FIVE-YEAR ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

2016-2021

nscc

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Preface

As part of the *Community Colleges Act* (Section 63(u)), Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is required to conduct an internal organizational and operational review at least every five years. This is the fifth Organizational Review for NSCC, and it covers five fiscal and academic years starting in 2016 and ending in 2021.

Specifically, the fiscal year begins April 1 and ends March 31; the academic year begins August 1 and ends July 31. This report uses the academic year. It was prepared by NSCC employees, with ongoing review and guidance from NSCC's Executive Team and Board of Governors.

The guidelines and framework of the review are clearly defined and approved by the Minister of Advanced Education. As in the previous four organizational reviews, this review responds to key questions surrounding the College's effectiveness in delivering on our mission and ability to continue to grow and improve over time.

- Does the institution have an adequate mission statement and a plan that clearly states its objectives, and are these clearly communicated to its community?

- Does the institution offer programs and other services that best meet the needs of its community?

- Does the institution attract and keep an appropriate number and mix of students?

- Do students achieve appropriate outcomes?

- Does the institution obtain, organize and administer resources so that student outcomes are achieved at a reasonable cost?

- Is the institution maintaining and building its intellectual and physical resources, including the quality of our employees, curriculum and physical plant?

- Did the institution respond appropriately to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Does the institution have systems that produce information that enables management to answer the above questions?

This review includes additional considerations identified by the Minister of Advanced Education. They include the success of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Province and the College, and the evolution of working relationships between and amongst the College, the Ministry and the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA), chartered in 2014.

The Province's then Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) and NSCC first signed an MOU in 2013, which covered the period of 2013-16. The parties developed a second MOU for 2016-2019, and it included a clause outlining the relationship between the NSAA and NSCC. In June 2020, the parties signed a third MOU for the period 2019-24, which included quarterly meetings between the Deputy Minister and NSCC President. The MOUs established clear expectations for NSCC covering fiscal and demographic realties, requirements for creativity and innovation, ensuring programming is high quality and accessible and ensuring programming meets defined labour market needs.

The 2016-2019 and 2019-2024 MOUs included provisions for the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA). Each year, the NSAA and NSCC produce a joint Stewardship Report detailing collaborative efforts. They can be found at https://www.nsapprenticeship.ca/agency/reports. The inaugural NSAA–NSCC report was produced in 2014-15 following the creation of the NSAA in 2014. The report includes sections describing structures to support effective collaboration, Provincial and Atlantic Trades Advisory

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Committees, apprenticeship technical training and opportunities for joint promotion of skilled trades and apprenticeship.

NSCC is committed to the MOU and takes our responsibilities very seriously. NSCC understands the fiscal realities of the province and has been very diligent to live within our means. This report describes, in part, how NSCC met the requirements of the MOU. The following sections of this report highlight the relevant work.

- Financial stewardship – budget development, financial planning and tuition fee structure (Chapter 5 – page 48)

- Program quality and relevance - developing new programs and modifying existing ones (Chapter 2 – page 17, Chapter 6 – page 56)

- Delivery of the Adult Learning Program (ALP) and accessible programming – Province fully funds delivery and owns curriculum (all revisions must be approved) (Chapter 2 – page 25, Chapter 3 – page 42)

- Apprenticeship delivery and pathways via NSCC credentials – (Chapter 2 – page 19)

- Services to students with disabilities – separate MOU to provide information to PSDS Division to evaluate delivery of disability services – (Chapter 2 – page 29, Chapter 3 – page 41)

- Participation of underrepresented groups – (Chapter 3 – page 41)

- Diversity and inclusion – (Chapter 2 – page 27, Chapter 3 – page 41, Chapter 6 – page 58)

- Career decision-making – tools for engaging citizens – (Chapter 2 – page 31)

- Graduate Outcomes – graduate follow up survey – (Chapter 4 – page 45)

Executive Summary

As per the *Community Colleges Act*, NSCC is required to conduct an organizational review at least every five years. This is the fifth organizational review for the College, and it is focused on the period from 2016 to 2021.

The First Twenty Years

1996-2001

In our first five years as a Board-governed College, NSCC focused on building the necessary business systems and practices to operate effectively. NSCC engaged in a strategic planning process to create clear direction and vision for the College and focused efforts on establishing financial and management practices, frameworks for program and service review and business and governance practices.

2001-2006

During this period, the College continued to build and refine our business systems and processes. We also developed structures, programs and services to support student, employee and organizational growth. Furthermore, we achieved significant enrolment growth across all campuses in both credential and non-credential programs. This included significant growth in the number of African Canadian and Indigenous students, students with disabilities and students directly from high school. A substantial investment by the provincial government funded capital improvements to campuses across the province, which enabled NSCC to become a modern community college system serving Nova Scotia.

2006-2011

The third period of review saw the College complete our multi-year campus construction and renovation project, which touched every campus in the NSCC system. Between 2003 and 2011, capital funding from the provincial and federal governments totalled $140 million. Increased operational funding and revenues enabled the College to increase our core credential enrolment from 9,347 students in 2006 to 10,688 in 2011.

2011-2016

Our fourth review period represented a phase of maturity for NSCC, when we continued to maximize and leverage the College's well-respected place in Nova Scotia and the Canadian post-secondary sector. NSCC's strategic plan, *Now More Than Ever*, which was approved in 2012, built on the College's accomplishments and achievements, and ensured NSCC continued to play a key role in preparing the workforce of tomorrow. NSCC created the Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence in partnership with Irving Shipbuilding Inc., training workers from diverse communities throughout the duration of the shipbuilding contract with the federal government. Sixteen campus infrastructure projects were completed between 2011 and 2016 with $28 million in Knowledge Infrastructure Program (KIP) support and other federal and provincial funding. In 2012, NSCC partnered with IBM Canada and six universities in Nova Scotia to create the Collaborative for Analytics, Research, Education and Technology (CARET). The College launched our first provincewide fundraising campaign, Make Way – The Campaign for NSCC in 2015, with the largest donation ever made to the NSCC Foundation at that time, a $4.6 million gift from the Joyce Foundation.

Since 1996, NSCC has produced three strategic plans. For the period of this report, the College was guided by *Now More Than Ever (2012)*, and *Here & Now (2017)*. The 2012 strategic plan held fast to the richness of our past yet looked toward a future where Nova Scotians could realize their potential and achieve success in their chosen careers. The 2017 plan ensured the College stayed focused on serving the evolving needs of NSCC students, the labour market, and the provincial economy. In support of the pillars of both strategic plans, NSCC focused on community, recognizing that building strong communities is key to delivering educational opportunities without boundaries to Nova Scotians, and essential to the economic and social fabric of the province.

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2016-2021

During the winter of 2020, COVID-19 disrupted the world. On March 15, 2020, NSCC suspended all classes and closed all campuses and learning centres at the direction of Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer of Health. In the face of this uncertain threat, NSCC leadership created and led a crisis action team that successfully managed COVID-19-related issues, ensured effective communication, and made timely decisions to define remote work and distance learning options so that students and staff were safely supported. Throughout the spring of 2020, college leadership made sure students were not academically disadvantaged, given teaching and learning were delivered using creative and innovative practices. In the face of the uncertainty, the switch to remote learning challenged everyone at NSCC, yet students and staff were resilient and rose to the challenge. Under the guidance of Nova Scotia Public Health, the College developed NSCC's reopening plan for the 2020-21 academic year, which was approved by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. The plan allowed the delivery of 145+ programs through a blended format of online and on-campus classes, protected academic integrity and excellence and matched the needs and demands of our rapidly changing provincial economy. The reopening plan was deemed exemplary by Public Health, and institutions within the Nova Scotia post-secondary education sector used it as a template for developing their own reopening plans.

During this period, NSCC delivered on our promise to provide relevant and quality programming, continued to forge new educational partnerships, collaborated and innovated with industry, committed to being a welcoming and inclusive college community and looked to embrace the future.

Maximizing and Leveraging NSCC's Strengths

During the five-year period of 2016-2021, NSCC built a national reputation for leading-edge applied learning, innovative and sustainable solutions, and a vanguard curriculum. The strategic plans *Now More Than Ever* (approved in 2012) and *Here & Now* (approved in 2017) held fast to the richness of our past and looked toward a future where everyone in Nova Scotia could realize their potential and achieve success in their chosen careers. College highlights from this period include:

- In 2021, NSCC signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Accord as a commitment to do more to advance SDG at the College. The College is in an ideal position to mobilize and train Nova Scotians with the necessary skills to build a sustainable future.

- NSCC received the 2021 Colleges and Institutes Canada (CiCan) Gold Excellence in Sustainable Development Award for best practices in sustainability, which acknowledged the College's accomplishments in 2020.

- Guided by our strategic plans, NSCC developed annual business plans that leveraged the College's strengths and built new operating standards, processes and accountabilities.

- NSCC maintained LEED Gold standard status for our environmentally sustainable buildings and continued to improve our learning infrastructure throughout the province.

- Completed thirty-one campus infrastructure projects between 2016 and 2021 with $111 million in Strategic Investment Fund (SIF), stimulus fund, internal capital investment, and other federal and provincial funding support.

- The initiation of four major capital projects. Three projects were completed in 2021:
  - A $7-million, 19,000-sq.-ft. addition to the Institute of Technology Campus focused on job creation and industry-driven problem solving. This expansion accommodated 100 additional students in IT-centred programs.
  - Two campus housing projects—an $8-million, 20,000-sq.-ft. complex at the Strait Area Campus and a $9-million, 27,000 sq.-ft. Housing and Business Research Centre complex at the Annapolis Valley Campus/COGS—expanded the reach of offerings and helped address housing shortages.
  - A $150-million, 305,00 sq.-ft. new facility on Esplanade Street, to relocate Marconi Campus, will allow the College to explore new and improved programming for students in the downtown core. It is expected to open in 2024.

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- Achieved Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) gold ranking, and was recognized as the top performing Associate College by the Association of the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). This international recognition was awarded in 2016, and the rating was maintained through 2021 based on the College's sustainable construction and building management practices; success in engaging campuses in waste diversion, energy efficiency, community sustainability initiatives and other environmental stewardship practices; and integrating a future-focused sustainability ethos into our academic programs and applied research specializations.

- Exceeded the funded enrolment target of 10,650 in the first four years of this report (2016 through 2019 inclusive). For the 2021-2022 academic year, due to the impact of COVID-19 and restrictions on physical distancing in classrooms especially, enrolment reached 95% of the funded enrolment target.

- Established an e-Campus. This online learning community for students enrolled in fully online programs enhanced students' access to faculty, classmates, and support services.

- Implemented a fully online course registration and payment system for credit and non-credit Continuing Education courses.

- Evolved risk management practices, processes and reporting in support of NSCC's public accountability requirements.

- Built a national reputation for leading-edge applied research, applied learning, innovative and sustainable solutions and award-winning curriculum in support of industry partners. NSCC has been ranked as a Top50 Research College in Canada every year since 2013 and was awarded a National Technology Access Centre (SEATAC) in 2018.

- Established the Centre of Forest Innovation to advance the shift to ecological forestry practices in Nova Scotia and train the next generation of forestry professionals from diverse communities.

- Developed unique credit courses for students, graduates and employees to strengthen and sustain their growing careers in the marine, aerospace and defence sectors.

- Launched the Pathways to Shipbuilding Indigenous Education and Apprenticeship Program through the Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence (CoE), in partnership with Irving Shipbuilding Inc. (ISI). This unique collaboration of industry, government, academic and Indigenous partners is designed to create pathways and support for Indigenous Nova Scotians to enter the shipbuilding industry.

- Exceeded the goal of the *Make Way* fundraising campaign, raising over $33 million to improve student access to NSCC so that more people would have a chance at a transformative education.

- In 2017, NSCC's President Don Bureaux became the first convenor of the OneNS Collective—a group of local economic organizations, economists and academics. The Collective tracked and reported objectively on collective progress toward the OneNS goals, outlined in Nova Scotia's 2014 economic commission landmark report called "*Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotia*".

- Launched *Lead the Way*, an urgent-need campaign with a goal of $5 million to expand support for students during the turbulence and uncertainty of COVID-19. The campaign ultimately raised $6.9 million.

- Established a virtual Teaching Commons to ensure faculty had equitable access to responsive teaching supports and coaching, and launched the Library and Learning Commons, a virtual hub for both library resources and services, and an extensive suite of learning supports to facilitate student success.

- Expanded access to open educational resources to ensure educational equity and inclusion across all programs and campuses.

- Delivered over 90% of programs via a blended approach in response to COVID-19.

- Launched a finance electronic expense (eClaim) process in November 2020. The new cloud solution took the process fully online, enabling reimbursements to occur quickly and claims to be completed from home/remotely.

- Launched in 2020-2021, imbedded anti-racism/anti-oppression training into all student orientations.

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Chapter 1: Mission and Strategic Plan

Does the institution have an adequate Mission Statement and a Plan that clearly states its objectives, and are these clearly communicated to its community?

1.1 Overview

NSCC's success in creating and growing a robust community college system is driven largely by maintaining a sharp focus on our mission of *Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation*. This mission was first articulated in the College's inaugural strategic plan in 1999 and continued to guide the organization in our 2006, 2012 and 2017 strategic plans. During the current review period (2016-2021), the College operated under the 2017 strategic plan, *Here & Now*.

The planning process was highly collaborative and focused on understanding how best to maximize the potential of every learner through the College's portfolio-based Unique Learning Experience.

1.2 The 2017 Strategic Plan

Here & Now was a refreshed plan, and it built on the energy and momentum of the 2012 strategic plan. It was the road map to ensure the College stayed focused on serving the constantly evolving needs of NSCC students, the labour market and the provincial economy. The strategic priorities were contextualized by the recognition that the College believed the future of the province lay in the power of learning and it committed to the success and fulfilment of every student – in education, in career and in life.

The vision statement in the plan was *Transforming Nova Scotia one learner at a time.* At the heart of our vision is the belief that, by leveraging the power of learning to help individuals transform their lives, they have the power to transform their communities and thus transform our province.

Here & Now consolidated our best thinking and connected multi-year, College-wide initiatives that drove annual business planning for the next five years and beyond. It embraced current and future change imperatives through four strategic priorities and 18 goals. These goals and priorities demonstrate how NSCC is taking strategic, specific action to deliver on our vision, mission and promise to students.

The Four Strategic Priorities

- **Student Success**
  NSCC is committed to ensuring every student has access to programs and courses designed to support their learning needs at every stage of their careers, and throughout their lives.

- **Community Impact**
  NSCC is committed to accelerating student and community innovation and entrepreneurial capacity. NSCC is committed to the success of Nova Scotia's diverse students, cultures and communities.

- **Organizational Excellence**
  NSCC is committed to ensuring all our students and staff have the resources, systems and the supports they need to learn, strive and thrive.

- **Academic Quality**
  NSCC is committed to serving the province's changing labour market needs by providing innovative, relevant and accessible programming to Nova Scotia's diverse communities.

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1.3 Annual Business Plan

In 2005, the College began producing an annual business plan for approval by the Board of Governors. From 2005-11 these business plans were heavily focused on meeting the capital and enrolment requirements of the Master Growth Plan. This focus was appropriate at the time and served us well in delivering the key objectives of improving the infrastructure of campuses across the province and growing enrolment capacity from 7,600 to 10,650 students.

With the 2012 strategic plan, we recognized the need to develop a collaborative planning framework to integrate and coordinate planning efforts across all areas of the College. In 2013 a senior position, Director of Integrated Planning, was created to coordinate the College's planning processes. A planning framework and annual planning cycle was developed that aligns and focuses our efforts on strategic action priorities established annually by the College's Executive.

In 2015, a re-alignment of some executive responsibilities brought together three key planning functions under one umbrella: policy coordination, strategic and business planning and institutional research. By 2016, the annual planning process was fully functioning and featured regular progress reporting to the College Executive and semi-annual reporting to the Board of Governors.

From 2016 onward, and during the pandemic, the NSCC annual business plans supported the strategic priorities identified in *Here & Now*. Regular progress reporting was delivered to the College Executive team and semi-annually to the Board of Governors.

1.4 Supporting Plans and Strategies

From Diversity and Inclusion to: Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism
Diversity at NSCC has long been a stated value and organizational strategy. Our initial Diversity and Inclusion Framework, established in 2010 through the work of the NSCC Advisory Committee on Diversity, has evolved exponentially.

We believe that every Nova Scotian deserves the chance to seek a better life and to work and learn in a safe, equitable and inclusive environment. For that reason, equity is a shared commitment across the college community, with everyone playing an active role as part of our equity ecosystem. Together, we will shape a shared path to equity and reconciliation by removing systemic barriers as active advocates for change.

During the period of this review, the College Equity Leadership Team was created with a vision of being Canada's "Equity College." The NSCC's equity ecosystem was mapped, and the team used an equity-driven system change model to develop a three-year work plan for transformational change. Creation of equity and inclusion committees were planned and created at all campuses.

In collaboration with the Province, NSCC has developed a shared framework for accessibility planning which has been endorsed by CONSUP. Accessibility plan development began in 2020.

In 2020-21 NSCC launched a new Centre for the Advancement of Educational Equity and Belonging, which is responsible for Mi'kmaw and Indigenous Initiatives and Black/African Nova Scotian Initiatives on NSCC campuses, and also announced a tuition program for former youth in care which provides eligible applicants a bursary of up to 100% of their NSCC tuition and fees.

Sustainability Annual Report

Sustainability as a strategic priority for NSCC, and we recognize that the College and our students need to prepare for the risks and opportunities of a changing world. Fortifying the College's operations through resilience planning and equipping our graduates with the skills and knowledge to thrive as our economies and industries change is integral for NSCC to continue to be the college that Nova Scotia needs.

NSCC's longstanding commitment to sustainability has resulted in the College emerging as an international leader. The College had received recognition as a top-performing institution among colleges worldwide and has been listed as one of the top 10 post-secondary institutions in Canada. In our mission toward continual sustainability improvement, the College has established guiding goals to provide direction for future sustainability work.

