

The SFU logo is a white 'SFU' text on a red rectangular background.

SFU

LIFELONG
LEARNING

2019-2024

LIFELONG LEARNING FIVE-YEAR ACADEMIC PLAN

“With life spans projected to extend as long as 150 years in the future, two, four, or six years of learning on the front end of a 100-year work life will not be enough. Learning and ongoing skill development will become a way of life.”

— *Robot Ready: Human+ Skills for the Future of Work*

VISION

Transforming,
empowering
and mobilizing
learners for life
in a changing
world.

MISSION

To be the leading provider of flexible, responsive education in British Columbia and beyond.

VALUES

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

We deliver accessible high-quality academic programming that anticipates both learners' needs and the demands of a changing world.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SOCIETAL IMPACT

We believe lifelong education is a key means of enriching quality of life, promoting social and economic development, and strengthening the future of Canada and its diverse citizens.

ADVOCACY

We respond to the various learning needs of non-traditional and historically excluded learners and represent their interests within the university.

COLLABORATION AND RECIPROCITY

We foster strong collaborative relationships with the university and external communities, based on principles of reciprocity.

TEAMWORK

We recognize that each person contributes to the success of the organization and that supportive working relationships and inclusive work environments are fundamental to achieving goals.

AGENTS OF CHANGE

SFU Lifelong Learning strives to be the leading provider of flexible, responsive education in British Columbia and beyond. We believe that lifelong learning not only imparts knowledge but also empowers and inspires participants to be change agents for their lives and communities. We mobilize learners by providing timely, targeted programming that helps them succeed in a fast-changing world.

Lifelong Learning uses nimble programming and inclusive engagement initiatives that reach people and populations not served by more formal academic pathways. By offering an academically excellent experience, we transform learners and demonstrate SFU's commitment to meeting their diverse needs for today and tomorrow. Through inclusive engagement, we empower citizens and further the connections between the institution and the broader community. Our innovative curriculum mobilizes learners by providing access to academic programming with few barriers. With the support of our staff, instructors and many partners, we look forward to the next five years.



OUR REACH

Since 1971, Lifelong Learning has delivered relevant, meaningful continuing education and English language and culture programming that extends the accessibility and reach of Simon Fraser University. We teach 6,000 learners each year in primarily non-credit programs that span business and management, liberal arts, English language learning, communication and writing, health and wellness, community building, and leadership. We deliver full-time and part-time certificates through face-to-face courses in Vancouver and Surrey and through a suite of online offerings that has grown more than 800 per cent since 2013.

Lifelong Learning has also built robust community engagement activities that connect people through education and provide the tools to accelerate social innovation, enhance community well-being and increase societal impact. Our community programming, which reaches roughly 10,000 attendees each year, puts us on the front lines of SFU knowledge mobilization. Faculty and staff engagement—through committing to best practices, building a culture of learning and nurturing competencies—is critical to these initiatives.

2018/2019

6,422

LEARNERS

415

INSTRUCTORS

379

UNIQUE COURSES

INTERNATIONAL ONLINE LEARNERS



RESPONDING TO A CHANGING WORLD

According to WorkBC, the province is forecast to have more than 900,000 job openings between 2018 and 2028 (*BC's Labour Market Outlook: 2018 Edition*). Seventy-seven per cent of them will require some form of post-secondary education or training, and, as shown in the figure below, 41 per cent will require diploma, certificate or apprenticeship training.

Anticipated job openings include replacements and new positions that will be filled by young people starting work, new immigrants, older workers changing occupations and people from other provinces. Lifelong Learning can meet the needs of these groups with programming that supports their desire for flexibility, quick time-to-completion and direct industry relevance.

