this area and does make an important contribution.

Institutional Strategies

- Using Salesforce, the College can communicate with approximately 4,000 active corporate learning accounts. This increases student placement and co-op opportunities by minimizing contact points, streamlining placement requests and processes, maximizing program exposure for multi-placement opportunities, and better matching key skills and competencies with placements.

1.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics ¹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive engagement with business community • Contract training • Applied research • Experiential learning for innovation, entrepreneurship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate employment rates • Employer satisfaction rates • Number of graduates employed full-time

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

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

St. Lawrence College offers programs through a number of delivery methods, including:

- Work placement opportunities across a number of programs.
- A Centre for Contemporary Teaching and Learning – supporting faculty in effective teaching methods and curriculum design.
- Use of online learning to support continuing education programs.

2.2 Additional Comments

- The Ministry acknowledges that St. Lawrence is committed to increasing experiential learning opportunities and the availability of courses and programs through online learning, and is piloting a unique scheduling system and other activities aimed at improving student retention.

Institutional Strategies

- St. Lawrence is further developing and implementing a number of activities to better measure:
 - Strategic commitment
 - Digital fluency
 - Foundational literacy
 - Experiential learning
 - Contemporary Educator
 - Institutional culture of innovation
- As progress is made on these activities, the Ministry and St. Lawrence may update the SMA to incorporate additional metrics.

2.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 at institution

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

St. Lawrence is situated in a region of lower socioeconomic status. The College has demonstrated strength in serving a number of student groups:

- Aboriginal students
 - The College maintains program delivery agreements with the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) and Iohahi:io Akwesasne Adult Education (IAAE).
 - Aboriginal students make effective use of Student Success Facilitators, counseling and other student support services, and two Aboriginal Centres (Kingston, Cornwall).
 - The College offers a summer orientation for approximately 100 new Aboriginal students to acquaint them and their parents with the College, a new social network, and service providers before classes start.
- First generation students
 - The College has high demand for first generation bursaries, high approval ratings for services, and high rates of success (92% of first generation students who used a service completed their first year).
- Crown Wards
 - St. Lawrence provides and supports postsecondary education opportunities for Crown Wards through MOUs with Child and Family Service agencies.
- Students with disabilities
- Lower income students

3.2 Additional Comments

- The Ministry notes that St. Lawrence’s strengths in serving and supporting students in underrepresented groups are confirmed by performance indicators.
- Ministry data indicates that in 2012-13 32.6% of St. Lawrence’s enrolment was first generation (above the sector average of 30.3%), 5.6% of enrolment was Aboriginal (above the sector average of 4.2%), 18.7% of enrolment was students with disabilities (above the sector average of 15.2%), and 76.3% of students received OSAP.
- The Ministry acknowledges St. Lawrence’s commitment to assessing and advancing services, with attention to such areas as the demographics of the student population and students’ preparedness, physical and mental well-being, cultural needs, lifestyle, financial ability, and social and recreational interests.

Institutional Strategies

- St. Lawrence is playing a leadership role in providing mental health support by partnering with Queen’s University in a \$1M research project funded by Ontario’s Mental Health Innovation Fund to identify ideal postsecondary education mental health supports and processes.
- The College plans to expand supports for students, and to improve its first generation mentoring programme and the web page with which services are communicated.

3.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
<p>St. Lawrence to develop metrics relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and support for students with special needs • Serving a low-SES region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. Nursing Related
2. Biological Sciences
3. Behavioural Science
4. Social and Community Services
5. Traditional Business
6. Advertising and Design
7. Arts
8. Construction Management
9. Hospitality and Tourism
10. Sustainable Technology

Proposed program areas for growth include:

1. Advertising and Design
2. Social and Community Services
3. Traditional Business
4. Arts
5. Construction

4.2 Additional Comments

- The Ministry notes the College's expansion into Digital Photography to provide greater programming and improve access at its Cornwall Campus.
- The Ministry notes the work underway by the College to adapt its Advertising and Design program cluster to improve student outcomes and respond to the labour market.
- In the event St. Lawrence requests funding approval for Graphic Design programs, the Ministry will require additional information (e.g., student demand and labour market analysis).

Institutional Strategies

- The Ministry notes the proposed Bachelor of Commerce program is presented as an alternative option, while discussion around the current Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree continues with Laurentian University.

4.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
St. Lawrence to develop metrics relevant to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad programming range for regional postsecondary education access • Demonstrated program leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

St. Lawrence College focuses on improving collaboration, pathways, and student mobility in the areas of:

- Engagement in the School-to-College-to-Work Initiative.
- Participation in the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) initiatives to align programming and facilitate mobility.
- Pathways with:
 - Laurentian University’s Bachelor of Business Administration program.
 - Brock University whereby students complete the Behavioural Science Technology (BST) Diploma in lieu of year three of their Brock Psychology degree.
 - Tralee and Sligo Institutes of Technology in Ireland for 15 different programs.
 - Queen’s University Music graduates to complete St. Lawrence’s Music and Digital Media program.

5.2 Additional Comments

- The Ministry acknowledges and supports St. Lawrence’s planned expansion of student pathways and mobility through initiatives such as a Memorandum of Understanding with Queen’s University and improvements in providing students with assistance in transferring in or out of the College.

Institutional Strategies

- St. Lawrence is committed to growing its relationship with other local institutions and regional universities to develop additional joint programming and is working to provide additional data to participate in the online database provided by ONCAT.

5.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
<p>St. Lawrence to develop metrics relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported pathways to and from college• Robust partnerships for learners and educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 St. Lawrence 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 St. Lawrence’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) Apprenticeship

The Ministry acknowledges the College’s commitment to apprenticeship and the skilled trades, and its recommendation for apprenticeship reform. The Ministry is currently undertaking efforts to modernize Ontario’s apprenticeship administration and any decisions will be made within this context.

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.

St. Lawrence 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	5,404	5,458	5,513
Degree	871	880	889
St. Lawrence Total	6,275	6,338	6,402

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:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Deborah Newman
Deputy Minister

March 31, 2014

Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of St.
Lawrence College of Applied Arts
and Technology by:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Glenn Vollebregt
President

April 11, 2014

Date