Capital Planning and Operations Annual Report

NSCC Campuses are important resources in communities throughout the province, offering Nova Scotian's an inclusive and flexible pathway for student wanting to access specialized, industry-driven education and training. The ability to identify, plan and deliver physical capital infrastructure projects that support these campuses is an essential foundation to providing NSCC's unique post-secondary education experience.

NSCC is committed to supporting a safe, healthy, productive, and barrier-free working and learning environment. With most NSCC campuses originally constructed in the 1960s and 70s, it is particularly important that the College continually monitors the condition and accessibility of our extensive infrastructure network and ensures, through proactive maintenance, that building systems are operating efficiently and effectively.

This annual report identifies both short- and long-term goals to inform strategic planning regarding the improvement of NSCC's built environment.

Occupational Health, Safety and Environment (OHS&E) Plan

Health and safety are crucial components of an exceptional student learning experience and engaged workforce. First developed in 2003, the OHS&E Plan is focused on very clear objectives to support health and safety at the College.

This continued focus on actions and resources meets the College's legal obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and creates a world-class health and safety culture at NSCC.

The OHS&E Plan has led to a continuing priority of integrating best practices into NSCC's Safety Management System; a renewed focus on emergency preparedness and planning practices throughout the College; and widespread involvement of campus employees in occupational health and safety training and committee participation. (Chapter 6)

NSCC Foundation Strategic Plan

The NSCC Foundation's most recent strategic plan, *Aspire & Inspire*, was completed in 2018. Developed with engagement from NSCC employees, Foundation Board members and external stakeholders, and approved by the Foundation's Board of Directors, the plan focused on four key priorities:

- **Student success**
  The NSCC Foundation supports student success through financial aid, and the positive impact on students' lives cannot be overstated.

- **Academic quality**
  By supporting specialized programming, the development of centres of expertise and innovation and opportunities in experiential learning, the NSCC Foundation will enhance available resources so that students continue to learn, strive and thrive.

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- **Community impact**
  The NSCC Foundation will continue to strengthen communications and outreach to enhance brand awareness of NSCC in the communities we serve.

- **Organizational excellence**
  By investing in service excellence and following best practices in fundraising, we will develop stronger relationships with our stakeholders and communities and leverage funding to maximize impact.

The plan will help the Foundation to deliver on the mission to advance the vision, mission and promise of the Nova Scotia Community College through philanthropy.

1.5 Communication and Review of the Strategic Plan

NSCC publishes our strategic plan, annual reports to the community, five-year reviews, graduate survey results, annual reports on giving and other public accountability reports on the College's website (www.nscc.ca). Annual business plans and other College plans and strategies (e.g., technology strategy, innovation and entrepreneurship, sustainability report) are available to all employees via the employee intranet site.

NSCC undertook formal and informal communication about the progress of the strategic plan with both internal and external stakeholders in each of the years of the review period. Senior leaders of the College met regularly to receive progress reports on implementing strategic and other plans and provide input as each year's strategic and business plan priorities were set. Managers and their employees also discussed their work in relation to the achievement of the plan's goals.

Communication to external audiences was largely through the annual report to the community. This report included audited financial statements and stories that illustrate the many ways the College is achieving our mission to improve Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation. The stories highlight the range of NSCC programs and delivery options. They also reflect the geographic and cultural diversity of the communities NSCC serves and showcase the benefits of the portfolio approach to applied learning and research for students, employees, communities and employers.

1.6 Performance Measurement Efforts

There is strong evidence that NSCC made progress in implementing our 2017 strategic plan and in building a college-wide culture of continuous planning, measurement of results and accountability.

Since 2011, a full suite of admissions and enrolment tracking reports have been a key asset within NSCC's Business Intelligence program. By 2016, there was extensive use of admissions, enrolment, graduation and student retention reports supporting the:

- Development of an annual program mix, offering more than 145 programs with over 300 possible choices of location and delivery mode.

- Achievement of enrolment targets.

- Tracking of admission, enrolment and retention statistics.

The report provides metrics on five key areas that are fundamental to organizational health and performance. Annual reporting on the organizational health indicators is included in each Business Plan.

1.7 Board Governance

The Nova Scotia Community College Board of Governors stewards the College's mission and approves NSCC's goals and strategic directions. The Board ensures the business and affairs of the College are conducted in accordance with exemplary governance practices and the *Community Colleges Act*. Board members have accountability to monitor the performance of the College and responsibility for the implementation of key policies and programs that incorporate financial and risk management and external communications.

The Board comprises a diverse collection of public and private interests from every region of the province and members represent all Nova Scotians.

During this review period, the Board had six standing committees, which assisted in developing governing policy. The standing committees included:

- Executive

- Programs

- Finance, Audit and Risk

- Governance

- Nominating

- Succession

The President is an ex officio non-voting member of all committees established by the Board.

1.8 Into the Future: 2022 NSCC Strategic Plan Our Time is Now

The key goals and objectives in the 2012 strategic plan *Now More Than Ever* and the 2017 strategic plan refresh *Here & Now* laid the foundation for the new strategic plan to build upon. Our values are sound. Our mission and vision remain clear. They have provided a guiding light in the past few years of uncertainty, and they will continue to support us as we adapt and grow.

Our new Strategic Plan, *Our Time is Now*, was approved by the Board of Governors in June 2022. This plan outlines dynamic ideas, great enthusiasm and a robust desire to be part of the solution in readying Nova Scotia to forge ahead in a post-pandemic economy. To accomplish this, we are moving forward guided by our strategic enablers—the foundation of our operations—while focusing on key challenges facing our province and developing solutions within four pivotal priority areas of impact.

Together, these create a framework for the opportunities and challenges of today and tomorrow.

Chapter 2: Programs and Services

Does the institution offer programs and other services that best meet the needs of its community?

2.1 Overview

NSCC offers a comprehensive suite of relevant and innovative programs that proactively respond to the emerging needs of the province's economy and communities. This includes more than 140 core academic programs along with an array of continuing learning opportunities, customized training and apprenticeship learning.

As an access College, NSCC prioritizes the creation of productive learning pathways across the career lifespan that take learners from the Adult Learning Program and academic upgrading through to Advanced Diplomas and Graduate Certificates, and through articulation of learning to university degrees and further graduate studies.

NSCC is proud of our access agenda within an applied learning environment that emphasizes experiential and work-integrated learning, applied research, service learning, international exchange and student leadership development opportunities. We have worked throughout this five-year review period to strengthen inclusion and accessibility to increase access to and participation in programming by Nova Scotians from equity-seeking communities.

Flexible learning options are key components of an accessible and quality learning environment. Spurred by COVID-19, NSCC greatly expanded our capacity for flexible learning, introducing and clarifying program delivery modes such as in-person, asynchronous online, synchronous online, blended, blended flex and distributed to provide the greatest access to learning for students across Nova Scotia.

To support teaching and learning excellence among instructors facing a rapidly changing educational landscape, the College also created the Centre for Teaching and Learning. This centre complements the robust and well-developed suite of library, student support and ancillary services that are provided to students and employees to further enhance the learning experience.

2.2 Services for Students

In 2015-16 Student Services underwent service renewal. As a result, it implemented a new service delivery framework, core competencies, core services and programs and an integrated service management model during this five-year review period, all informed by NSCC values.

Service Delivery Framework
An Integrated Service Delivery Model combined with a Service Management Framework enables enhanced communication, seamless transition between services and a focus on providing excellent student experience. The approach is proactive. Student needs are anticipated, which inform early outreach opportunities. Programs and services are developmental, based on individual student needs. Supported referrals occur between student affairs professionals and community resources as needed. A student-centred focus drives all meetings and actions. Collaboration is key in an integrated model. Every person has a role to play. All perspectives, knowledge and skills are relied upon to ensure a trauma and culturally responsive approach to care. Intersectionality refers to a broad range of overlapping social identities. Student affairs professionals recognize that our students have multiple and diverse identity factors that intersect to shape their perspectives, ideologies and experiences. This is especially important as we strive to better meet the needs of our equity-seeking students.

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The following foundational competencies were embedded in the work we do to shape the student experience:

- Accessibility

- Career Development

- Cultural Responsiveness

- Digital Literacy

- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Service Excellence
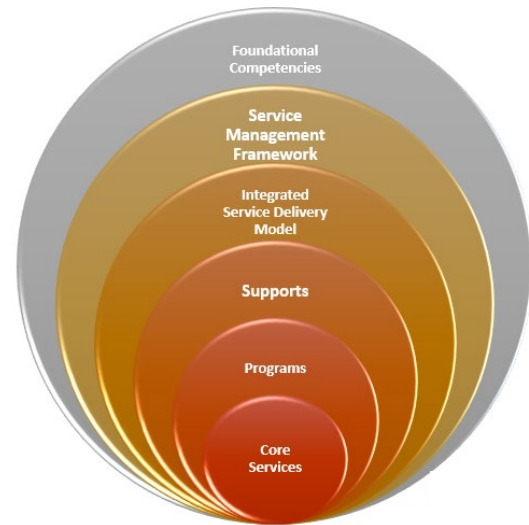
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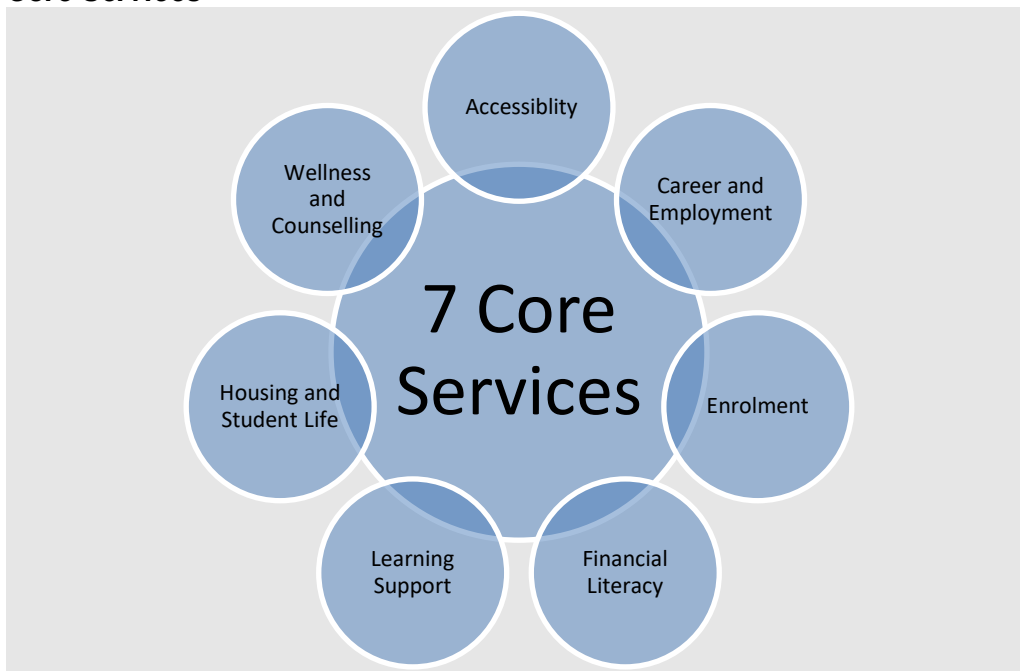
Continuous Quality Improvement

Peoplesoft is the primary tool used for electronic data capture of the academic record and student experience. This helps us understand service utilization, pattern and frequency of use by our students. Our student experience and well-being surveys provide us with rich information, which inform our strengths and service gaps.

In fall 2020, NSCC administered the Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey. Data was collected in the following well-being domains:

- Academic Achievement

- Mental Health Assets

- Mental Health Deficits

- Health Service Utilization/Help Seeking

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- Physical Health/Health Behaviours

- Sexual Health Behaviours

- Substance Use

- Food Security

Counselling and Wellness

NSCC Mental Wellness Strategy
The mental wellness strategy was launched in January 2019. The goal is to foster a culture that prioritizes the mental wellness of students and employees, allowing us all to learn, grow, contribute and thrive. There are three priority areas: Build Understanding, Build Capacity and Build Connections.

NSCCs Mental Wellness Strategy aligns with the National Standard of Canada for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students. The Standard supports the following key outcomes:

- Raise awareness about mental health and decrease mental illness-related stigma.

- Provide healthier and safer institutional environments.

- Improve opportunities for student success and flourishing.

- Promote life and resiliency skills that students can use at school, at work and in daily life.

NSCC Counsellors provide confidential in-person, online or telephone counselling support for student well-being and academic success. Common issues include anxiety, depression, relationship issues and grief. Students can book counselling sessions directly with their counsellor.

Two of the 14 student services personal and career counsellors provide culturally specific counselling services, supporting Mi'kmaq/Indigenous and Black/African Nova Scotian students.

Since 2018, NSCC has widely promoted eMental health resources under the umbrella of HealthyMinds Nova Scotia, funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Advanced Education. Key tools for students include:

- **TAO Self-Help**
  An online mental health library with interactive modules to help users understand and manage how they feel, think and act.

- **Good2Talk**
  A free, confidential post-secondary student helpline that offers support, information and referrals 24/7/365. To talk to someone, call 1-833-292-3698. Text Good2TalkNS to 686868.

- **Togetherall**
  Safe, anonymous online peer community for mental health, freely available 24/7 to all youth and young adults age 16+ and post-secondary students in Nova Scotia.

- **MyWellness**
  A mental health and wellness program that is a component of student benefits. Features of MyWellness include:

  o Access to an anonymous online mental health assessment tool that helps students put their feelings into words and helps them navigate from awareness to care.
  o A toolbox of helpful supports and resources in the community and beyond.
  o Access to Online Video Counselling available during normal business hours as well as evenings and weekends. NSCC students are eligible to receive three free hours of counselling through this platform.

In 2018, NSCC commenced the training of facilitators to deliver the **Inquiring Minds Workshop**, a four-hour workshop, developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. The workshop is designed to enhance mental health literacy, reduce stigma, develop positive coping strategies and create well-being in the campus community.

2.3 Academic Programs

During this five-year review period, NSCC refreshed our credentials policy to ensure a robust suite of credentialed offerings to meet the diverse needs of learners, industries and sectors across the province. Credential tiers were added to the policy and framework to provide clear guides for the evaluation of learning, credential approval, signatories, parchments and convocation. The are three tiers as follows:

- **Tier 1** credentials represent core, credit programs approved by government and issued an NSCC parchment. Tier 1 credentials include graduate certificates, advanced diplomas, diplomas, certificates, college certificates, and certificates of individual accomplishment. Tier 1 credentials are processes and awarded through Assistant Registrars and include the President's signature.

- **Tier 2** includes a mix of credit and non-credit credentials which are NSCC-approved and include formal evaluation of learning. This tier generally supports the development of continuing education and customized learning opportunities. Tier 2 credentials include documents of learning, documents of achievement, certificates of completion and certificates of professional studies. Tier 2 certificates are processed and awarded through Assistant Registrars and include the VPA signature. Tier 2 documents are processed and awarded through Assistant Registrars and require the Assistant Registrar's signature.

- **Tier 3** represents learning events for which there is no evaluation of learning. Tier 3 credentials include Records of Participation. These are processed and awarded through Assistant Registrars and require the Assistant Registrar's signature.

NSCC credentials range from the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults to Graduate Certificates, which were introduced in 2020 to provide an opportunity for graduate-level education in specific occupational fields.

Most students (85-90%) were enrolled in Certificate (one-year) and Diploma (two-year) programs, which covered every sector of the economy. NSCC also launched a suite of shorter Tier 2 Credentials to support upskilling and reskilling across the career lifespan and introduced the Graduate Certificate, which provides a pathway for advanced learning at the graduate level.

During the review period, NSCC developed and enhanced the planning process for our annual program mix to ensure the annual development launch of a relevant and innovative suite of programming to meet the needs of industry, government, sectors, communities and learners across the province. From 2016-17 to 2020-21 programs were available across the province through in-person offerings at each of NSCC's 13 campuses and community learning sites, and through enhanced options for flexible program delivery. While many learners continue to identify the opportunity to study close to home and find jobs related to their field in their region of Nova Scotia as important factors in their choice of program and study location, there is increasing demand for flexible programming delivery options as evidenced by the increased enrolment in online and blended programming.

In the period between 2016-2017 and 2020-2021, NSCC created the following new core Tier 1 programs:

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Program	Credential	Academic Year
Access, Education and Language		
Mi'kmaw Early Childhood Education	Diploma	2017-18
School of Business and Creative Industries		
Business Fundamentals	Certificate	2018-19
Digital Marketing	Grad Certificate	2020-21
Event Management	Grad Certificate	2017-18
Finance	Grad Certificate	2017-18
Professional Sales	College Certificate	2020-21
School of Health and Human Services		
Disability Supports and Services	Diploma	2016-17
*Mi'kmaw Health and Wellness**	Advanced Diploma	2017-18
School of Technology and Environment		
*Aquaculture Operations**	College Certificate	2018-19
Cannabis Cultivation	College Certificate	2018-19
Cartography	Diploma	2019-20
*Community and Environmental Planning**	Diploma	2019-20
Cool Climate Wine and Viticulture	Certificate	2018-19
Cyber Security	Diploma	2017-18
Emergency Management	Grad Certificate	2017-18
Full Stack Application Development	Grad Certificate	2020-21
Geographic Information Systems Technician	Certificate	2019-20
Geospatial Data Analytics	Grad Certificate	2017-18
IT Embedded Systems Programming	Grad Certificate	2019-20
School of Trades and Transportation		
Electro-Technical Officer	Advance Diploma	2018-19
Marine Mechanical Technician	Certificate	2018-19
Occupational Health and Safety	Diploma	2017-18

*Program is not currently being offered at NSCC.

NSCC also introduced the following shorter Tier 2 credential programs during this period:

Program	Credential	Academic Year
School of Business and Creative Industries		
Contemporary Leadership in Manufacturing	Certificate of Completion	2020-21
Developing Supervisors and Managers	Certificate of Professional Studies	2020-21
Residential Property Management	Certificate of Professional Studies	2018-19
Supervisory Skills Development: Seafood Industry	Certificate of Completion	2020-21
School of Health and Human Services		
Foundations of Disability Studies	Certificate of Professional Studies	2020-21
School of Technology and Environment		
Coastal Protection Environmental Technologies	Certificate of Professional Studies	2020-21

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Emergency Management -Indigenous Communities	Certificate of Professional Studies	2020-21
Material Handling 4.0	Certificate of Completion	2020-21
Survey Assistant *	Certificate of Completion	2018-19
School of Trades and Transportation		
Marine Foundations-Small Vessel Operator Proficiency	Certificate of Completion	2020-21
Marine Foundations-Marine Emergency Duties	Certificate of Completion	2020-21
Ship's Cook	Certificate of Professional Studies	2018-19

Program is not currently being offered at NSCC.

