

Multi-Year Program Planning Framework

September 2015

Introduction

Multi-Year Program Planning (MYPP) is a college-wide process for planning credit, credentialed, and apprenticeship programming within the context of College Plan 2015-2020. At the centre of the process are NIC's departments and schools which will develop rolling three-year plans for base and cost-recovery funded credit-based programming that meet the needs of our diverse regions using available financial resources. These program plans will form the basis of service and financial planning necessary for the College to achieve its goals.

The MYPP process establishes optimum program enrolment, a regionally responsive program mix and program quality standards, all within the context of student success strategies and planning processes that create the conditions for programs to thrive. As such, the process includes mechanisms to monitor enrolment related goals as a primary indicator of NIC's responsiveness to our students, our communities, our partners in education and provincial government priorities.

Why MYPP now?

While NIC has always risen to the challenge of serving the diverse needs of its geographically dispersed population, the broader post-secondary environment in which NIC operates continues to change provincially, nationally and internationally. Sustainable funding is a key and critical issue for the institution. Multi-Year Program Planning is necessary so that NIC can create its future within this ever-changing environment – to thoughtfully and strategically plan its way forward rather than merely reacting.

This approach ensures that NIC adjusts to changing internal and external priorities and directions, as well as market demands and shifts in post-secondary education in BC, Canada and around the globe. The strength of MYPP is its approach – college-wide consideration of the key elements of healthy programs including student demand, institutional and faculty priorities, government direction and industry and community input.

MYPP Process and Timeframe

MYPP is a college-wide exercise in leadership; the process encourages both vertical and horizontal leadership across all levels at NIC. The plan integrates recent work to strengthen college policy on programming and it builds on NIC's existing foundation of success - our commitment to our students, working cross-divisionally, being regionally responsive, indigenizing, and internationalizing.

Advisory to the Senior Education Team (SET), a college-wide Steering Committee composed of chairs, interested faculty and staff, members of Education Council, and administrators continues to guide the development of this framework through a series of meetings. The Committee first met on December 19, 2014 and will continue to meet through to Spring 2015. See Appendix 1 for a list of participants to date.

Upon completion of the framework, the planning process for department and schools will unfold as follows:

May – October 2015	Schools and departments to engage in the development of their 3-year rolling plans.
Fall 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Plans to be reviewed and approved by responsible Dean/AVP.Departments and schools to make presentations to the Senior Education and Senior Leadership teams.
Mid Fall 2015 – March 2016	College service areas to prepare plans to support finalized programming.
May – October (ongoing)	Schools and departments to monitor results and update plans.

The adoption of this annual planning cycle will allow program-planning decisions to link to the college's annual budget development process as well as funding timelines, governance processes and preparation of the timetable.

MYPP Planning Assumptions

Enrolment in our programming and student success underpins NIC's MYPP framework. As with any planning process, there are a number of assumptions guiding this process. The Steering Committee has identified the following as the top five:

1. The MYPP process is an iterative process that connects NIC to students and other members of community.

This MYPP Framework marks the beginning of NIC's program planning process. The process will evolve and be enriched by dialogue.

2. NIC programs must be responsive to self-described student, community and industry needs, including regional labour market needs

NIC is a community of professional educators that bridge the learning needs of the places where we live, industry and business, other post-secondary institutions, and other organizations. Defining these needs requires direct input from those stakeholders.

3. Student success is key to NIC's success.

To ensure that we have the right programming, we need to understand how students define success. We can then develop and evaluate our programming to ensure it aligns with these definitions. Therefore, in addition to standard measures of student success, NIC programs will work with its students to determine what student success means to them, to develop mechanisms to evaluate its programs against these criteria and to establish development processes to support faculty and staff to respond to this feedback. This will be balanced with government mandate and direction as well as the needs of communities and industries.

4. Enrolment in our programming is the most significant measure of our relevance.

Student enrolment in our programming and their success underpins NIC's MYPP framework. Enrolment related goals and measures of student success form the benchmarks for MYPP on the understanding that the latter drives the former. Students must find a meaningful connection to NIC's programs whether that is expressed as a personal learning journey or a particular labour market outcome. As a regional community college, NIC will establish optimum program enrolments that reflect relationships with communities and stakeholders, community size, programming needs, and access to education.

5. Programming must be financially sustainable.

Education is a pathway for individual self-discovery and personal growth as well as a social and economic development tool. While NIC's programs will be designed to meet student interests, goals and passions, they must also align with government mandates and labour market demand to ensure optimal access to available funds. For NIC to thrive in today's post-secondary environment, programming must also be delivered in a financially sustainable manner.