WHERE WE LEARN

58%

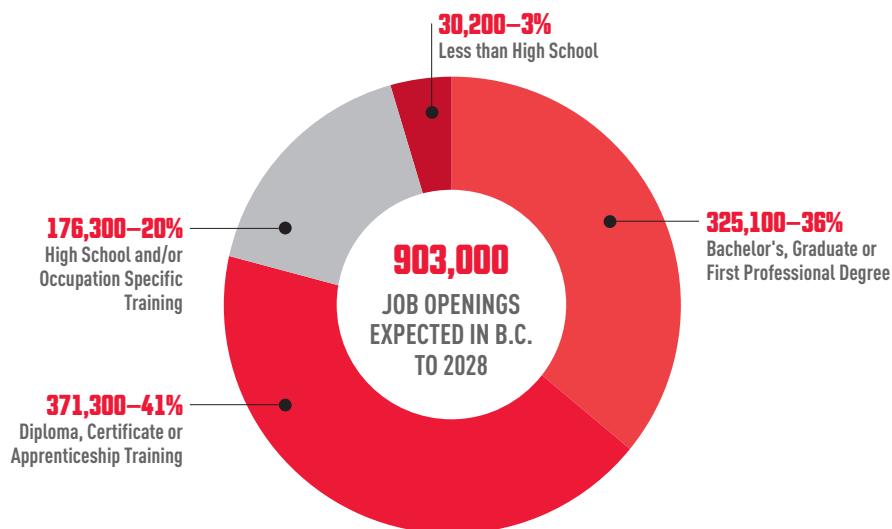
SFU'S VANCOUVER CAMPUS

15%

SFU'S SURREY CAMPUS

27%

ONLINE



Job openings expected in B.C. to 2028 (*BC's Labour Market Outlook: 2018 Edition*)



LOOKING AHEAD

As we plan for the next five years, we must ensure that our programming is aligned with the university's mission and goals and that it responds to identified market and community needs, always seeking the right balance between for-profit programming and subsidized community offerings. Beginning in fiscal 2019/2020, base budget funding to Lifelong Learning will be reduced with the expectation that the unit will eventually become self-sufficient. Simultaneously, the unit is challenged to enhance and grow community engagement activities.

This plan outlines the academic excellence, inclusive engagement, and innovative curriculum and delivery strategies that will help us meet our goals. We bring the strengths of SFU to people of all ages and empower them to succeed regardless of their past life experience or educational background. We look forward to enhancing our collaborative activities with university, community and industry partners to bring new educational opportunities to an ever-expanding audience of learners in British Columbia and beyond.



COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND RECONCILIATION

As a point of access to the university, Lifelong Learning champions the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and the recommendations of both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and SFU's Aboriginal Reconciliation Council. As DVV International has observed, socially marginalized people are more likely than others to leave formal education. For many learners, Lifelong Learning offers an avenue to return to education and gain the power to break with "vicious cycles of marginalization and low educational attainment" (*Youth and Adult Education in the Agenda 2030*, p.11).

To support this commitment, Lifelong Learning must complete the following tasks:

- Develop and implement strategies that foster a learning and teaching environment that is inclusive of all adults regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, faith, physical ability, age, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.
- Scale up efforts to advance Indigenous rights and opportunities, including Indigenizing curriculum and creating programming that advances Indigenous inclusion and reconciliation.
- Implement guidelines for staff and instructors to support EDI alignment and Indigenization of curriculum.

OUR GOALS



GOAL

Transform Lifelong Learners through an Academically Excellent Experience

Lifelong Learning delivers outstanding academic programming that is taught by experts in their field. Our offerings are informed by the expertise of the community, the research strengths of the university and the needs of both civil society and the labour market.

Lifelong Learning's non-credit certificates and diplomas are developed, delivered and continuously improved in consultation with academic advisory committees and are approved by the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies. Partnerships with the SFU faculties, professional associations and industry practitioners are central to maintaining the quality of our curriculum. In collaboration with advisors, we craft programs that help learners address challenges in such areas as governance, social innovation, health and business.

The jobs of the present and future require an interdisciplinary balance between the technical skills employers demand and the "soft" or human competencies that support creativity, collaboration, innovation and leadership. We help learners transform and adapt to a changing marketplace through a robust focus on a range of competencies and expansion of our high-quality offerings.

Attaining this objective means we need to undertake the following tasks:

- Enhance faculty representation on advisory committees and the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies to support the development and governance of innovative programming and credentials.
- Implement a course and program outcome assessment framework that includes student evaluation of teaching and learning, and establish a rolling schedule for assessment and program/unit review.
- Enhance training and support for curriculum design, program development, and learning and teaching.
- Increase partnerships with career professional associations and leading practitioners to ensure that we are meeting labour market needs in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

INITIATING ACTION

By September 2020, Lifelong Learning will implement a revitalized program proposal, development and assessment/review framework.