The following programs underwent redevelopment and were renewed following our comprehensive program review process:

Program	Credential	Previous program	Academic Year
School of Business and Creative Industries			
Business-Hospitality	Diploma	Tourism Management	2017-18
Business-Tourism	Diploma	Tourism Management	2017-18
Business Administration	Diploma	Business Administration	2020-21
Culinary Skills	Certificate	Culinary Arts	2017-18
Music Production and Engineering	Diploma	Recording Arts	2018-19
Tourism Hospitality	Certificate	Tourism Management	2017-18
School of Technology and Environment			
Geographic Information Systems	Grad Certificate	Geographic Sciences – 2-year diploma	2019-20
Remote Sensing	Grad Certificate	Geographic Sciences – Remote sensing concentration	2019-20
School of Trades and Transportation			
Brick and Stone Masonry	Certificate	Bricklaying Masonry	2019-20
Heavy Duty Equipment Repair	Diploma	Heavy Duty Equipment/Truck and Transport Repair	2019-20
Marine – Industrial Rigging	College Certificate		2019-20
Sheet Metal Systems	Certificate	Sheet Metal Worker-Pre-Apprenticeship	2019-20
Truck and Transport Repair	Diploma	Heavy Duty Equipment/Truck and Transport Repair	2019-20

2.4 Apprenticeship

NSCC and the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) work as joint stewards to advance the goals of the province's apprenticeship and certification system. It is a relationship codified under the *Community College Act* and the NSAA Operating Charter that aims to use the strengths of both organizations to serve regional needs concerning the trades. This includes the advancement of equity, diversity and inclusion; marketing the opportunities afforded by a career in the trades; and, critically, providing quality trades training that aligns with industry standards and addresses labour market demand.

Reflecting on nearly a decade of collaboration, joint stewardship remains a concept that we continue to improve collaboratively. NSCC and NSAA have worked well to tackle considerable challenges over the past years, most notably during the COVID-19 global pandemic. In terms of operational efficiency, communication, collaboration,

decision-making and supporting quality technical training, we continue to work closely to enhance the trades training system together.

Recognizing this, leadership from both organizations released a planning playbook in 2021. It formalized new goals for the joint stewardship initiative. These stemmed from a review of stewardship outcomes, governance, committee structure, planning and reporting requirements. The playbook's new aims target:

- Organizational excellence

- Excellence in teaching and learning

- Educational equity

- Promotion of trades pathways and careers

- Better engagement between industry, apprentices and NSCC technical training faculty and respective staff

For NSCC, these new goals must be realized on campuses, where the College's ties to NSAA are most evident. As the principal provider for technical training in Nova Scotia, NSCC had over 52,000 course enrolments and an average of 442 courses offered per year at 12 campuses between the 2016-2017 and 2020-2021 academic years (these figures were notably impacted in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 by COVID-19 and associated restrictions on physical delivery). Detailed enrolment tables are provided in Chapter 3. For NSAA, co-operation with NSCC is no doubt necessary.

There was significant value to this training, certainly for the province and the Agency. Yet, it is notably a training arrangement that is not formalized in a contract, and the financial expectations and benefits for the College need review.

If the impact of our partnership is measured in terms of quality education, a well-trained and diverse workforce and addressing a skilled trades labour shortage, then the work has been important. We were tasked with the renewed goals of joint stewardship and the need to recognize, value and resource the major role NSCC plays in the apprenticeship system. A focus on these aims continues to ensure that our shared aims are met.

2.5 Applied Research and Innovation

NSCC Applied Research develops practical and innovative solutions for industry's real-world problems. Through a network of students, faculty, staff and research scientists and external collaborators, the College helps industries improve their products, enhance processes and grow their businesses. NSCC has well-equipped facilities that provide the tools needed to contribute to the development of new technologies that can be transferred to partners. The commercialization of research findings adds value to communities and contributes to the economic growth of the province.

Since NSCC Applied Research's launch in 2000, it has grown in capacity and scope. It is now a multi-million-dollar research operation that responds to the needs of industry and the community. NSCC has been ranked among Canada's top 50 research colleges since 2013.

Starting with a solid base of research expertise in Geomatics, the College has continued to broaden and deepen our applied research capabilities and align them with new and existing credential programs. By 2021, there were multiple areas of research, with highly qualified scientists leading each area and inspiring the expansion of applied research networks to include students and faculty expertise from more than 140 programs. Primary research areas are:

- **Energy**
  Research includes developing and testing sustainable energy technologies and better methods of collecting, managing and analyzing energy data to create solutions.

- **Engineered Technologies**
  Research includes acoustic and ultrasonic testing, developing various engineering prototype devices and creating products using advanced design software, 3D modelling and a metal laser-sintering printer.

- **Environment and Agriculture Technologies**
  Research that solves real-world problems facing the agricultural sector. By analyzing crop variables, this research helps producers reduce risks associated with climate change, become more productive and identify the most suitable areas for agriculture development.

- **Geomatics**
  Research includes applying advanced mapping techniques and meteorological monitoring to solve problems and support sustainable development in areas related to the coastal zone, aquaculture sites and agricultural and forestry lands.

- **Information Technology Applied Research (ITAR)**
  ITAR develops and improves upon areas such as payment security, mobile apps and risk analysis/mitigation using technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence.

- **Ocean Research and SEATAC**
  NSCC's Ocean Research program became a specialized Technology Access Centre (TAC)- SEATAC in 2018. SEATAC develops ocean technologies with industry partners as part of a nationwide network of 60 federally funded TACs.

2.6 Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Since NSCC Entrepreneurship's creation in 2009, it has focused on providing experiential learning opportunities for students to develop their entrepreneurial mindset and recognize the potential of venture creation as a viable career option. Students have engaged in these experiences through curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular approaches designed to expose and propel students toward the entrepreneurial ecosystem locally, nationally and internationally. Students gain first-hand knowledge of what it takes to be entrepreneurial and relevant in Nova Scotia's economy through exposure to resources and opportunities such as Challenge Nova Scotia, Enactus, Entrepreneur in the Making and other classroom and campus-related activities and events.

Emphasis is placed on advancing a strategic mandate of entrepreneurship and innovation at NSCC and beyond. The Entrepreneurship team provides resources and supports to embed entrepreneurial principles and concepts on campus, in the classroom and in communities. This includes curriculum support, teaching tools, events, workshops, funding, access to community partners and advising services that enable students and faculty to unlock their entrepreneurial potential.

NSCC Entrepreneurship is part of the Campus Planning and Community Engagement department, which emphasizes the value of community engagement in learning and is well positioned to connect students to a network that will serve them for years to come.

2.7 Centre for Teaching and Learning

NSCC launched a Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) in 2020. The CTL is part of the College's commitment to support Faculty in teaching and learning excellence within a rapidly changing educational landscape.

NSCC's Centre for Teaching and Learning leads the philosophy, policies, strategies and key supports that strengthen teaching and learning across NSCC.

Specific supports developed and now offered by the CTL include:

- Supporting the development of new Faculty and professional support staff in NSCC's Adult Education Program, which includes orientation activities as well as credential learning in certificates of professional studies.

- Connecting all new Faculty, including casual and auxiliary, to one-on-one and group mentoring, just-in-time resources for teaching, and a community of colleagues across the College.

- Professional development for all Faculty in teaching practice through courses, workshops and one-on-one support and guidance.

- Information curation and communication to clarify and enhance the Faculty experience.

- Discussion and collaboration via the Teaching Commons Community (Microsoft Teams), including the Ask the Team live chat service for quick answers to teaching and course design questions.

- Instructional Design leadership for online course design and development, as well as quality assurance.

- Guidance and resources for program and course delivery across all delivery modes.

- Educational technology support and training.

- Advising and professional learning to support the implementation of Universal Design for Learning, accessible teaching strategies, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

- Supporting Academic Chairs in leading teaching and learning excellence through communities of practice, consultation, and advising.

2.8 Building and Enhancing the Learning Experience

Student learning experiences have been enhanced in recent years through the layering of formal learning experiences outside the traditional classroom and embedding these experiences into the curriculum for many of NSCC's programs. This goal is being fulfilled through the following learning opportunities available to NSCC students and employees:

Experiential and Work Integrated Learning
Experiential Learning (EL) is a broad term used to cover all the opportunities available to students to take part in sector-specific learning experiences. These opportunities take place in a variety of educational, work and practice environments, including labs, shops, simulation facilities, in-the-the field settings and workplaces. They present an opportunity for students to apply their skills, gain experience and learn what is expected of them in their field or industry before graduating.

At NSCC, Experiential Learning is a broad term that encompasses 12 unique types of experiential learning experiences, including applied learning courses, capstone courses, and 10 types of work integrated learning (WIL) courses. Work integrated learning is a distinct form of experiential learning that formally integrates a student's academic studies with quality experiences within a workplace or practice setting. These experiences typically include an engaged partnership of, at least, an academic institution, a partner organization and a student. The experiences are intentionally designed into programs and include the development of student learning outcomes and objectives related to employability, personal agency, knowledge and skill mobility and lifelong learning.

At NSCC, all Tier 1 core credentialed programs are required to incorporate WIL. In some regulated programs, this takes the shape of mandatory professional practice courses, such as clinical placements. Most core programs culminate in a five-week work experience, although some programs provide options for an

entrepreneurial work experience, capstone project or industry-based project. Some programs include longer work placements, such as internships, sea time or co-operative work terms. Applied and service-learning experiences are often embedded within these work experience-type courses.

Growing Co-Operative Education

Three programs at NSCC have a mandatory co-op credit for earning credentials (Culinary Management; Business – Tourism; and Business - Hospitality), these programs are accredited by Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada to ensure that we are meeting quality standards in co-operative education. Over 50 other NSCC programs have an optional co-op credit elective available. During the five-year review period, NSCC doubled student participation in optional co-op electives and continued to grow the program.

Student Life and Leadership Development

At NSCC, students are encouraged to develop leadership skills by being involved in campus activities beyond the classroom. NSCC and our Student Associations (collectively) financially support the work of three Student Life positions. These roles work collaboratively with our student leaders across the college and provide them with support and mentorship as they deliver events, activities, programs and services to students. The NSCC Student Association (NSCCSA) at each campus also work with NSCC campus staff to improve student life by creating opportunities for balanced lifestyles, promoting health and wellness and encouraging campus-wide communication and participation. Additionally, two students are elected each year to participate as student Board of Governors.

During the five-year review period, NSCC Student Life, engaged in some notable work in collaboration with the student leaders who govern our Student Associations. One instance was the Student Association participation to the *Make Way* fundraising campaign. They actively raised and committed approximately $500,000 over five years to support student awards and bursaries. Other work included:
(Please note: during COVID-19 and the latter half of the reporting period, events, activities and supports transitioned to online delivery under the management of Student Life and in consultation with our student association executive members).

Student events and activities:

- **Provision of Active Living Program**
  Sponsorship management, promotions, materials, social media management and program delivery across college.

- **NSCC Winter Classic annual hockey tournament**
  Logistics management, sponsorship, promotion, securing of livestreaming and collaboration with the Radio Television Broadcasting program for play-by-play/video production.

- **Student Leadership Conference** (typically two/year)
  In-person meeting held to address high-level leadership skills and ongoing training and support initiatives/activities. This included research and materials development, printing and support of travel arrangements.

- **Student Life Appreciation Awards program and celebration banquet**
  Facilitation of awards nominations process and overall planning of event, including catering, hotel bookings, travel and delivery of event and awards program.

- **Academic support**
  The Student Association, in partnership with Student Life and NSCC Libraries and Learning Commons, supported the creation and delivery of free, accessible and technology-enabled learning supports for students through the development of the peer-assisted learning support program. This program is financially supported by the Student Association, in addition to some financial support of online tutoring available through TutorMe.

- **Food security**
  The Student Association supports the delivery of student food pantry programs on campus and, in the later part of 2020, shifted them toward a gift card program. Collectively, in the final year of this reporting period, the Student Association contributed over $115,000 to student food security.

Organizational management/oversight:

- Developed policies and procedures, including the creation of a memorandum of understanding between campus Student Associations and Campus Management teams, redrafting of NSCCSA Common Constitution and Bylaws, adoption of inclusive event guidelines, etc.

- Student Associations Elections support/facilitation—support of online voting, promotions, candidate validation, promotion webinars and staff and faculty outreach twice yearly.

- Risk management and insurance facilitation—reporting for renewal, updating of risk management materials and certificate of insurance requests.

- Financial oversight and ongoing support—development of financial reporting templates, monthly reviews, training and first-look auditing and referral to NSCC Internal Audit for review.

- Development of event templates for Student Associations inclusion in college-wide activities—Bell Let's Talk, Get Started, Orientation, Open House, etc.

- Support of student inclusionary practices in college-wide policy development—mental wellness strategy, sexual violence policy, student code of conduct, etc.

- Oversight of Board of Governors Student election—support of online voting, promotions, candidate validation, and staff and faculty outreach once yearly.

- Liaise with Department of Advanced Education—support the organization and logistics for twice-yearly meetings with the Minister and quarterly meetings of the Housing and Transportation working group.

International Exchange Opportunities

NSCC's international vision is two-fold: that NSCC students and employees will have a strengthened world view developed through experiential international learning opportunities at home and abroad, and that NSCC will play an important role in creating welcoming communities for immigrants. In support of this vision, NSCC International focuses on the following activities:

- **International Learning Programs (ILP)**
  *S*tudent and employee engagement in international learning programs at home and abroad that enhance global awareness and employability skills. Between 2016 and 2021, over 600 students and 50 employees were engaged in international learning programs, including virtual exchange programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, NSCC was part of a successful European Union-funded exchange program and was awarded $1m in Global Skills Opportunities funding from the Government of Canada via Colleges and Institutes Canada to support student participation in international learning programs.

- **Technical Assistance Projects (TAP)**
  Externally funded international projects with international partner institutions that create opportunities for employees and students to share their expertise and learn in an international context. Between 2016 and 2021, over 100 employees were engaged in 18 externally funded (Government of Canada/Colleges and Institutes Canada and various international funding agencies) NSCC international technical assistance projects, including training for partner institution staff in the host country, at NSCC and online.

- **International and Immigrant Student Experience (IISE)**
  Building capacity at NSCC to create welcoming communities and enhance international/immigrant student experience. Between 2016 and 2021, international student enrolment grew from 225 to 718. There was also corresponding growth in in-person and virtual NSCC international student experience programming, such as

the International Student Ambassador program, writing centre and EAL supports, international student advising and participation in innovative programming, including the EduNova Study and Stay in Nova Scotia program.

These initiatives have been undertaken with partners in the Caribbean, South America, Southeast Asia, East Africa and Europe.

2.9 Learner Pathways

NSCC strives to provide a wide variety of accessible learning pathways to serve all Nova Scotians. In addition to increasing access through expansion of flexible delivery modes—including in-person, asynchronous online, synchronous online, blended, blended flex and distributed learning—NSCC provides innovative pathways programming, services, admissions assessment approaches, recognition of prior learning and articulation agreements to meet students wherever they are in their learning journey.

2.10 Pathway Programs

Access Programs

TABLE 2.3	NSCC Access Program Enrolment 2016-2021				
	October 1 Enrolment per Academic Year				
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Academic and Career Connections	569	591	550	506	455
Adult Learning Program	1280	1319	1329	1324	1337
Total October 1 Enrolment	**1,849**	**1,910**	**1,879**	**1,830**	**1,792**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

NSCC designs and delivers flexible pathway programs to support our diversity of students in achieving their learning goals. The Adult Learning Program (ALP) and Academic and Career Connections (ACC) programs, both in place for more than a decade, provide opportunities for learners to complete their high school diploma and earn credits or update their knowledge for post-secondary admission, respectively. During the five years covered by this report, an average of 1,852 students were enrolled each year in these two programs.

In addition to the continued base of enrolment capacity in the ALP and ACC programs, NSCC continues to provide innovative programs that are designed to meet learning needs for specific cohorts of students as identified in partnership with industry, communities and the provincial government. These program offerings are also targeted geographically and delivered in communities closest to an identified need. The following targeted programs were offered during the five-year review period:

- **ALP/Africentric Learning Option**
  This program was developed with an Africentric perspective and additional tutoring/mentorship supports to give an opportunity to African Nova Scotian adult learners to upgrade their learning. This program is delivered virtually through teacher-led synchronous online learning.

- **Adult Learning – English as an Additional Language**
  This program was started in 2013 to respond to a need among recent immigrants who lacked the level of English language fluency and high school credential required for many jobs, and to enable them to enroll in further learning.

- **English for Academic Purposes**
  This program helps prepare students for a college or university program by providing academic writing, reading, listening and speaking skills to Canadian Language Benchmark Assessment (CLBA) level 8 in all skill areas. A total of 87 students completed the program between 2016 and 2021.

- **Achieve Program**
  Achieve Program was developed and expanded to nine campuses during the five-year review period. Achieve is a one-year program designed for students between the ages of 18 and 21 who hold a high school diploma with an Individual Program Plan (IPP). The program uses a student-directed model of delivery to further prepare students for life after high school. Outcomes support growth in self-determination, wellness and employability and community engagement. The program's unique interactive learning environment provides each student access to a wide range of opportunities to gain self-awareness, confidence and the social skills that support each individual's personal and employment goals.

- **Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence**
  In October 2012, NSCC signed an MOU with Irving Shipbuilding to create the *Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence* (CoE) *at NSCC.* The current mandate of the Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence is to provide pathways and equitable access to opportunities, programs and training for Nova Scotians, with particular focus on historically under-represented communities, to effectively work in the shipbuilding industry. Irving Shipbuilding will contribute $250,000 each year during the lifetime of the federal shipbuilding programs to create and support the Centre.