Planning Context

Successful planning relies on a solid understanding of the context in which NIC operates. The following are key factors in our planning environment:

Government Funding and Policy

Enrolment drives college revenues. Tuition and operating grants from the province account for the vast majority of NIC's operating revenues and these have been diminishing. In fiscal 15/16 NIC will see a third year of reductions to its base grant and, while government has implemented the *Skills for Jobs Blueprint*, institutions are required to reallocate funding to provincially defined labour market needs. In addition, government has capped tuition and fee increases to a maximum of 2%.

Accountability to the taxpayer is also a key government consideration. NIC is operating in an environment of increasing attention and controls focusing on the efficient use of our government grants. To meet its financial needs, NIC must protect its established primary revenue stream by remaining responsive to government policy and direction while continuing to diversify its revenue sources.

Demographics and Demand for Post-Secondary Education¹

The NIC region can expect a slow and steady 4% growth in population (based on projections) between 2015 and 2020, slightly less than the provincial rate of 7%. A shift in the age distribution of the population is also projected due to expected decline in the number and proportion of 18-24 year-olds. This group represents the traditional demographic for post-secondary education who typically make up almost half of NIC's credit headcount enrolment. Correspondingly, the proportion of the population 65 and above is growing. NIC will increasingly have to consider the implications of these demographic changes and their relevance to our programs and services.

NIC operates as a guest in the traditional territories of 35 First Nations. Accordingly, there are just over 17,000 people who identify as Aboriginal living in the NIC region, which includes over 14,000 First Nations and around 3,000 Métis.² Aboriginal people account for about 12% of the NIC region population, which is significantly higher than the provincial average of 5%. The Aboriginal population in the NIC region is younger than the overall average, with 18-24 year-olds making up around 11% of the Aboriginal population and 9% of the population overall. Partnering with Aboriginal communities to meet the needs of Aboriginal students must be a consideration for all NIC programs.

High school graduation rates and post-secondary completion rates in NIC's catchment area have historically been substantially lower than provincial rates. The most current data indicate that between 2009/10 and 2011/12 the NIC region's high school non-graduation rate was 26%, slightly below the provincial rate. Post-secondary completion rates, nonetheless, remain low in the NIC region with 41% of 25-64 year olds having no post-secondary credentials compared with 35% provincially in 2011. Readiness for post-secondary education and training varies considerably across the four major regions that NIC serves. As a result, programming will have to be responsive to the post-secondary readiness of the population as well as to the needs of the region's communities and industries.

Competition, Educational Identity and Institutional Branding

As provincial funding diminishes and the size of the traditional post-secondary age group declines, it follows that NIC is operating in an increasingly competitive post-secondary environment. Provincially funded public institutions, including universities, are all striving for greater student numbers. Competition is strengthened by on-line and other distance modes of delivery that facilitate the provision of instruction irrespective of geography. Moreover, private sector institutions have demonstrated that students are prepared to pay a premium for accessibility and immediate entry.

The success of NIC's programs will, therefore, be dependent on showcasing the distinct advantage of being an NIC student, the educational identity of our programs and their unique selling points. Developing the essence of the NIC brand must be a top institutional priority.

7 Elements of Healthy and Sustainable Programming at NIC

The MYPP Steering Committee began its work by answering the question, "What are the elements of a healthy and sustainable program at NIC?" The purpose of this group discussion was to determine those things to which every NIC program should aspire. The committee's deliberations were thoughtful and broad yet consistent across the working groups.

Seven inter-related and overlapping elements of healthy, sustainable programming at NIC emerged:

1. Meeting Students' Needs
2. Relevant Curriculum
3. Evaluation and Development
4. Financially Sustainable.
5. Accessibility
6. Regional Outcome
7. Educational Identity/Brand

Element 1: Meeting Students' Needs

NIC's programs must be shaped around students' interests, passions and life goals and the college must provide support to the achievement of these ends.

Objectives:

- NIC programs will actively work to determine how students define their success and use faculty expertise to respond to this feedback;
- NIC will demonstrate how its programs link to goals and elements of student success;
- NIC will plan and develop strong student supports and ensure effective communication of these.