GOAL

Empower Lifelong Learners through Inclusive Engagement

Lifelong Learning fosters inclusive engagement and dialogue, helping diverse learners acquire everything from fundamental knowledge in the liberal arts to insights into the contemporary themes defining our times.

In Lifelong Learning, we treat members of the community as partners in discovery. Healthy, vibrant communities need engaged citizens. Our engagement initiatives offer low-barrier access, broad geographical reach and an inclusive approach that encourages and empowers learners from marginalized groups.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Lifelong Learning's commitment to community engagement is part of our DNA. Much of our practice is informed by principles of social justice. We offer low- and no-cost programming to a wide variety of diverse learners, whether in the form of open access conferences, weekend workshops or entire programs funded by internal or external partners.

As we move to a new business model in anticipation of reduced university funding, our community engagement mandate remains at the forefront of our academic planning process, recognizing that some of our programming will subsidize other parts of our operations.

To ensure that we are able to support delivery of ongoing community engagement activities, Lifelong Learning must complete the following tasks:

- Design a model for mobilizing knowledge and sharing expertise in community-engaged/integrated education, drawing on strategic partnerships with faculties and existing community engagement initiatives.
- Increase opportunities for engaging internal and external communities in events and programming that build on the strengths of Lifelong Learning and SFU's community engagement vision.
- Capitalize on opportunities to collaborate with community-engaged researchers and to partner with the faculties to design and deliver community-based programming that supports SFU's vision of engagement, innovation and research.
- Maximize opportunities to create and expand revenue-generating programming that can offset the costs of developing and delivering excellent low- or no-cost offerings.

INITIATING ACTION

By September 2020, Lifelong Learning will implement a community engagement action plan.

GOAL

Mobilize Lifelong Learners through Curriculum and Delivery

Lifelong Learning delivers leading-edge programming to meet the needs and curiosities of learners throughout their lifespan.

Accessing ongoing skills training is key to the success of learners who must respond to a rapidly evolving labour market. With the academic excellence of SFU as a foundation, Lifelong Learning is uniquely poised to offer high-quality programming that fits the needs of busy people wherever they are located. We offer just-in-time delivery of educational opportunities to meet societal demands across learners' lifespans where such opportunities are not available through other university programming.

Potential areas of growth include flexible delivery methods, programs delivered at a variety of locations, and relevant credentials that mobilize learners and help them meet employer needs. As we evolve our portfolio, we will open doors for new audiences to access knowledge that takes them to their next step in professional or personal development.

To achieve this goal, Lifelong Learning must complete the following tasks:

- Create a wider range of responsive and just-in-time content for delivering and accrediting learning, such as stackable credentials, badging and micro-credentials.
- Increase programming that gives learners skills in entrepreneurship, community capacity building and/or innovation.
- Develop new programming that responds to the needs of new Canadians, including EAL, non-traditional and under-represented learners.
- Create flexible programming that enables learners to move among SFU's three campuses/communities, or from one learning delivery platform to another, or that brings the learning to the learners, no matter their location.

INITIATING ACTION

By June 2020, Lifelong Learning will have created a credential framework to support development of more flexible offerings, including guidelines to standardize contact hours across various offerings.



NEXT STEPS

As Lifelong Learning makes progress toward self-sufficiency, we have set ambitious deadlines for our initiating actions. In part, this aggressive agenda responds to the consequences of several years of leadership turnover that resulted in a lack of capacity to address challenges in both academic and operational quality and processes. With new stability and a nearly complete complement of senior leaders, Lifelong Learning is poised to meet our action deadlines and then turn our attention more fully to new program development and continuous improvement.

The plans and frameworks set out in our initiating actions support more streamlined curriculum development and renewal across Lifelong Learning. Together with extensive revisions to our operations processes, these efficiencies will enable us to respond to the dual challenges of attaining self-sufficiency and fulfilling our commitment to community engagement. As we take the post-2020 step of inhabiting these new processes and frameworks, Lifelong Learning will be well positioned to deliver academically excellent, transformative programming that builds competencies for an evolving job market, engages vibrant communities and meets the needs of learners life-wide and life-long.

CANADA'S ENGAGED UNIVERSITY

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