  The model for the CoE is based on partnerships and collaboration. The input and leadership of community organizations, government partners, industry and individuals has led to multiple successes to date.

  Since the Irving Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence project started, NSCC has taken both a short-term and a long-term view of the opportunities available. Some activities have connected directly to the workforce planning needs and projections of the shipbuilding industry in the foreseeable future. Other activities have taken a longer view and are designed to invest in programming that reaches out to historically under-represented communities in Nova Scotia to help them connect to opportunities in the shipbuilding sector or in the areas of SETT (Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology) and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

- **Limitless**
  In partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Justice, and with funding from the Windsor Foundation, Limitless supports incarcerated individuals who seek to obtain post-secondary education. Limitless delivers culturally responsive self-exploration and career readiness programming within the correctional system as a bridge to an NSCC post-secondary program.

- **The Future is Youth**
  Supported by Employment and Social Development Canada, the Future is Youth: Maximizing Pathways to Post-Secondary Education, Skill Development and Employment is a unique program designed for persons (17-30 years of age) who are Mi'kmaq/Indigenous or Black/African Nova Scotian and who are under court order and currently involved with Nova Scotia Community Corrections, including Mental Health/Wellness court and Domestic Violence court. The Future is Youth aims to support participants to continue education at NSCC and train for quality employment opportunities by removing the barriers to education, skill development and employment.

2.11 Optimizing Learning Pathways

NSCC works to take learners from where they are now to what they want to achieve by helping applicants and students optimize their learning pathways.

Additional Assessment

Mature applicants without a high school diploma, applicants who lack sufficient recognized documentation of secondary education, homeschooled applicants, and applicants with an Individual Program Plan (IPP) in Math or English are eligible to apply to NSCC through our additional assessment process. This involves the option to schedule an assessment based on established equivalencies (Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT) or Test of Workplace Essential Skills) to determine academic readiness for post-secondary programs.

Recognized Prior Learning and Transfer Credits

Students entering NSCC are given credit for demonstrated equivalent learning. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) allows students to gain credit at NSCC for both formal and informal learning through credit transfer, advanced standing and/or prior learning assessment and recognition. RPL has offered an alternate pathway to achieving credit since 2000, allowing thousands of students an opportunity to receive recognition for the learning they acquired before coming to NSCC. RPL includes the assessment and recognition of credit courses from other institutions that are equivalent to NSCC courses through transfer credit and recognition of informal learning through Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). Learners who apply for PLAR that derives from their life and work experiences rather than formal credits earned at another post-secondary institution are referred to faculty who are subject matter experts in the learning outcomes required for the applicants' intended program.

Articulation Agreements

Recognizing that many students come to the College with the intention of completing additional post-secondary credentials, NSCC has entered into formal agreements with 15 post-secondary institutions across Canada, the United States and Europe. These articulation agreements have been established to make it easier for students to move among post-secondary institutions to achieve their learning goals. NSCC students can gain advanced standing in more than 34 post-secondary programs using credits from 77 NSCC programs.

2.12 Diversity and Inclusion Supports and Services

NSCC is committed to improving access to post-secondary education and fostering a diverse college culture and community.

Dedicated program advising is available for students at every NSCC campus. Student Services Advisors are assigned advising responsibilities for specific programs available at their campus and provide support to students in the following areas:

- Understanding published program requirements and relevant policies, guidelines and regulations.

- Setting clear, realistic and achievable goals in line with the educational and career goals of students.

- Identifying strategies and resources to support learning and professional skills development.

- Accessing learning supports, academic accommodations and programs (e.g., tutoring, PALS, Writing Centre).

- Making informed plans about paying for school and identifying possible funding sources.

- Providing information and guidance on applying for NSCC bursaries and scholarships.

- Problem-solving related to life and school situations that may be impacting student learning.

- Make informed referrals to additional internal and external resources/services, including funding, housing and community and agency groups.

- Guiding students on how they can get involved in student life activities to build valuable employment and leadership skills.

NSCC continues to provide targeted services to students from Mi'kmaq/Indigenous and Black/African Nova Scotian communities.

Supporting Mi'kmaq/Indigenous and Black/African Canadian Students

Currently, NSCC employs seven Student Services Advisors and Indigenous Supports and five Student Services Advisors and African Canadian Supports. These roles include both program advising assignments and cultural supports advising responsibilities. Provincial Community and Cultural Liaison (CCL) roles (one role for Indigenous community and one for the African Canadian community) also provide cultural supports and advising to students from these communities in addition to their Central Office responsibilities in Student Affairs and Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion (HREI) Services. The table below shows how cultural supports resources in Student Affairs are distributed in our current service model.

Campus	Student Services Advisor and Indigenous Supports	Student Services Advisor and African Canadian Supports
Annapolis Valley (AVC)	Ad hoc support	Shared CCL (also supports Lunenburg and Truro)
eCampus		
Cumberland		
Burridge	Shared Community and Cultural Liaison (CCL)	Shared Advisor (includes Digby Learning Centre)
Lunenburg		Shared CCL (also supports AVC)
Pictou		Dedicated Advisor
Shelburne		Shared Advisor (see Burridge)
Marconi	Dedicated Advisor	Dedicated Advisor
Kingstec	Dedicated Advisor	Shared Advisor (also supports Akerley and IT, virtual service)
Strait Area	Dedicated Advisor	Ad hoc support
Truro	Dedicated Advisor	Shared CCL (also supports AVC)
Ivany	Dedicated Advisor	Dedicated Advisor
Akerley	Shared Advisor	Shared Advisor (also supports Kingstec)
Institute of Technology (IT)		

In addition to program-based advising, cultural supports provide students from Indigenous and African Canadian communities with advice, interventions, supports and events that are reflective of their cultural heritage. These Advisors also work with the campus and local community to offer prospective and current students culturally specific supports, as well as host gatherings, cultural events and other culturally relevant activities.

Beginning 2019, conversations with Indigenous and African Canadian students have been tracked in Advising Notes.

Advising Conversations with Indigenous Students

Advising Notes data can be added by a variety of users. These numbers show only those advising conversations attributed to roles in Student Affairs. The numbers below show individual conversations. Multiple advising conversations can be had with an individual student.

2019-2020	2020-2021	Total
1832	3429	**5261**

Source: NSCC Student & Career Services

The top three conversational themes in working with Indigenous students, as reflected in Advising Notes data during the three academic years represented in the table above, were:

1. **Student Services** – specifically regarding academic progress and general inquiries.

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2. **Enrolment** – specifically regarding academic (course) advising, general inquiries and program withdrawals.

3. **Accessibility & Inclusion** – specifically regarding standard accommodations and general inquiries.

Advising Conversations with Black/African Canadian Students
Advising Notes data can be added by a variety of users. These numbers show only those advising conversations attributed to roles in Student Affairs. The numbers below show individual conversations. Multiple advising conversations can be had with an individual student.

2019-2020	2020-2021	Total
1380	3120	**4500**

Source: NSCC Student & Career Services

The top three conversational themes in working with Black/African Canadian students, as reflected in Advising Notes data across the three academic years represented in the table above, were:

1. **Student Services** – specifically regarding general inquiries and academic progress.

2. **Accessibility & Inclusion** – specifically regarding cultural support, standard accommodations and general inquiries.

3. **Enrolment** – specifically regarding academic (course) advising, general inquiries and program withdrawals.

Our current cultural supports roles were designed as part of the 2015 Student Services Alignment Project. At that time, the strategy used to determine resource allocation focused primarily on a many-to-one student-to-advisor ratio. We have learned from students, advisors and the community that the nature of cultural supports and community relationships adds complexity to expectations of the Student Services Advisor Indigenous and African Canadian Supports roles that may not have been incorporated in previous decision-making. Our ability to ensure equitable access to service across all our campuses is limited by our current service model for delivering cultural supports. As we move forward, this model will be examined and refined to improve access to cultural supports across the province. This work will be done in collaboration with Senior Advisors in HREI, the Indigenous and African Canadian Advisors, Campus and Central Leadership and the voice of students to inform our review.

Tutoring Programs
The African Nova Scotian Student success Tutoring Program supports all Black/African Nova Scotian students in accessing tutoring at no cost. It is funded by the African Canadian Services Division of the Department of Education.

The Indigenous Student Success Tutoring Program supports Indigenous students in accessing tutoring at no cost. It is funded by Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey.

Subject Guides
NSCC Libraries, in partnership with HREI and community consultation, have developed Equity and Inclusion Subject Guides to support education and awareness and highlight resources for the College community.

Services and Supports for Students with Disabilities
At NSCC, Accessibility Services has evolved in recent years from 15 Disability Resource Facilitators working within a medical model to 20+ Student Accessibility Specialists working to meet the vision of NSCC's Educational Equity Policy. The number of students self-identifying with disabilities rose in each year of the five-year review period, from approximately 15% in 2016 to 26% in 2021. Growing complexities in serving students with disabilities include thoughtful navigation of intersectionality, external resources and increased awareness of disability and human rights due to new provincial legislation.

Student Accessibility Specialists offer individualized service to reduce students' barriers to learning. They help students identify barriers and make requests for academic accommodations and supports while considering recommendations in medical documentation, lived experiences and the nature of NSCC programming. Supports include approving academic accommodations, recommending and acquiring assistive technology and services, creating physical access, navigating external resources, applying learning strategies and coaching self-advocacy skills.

NSCC Accessibility Services has also grown to include an Accessibility Employment Program, which offers a wage subsidy to local employers who hire a student with a disability, and various terms of service with community partners to streamline external supports such as American Sign Language (ASL) Interpretation, autism support and transition to employment support.

2.13 Libraries and Learning Commons

NSCC Libraries and Learning Commons play a crucial role in providing access to resources and services that support academic success and lifelong learning, with efforts focused on:

- Bridging the digital divide through an expanded laptop loan program.
- Providing access to electronic resources and services to support flexible delivery.
- Delivering essential information literacy skills instruction.
- Growing the suite of academic learning supports.
- Creating integrated physical and virtual library and learning commons spaces.
- Partnerships and collaboration on provincial and regional consortium initiatives.

All NSCC campus libraries carry a wide range of materials in both print and online formats to support teaching and learning. Online resources such as databases, e-books and streaming video are accessible either on campus or from home using the College network ID and password. NSCC libraries are also members of the Novanet library system, which provides access to the resources of 12 university and college library collections.

NSCC Libraries have invested in building education and support for faculty in the adoption and use of open educational resources and now host a growing collection of open textbooks to aid in reducing financial and accessibility barriers for students.

NSCC Libraries also manage the digital archives of two NSCC special collections:

- The **W. K. Morrison Special Collection** was donated by Walter Morrison, Cartographer Emeritus, to the J. B. Hall Library located at NSCC's Annapolis Valley Campus, Centre of Geographic Sciences (COGS) site. This collection focuses on the early mapping of Atlantic Canada, specifically Nova Scotia, and includes over 2,000 historical maps, atlases, periodicals and books. Over 800 of these items are currently digitized and accessible online. The collection was featured in Maclean's 2017 College Guide.
- The **Yearbook Collection** features yearbooks from current NSCC campuses and from the vocational schools, institutes and colleges from which NSCC was formed.

Other services offered through NSCC libraries include:

- Reference assistance with assignments and research.
- Academic integrity, citation and copyright support.

- Online subject guides, with resources to support learning programs, equity and inclusion and essential learning skills development.

- On-demand webinars and workshops.

- Access to the LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda.com) educational platform.

- Laptop loan program.

- Live help online chat reference service.

- Mobile device charging stations, photocopying, scanning and computing.

- Collaborative and quiet study spaces.

The Libraries and Learning Commons presence has been further enhanced with the development of a new website. It creates a virtual hub for both library resources and services and the extensive suite of learning supports that have been implemented to facilitate student success, including:

- Writing Centre for one-to-one support to help improve writing skills for assignments, research papers, resumes, note-taking and more.

- Peer Assisted Learning Supports (PALS), in which peers support peers through general skills webinars, facilitated study groups, drop-in sessions and one-to-one support.

- Tutoring that includes cultural tutor matches and a 24/7 online tutoring service.

- English as an Additional Language (EAL) Supports to aid EAL learners in strengthening their listening, reading and writing skills through webinars, conversation circles and one-to-one support.
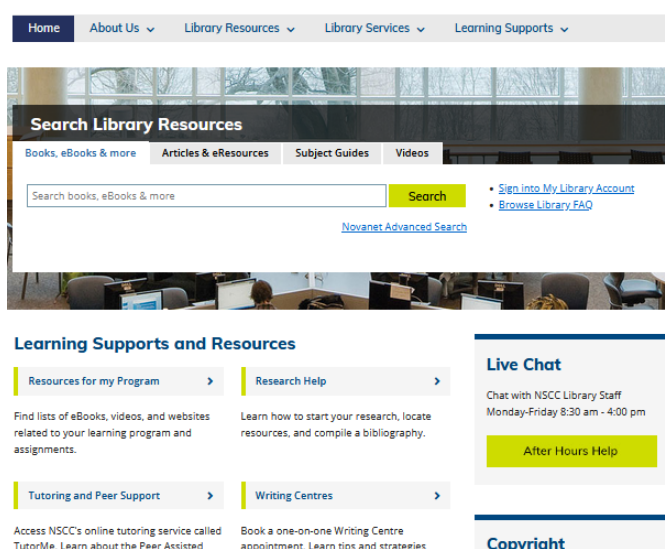
2.14 Career Services

Career advising and development services have always been an integral part of NSCC's services to our students. They guide students not only in connecting their career aspirations to good program choices, but also in transitioning from learning to the workforce by finding employment related to the program they completed. Career and Employment Services continues to offer a full range of services and programs, including:

- Career coaching through the Talk to an Advisor program.

- Online webinars, programming and ongoing supports to build skills in resume and cover letter writing, job search techniques, interview skills and networking. This area of programming has grown significantly due to NSCC's response to COVID-19.

- The Student & Graduate Job Board on the NSCC website to connect employer partners to students and alumni for full-time, part-time, WIL & co-op, apprenticeship and volunteer opportunities.

- Supporting program job fairs, campus career events and industry partner recruitment events. Promoting accessibility and inclusion for all students.

Career in Gear was a web-based career exploration tool launched in 2014. In 2017, the Incoming Student Success Survey asked students if Career in Gear helped them decide to come to NSCC. Thirty percent used Career in Gear, with 43% stating it helped them decide. In the last few academic cycles, Career in Gear suffered a few setbacks, and the system was taken offline for enhancements. We are currently working with the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) on a new feature of the Career in Gear tool that will support prospective apprentices in accessing this pathway to meaningful work in industry. We are developing a project to support the relaunch of the tool and are very excited to see it return as a feature of the NSCC career development experience.

2.15 Financial Awards and Bursaries

Recognizing the cost of post-secondary education, the College continued to ensure that we are accessible and affordable option for learners. Through the fundraising work of the NSCC Foundation, and the administrative and operational support of the Student Awards office, NSCC is able to provide financial support to learners through a robust Student Awards program:

- Unique student award applicants grew from 2,034 in 2016 to 3,717 in 2021.

- In response to the rising cost of living and the global pandemic, NSCC Foundation offered $270,000 in Cost-of-Living bursaries in 2021.

- The number of students receiving financial awards from the NSCC Foundation has grown from 492 in 2016 to 1,025 in 2021.

NSCC committed to a better awards promotion and application experience for students by implementing a new student awards portal in March 2020.

The five-year review period was a time of significant growth and maturity for the NSCC Foundation, which has been working across the College to enhance the culture of philanthropy and community engagement by being a resource for campuses, schools and departments to leverage their reach and impact. The Foundation Board of Directors grew and increased the governance structure and reach. Five Board subcommittees were added, Board guidelines were established to outline the diversity, equity and inclusion commitment, and updates were made to bylaws and the MOU with the College. The NSCC Foundation updated several college-wide policies, including the Naming Rights Policy, Fundraising Policy, Endowment Spend Policy and the Investment Policy.

In the NSCC Foundation's first-ever provincewide fundraising campaign, *Make Way*, $33M was raised for direct student supports at every campus. As a result, students were supported throughout the province in the following ways:

- Funding for almost 7,500 bursaries and awards for students (2016-2021), which totaled just over $8.2M disbursed directly to students.

- Funding for over 4,100 students through Urgent Aid, which totaled over $1.1M in funding to help cover emergency items like increases in cost of living, medical, bills, vehicle fixes, etc.

- Funding for over 250 opportunities through the granting program for extraordinary learning opportunities outside the classroom—a total of over $2.7M.

The NSCC Foundation responded to the immediate needs of students during COVID-19 by launching *Lead the Way*, with a goal to raise $5M for rapid response funding. The effort raised $6.9M. When it became apparent

that there was a significant gap in access to technology for online learning during the shutdown, the Foundation mobilized quickly, communicated with donors and was able to fund over 480 laptops for the NSCC Library Loaner program.

2.16 Alumni Relations

The College has a unique vision for our alumni: to "friend-raise," not "fundraise," and to build mutually beneficial, lifelong relationships with NSCC Alumni. Alumni relations has reached 100,000 alumni on record.

During the five-year review period, Alumni Relations:

- Co-led the College's 25th anniversary year program.

- Brought on affinity partners for home and auto insurance, health and life insurance and grad ring purchases.

- Was recognized as a source of data for the College Graduate Survey, resulting in a participation increase of 13+%.

2.17 Summary

Continuing progress is evident as NSCC matures in our capacity to deliver on our mission to build Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation. Through the delivery of a wide range of programs, the College is committed to ensuring learning is aligned with industry needs and accessible to communities throughout the province. By specializing supports and services for our learners, NSCC is dedicated to supporting students throughout their entire learning journey.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Chapter 3: Student Profile

Does the institution attract and keep an appropriate number and mix of students?

3.1 Overview

Given that the community is the heart of the Nova Scotia Community College, the occupational training we offer accelerates community innovation, entrepreneurship and cultural prosperity. The ever-changing needs of Nova Scotia's economy are addressed by the College's commitment to educating an increasingly diverse body of students who bring a wealth of knowledge, skills and cultural and lived experience into the workplace. To achieve this mandate, the College offers a diverse range of post-secondary certificates, diplomas and advanced diplomas, and an array of access programs for those who have not completed high school education or who require specific credits to enable them to enter post-secondary programs. In addition to our core credential programs, which serve approximately 11,000 learners each year, NSCC enrols approximately 10,000 learners annually in apprenticeship training, credit part-time learning, continuing education and customized training courses.

