**Saint Mary’s University Academic Plan 2021-2026**

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| **Key Themes** | **Element Summary** | **Program Alignment** |
| 1. **Student Persistence and Success**
 | * work on coordinated care, pro-active advising andstudent-based peer mentorship
* work to expand Experiential Learning
	+ more support/professional development for faculty on how to incorporate active learning pedagogy
* support in programs for understanding and improving student experience in the classroom *(see Academic Program and Intercultural Learning discussions)*
* continued efforts to update and improve the physical learning environment
	+ accessibility is imperative here
* improving student communication and awareness of services
	+ a student communication officer has been hired and charged with this
	+ improve our web presence to be needs focused for students rather than organization focused
* technology infrastructure to support these initiatives
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| 1. **Academic Programs**
 | * development of a teaching and learning plan to better support courses and programs
	+ workshops on new approaches to pedagogy from discipline perspectives/peers
	+ these must include a focus on universal design for learning (UDL) to address accessibility and inclusion
* identification and engagement of faculty champions
* improved awareness of what resources (vs. positions) exist to support academic programs and connect those resources to needs
* enhanced and increased use of online tools (e.g. Brightspace) not just for online courses, but for blended learning and accessibility purposes
* a move beyond learning outcomes to understand the experience inside courses
* workshops for faculty and students on how to articulate broader skills development in courses and programs
* creation of an integrated network (Program Review Office, Studio, Library, Experiential Learning, etc.) to provide support to faculty and programs looking to create/renew programs
* transparent process to review and implement technology needs to support course and program delivery, in classroom and remotely
* work to determine means to provide programs to new communities of learners through micro-credentials, pathway programs and continuous professional development (CPD)
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| 1. **Scholarship and Research**
 | * develop a Grant Facilitator role to meaningfully engage and support faculty in their efforts to secure research resources (funding and infrastructure) and will work the faculty champions in this effort
* create a research advisory group to the AVPR to help identify opportunities and issues impacting scholarship and research at SMU
* work with EIT so that the university begins to support computing and information technology needs specific to research and scholarship
* engage resources (e.g. Library) that can provide support for use of research tools
* work with communications officers across campus on improving the storytelling and recognition attached to the work going on at the university
* recognize our top researchers for their contributions to the university, and to building collaboration across the campus and into the community at large
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| 1. **Interdisciplinarity (Scholarship and the Classroom)**
 | * The Strategic Research Plan (SRP) consultations identified emergent themes. The need to provide opportunity to allow persons in those themes to collaborate. Using the SRP to create working groups and provide support for workshops and other activities to build collaborations. Reviewing our cross-appointment structure and how it serves to address the challenge of co-teaching in interdisciplinary and/or collaborative domains.
* Review our cross-appointment structure and how it serves to
* support and/or impede interdisciplinary collaboration.
* Address the challenge of co-teaching in interdisciplinary and/or collaborative domains.
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| 1. **Working with Indigenous Communities**
 | * enhance support for Indigenous youth
	+ collaborate with external partners here, (e.g. Mi’kmaw Native Friendship Centre, The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq and Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey)
	+ develop transition programming with community partners
	+ create recruitment materials with focus on services for Indigenous students
	+ develop an Indigenous peer mentorship program (modelled on University of Northern British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and University of Victoria)
* come to an understanding as to what Indigenization and decolonization mean at Saint Mary’s University, and provide the means to implement that understanding across academic curricula and scholarship
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| 1. **Intercultural Learning**
 | * provide advanced workshop opportunities for faculty and staff
	+ foster understanding and dialogue on systemic racism in the classroom and other learning environments
	+ foster understandings of other ways of knowing and different forms of scholarship
	+ include a pedagogical focus addressing intercultural capacity in the classroom
* engage student societies in these learning opportunities and professional development
* better reflect the intercultural campus in activities and environment (displays, events)
* support meaningful collaboration with external
	+ the work of the Indigenous Student Advisor, the new African Nova Scotian/Black Student and Community Liaison are examples of how to do this
* foster a better/deeper understanding of campus
	+ the university equity plan has a role here in supporting diversity excellence and creating a stronger environment for intercultural learning and engagement
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