

Strategic Mandate Agreement (2014-17)

Between:

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

&

Confederation 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.

CONFEDERATION COLLEGE VISION/MANDATE

Mission

- Confederation College inspires learners to succeed in their lives and careers in Northwestern Ontario and beyond.

Vision

- Confederation College will enrich lives through learning.

This Mission and Vision has been approved by the Confederation College Board of Governors.

PREAMBLE

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

CONFEDERATION COLLEGE KEY AREAS OF DIFFERENTIATION

Confederation supports the learning and lives of the people of Northwestern Ontario and provides leadership in Aboriginal Learning. It does this by providing access to education and training, and leveraging multiple rural and remote campuses through Technology Enabled Learning to support the success of learners and community development.

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

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

- Applied research to support innovation in Northwestern Ontario and experiential opportunities for learners in:
 - Advanced Manufacturing;
 - Natural Resources (Biomass and Water);
 - Health (Wellness); and
 - Aboriginal Learning (Centre for Policy in Aboriginal Learning).
- Fully integrated Employment and Training Services in Northwestern Ontario.

1.2 Additional Comments

- 2012-13 Ministry data notes a high employment rate (89.3%, above the sector average of 83.1%), a high rate of employment in a related field (53.0%, above the sector average of 45.1%), and a high employer satisfaction rate (97.7%, the highest in the province).

Institutional Strategies

- Confederation College plans to integrate a comprehensive Employment and Training Services network, matched to local community and employment needs, across their regional campuses by 2016.
- Confederation College works closely with partners to grow entrepreneurs (e.g., the Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre on the Thunder Bay campus and other initiatives with Lakehead University).

1.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics¹
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number and percentage of employment service clients placed• Number of students in entrepreneurial activities• Number of applied research projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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

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

- Blending experiential, technology enabled, and community-based program delivery for learners.
- Through its Integrated Plan, continuing to enhance a Technology Enabled Learning (TEL) environment that supports hybrid, synchronous, and asynchronous delivery of programming across multiple sites, to improve access and the quality of education in Northwestern Ontario.
- The Teaching and Learning Centre supports the further development of the Integrated Plan, including TEL.

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

2.2 Additional Comments

- Between 2010-11 and 2012-13, Ministry data notes a high number of eLearning course offerings (2,495) and a growing number of registrations in eLearning courses (from 227 to 1,601) to support Confederation’s Integrated Plan.
- 2012-13 Ministry data notes a low graduation rate (58.0%, below the sector average of 64.8%).
- 2012-13 Ministry data notes a low retention rate for 1st to 2nd year students (69.1%).

Institutional Strategies

- Confederation plans to build on its Integrated Plan to improve learner success via integrating technology into an increased range of programs, supports for enhanced counselling, career path development, and financial advice. The Ministry supports Confederation’s partnerships with Contact North, the Ontario Telemedicine Network, First Nations, and Boards of Education to improve infrastructure and continue supporting learner access.
- Confederation continues to emphasize providing comprehensive services and programs to support student success, including student navigators and early intervention strategies.
- The Ministry notes Confederation’s development and construction of The Student Village, an innovative housing complex for learners, designed to address the challenges in accommodation for students in Thunder Bay and improve overall postsecondary student success.
- The Ministry notes Confederation reports that, due to strong employment rates in Thunder Bay, many students move from education to the labour market without completing a program/credential.

2.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate satisfaction rate • Number of students involved in experiential learning • Number of partnerships involved in sharing curriculum through TEL • Success rates of learners served through the Integrated Plan 	<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

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

- Improving learner transition programming supports for postsecondary education through the School-College-Work Initiative, in partnership with 11 Boards of Education in Northwestern Ontario.
- Learner centred balance between access and success.
- Confederation's Negahneewin Council plays a vital role in identifying priorities for Aboriginal Learning and communities by emphasizing Aboriginal support services, regional campuses, responsive training opportunities, and the presence of Aboriginal learning in all programs.
- The Centre for Policy in Aboriginal Learning (CPAL), developed from Negahneewin, takes the work of Confederation in support of Aboriginal Learning to applied research and policy development. CPAL provides leadership in the identification and dissemination of best practices in Aboriginal Learning.

3.2 Additional Comments

- 2012-13 Ministry data notes a high number of Aboriginal students as a proportion of total enrolment (the highest among all colleges at 25.9%, far above the sector average of 4.2%).
- 2012-13 Ministry data notes a high number of first generation students as a proportion of total enrolment (the highest among all colleges at 53.1%, well above the sector average of 30.3%).
- The Ministry acknowledges the unique learning environment and context of Northwestern Ontario in which Confederation delivers postsecondary education and training, and the innovative and responsive strategies the College has implemented.

3.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students that move from preparatory programming to postsecondary programming • Number of School-College-Work Initiative (SCWI) learners enrolled in postsecondary programming • Number of collaborations through the leadership of CPAL • Percent of students from Northwestern Ontario 	<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. Access and Success
2. Aboriginal Learning
3. Serving Northwestern Ontario (community development and entrepreneurship)

Proposed program areas for growth include:

1. Health & Community Service
2. Trades/Technology and Engineering
3. Access & Pre-programming
4. Business

4.2 Additional Comments

- Confederation proposes to expand programming into key areas of generally strong growth, including Health & Community Service, and Technology and Engineering.
- The Ministry notes the College’s plans to expand programming through partnerships and shared curriculum design and development.
- The Ministry notes Confederation’s significant enrolment in pre-programming, which is intended to prepare students for success in postsecondary studies.

Confederation is tracking student success in this area. The Ministry looks forward to working with Confederation to better understand best practices in foundation programs, measures of success, and opportunities for consolidating across areas of study.

- In the event the College proposes to grow its Business program, the Ministry will require additional information elements (e.g., student demand and labour market analysis).

4.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students in pre-programming • Number of students that move from preparatory programming to postsecondary programming 	<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

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

- In meeting its commitment to serving the needs of the residents of Northern Ontario, Confederation and five other Northern colleges form the Northern Colleges Collaboration, which is committed to improve sharing in the development and delivery of curriculum, courses, programs, and learner support services, as well as professional development opportunities.
- Fleming College and a number of Northern colleges, including Confederation, are collaborating on program development in Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences to share expertise and best practices.
- Lakehead University and Confederation College have a longstanding collaborative relationship on program offerings and access to improve postsecondary credential completion and entrepreneurship, as well as building learner pathways to higher learning.

- The College works with local school boards to support the mobility of students from the K-12 system through Dual Credit programs, etc.

5.2 Additional Comments

Institutional Strategies

- Confederation supports student mobility with Lakehead University and other institutions through credit transfer agreements.
- Confederation is focussed on the further development of its relationship with Lakehead University through the mutual support of international student recruitment, entrepreneurship, reciprocal student transfer, and expanded TEL.
- Confederation has an active partnership with eleven Northern school boards to support student success and transition to postsecondary studies.

5.3 Metrics

Institutional Metrics	System-Wide Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students with university education enrolled at college • Number of School-College-Work Initiative learners continuing to college 	<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.

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.

Confederation 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	3,049	2,969	3,085
Degree	0	0	0
Confederation Total	3,049	2,969	3,085

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

April 2, 2014

Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of The
Confederation College of Applied Arts
and Technology by:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Jim Madder
President

April 23, 2014

Date