3.2 Credential Program Enrolment

During the five-year review period, the enrolment target of 10,650 was exceeded in every year except for 2020-21, when the COVID-19 pandemic put pressures on enrolments in national and international public colleges and universities. NSCC's fall enrolment in the pre-pandemic years averaged 10,856 annually. In 2020 (the first year of the pandemic) enrolment fell to 10,049, however, this is in keeping with lower college enrolments of -5.0% for both Canadian and international college students*. Part-time enrolment remained stable through the pandemic, with an average annual enrolment of 1,265 students (Table 3.1).
Statistics Canada release 2022-11-22.

Between 2016 and 2020, NSCC saw a consistent pattern of enrolment with, on average, 88% of students in certificate, diploma and advanced diplomas enrolled on a full-time basis.

TABLE 3.1	NSCC Fall Enrolment 2016-20				
Academic Load	**Fall Enrolment on October 1**				
	2016	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
Full-Time	9818	9664	9473	9533	8657
Part-Time	1204	1173	1247	1310	1392
Total Enrolment	**11,022**	**10,837**	**10,720**	**10,843**	**10,049**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

Table 3.2 provides the part-time statistics for the students in the fall 2020 enrolment. These statistics were consistent with the previous four years within the scope of this review.

TABLE 3.2	NSCC Part-Time Enrolment Fall 2020		
		Number of Programs	Part-Time Enrolment
Number of Programs with no Part-Time Students Enrolled		74 of 136 Programs	0
Number of Programs by School			
Access, Education and Language		4	666
Business and Creative Industries		14	474
Health and Human Services		11	52
Technology and Environment		20	78
Trades and Transportation		13	122

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

Campus Enrolment

Table 3.3 It should also be noted that the eCampus began reporting enrolment in 2018. The growth in eCampus between 2016-2017 and 2020-2021 positively impacted overall enrolment for both the Business Administration and Adult Learning programs, however overall enrolment for Academic & Career Connections fell 20% over the same period.

TABLE 3.3	NSCC Enrolment by Campus 2016-2021				
Campus	October 1 Enrolment per Academic Year				
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Akerley	815	876	865	927	915
Annapolis	338	308	282	266	346
Burridge	522	465	461	441	411
Cumberland	530	550	403	342	312
eCampus*			758	878	1180
Institute	1,003	962	1,006	1,012	859
Ivany	2,900	2,639	2,607	2,664	2,278
Kingstec	900	838	791	787	688
Lunenburg	383	338	333	336	322
Marconi	1,246	1,172	1,118	1,078	899
Pictou	688	668	672	633	487
Shelburne*	226	632	63	70	52
Strait Area	672	613	605	623	589
Truro	799	776	756	786	711
Total Enrolment	11,022	10,837	10,720	10,843	10,049

Source: NSCC Institutional Research
Official credential program enrolment is counted as of September 30 each academic year
*The enrolment of online students was transferred from Shelburne to eCampus in 2018 to reflect the method of learning

eCampus

In July 2018, the College launched eCampus in response to the growing number of students who wish to study fully online programs on either a part-time or full-time basis.

The post-secondary landscape is constantly evolving, adapting to changing student expectations and needs, educational technology, teaching and learning scholarship and more. Recognizing that the future of all learning

at NSCC has some level of technology-enabled learning, eCampus will play an integral role in supporting students seeking the online student experience.

NSCC's eCampus provides students a fully online experience. Together, NSCC's network of 14 campuses deliver a responsive, comprehensive suite of programming that meets the needs of students, industries and communities in the province.

NSCC's eCampus will complement traditional and evolving on-campus delivery. For example, eCampus can provide online, flexible options for the delivery of short credentials and microcredentials for reskilling and upskilling in key industry sectors. Equally, eCampus can be the vehicle for training of geographically dispersed learners and teams. eCampus is part of a strong menu of offerings that meet the needs of students seeking to advance their skills and knowledge throughout their career's lifespan.

TABLE 3.4	NSCC Fall 2021 Enrolment Profile*		eCampus	All Other Campuses
Enrolment		**Incoming**	556	5,524
		Returning	682	3,339
		Total	**1,238**	**8,863**
Gender		**Female**	918	4,131
		Male	272	4,375
		Undisclosed	36	271
		Non-Binary	12	86
Academic Load		**Full Time**	152	8,287
		Part Time	1,086	576
Age		**Under 20**	80	2,531
		20-24	312	2,908
		25-29	280	1,384
		30-39	359	1,287
		40-49	155	548
		50-59	47	174
		Over 60	5	29
		Unknown	0	2
Indigenous			73	693
African Canadian or African Nova Scotian			82	489
Racially Visible			47	378
Mi'kmaq			6	90
Mi'kmaq Nation			11	119
			eCampus	**All Other Campuses**
Métis			10	106
Inuit			1	31
Students with Disabilities			225	1,941
International			2	716
Sponsored			28	911

Source: NSCC Institutional Research
*As of October 1

Table 3.5 provides a summary view of the college-wide enrolment changes by academic school during the five-year review period.

TABLE 3.5	NSCC Enrolment by Academic School 2016-2021				
School	**October 1 Enrolment per Academic Year**				
	2016-17	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
School of Access, Education & Language	2,206	2,192	2,195	2,201	2,154
School of Business & Creative Industries	2,847	2,794	2,816	2,926	2,924
School of Health & Human Services	2,207	2,132	2,021	1,977	1,534
School of Technology & Environment	1,714	1,701	1,713	1,670	1,637
School of Trades & Transportation	2,048	2,018	1,975	2,069	1,800
Total Enrolment	**11,022**	**10,837**	**10,720**	**10,843**	**10,049**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

3.3 Enrolment by Program Type

In addition to our core credential programs that serve approximately 11,000 learners each year, NSCC enrols another 10,000 learners in apprenticeship training, credit part-time learning, continuing education and customized training courses. Enrolment was greatly affected by the pandemic and related public health restrictions during that time. Enrolment in credential programs that started in September increased by 33 students over this five-year period, and apprentices enrolling in courses at NSCC decreased by 198. In contrast, the number of short-term and part-time students* grew by 645.

More than 85% of the students in the Off-cycle, Continuous intake, Credit Part-time, Continuing Education and Customized Learning groups are part-time learners, enrolled in three or fewer courses in the academic year. The remainder are full time, but only for a period of 9 to 15 weeks of study, usually in the winter and spring semesters.

TABLE 3.6	Comparison Summary of 2016-2017 to 2020-2021 Enrolment by Program Type					
Academic Year	**Sept 30 Enrolment**	**Off-cycle, Other Credit & Continuous Intake**	**Total Credential Enrolment**	**Enrolment of Apprentices**	**Credit Part-time, Continuing Education, Customized Learning & Organizational Learning credit Programs ****	**Total Annual Head Count**
2016-17	11,022	1,319	12,341	2,044	9,436	20,401
2020-21	10,049	2,325	12,374	1,846	10,375	18,193
Change 2011-2015	**-973**	**1,006**	**33**	**-198**	**645**	**-2,208**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research
** Enrolment of Credit Part-Time, Continuing Education and Customized Training learners represent an unduplicated head count. Core program learners and Apprentices also enrolled in non-program courses are counted only in their primary program, and learners enrolled only in non-program courses are only counted once in this category.

Tables 3.6 provides details on apprenticeship enrolment at NSCC.

There was modest growth in apprenticeship enrolment between 2016 and 2018. The total number of students increased by 134 (6%). For the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years, enrolment was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with an average enrolment of 2,033.

It is important to note that the significant (47%) reduction in course enrolments among apprentices between 2016 and 2020-2021 was primarily due to the "harmonization" of apprenticeship training. In the past, apprentices would have registered for several of courses at their apprenticeship "level," whereas there has been a transition to registering only at a "level" with no courses specified. Additionally, course enrolments in 2020-2021 would have been impacted by the pandemic.

TABLE 3.7	Apprenticeship Training Profile 2016-2021					
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Net Change
Total Number of Programs	26	28	29	25	27	1
Total Number of Courses	475	446	441	431	419	-56
Total Course Enrolments	12869	12643	11081	9058	6954	-5915
Total Number of Students	2115	2180	2249	1968	2099	-16

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

TABLE 3.8	Apprenticeship Course Enrolments by Campus 2016-2020				
Campus	**Academic Year**				
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Akerley	4,624	4,902	5,264	4,593	3,960
Annapolis Valley	0	0	0	0	0
Burridge	761	348	508	820	587
Cumberland	0	0	5	0	0
Institute of Technology	1,950	2,182	1,961	1,226	1,021
Ivany	2,558	2,305	1,519	1,132	576
Kingstec	253	274	139	197	96
Lunenburg	35	35	0	26	0
Marconi	1,532	1,666	856	517	345
Pictou	871	791	551	404	251
Shelburne	25	42	0	0	0
Strait Area	65	88	54	27	21
Truro	195	10	224	116	97
Total	**12,869**	**12,643**	**11,081**	**9,058**	**6,954**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

3.4 Geographic Access

NSCC remains committed to providing access to post-secondary education for all Nova Scotians. Spanning the province, the College's 14 campuses offer a variety of programs. The decision-making process that determines where and how programs are designed and delivered continues to include practices to ensure that rural and urban communities are served appropriately.

NSCC uses the population balance between metro and non-metro areas of the province as a target ratio for metro/non-metro student enrolment. The population of the Halifax Census Metropolitan Area was 44% in 2016 and 48% in 2021.

Table 3.9 provides detail on enrolment at both metro and non-metro campuses.

TABLE 3.9	Halifax Metro and Non-metro Campus Enrolment 2016-2021*									
Campus	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Metro Campuses	4,718	43%	4,477	41%	4,478	45%	4,603	46%	4,052	46%
Non-metro Campuses	6,304	57%	6,360	59%	5,484	55%	5,362	54%	4,817	54%
NSCC Total	**11,022**		**10,837**		**9,962**		**9,965**		**8,869**	

Source: NSCC Institutional Research   *excludes eCampus enrolment which commenced in 2018-19

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

To ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained, and that growth is planned for at appropriate campuses, NSCC measures our geographical distribution of learning through the participation rate of adults aged 18 to 39.

Table 3.10 shows the College-wide participation rate by county in Nova Scotia at the end of the five-year review period, using 2021 census population numbers. The overall participation rate was 3.6% in 2020-2021.

TABLE 3.10	Participation Rate of Adults Aged 18-39 Years Enrolled at NSCC 2020-2021			
NS County of Residence	**2020-21 Residents Enrolled**	**2021 Census Population Aged 18-39**	**2020-21 Participation Rate**	**Population Change from 2016 Census to 2021 Census: 18–39-year-olds**
Annapolis	162	4,055	4.0%	350
Antigonish	220	4,985	4.4%	260
Cape Breton	923	23,130	4.0%	910
Colchester	542	12,085	4.5%	475
Cumberland	280	6,090	4.6%	190
Digby	153	3,160	4.8%	-45
Guysborough	62	1,110	5.6%	15
Halifax	4013	139,875	2.9%	16,530
Hants	435	10,470	4.2%	645
Inverness	186	3,470	5.4%	5
Kings	615	15,490	4.0%	1,130
Lunenburg	337	9,415	3.6%	280
Pictou	554	9,005	6.2%	-395
Queens	67	1,790	3.7%	5
Richmond	112	1,635	6.9%	-25
Shelburne	110	2,735	4.0%	-80
Victoria	59	1,405	4.2%	65
Yarmouth	303	5,360	5.7%	55
Unknown (in province)	23			
Total Enrolment	**9,156**	**255,265**	**3.6%**	**20,370**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research and Statistics Canada

Except for Halifax (2.9%), Lunenburg (3.6%) and Queens (3.7%) counties, participation rates were above 4% throughout the province.

3.5 Access Directly from High School

NSCC continues to attract approximately one third of our incoming students directly from high school. In the five-year period between 2016 and 2021, the percentage of incoming students under 20 years old averaged 34%. It is noted that many who left high school chose to defer post-secondary studies until after 2020 due to the impacts of the pandemic on readiness and on program delivery.

TABLE 3.11	Percent of Incoming Students under 20 years old Fall 2016 to Fall 2020*				
	Fall 2016	**Fall 2017**	**Fall 2018**	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**
% of Incoming Under 20	34%	35%	33%	35%	31%

Source: NSCC Institutional Research
* The number of students under age 20 is used as a proxy for the number of students coming directly from high school

TABLE 3.11a	Incoming Students who Participated in Options and Opportunities (O_2) in High School				
	2016-17	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
Number of Incoming Students with O_2	360	341	363	380	322
Percent of Incoming Students with O_2	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

The Options and Opportunities (O_2) program was designed to help retain a group of students who are *"often overlooked, who are not as successful as they could be, who are discouraged, and who may have ceased to believe in themselves"* and *"to engage students and to support them in planning and preparing for a post-secondary destination that is right for them." ***
*** Options and Opportunities: A Resource for Schools, Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2013*

The number of incoming students who participated in the O_2 program in high school during the 2016-2021 period remained stable, except for the 2020-2021 intake. With an overall lower enrolment number in 2020-2021 the percentage of students who participated in O_2 remained at 6%.

NSCC continues to attract a diverse group of learners with a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Results from the most recent incoming student survey showed that 35% of students are first generation (i.e., neither parent has post-secondary education). Forty-seven percent of survey respondents indicated they were employed and 34% of respondents indicated that they are working at least twenty hours per week.

Table 3.12 shows results from the 2016 and 2019 NSCC Incoming Student Success Surveys (ISSS). The survey was not administered in fall 2020 due to COVID-19. More than half of students were admitted from high school, but the proportion with no previous post-secondary decreased by 5%. At the same time, those with previous post-secondary experience fell by 1%, combined with a 9% increase in the proportion of respondents who had completed a college or apprenticeship credential prior to enrolling in their current program. Also, during this time, the proportion of incoming students arriving with a university degree increased by 6%.

| TABLE 3.12 Education Prior to Starting Current Program at NSCC 2016-2017 to 2019-2020* (Note: Students are asked to check all that apply)		
Students are asked to select all that apply	**Fall 2016**	**Fall 2019**
Undergraduate or Graduate Degree Completed	8%	14%
College or Apprenticeship Credential Completed	23%	32%
Some Post Secondary but No Credential Completed	15%	14%
No Post-Secondary Prior to Current NSCC Program	56%	51%

Source: NSCC Incoming Student Success Surveys
*The ISSS was not administered in fall 2020 due to COVID-19

3.6 Participation of Women in Trades and Technology Programs

NSCC continues to provide most of the learning opportunities in the province for a wide range of trades and technologies. Both the School of Trades and Transportation and the School of Technology and Environment showed steady increases (+2% and +4%) in female students enrolled over the five-year review period.

Chart 3.13 provides a year-by-year display of the percentage of female students by Academic School for the 2016-2017 through 2020-2021 academic years.
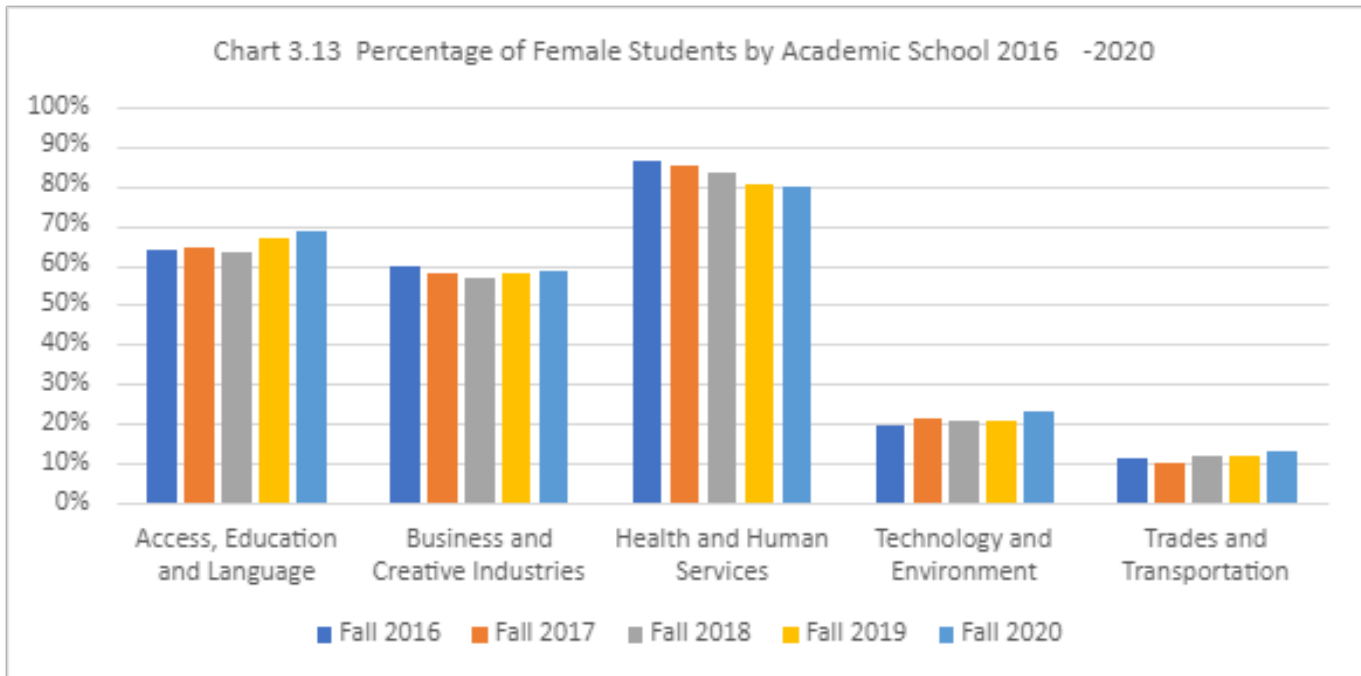
Source: NSCC Institutional Research

3.7 Diversity: African Canadian, Indigenous Students, Students with Disabilities

NSCC values diversity in our student population and is committed to increasing the number of African Canadians, Indigenous students and students with disabilities enrolled in our programs. **Tables 3.14 and 3.15** show the enrolment of self-identified African Canadian students, Indigenous students and students with disabilities between 2016 and 2020. Over this five-year period, the total enrolment from these student groups increased by 324 and their combined proportion of overall student enrolment grew from 26% in 2016-2017 to 32% in 2020-2021. On average, African Canadian students and Indigenous students made up 5% and 7% of the student population, respectively. The growth in the number of students with disabilities enrolled in credential programs at NSCC during this time has been significant and reflects a trend experienced across the broader post-secondary education sector. Enrolment in 2016 was 1,577 or 14% of the total enrolment, but it increased to 1,966 students enrolled, or 20% of the student, population in 2020.