Actions:

- NIC will develop ways (e.g., surveys, focus groups) to understand what "student success" means to students, recognizing the perspectives of aboriginal students, international students, older students, direct-entry students, etc.;
- NIC faculty will work with students to define "student success" in terms of learning outcomes;
- All programs will use measures of student satisfaction in their evaluation and development processes;
- NIC will obtain input from students about their support needs;

- NIC will partner with service organizations in our regional communities to identify and develop student supports;
- NIC will conduct entry, midpoint and exit student surveys to augment existing, provincially administered outcomes surveys;
- NIC programs will further develop relationships with alumni as a way of obtaining feedback about their experience after leaving NIC.

Element 2: Relevant Curriculum

The curriculum for each of NIC's programs must be relevant to students, as defined by them and by our communities, post-secondary partners, industries and employers. Further, NIC's curriculum must be balanced, comprehensive, dynamic and innovative to enable student success.

Objectives:

- NIC will focus on facilitating student learning that is transferrable beyond single disciplines and areas;
- NIC will expand the indigenization of its curriculum to reflect Canada's first peoples;
- NIC will increase the internationalization of its curriculum to prepare students to be successful in an increasingly globalized economy;
- NIC will foster smooth student transitions between programs to ensure that students have viable pathways to their educational and employment goals;
- NIC will highlight the applicability of its learning outcomes, particularly employability skills;
- NIC will consult with community and industry partners to obtain their feedback on our programs;
- NIC will reaffirm its commitment to its new program development process and the development of a strong business case for new programs.

Actions:

- The relevancy of NIC courses and programs will be articulated through appropriate learning outcomes;
- NIC will establish program/course entry and exit criteria appropriate to learning outcomes;
- NIC will work with Aboriginal partners to ensure programs include indigenous ways of knowing and being;
- NIC will diversify the program choices of international students;
- NIC will monitor the employability of our program leavers;
- NIC programs will establish ladders between its programs and pathways between both its programs and those at other post-secondary institutions;
- NIC schools and departments will readily engage with its stakeholders and establish mechanisms to obtain external advice about its programs;
- Proposed new programs and major program revisions will go through established NIC processes.

Element 3: Evaluation and Development

The NIC advantage must centre on quality programming and learning experiences but to be competitive, programs must feature more than that. Strong programming drives enrolment, increases our relevance to our communities and supports financial sustainability. To ensure we continue to offer quality programs and learning, NIC is committed to continuous quality improvement through evaluation and development.

Objectives:

- NIC will enhance the depth and breadth of quality within its programs;
- NIC will develop iterative, formative program and service evaluation processes that include both standardized components and discipline specific considerations;
- NIC's program and service evaluation processes will be inward and outward in orientation, seeking feedback from students and other stakeholders;
- NIC's program and service evaluations will be both forward and backward looking;
- NIC's program and service evaluation processes will include both qualitative and quantitative data.

Actions:

- NIC programs will establish indices of quality for their discipline/area;
- NIC will develop program evaluation mechanisms that consider the alignment of program achievements against the goals and objectives of the College Plan as well as government policy and priorities;
- NIC will develop program specific student outcomes surveys and other feedback mechanisms;
- NIC will develop standard course evaluations guided by the collective agreement;
- NIC will establish processes of faculty and staff evaluation guided by the respective collective agreements.

Element 4: Financially Sustainable

NIC's ability to meet its provincial mandate to provide comprehensive education and training for adults relies on the financial sustainability of programming, the efficient use of government grants and increasingly, the diversification of revenue sources.

Objectives:

- NIC will increase student seat utilization to enhance fiscal sustainability;
- NIC will adjust budgets in response to multi-year program plans;
- NIC will offer programming in a manner that balances the requirements for a sound learning environment with efficient delivery;
- NIC will both shape and respond to student demand for learning;
- NIC will respond to government funded enrolment opportunities that are aligned with community needs;
- NIC will respond to emerging post-secondary education and training markets;
- NIC will seek to diversify the program choices of its students;
- NIC will maintain a safe and suitable learning environment by articulating the non-instructional resource needs, e.g., equipment, space, technology etc., of its programs.

Actions:

- NIC schools/departments will establish baseline student enrolment targets in programs (based on campus and community size);
- NIC schools/departments will work to understand the relationship between revenue and program delivery costs;
- Where feasible, NIC schools/departments will plan for the expansion of high demand areas where reasonable investment is required;
- NIC schools/departments will develop plans to increase enrolment in low demand areas and/or consolidate/contract low enrolment programming;
- All NIC schools and departments will be encouraged to incorporate and pursue revenue generating initiatives including cost recovery and one-time funded opportunities;
- NIC schools/departments will consider program development opportunities to encourage international student enrolment;
- NIC schools/departments will establish capital and space plans for their programs.