TABLE 3.14	Enrolment by Diversity Group 2016-2017 to 2020-2021				
Diversity Group	**Fall 2016**	**Fall 2017**	**Fall 2018**	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**
African Canadian	499	512	504	489	455
Indigenous	772	793	764	799	721
Students with Disabilities	1577	1,713	1,836	1,994	1,996

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

TABLE 3.15 Proportion of Total Enrolment by Diversity Group 2016-2017 to 2020-2021					
Diversity Group	**Fall 2016**	**Fall 2017**	**Fall 2018**	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**
African Canadian	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Indigenous	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Students with Disabilities	14%	16%	17%	18%	20%

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

3.8 Adult Learning Program

NSCC's ALP program experienced significant growth between 2001 and 2011, with enrolment increasing from 373 students per year to over 1,000 students. For the five-year review period, enrolment remained steady, with a five-year average annual enrolment of 1,317. **Table 3.16** shows ALP enrolment for the five-year period.

TABLE 3.16 Adult Learning Program (ALP) Fall Milestone Enrolment* 2016-2020						
Annual Fall Average 2011-2015	**Fall 2016**	**Fall 2017**	**Fall 2018**	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**	**Annual Fall Average 2016-2020**
1,288	1,280	1,319	1,329	1,324	1,337	**1,317**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research
*As of September 30

3.9 Sponsored Students

While NSCC provides an affordable and accessible post-secondary option for students, many students face additional challenges, such as inadequate financial resources and family and job demands. To help those on income support programs, such as Employment Insurance and Social Assistance, Employment Nova Scotia (ENS) provides funding from a fund administered by Service Canada. There has been a marked reduction in the number of seats funded since 2010. In 2010-2011, nearly 1,900 students were supported through ENS. Through this program, 503 students were supported in 2020-2021.

Similarly, the provincial Department of Community Services (DCS) has a funding partnership with NSCC to support students through their post-secondary education, with 663 students benefiting in 2010-2011. There has also been a sharp decline in the number of DCS sponsored students. Through this program, 233 students were supported in 2020-2021.
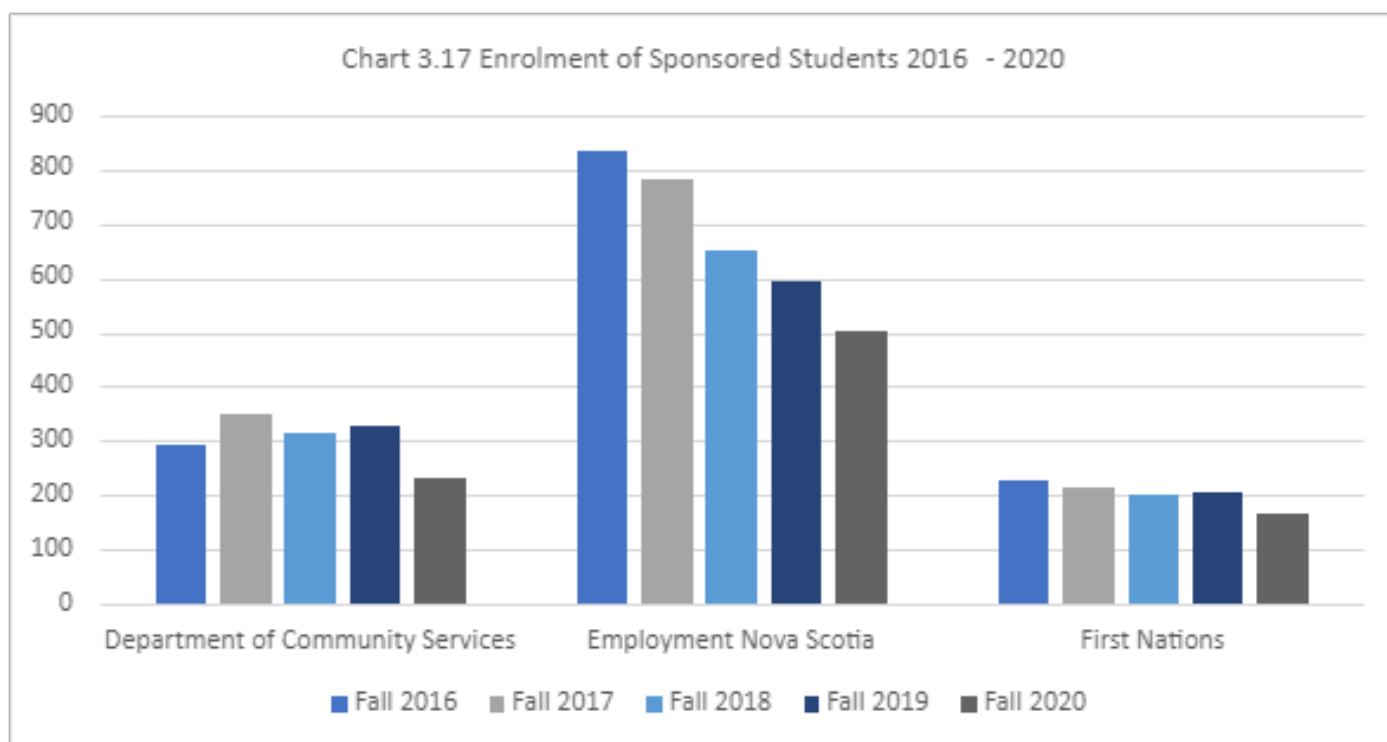
Table 3.17 shows the number of NSCC students sponsored through ENS, DCS and other funding programs.

TABLE 3.17 Sponsored Students Fall Enrolment* 2016-2020					
Diversity Group	**Fall 2016**	**Fall 2017**	**Fall 2018**	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**
Department of Community Services	294	351	314	328	233
Employment Nova Scotia	834	783	650	594	503
First Nations	229	214	203	204	166
TOTAL	**1,357**	**1,348**	**1,167**	**1,126**	**902**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research
*As of September 30

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Chart 3.17 Enrolment of Sponsored Students 2016 - 2020

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

3.10 Student Retention

Post-secondary institutions measure student success through retention and graduation metrics. As students progress from admission to graduation, there are several financial, social and academic factors that can impact their ability to complete a program.

Research increasingly demonstrates that the first semester is a critical time for students. This is particularly true at colleges where the bulk of programs are one-to-two-years long. If students are retained for the second semester, the possibility of successful completion of a credential is greatly improved. NSCC has been using specialized reports since 2010 to better track the retention and persistence of our students. Ongoing development and enhancement of these reports, developed in Cognos, is central to NSCC's strategic focus on building robust Enrolment Management practices.

Table 3.18 shows that term-to-term retention of first year students remains at 83-85%.

TABLE 3.18	Term to Term Retention Rate for First Year Students 2016-2021		
Academic Year	**Enrolled Sept 30**	**Retained Jan 30**	**Retention Rate**
Fall 2016 to Winter 2017	6,485	5,461	85%
Fall 2017 to Winter 2018	6,086	5,129	85%
Fall 2018 to Winter 2019	6,045	5,117	85%
Fall 2019 to Winter 2020	6,052	5,056	84%
Fall 2020 to Winter 2021	4,965	4,116	83%

Source: NSCC Enrolment & Registrar

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

3.11 Summary

NSCC is committed to ensuring that our 140 programs and 14 campuses are accessible to the communities we serve. As the province's most diverse learning institution, the College has established strategies and committed resources to maintain an affordable option for post-secondary education. NSCC will continue to focus our efforts on initiatives that align with our equity and accessibility agenda, including the following:

- Attempting to increase the participation rate of the Nova Scotia population (aged 18-39 years) in all counties.

- Increasing the number of students admitted directly from high school.

- Increasing the participation of women in trades and technology programs.

- Increasing the participation of Black/African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq/Indigenous students.

- Increasing the participation of adults with disabilities.

- Increasing participation in the Adult Learning Program and Academic Career Connections.

- Ensuring that learning is affordable to learners, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

- Increasing student retention and success in programs.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Chapter 4: Graduate Outcomes

Do students achieve appropriate outcomes?

4.1 Overview

NSCC is committed to meeting the learning and labour market needs of the province. Each year, thousands of graduates from a variety of programs launch successful careers in diverse workplaces across the province.

Intrinsic to the College's mission are the goals that students graduate from their programs, that they are satisfied with their post-secondary education experience and that they are successful in the labour market. NSCC monitors the number of graduates and the graduates' employment experiences to ensure that it is providing an appropriate mix of programs and graduates to match current and emerging labour market opportunities.

4.2 Graduate Statistics

During the five-year review period, there were 22,024 graduates from credential programs. **Table 4.1 and Table 4.2** provide a breakdown of annual graduate counts by Academic School and program cluster, respectively.

Table 4.1 details the number of graduates by Academic School from 2016-2017 to 2020-2021. The total number of graduates peaked in 2016-2017 at 4,666. Over the remaining four years, each year's graduate count averaged 4,340 graduates.

TABLE 4.1 NSCC Graduates by Academic School 2016-2021					
Academic School	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
School of Access, Education and Language	606	650	573	477	502
School of Business and Creative Industries	1,180	1177	1,208	1,253	1,243
School of Health & Human Services	1,010	1,048	856	717	907
School of Technology and Environment	674	641	675	672	667
School of Trades & Transportation	1,196	1,098	1,049	1,056	889
Total	**4,666**	**4,614**	**4,361**	**4,175**	**4,208**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

Table 4.2 provides a further breakdown of NSCC's graduate numbers by program cluster. Fluctuations in graduate numbers year-to-year and over the five-year period were mainly the result of the changes in program offerings each year and the limitations placed on post-secondary education by the pandemic. Changes in program offerings reflected the College's commitment to being responsive to local labour market needs in every economic region of Nova Scotia.

TABLE 4.2 NSCC Graduates by Program Cluster 2016-2021					
Program Cluster	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
Academic Upgrading and Skills Development	515	530	447	388	367
Building & Manufacturing	843	746	702	716	632
Business	804	820	797	842	894
Creative & Digital Media	199	182	187	178	165

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

TABLE 4.2	NSCC Graduates by Program Cluster 2016-2021				
Culinary & Tourism	177	175	224	233	184
Education	54	85	93	67	110
Engineering Technologies	392	330	354	274	263
Environment, Sustainability and Natural Resources	69	72	82	107	103
Health & Wellness	670	733	541	430	565
IT & Data Analytics	104	146	162	203	202
Language & Cultural Studies	37	35	33	22	25
Marine	40	44	53	41	32
Social & Community Supports	340	315	315	287	342
Surveying, Mapping & Geomatics	109	93	77	88	99
Transportation	313	308	294	299	225
Total	**4,666**	**4,614**	**4,361**	**4,175**	**4,208**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

4.3 Graduate Employment Success

Each year, NSCC conducts a Graduate Follow-Up Survey. One year after graduation, the survey asks graduates about their satisfaction with their NSCC and employment experience. Until 2012, the survey was administered exclusively by telephone. Since then, the survey has been administered using both online and telephone methods to improve response rates and, therefore, reduce sample size margins of error.

TABLE 4.3	Employment Outcomes of NSCC Graduates 2016-2020				
Graduation Year	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
Graduate Survey Year	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**
% of graduates participating in the labour force	96%	97%	97%	93%	94%
% of graduates employed	87%	88%	90%	82%	83%
% of graduates employed in work related to field of study	81%	83%	87%	85%	80%
% of graduates who worked three or more months in the year following graduation	94%	94%	94%	95%	90%
% of graduates living and working in Nova Scotia	93%	92%	91%	94%	94%
Average annual earnings of graduates employed full time in work related to field of study	$37,426	$38,395	$39,943	$41,192	$41,861

Source: NSCC Graduate Follow Up Surveys 2017 to 2020

Results from the Graduate Follow-Up Survey during the five-year review period consistently showed that NSCC graduates succeed after graduation. **Table 4.3** outlines the key graduate employment outcomes by year of survey. The graduate labour force participation rate, the employment rate and employment relatedness remained strong during the five-year period.

Just as most NSCC students are from Nova Scotia, most graduates choose to stay in Nova Scotia after program completion. **Table 4.3** shows that, on average, 93% of graduates were living and working in Nova Scotia during the five-year review period.

Graduate Satisfaction

The Graduate Follow-Up Survey asks questions that are related to College satisfaction. Overall graduate satisfaction with the NSCC experience remained very high, ranging from 91% to 95% during the five-year period

The importance of portfolio continues to be significant. Results showed that between 81% and 88% of graduates were satisfied with the portfolio experience at NSCC.

TABLE 4.4	Graduate Satisfaction with NSCC 2016-2020				
Graduation Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Graduate Survey Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Overall satisfaction with NSCC experience	94%	95%	95%	93%	91%
Overall Satisfaction with Portfolio Learning	86%	86%	88%	88%	81%

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

Table 4.5 provides details of the graduate employment rate by Academic School. The year-to-year variations reflect employment trends in the provincial labour market. The impact of the pandemic is seen in employment rates in this survey throughout the 2019-2021 period.

TABLE 4.5	NSCC Graduate Employment Rates by Academic School 2016-2020				
Graduation Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Graduate Survey Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Access, Education and Language	77%	72%	81%	68%	75%
Business and Creative Industries	88%	89%	90%	77%	81%
Health & Human Services	94%	90%	93%	92%	92%
Technology and Environment	86%	90%	89%	84%	83%
Trades & Transportation	82%	85%	89%	79%	78%
Overall NSCC	**87%**	**88%**	**90%**	**82%**	**83%**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research
* Graduates from the School of Access have been included in the Graduate Follow-Up Survey results since 2014

4.4 Summary

NSCC is committed to the success and satisfaction of our graduates with a priority focus on equity and excellence. By monitoring graduate outcomes and their subsequent employment experiences, the College is better able to ensure that programs are aligned with the needs of the local labour markets.

Understanding labour markets and the skills that people need remains a priority for NSCC. With over 140 programs in five academic schools, NSCC continues to align programs to the identified labour market needs and opportunities of the provincial economy.

Chapter 5: Operational Efficiency

Does the institution obtain, organize and administer resources so that student outcomes are achieved at a reasonable cost?

5.1 Overview

During the period of this review, NSCC continued to build and focus on organizational and operational efficiency. While still maintaining an affordable and accessible post-secondary option for Nova Scotians, significant efficiencies have been realized through the consistent management of financial services and physical plant utilizations.

5.2 Revenue Sources

Provincial and federal government support, along with revenues from customized programming, ancillary and other revenues, has allowed NSCC to keep tuition revenues between 15% and 16% of the total operating funding in each fiscal year. **Table 5.1** displays the results for the five years of this review. Recognizing that affordable tuition is essential, the percentage of revenues generated through tuition and fees is a key indicator in NSCC's Organizational Health Indicators.

TABLE 5.1	Percent of Operating Revenues Generated Through Tuition Fees 2016- 2021				
Academic Year	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
Percent of Operating Revenues Generated Through Tuition Fees	16%	16%	15%	16%	16%

Source: NSCC Financial Services

TABLE 5.2		Funding and Revenue Ratios (NSCC Revenues and Operating Funding by Source) 2016-2021				
		2016-17	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
Contract Training and Service Contracts	**Dollars**	3,770,453	2,981,327	2,140,619	2,178,250	1,917,928
	%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Tuition Fees	**Dollars**	35,295,743	34,916,389	36,959,614	39,623,656	37,550,735
	%	16%	16%	15%	16%	16%
Ancillary and Other Revenues	**Dollars**	22,190,201	24,177,846	26,663,401	27,516,517	18,991,662
	%	10%	11%	11%	11%	8%
Labour and Advanced Education – Other	**Dollars**	17,341,759	18,713,055	19,667,394	19,540,954	18,648,088
	%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Labour and Advanced Education – Core Grant	**Dollars**	143,081,700	138,324,000	145,056,878	145,676,000	147,931,000
	%	64%	62%	59%	61%	64%**
*Labour and Advanced Education – Retirement Health Benefits**	**Dollars**	0	4,688,700	14,575,703	6,133,726	7,153,700
	%	0%	2%	6%	3%	3%
Gross Revenues	**Dollars**	221,679,856	223,801,317	245,063,609	240,669,103	232,193,113
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: NSCC Annual Reports 2016 to 2021
* Labour and Advanced Education – Retirement Health Benefits and Labour and Advanced Education – Core Grant were reported separately in the financial statements starting in 2018-2019. This amount includes future health benefit contributions for the Nova Scotia Teacher's Union (2017-2018 to 2020-2021) and the NSCC Academic Union (2018-2019 to 2020-2021).

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**Labour and Advanced Education – Core Grant increased as a percentage of total revenue because of a reduction in Ancillary and Other Revenue. The reduction in Ancillary and Other Revenue is attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 5.2 summarizes the operating funding and revenue ratios between the 2016 and 2021. The Core Operating Grant from Labour and Advanced Education – Core Grant contributed between 64% and 67% of the total operating funding, while Labour and Advanced Education – Other funding totalled 8% of the College's overall revenue over the five-year period.

TABLE 5.3	Tuition Fees for NSCC Programs 2016-2021				
Program Group	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
Adult Learning Program*	$0*	$0*	$0*	$0*	$0*
Academic and Career Connections Certificate	$1,325	$1,325	$1,360	$1,400	$1,440
Full-time Certificate and Diploma Programs	$3,220	$3,220	$3,315	$3,415	$3,515
Full-time Advanced Diploma	$4,930	$4,930	$5,075	$5,225	$5,380

Source: NSCC Academic Calendar
* For Nova Scotians who do not have a High School Diploma

Table 5.3 details the tuition fees for NSCC programs for the period of 2016-2017 to 2020-2021. Programs include the Adult Learning Program, Academic and Career Connections, full-time Certificate and Diploma programs and full-time Advanced Diploma programs. While tuition fees remained the same for the first two years (2016-2017 and 2017-2018), a modest increase of approximately 3% occurred over a three-year period from 2017-2018 to 2020-2021.

5.3 Budget Management

A key component of NSCC's stewardship responsibilities is the effective and responsible use of its operating and capital allocations.   The College is accountable to students to ensure that they receive an appropriate return on their tuition investment in increased knowledge and skills and improved employment outcomes.

Fiscal responsibility is evident through effective budget management. In each of its fiscal years, the College:

- Worked within its operating budget with the exception of 2018-2019 where a small deficit occurred.

- Received an unqualified audit opinion on its financial statements from its external auditors.

- Met or exceeded its enrolment targets with the exception of 2020-2021 when the COVID-19 pandemic put pressures on enrolment.

NSCC ensures that it maximize the resources devoted to academic program delivery and services to students by tracking the percent of operating funds dedicated to academic delivery and services to students. **Table 5.4** shows that the College continues to meet or exceed the target of 75% of all operating funds dedicated to students and their learning, with the remaining allocated to institutional administration and facilities maintenance expenses.

As an important measure in NSCC's Organizational Health Indicators, it is evident that NSCC continues to focus efforts to ensure it is allocating appropriate funds to support academic delivery and services to students.

TABLE 5.4	NSCC Operating Expenditures as a Percentage 2016-2021				
NSCC Operating Expenditure Profile	**2016-17**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
Academic Delivery	61.0%	59.7%	59.9%	61.1%	60.5%
Student Services	7.6%	7.1%	6.8%	7.0%	7.4%
Library Services	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%
Information Technology	7.3%	7.7%	7.5%	7.7%	8.1%
Program & Service Delivery Subtotal	**77.5%**	**76.0%**	**75.7%**	**77.4%**	**77.7%**
Institutional Administration	11.0%	12.7%	13.2%	11.6%	11.6%
Facilities and Maintenance	11.5%	11.3%	11.1%	11.0%	10.7%
College Infrastructure & Admin Subtotal	**22.5%**	**24.0%**	**24.3%**	**22.6%**	**22.3%**
College Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: NSCC Organizational Health Indicators

5.4 Summary

Financial stewardship is extremely important to NSCC. Focusing on our performance measurement targets, the College continues to operate effectively and efficiently as possible, thereby ensuring that the institution is providing a quality, accessible and affordable learning experience.

Chapter 6: Intellectual and Physical Assets

Is the institution maintaining and building its intellectual and physical resources, including the quality of its employees, curriculum and physical plant?

6.1 Overview

NSCC recognizes that our intellectual and physical resources are critical and must focus on recruiting and retaining a talented workforce. The College is dedicated to inclusion, which includes accessibility and safe spaces.

The College's greatest asset in supporting student success is our people. NSCC continues to invest in the professional development of our employees and in workforce planning initiatives to help the College ensure that both NSCC's core business (i.e., programs and services) and strategic goals are appropriately resourced.

Over the five-year review period, our efforts included focusing on opportunities to maintain and build on the momentum of the last few years as we continued to evolve and strengthen our Human Resources capacity at the College. We have continued to focus on operational excellence, with a strong emphasis on planning, process, systems and service delivery.

6.2 Our People

In 2021, NSCC had 1,869 employees throughout the province. **Chart 6.1** provides detail on the number of employees at each campus (this excludes Central employees) during the period of 2016-2021. The total number of people employed at our campuses decreased from 1,430 to 1,415 between 2016 and 2021. Campus employees (this excludes Central employees) represented 76% of the total number of employees in 2021.

Chart 6.1
NSCC Employees by Campus, 2016-2021

Source: NSCC Human Resources

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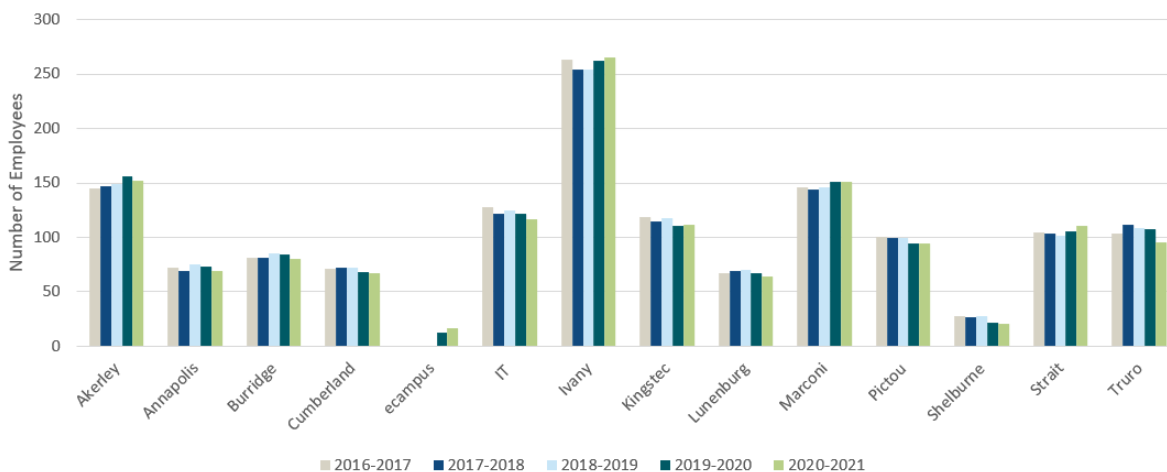
Chart 6.2 shows the number of employees at the College based on their employee group. During the 2016-2021 period, the total number of employees increased by 4% from 1,799 to 1,869.

Chart 6.2
NSCC Employees by Employee Group
College-wide

Source: NSCC Human Resources

NSCC continues to focus efforts on ensuring that employees understand and commit to the College's direction, strategy and goals. Each employee of the College is supported to contribute to the successful achievement of our goals. Through clearly defined policies, including the Employee Code of Conduct, collaboration with union partners, employee success planning, professional development and learning opportunities, NSCC is committed to providing programs and services for employees that contribute to our position as an employer of choice, and is steadfast in its' commitment to work with communities, especially those that are marginalized.

Employee Policies
At Nova Scotia Community College, established policies align operations, set behavioural expectations and communicate policy roles and responsibilities. NSCC continues to review and update all employee policies, including those requiring Board of Governors approval on a five-year cycle. These policies include:

- Employee Code of Conduct (2021).

- Safe Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy (2021).

- Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy (2021).

- The Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment Policy of 2014 was updated and renamed as the Respectful Community Policy, with new procedures and guidelines incorporating a restorative approach to informal and formal complaints. (2020).

During the 2016-2021 period, Organizational Development conducted a comprehensive review of the existing 22 employee policies and their supporting documents. Policies and procedures were updated to

align with organizational changes, process currency and language usage. Additionally, some policies were consolidated into primary policies to support ease of use by employees.

Employee Relations

Maintaining positive employee relations is paramount for organizational success, and the relationships with Union partners remained a priority for the College during the five-year review period. The College's labour relations strategy is an important lever to effect positive culture change and aims to build capacity in our managers to advance a more engaged and collaborative approach with the Unions. As College managers, we all share accountability for the labour relations function and fostering proactive and productive employee relations. Central to this accountability is ensuring leaders have the support, information and resources to confidently and effectively manage labour relations.

Of particular note during the period, Faculty and Professional Support employees, represented by the NSTU, successfully decertified the Union as their bargaining agent, resulting in the creation of a new Union of College employees, the NSCC Academic Union (NSCCAU). This represented a significant shift in our approach and the culture of labour relations, bringing with it many challenges and opportunities. We are maintaining efforts to build relationships with our Union partners. The College has done well in transitioning to the NSCCAU's union model and will continue our efforts to encourage a respectful and collaborative relationship between the parties.

Labour and Employee Relations remained active over the period. Most recently, we have bargained with both unions, the NSCCAU and the NSGEU, representing our Operational Support employees, virtually, in a particularly challenging climate. In addition to the fast-paced movement of conducting negotiations with two Unions, there was the additional hurdle of pivoting business to a virtual setting due to COVID-19.
The College values the positive working relationships with the unions as partners who share a common interest in the well-being of their members/our employees. The joint College and Union Committees support ongoing dialogue on matters of mutual interest during periods when collective bargaining is not in progress.

Understanding and Focusing on the Employee Experience

NSCC strives to create a working and learning environment where a high-calibre workforce delivers a unique learning experience. The College is committed to listening to the voices of employees to better understand their experiences and to build upon the people practices that help employees be their personal best and deliver on NSCC's mission. Employee engagement surveys are used to gain a broad-based snapshot of the employee experience. Employee surveys are also used to monitor, measure and report engagement results to the Board of Governors through the Organizational Health Indicators reported to the Board of Governors every two years. This metric has been part of NSCC's performance indicators system since 2003, when the College's balanced scorecard was established.

Bi-annual internal employee surveys seek input on key drivers of engagement that contribute to a strong experience. The surveys focus on the employees' connection to their work, their team and NSCC's mission, vision and values, and further examine what makes NSCC culture and work meaningful to them.

The overall 2017 and 2020 Employee Engagement survey results were as follows:

- Employee Engagement Index 2017 **– 83%**.

- Employee Engagement Index 2020 **– 84%**.

These results indicated that employees remain dedicated to providing a first-class student experience. Engagement Index scores remained high in areas that measure the employees' drive to "say" good things about the College, "stay" working at the College and "strive" to do their best work.

In the 2020 survey, NSCC included a special research section on mental wellness. The results were positive overall: 81% of employees indicated they know how to access services that support their mental wellness and 75% indicated that they see evidence that the College values employee mental wellness. The results helped inform initiatives offered through the Mental Wellness Strategy. Future engagement surveys will incorporate mental wellness questions as an ongoing feature.

Workforce Planning

A robust workforce planning practice is critical to the College's success, ensuring that both NSCC's core business and strategic goals are appropriately resourced, now and in the future. The College also has a long-standing commitment to being accountable for public trust in all we do, including how human resources are maximized.

As labour force participation and workforce demographics continue to challenge employers, NSCC is facing more and more challenges in attracting, retaining, maximizing and leveraging the workforce required to achieve College goals and priorities. Significant human capital challenges for NSCC include the loss of institutional memory and knowledge as many employees are eligible to retire from the College (approximately 38%) over the next three years. The challenge is further exacerbated by the impacts of the pandemic, including organizational challenges and rising costs in terms of employee health, productivity and currency. The College now embraces the opportunities to reimagine the workforce and practices in the context of a new way of working in the future.

NSCC has created a culture of employee engagement and built a strong employer brand. NSCC continues to see considerable strength in terms of the depth and quality of both job candidates and employees at the College, but the lack of diversity at all levels of NSCC's workforce has the potential to negatively impact the learning experience of students, the experience of NSCC's employees, and the quality of leadership and decision-making due to insufficient diversity of perspectives.

In response to this critical imperative, the College has developed a systematic, iterative process for workforce planning that continually aligns human resources to current strategic goals, includes more rigorous reporting and analytical tools and has an increased focus on data quality.

NSCC's workforce planning process was introduced in 2016. The launch of the process has served us well, particularly over the last few years where we have been forced to pivot and innovate our workforce planning approach to respond to critical challenges brought by the pandemic.

6.3 Flexible Learning for Employees

NSCC is committed to the continued development of ongoing learning opportunities for employees.

Throughout the five-year review period, NSCC continued to require that all probationary faculty and professional support staff complete the Community College Education Diploma Program (CCEDP) during their first two years of employment before changing status from probationary to regular status. A total of 120 faculty and professional support staff completed the program between 2016 and 2020.

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TABLE 6.3 Graduates of Organizational Learning Programs by Academic Year 2016-2021					
Program	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Community College Education Diploma Program	65	43	9	3	0
Adult Education Foundations		14	37	49	45
Operational Excellence				18	14
Leadership Essentials				10	2
Leadership Development					1
Total Graduates	**65**	**57**	**46**	**80**	**62**

Source: NSCC Institutional Research

Following a review of its structure and program delivery priorities in 2015, the College's department of Organizational Learning reorganized its employee learning programs to better support the internal educational needs of the College. A full suite of workshops, seminars and College conferences will continue to be offered through Organizational Learning. During the five-year review period, further organizational change resulted in the integration of the learning function with the Human Resources function and the addition of an Employee Health and Well-being function. This has broadened our work and our reach in terms of professional development and enabled a more seamless and integrated approach to learning.

In addition, three new streams of structured employee learning were designed and enrolled their first cohorts of employees in 2017:

- Operational Excellence Program
- Leadership Essentials Program
- Leadership Development Program

The College's Organizational Learning team also deliver and/or support a wide range of professional development learning opportunities for employees at NSCC.

Learning College Portfolio (LCP)
NSCC continues to offer a self-directed learning program for faculty, professional support and operational support employees that provides them the opportunity to ensure that they have the relevant skills and knowledge required to advance the work of the College. The LCP program is offered as per the collective agreement for Faculty, Professional Support and Operational Support Employees.

Learning Leaves
Organizational Learning offers employees the chance to take up to a year's leave from their current role for learning that enhances their skills, knowledge and performance, and supports NSCC in achieving our goals. This is offered to Faculty, Operational Support and Professional Support employees as per collective agreement.

Conferences and Seminars
Organizational Learning's conference series offers unique opportunities to connect, explore and exchange ideas and approaches for learning with colleagues from across the NSCC community. Annual learning conferences include:

- Support Staff Learning Conference (SSLC)
- Facilities Support Staff Conference (FSCC)

Professional Development Workshops and Courses
Organizational Learning offers a diverse range of professional development programs and courses throughout the year. Our courses and workshops are designed to help build employees' skills and career within NSCC.

6.4 Organizational Structure

The fundamental role of key leaders within an organization is to define goals, formulate plans and organize people to achieve objectives.

Appointed NSCC President on April 27, 2011, Don Bureaux continued to lead the College from 2016–2021. However, typical of Canadian post-secondary institutions, there were several changes to the portfolios and responsibilities of senior leaders within the NSCC organizational structure, all intended to enhance NSCC's capacity to navigate and thrive in the face of economic and demographic challenges facing Nova Scotia. NSCC's 2017 Strategic Plan also framed the need for organizational leadership changes that would enable the College to advance some key strategic goals.

Senior Leadership Forum/College Leadership Forum
During the College's growth and evolution, it became evident that there was a need to formalize opportunities to engage different levels of leadership in anticipating and responding to the changing needs of the organization. As a result, two forums were created to foster the leadership culture and community required to advance College strategy.

- The mandate of the Senior Leadership Forum (SLF) is to create a forum for executive planning, strategy and direction setting with the most senior leaders of NSCC. It serves to build understanding and leverage relationships in responding to political and community environments, while engaging senior leadership in strategic planning and implementation of College priorities.
- The mandate of the College Leadership Forum (CLF) is to engage the broader NSCC leadership/middle management team to ensure context, clarity and alignment around leadership priorities and expectations at NSCC. It is a forum for management sharing, learning and building capacity and increasing leadership commitment and visibility at all levels.

6.5 Academic Systems and Quality

The 2017 strategic plan refresh identified four clear academic quality goals:

- Strengthening academic systems and structures
- Ensuring equitable access and pathways
- Ensuring exceptional quality learning experiences
- Ensuring excellence in teaching and learning

Although learner pathways and the development of the Centre for Teaching and Learning were previously

described in this report, key work in the area of Strengthening Academic Systems and Structures and Program Quality are outlined below.

Several changes took place within Academic Services during 2016-2021 in service of strengthening academic quality and systems, including:

- The creation of the new Departments of Academic Development and Operations and Planning, each under the leadership of a new Director.

- The restructuring of the Academic Schools to better meet the needs of our evolving programming, labour market demands, learner demographics and needs and industry, government and sector requirements. The new structure also positioned the College to continue to grow, adapt and innovate at a pace that matches the needs of our students and the sectors and communities we serve.

With this renewed structure and leadership, the College was able to achieve the following accomplishments toward these strategic goals.

Strengthening academic systems and structures
During the five-year review period, the College accomplished the following goals in relation to strengthening our academic systems and structures:

- Implementation of Orbis and HPS Net systems to strengthen management of work-integrated learning.

- Launch of the Credentials Framework to strengthen and clarify credential pathways. The framework clarified the purposes and features of each credential, outlined the knowledge and skills expected of holders of each type of qualification, and introduced new credential categories to provide enhanced learner pathways.

- Continued the rollout of the Brightspace Learning Management System and development of the quality design and engagement standards.

Program Quality
The Program Quality Strategic Direction articulates the College's commitment to ensuring the highest quality learning experience so that our graduates can drive the workforce our communities and economies need. Key developments during this period include:

- The creation of our Academic Quality Framework, which lays out our foundational quality processes and articulates key quality domains and criteria designed to ensure high quality, equitable programming that keeps pace with the changing needs of employers, industry, communities, learners and best practices in post-secondary learning.

- Strengthening of our program and curriculum development processes and systems, including sourcing and onboarding the new Courseleaf Curriculum Information Management system (CIM) to replace our end-of-life curriculum system.

- The development of our annual program mix planning process, which includes cross-departmental collaboration to ensure the development of an innovative, quality and responsive programming mix to meet the current and emerging needs of industry, government, sector and learners across Nova Scotia.

6.6 Diversity and Inclusion Evolution and Strategic Direction

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Established in 2008, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion transitioned to Human Rights and Equity Services in 2020 and began to focus on establishing and nurturing spaces for connection and collaboration within the College. The Office also began to work collaboratively with the newly established Centre for the Advancement of Educational Equity and Belonging (2020) to enhance the College's strategic orientation to monitoring and evaluating progress toward the College's equity-related goals and the development of an Equity Ecosystem and Roadmap.