Element 5: Accessibility

NIC's value to its communities depends on the accessibility of programs to its students. Students must be able to access our programs and feel welcome, safe and supported in their learning.

Objectives:

- NIC will ensure that prospective students can access programs;
- NIC will work to provide a welcoming learning environment that is inclusive to all;
- NIC will implement measures to reduce barriers to student attendance;
- NIC will ensure that as many qualified students as possible can complete its programs through consideration of diverse modes of delivery.

Actions:

- NIC programs will establish entry requirements that align with learning outcomes;
- NIC programs will review admission requirements toward streamlining processes;
- NIC programs will demonstrate clear pathways for Adult Upgrading students to seamlessly bridge to college level programs;
- NIC programs will work with school districts to establish pathways from secondary school to post-secondary education and training;
- NIC schools/departments will consider the viability of multiple entry and exit points for programs;
- NIC programs will include flexible modes of instructional delivery that allow the participation of students with multiple commitments;
- NIC will establish processes and pathways that encourage the part-time enrolment of students with multiple commitments (e.g., work, family);
- NIC will pursue initiatives that provide students with access to programming in the evenings, weekends and spring/summer period;
- NIC will pursue funding sources to reduce financial barriers to attendance.

Element 6: Regional Outcome

With a college region stretching over 80,000 km², NIC must respond to a diverse range of post-secondary education and training needs. Growing communities and anticipating then meeting the needs of regions will be a focus for NIC's programs.

Objectives:

- NIC will work in collaboration with our community and industry partners to determine programming appropriate to the size and learning needs of the population.
- NIC will assess the potential of offering programming throughout the region;
- NIC will assess the success of our students in the communities.

Actions:

- NIC schools/departments will develop a presence at all campus/centre locations;
- NIC schools/departments will consider opportunities to deliver programs through a mix of delivery methods (e.g., face-to-face, blended, ITV);
- NIC schools/departments will consider opportunities to offer programming in-community;
- NIC schools/departments will consider the feasibility of rotating programs;
- NIC schools/departments will seek college-community partnerships that align with program priorities (e.g., research opportunities, work placements).

Element 7: Educational Identity/Brand

In an increasingly competitive post-secondary environment, NIC will develop and articulate the distinct advantage of being an NIC student, the educational identity of programs and their unique selling points, and the essence of the NIC brand. Stakeholder led strategies to support the communication of these must be a top institutional priority to ensure program success.

Objectives:

- NIC will develop opportunities to engage with community members throughout their lives;
- NIC schools and programs will work with College Relations and Marketing to evolve the NIC brand into one that centres on student success;
- NIC will better understand the relationship between affordability and quality;
- Everybody at NIC will be able to clearly and simply communicate our brand.

Actions:

- NIC schools/departments will work with Marketing and Student Services to feature the core learning outcomes for its programs and to translate these into unique selling points;
- NIC schools/departments will work with Marketing and Student Services to feature programs on the website;
- NIC will develop strong faculty profiles as a way to promote student recruitment;
- NIC will work to connect with students at differing points of their lives – from school age through their adult lives.

Program Planning Framework

To undertake multi-year program planning, departments and schools require a defined framework to assess current and future programming. The following is information schools/departments will include in the development and reporting of program plans.

1. Current Programming: Program Descriptions
 - credentials offered
 - availability of credentials at campuses and/or through distance/blended modes of learning
2. Program Capacity and Seat Utilization
 - current student (domestic and international) enrolments by campus/location
 - optimal student (domestic and international) enrolments by campus/location
 - current sections offered by campus/location
 - optimal sections offered by campus/location
3. Course/Program Completion
 - current credential graduates by campus/location
 - optimal credential graduates by campus/location
 - Course/program retention rates
 - Course/program completion rates
4. Program SWOT (or similar) analysis
5. Program Response to Elements 1-7: Objectives and Actions
6. Other Initiatives Necessary for Student Success
7. Recommended Programming Changes
8. Areas for Further Exploration
9. Possible New Program/Credential Offerings
10. Other information

¹ Information and data sourced from *Environmental Scan 2016 – 2020* produced by Institutional Research and Planning
² 2011 National Household Survey

APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Member	Title	Location
Janis Almond	Faculty, Access for Students with Disabilities	PA
Susan Auchterlonie	Director, Community & College Relations	CVC
Andrea Baluchi	Regional Director, Port Alberni & Alberni-Clayoquot Region	PA
Greg Batt	Regional Director, Mt. Waddington Region	MW
Janet Beggs	Counsellor	CVC
Tony Bellavia	Assistant Vice President, Access & Regions	CVC
Norman Bendle	Faculty, English As A Second Language	CVC
Laurie Bird	Department Chair, Health Care Assistant	PA
Lori Boray	Student Recruitment Officer, Student Services	CVC
Jane Burch	Budget Analyst	CVC
Alix Carrel	Faculty, Humanities & Social Sciences	CVC
Greg Cran	Dean, University and Applied Studies	CVC
Ken Crewe	Director, Human Resources	CVC
Anne Cumming	Department Chair, English	CVC
Lisa Domae	Vice President, Learning & Students	CVC
Sheila Doncaster	Department Chair, Access for Students with Disabilities	CVC
Marie Ducharme	Coordinator, Assessment Services	CVC
Deborah Forsyth	Department Chair, Tourism & Hospitality	CVC
Lynette Gallant	Library, Public Services	CVC
Theresa Gereluk	Co-Dept. Chair, Early Childhood Care & Education	PA
Kim Gibson	Faculty, Business Administration	CVC
Jeannette Gingras	Department Chair, Applied Business Technology	CVC
Mary Anne Guenther	Coordinator, Library Services	CVC
Kathleen Haggith	Dean, Health & Human Services	CVC
Brad Harsell	Instructor, Industrial Automation	CR
RaeAnn Hartman	Co-Dept. Chair, Bachelor of Science Nursing	CVC
Caitlin Hartnett	Department Chair, Adult Basic Education	MW
Randall Heidt	Vice President, Strategic Initiatives	CVC
Vivian Hermansen	Director, Aboriginal Education	CR
Mark Herringer	Executive Director, International Education	CVC
Christine Hodgson	Department Chair, Mathematics & Sciences	CVC
Heather Howie	Scheduler, College-Wide	CVC
Shari Jakubiec	Evaluations/Student Records Assistant	CVC
Miriam Jones	Assistant Registrar, Student Records & Systems	CVC
Alex Khan	Manager, Marketing	CVC
Kathleen Kuhnert	Director, Student Services & Registrar	CVC
Christine Lilyholm	Faculty, Culinary Arts	CR
Kerri Lowey	Co-Dept. Chair, Human Services	CVC
Brent McIntosh	Department Chair, Humanities & Social Sci/DL Facilitator	CVC
Jan Meiers	Co-Dept. Chair, Bachelor of Science Nursing	CVC
Laurie Michaud	Department Chair, Practical Nursing	CR

Marti Mitchell	Assistant to the VP, Learning & Students	CVC
Cathy Mutis	Associate Director, International Education	CVC
Peggy Nelson	Administrative Manager, Learning & Students	CVC
Cheryl O'Connell	Dean, Continuing Education & Training/ Interim Dean, Trades & Technology	CR
Bill Parkinson	Department Chair, Business Administration	CVC
Linda Perron	Department Chair, Fine Arts	CVC
Sheree-Lee Powsey	Faculty, English	CVC
Cathy Reyno	Student Records Systems Assistant	CVC
Liz Robbins*	Faculty, Adult Basic Education	MW
Janie Roelants*	Practice Placement Coordinator, Health & Human Services	CVC
Pat Rokosh	Dean, Trades & Technology	CR
Susanne Sampson	Faculty, Fine Arts	CVC
Suzanne Schiller	Department Chair, English as a Second Language	CVC
Antonio Scholtz	Analyst, Research & Planning/Faculty, Humanities & Social Sciences	CVC
Susan Shantz	Co-Dept. Chair, Human Services	CVC
Wes Skulmoski	Manager, Institutional Research & Planning	CVC
Naomi Tabata	Manager, Centre for Applied Research, Technology & Innovation	CR
Laurie Tullock	Co-Dept. Chair, Early Childhood Care & Education	CVC
Chris Udy	Director, Trades, Technology & Industry Training	CR
Sara Vipond	Faculty, Fine Arts	CVC
Kevin Walters	Director, IT - Infrastructure & Educational Technologies	CVC
Lesley-Anne Watts	Faculty, Adult Basic Education	CVC
Jeffrey Wharton	Coordinator, Trades & Technology	CR
Naomi Wolfe	Faculty, English	CVC

*Provided feedback