In 2021, Human Rights and Equity Services and the Centre for the Advancement of Educational Equity and Belonging were amalgamated to become the current Office of Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion (HREI), a unified force for social change and economic prosperity for all Nova Scotia communities. In striving for equity and inclusion, and ensuring that everyone has the tools and supports they need to excel at the college, this new portfolio will have an expanded focus on building organizational competence as a key driver of systems change.

The combined momentum of these two departments under one elevated portfolio will catalyze a shared sense of purpose and create further growth to compel the college to action in achieving our bold mandate for equity and excellence.

Equity Ecosystem

Our vision is one of NSCC as a dynamic community—an ecosystem—of equity-minded individuals and groups, where opportunities to connect and align can easily occur. An Equity Ecosystem can help maintain and create pathways to share information and model inclusive leadership.

The Ecosystem aims to elevate the post-secondary experience for everyone at NSCC by dismantling systemic barriers and fostering equity-centred learning and working environments. It reflects two interdependent Equity Dimensions:

- **Equity Architecture** (Structural Dimension)
  This component builds the structures needed at the College for changing ways of thinking and acting and informs key areas of impact to be developed within the cultural dimension.

- **Equity Mindedness** (Cultural Dimension)
  This component is responsive to the structural dimension by building the knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to change ways of thinking, acting and being, thus ensuring that equity-centred practices are a pervasive feature throughout the college community.

By thoughtfully building our **Equity Architecture** and intentionally fostering **Equity Mindedness**, we will establish learning and working spaces that celebrate and amplify difference.

Equity Roadmap

The Equity Roadmap is a summary action plan that outlines the equity priorities of the college from 2021-2024 to ensure alignment in transforming NSCC to be a leader in equity in the post-secondary sector in Canada. The Roadmap is organized under six Equity Pillars and reflects the two interdependent Equity Dimensions based on the Equity-Driven Systems Change model to accelerate learning and leadership in striving for equity and excellence.   The Six Interconnected Equity Pillars within which our strategic initiatives are organized are:

- Building our Accountability

- Investing in our College Community

- Nurturing First Voice

- Innovating our Programming and Services

- Transforming our Systems

- Amplifying our Commitment.

Some of the key services and activities of HREI are:

- Culturally Specific Leadership and Supports (e.g., Senior Advisors, leadership for cultural components of the Cultural Supports team, etc.)

- Education & Training (e.g., Understanding Diversity & Building Bridges, Shift Change, etc.)

- Trauma-Informed Advisory Services and Risk Management (e.g., Confidential Reporting, Conflict Resolution Process Facilitation, etc.)

- Programs and Pathways (e.g., Equity in STEM, Women in Trades, etc.)

- Professional Services (e.g., ASL Interpretation, Mediation, Conflict Coaching, etc.)

- Equity Planning and Reporting (e.g., Accessibility Plan, Indigenous Ed Framework, Anti-Black Racism Action Plan, Equity Annual Report, Equity Scorecard, etc.)

6.7 Physical Assets

Sustaining Good Buildings - Facility Condition Assessment

Although the College consistently upgrades campuses when key building systems reach the end of their useful life, a significant portion of NSCC's building infrastructure originates from the 1960s-70s. The College continually monitors the condition of our infrastructure to ensure that building systems are operating efficiently, meet applicable codes, provide modern learning environments and that potential system failures are identified before they become a problem.

Buildings that are welcoming, accessible, inclusive, safe, well maintained, clean and healthy are part of the NSCC brand. In order to maintain the College's high standard, regular Facility Condition Assessments (FCA) are completed to support funding requests. As a component of the FCA process, Facility Condition Index (FCI) provides a benchmark to compare the relative condition of a group of facilities.

Overall, NSCC FCA results from 2021 are as follows:
Current Deferred Maintenance Backlog: **$113,221,688**
Total Replacement Value (13 campuses): **$1,334,700,000**
Current FCI: **8.5%** (classification in standard industry rating: good-fair)
Annual Funding Requirement to Maintain Current FCI: **$15,000,000**

Funded Infrastructure Projects and Enhancements to Learning Environments

Several learning environments have seen considerable improvements over this period through the annual allocation of capital and some external funding dedicated to specific programs/industries. Most of the initiatives through the Facilities and Equipment Management Plan (FEMP) process support improvement

on the delivery of school- related programs by renewing outdated shop equipment to maintain currency and program certifications.

During this reporting period, NSCC completed and started four significant capital programs:

- **Post-secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) Projects**
  In 2016, NSCC received funding approval for three projects through the Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) initiative, which is designed to modernize research and commercialization facilities at Canadian universities, colleges and polytechnics. The following projects have since been completed:
  - Creation of the Centre of Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship (COVE).
  - Lunenburg Campus – Exterior Envelope Upgrades.
  - Pictou Campus – New Trades & Transportation Wing.

- **Sydney/NSCC Revitalization Fund**
  In 2019, NSCC received provincial funding to relocate the Marconi Campus to the downtown core of Sydney. Construction of the new, modern 305,000-square-foot Sydney Waterfront Campus is underway, with a planned opening of September 2024.

- **Student Housing & Technology Programming**
  In 2019, NSCC invested internal capital funding to expand our student housing offerings, applied research space and digital information technology programming. The following projects have since been completed:
  - Strait Area Campus – Student Housing Building.
  - Annapolis Valley Campus – COGS – Student Housing Building and Business Research Centre.
  - IT Campus – Information Technology Innovation Centre.

- **Stimulus Fund**
  In 2020, NSCC received provincial infrastructure funding intended to stimulate the economy, including the construction industry, and related supply chains/services. The following projects have since been completed:
  - Burridge Campus – Exterior Envelope Upgrade (60% of building)
  - Truro Campus:
    - Exterior Envelope Upgrade – McCarthy Hall (75% of building)
    - Davis Hall – Washroom Upgrades
    - Student Housing Interior Revitalization
    - Storage Building
  - Cumberland Campus – Exterior Envelope Upgrade
  - Strait Area Campus – Kitchen Upgrades (Culinary program)
  - IT Campus
    - Exterior Envelope Upgrade – D-wing
    - Parking Lot Improvements
  - Pictou Campus – Exterior Envelope Upgrade
  - Kingstec Campus – Structural and HVAC Upgrades.
  - Akerley Campus – Structural and HVAC Upgrades.
  - Shelburne Campus – Storage Building.

Facilities and Equipment Management Plan (FEMP)
The objective of the Facilities and Equipment Management Plan (FEMP) is to provide the physical infrastructure and program equipment that supports, develops and enables College faculty and staff to excel in program delivery. The FEMP budget is broken into operating (>$5,000) and capital components, with capital items (>$5,000) recorded on the balance sheet. The FEMP budget comes from provincial funding, and an appropriate portion of the funding is deferred and amortized at a rate that corresponds to the depreciation schedule of the assets purchased.

6.8 Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship

NSCC is a nationally recognized industry leader in sustainability practices and is committed to the continuous development of the social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of the College and our communities. Sustainability was rooted as a core value in NSCC's 2017 strategic plan, *Here & Now*. Between 2016 and 2021, NSCC worked diligently and collaboratively to embed sustainability principles, practices and literacy into programming, services, planning and operations.

To support and guide NSCC's commitment to sustainability, NSCC developed a Sustainability Policy. The policy is updated annually. It supports our commitment to sustainability by outlining key responsibilities and commitments, including embedding the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) throughout the College, minimizing our environmental impact and continuing to provide leadership in sustainability. As an example of this leadership, in 2021, NSCC President Don Bureaux signed the SDG Accord. As one of the first Canadian post-secondary institutions to do so, NSCC has led the way to further embedding the SDGs in higher education for a more prosperous future.

Sustainability Performance
One of the critical ways that NSCC monitors our sustainability performance is through measuring and reporting on key indicators in our Annual Sustainability Report. This report provides timely, accurate information on the College's sustainability performance and on campus-specific performance. The report plays a key role in NSCC's sustainability goal setting and continual improvement and is also an important tool for connecting and sharing information with our students, staff, and communities.

Sustainability achievements between 2016 and 2021 are summarized below.

Energy Consumption
Over the years, the College has pursued many energy conservation strategies to reduce energy consumption. Between 2016 and 2018, NSCC replaced all our campus lighting with LEDs, which are more energy efficient than conventional lights. The College also updated the exterior wall systems at our Institute of Technology, Cumberland, Pictou, Lunenburg, and Burridge Campuses to reduce heat loss and increase natural lighting. Additionally, the College has replaced inefficient and outdated heating systems with high-efficiency propane systems at the Lunenburg and Burridge campuses.

NSCC has contributed to increasing publicly available renewable energy by installing solar panels at the Shelburne, Strait Area and Annapolis Valley campuses that will power the provincial grid.
As a result of these efforts and improvements, NSCC reduced our energy intensity by 27% over our 2008-2009 baseline and by 12.9% between 2016 and 2021.

Climate Change
In 2017, NSCC announced a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% over our baseline year by 2020. NSCC successfully reached this goal in our 2020-2021 reporting year, with a 42% reduction

in greenhouse gas emissions over 2008-2009 levels. These reductions have largely been the result of the College's energy efficiency initiatives. The College continues to set progressive greenhouse gas emissions goals, targeting a 60% reduction by 2030, an 80% reduction by 2040 and net-zero operations by 2050.

In 2023, the College will release our first Climate Change Action Plan. This plan will outline how the College will address climate change within the organization. Key themes of the Action Plan will include climate change mitigation, adaptation and education. NSCC will create a pathway to achieve net-zero operations by 2050, adapt our facilities to support communities dealing with the emerging impacts of climate change, and leverage infrastructure to educate and create awareness about the consequences of human activities on the environment.

Water Use

NSCC is committed to conserving water use throughout all campus operations. In 2016, the College consumed 82,425 m^2 of water. This was already a significant reduction from the 2008-2009 baseline year, which was 40% higher. However, since 2016, the College has reduced water consumption by an additional 21% for an overall reduction from the baseline of 61%. NSCC has achieved these savings by replacing aging fixtures with low-flow options and through continued education.

At the same time, NSCC promotes and ensures that high-quality drinking water is readily available to students, staff and guests from hydration stations. The College continues to install hydrations stations in high-traffic and food service areas to maximize their use. This program also reduces waste by allowing occupants to refill bottles and drinkware.

Waste Reduction

Waste management at NSCC is an integral part of our sustainability policy. NSCC actively seeks to minimize solid waste generation and maximize the amount of waste recycled and diverted from landfill. NSCC has been recognized for our waste management achievements; we were listed as the top performer in waste management in the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's (AASHE) 2020 sustainable campus index.

The College's waste goal between 2016 and 2021 was to maintain a minimum diversion rate of 75%. The average reported waste diversion was between 73% and 76% from 2016 to 2020. In 2021, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased need for disposable and single-use products, the waste diversion rate fell to 65%. The College's goal is to return to a 75% diversion rate.

In 2016, the College began measuring the annual waste disposed of by each building occupant. The rate of waste disposal per person in 2016 was above 25 kg/person per year with a goal of reaching 15 kg/person per year by 2021. This goal was also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the College continues to strive to reach a waste disposal rate of 15 kg/person per year.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 17 Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) support the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. NSCC's strategic vision has been aligned closely with these goals. In January 2021, NSCC became one of the first institutions in Canada to sign the SDG Accord (sdgaccord.org), which is the international university and college sector's collective response to the United Nations 17 SDGs. Signing the SDG Accord reinforces the College's commitment to sustainable development initiatives and will strengthen the College's connection with Nova Scotia's communities and labour markets. The College has also incorporated the SDGs into our sustainability policy to emphasize this commitment to embed the SDGs into our academics and operations.

One of the drivers used to embed the SDGs into the College's operations is the SDG Project Fund. This fund, which was launched in 2021, allocates $15,000 toward projects that advance SDGs on our campuses. The fund not only financially enables projects that advance the SDGs, but also challenges staff members to take ownership of SDG-related opportunities on campus.

Sustainability Certifications and Awards

BOMA BEST
BOMA BEST is the platform that NSCC has used for environmental performance management since 2009. This program certifies that buildings meet or exceed benchmark criteria for industry best practices in five key areas: energy consumption, water consumption, waste reduction, emission and effluent management, and management and communication systems.

NSCC's average BOMA BEST score for 2019-2020 was 83% (Gold)—a significant improvement over our 2009 baseline score, which was 75% (Silver). The College aims to increase the number of campuses that receive platinum certifications.

The BOMA BEST scores by campus in 2019 included:

- Platinum Rating scores (90% and above): two campuses.

- Gold Rating scores (80% to 89%): nine campuses.

- Silver Rating scores (of 78% and 79%): three campuses.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)
LEED is an internationally recognized rating system in over 132 countries. It recognizes excellence in green building design, construction and operation. NSCC incorporates green building design principles in new construction while striving to meet the requirements of LEED certification. To date, NSCC has achieved the following LEED certifications:

- LEED Gold – (Targeted) – Sydney Waterfront Campus, to be completed in 2024

- LEED Gold – Pictou Trades and Innovation Centre, 2017

- LEED Gold – The Centre for the Built Environment (Waterfront), 2010

- LEED Silver – Marconi Centre for the Built Environment, 2011

- LEED Silver – Waterfront Campus Harbour Wing, 2007

Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS)
STARS is a self-reporting tool that provides a framework for understanding how a post-secondary institution embeds sustainability in everything it does. In March 2020, NSCC was recertified with STARS Gold Rating from AASHE, with a score of 71.07. NSCC was the highest-scoring associate College in Canada in 2020. NSCC is looking to build upon this success, and in 2021, the College set a goal to be STARS Platinum by 2026.

6.9 Safety Practices

Organizational Growth and Change
In 2012, NSCC reviewed our organizational mission and values, adding safety as a value. This addition increased participation and engagement throughout multiple levels of the college. The core principle of Occupational Health and Safety legislation in Nova Scotia is the Internal Responsibility System (IRS), where all persons in the workplace are responsible for the safety of others. The addition of safety as a value supports this concept within the organization.

Occupational Health Safety and Environmental Services (OHS&E)
Creating a "world-class" safety culture, integrating safety practices everywhere in the College, focusing on regulatory compliance and integrating best practices into NSCC's Safety Management System (SMS) continue to be a priority.

OHS&E administers the College SMS to ensure safe working and learning spaces. The SMS applies to all College operations to minimize risk to people, property and reputation. The core service of this department is to provide stewardship of the Occupational Health and Safety Policy and all its related procedures, programs, forms and tools. The OHS&E department actively engaged in this process to review and revise existing documents and it continues to perform gap analysis and regulatory review to develop and implement new policies and procedures as required. Currently, OHS&E has more than 200 policies, procedures, programs, related forms and tools comprising the SMS for which it is responsible.

Evidence of the College's commitment to creating and sustaining a world-class safety culture started with the addition of two Safety Officer positions in the OHS&E department, essentially doubling the team. Safety Officers audit, inspect, investigate, make recommendations, develop documents to support the SMS, train employees and liaise with internal and external stakeholders.

The College added five Lead Public Safety Officer (LPSO) positions to our safety complement during this reporting period. An LPSO is a security supervisor who coordinates contract security officers, conducts hazard assessments and performs training for their assigned campus. The LPSO works closely with campus management teams, student services, law enforcement and other stakeholders to address daily security requirements.

Regulatory Changes
In 2012, The then Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) set forth a three-phase plan to replace the Occupational Safety General Regulations (OSGR) with new Workplace Health and Safety Regulations (WHSR). In June 2013, the WHSR came into effect. Several sections of the OSGR have been superseded by new provisions in the WHSR.

NSCC's OHS&E team worked with internal and external stakeholders to ensure these changes were communicated and socialized, including further training for employees and policy and procedures to comply with the changes.

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
To help facilitate international trade and to enhance the protection of human health, a new system of hazard communication, the Global Harmonized System, is being adopted worldwide.

A multi-year transition plan is currently underway in the province to transition to 2015 WHMIS standards from 1998 standards. NSCC has fulfilled our responsibility to train employees to both standards by

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

implementing mandatory training administered through SafeColleges (online training provider). Further work is underway to ensure our internal system is harmonized with the upcoming requirements.

Engagement

In November 2015 NSCC President Don Bureaux, became a signatory of the Nova Scotia Safety Charter, supporting the growth of both the provincial and organizational safety culture. This top-down commitment to safety is evident through the engagement of NSCC employees in a range of enhanced safety-focused practices including:

- A College Occupational Health and Safety Statement, which is produced annually and posted on all Safety Information Stations across the College.

- Principals now take a greater role regarding campus safety and include safety as a standing agenda item on all meeting agendas.

- A College Safety Steering Committee was created in 2016. Consisting of Senior Management representing multiple levels within the college, it receives training, reviews SMS components, recommends improvements, discusses new safety initiatives at the college and discusses global safety and future planning for the organization.

- All 17 NSCC sites have active safety committees. We test the Emergency Master Plan (EMP) through drills that include community first responders. OHS&E continues to engage employees at all levels through committees, workshops and training in a variety of subjects.

Hazard Identification and Control

Regular testing, audit and remediation procedures are completed to ensure robust hazard identification and controls for College buildings and maintenance of safety equipment throughout the College.

6.10 Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Master Plan

Emergency Preparedness and Planning at the College is a crucial part of preventing, mitigating and recovering from major incidents. In addition to keeping the Emergency Master Plan (EMP) documents and processes current, we have implemented ongoing testing and practice for responders to that they are able to perform their duties and that any deficiencies are identified and corrected.

Situational Awareness Response Assistant

To improve campus emergency response capabilities and communications, and to support the implementation of the EMP, NSCC installed the Situational Awareness Response Assistant (SARA) at all campuses during the five-year review period. We installed physical hardware such as blue (Emergency Help/Security) and yellow (Emergency Lockdown) pull stations and real-time monitoring equipment to enhance our capacity for mass notification and public address in emergency situations. Improvements are ongoing based on lessons learned through the integration of the system into drills, training and through its application during emergency situations. The intent of the system is to integrate mass notification/ situational awareness capability, building envelope security and closed-circuit television/ security systems. Training and drills are an ongoing part of Emergency Preparedness at NSCC.

In 2021, NSCC Partnered with the RCMP to provide the Risk Manager/Commander with real-time CCTV access to improve the situational awareness of responders.

Medical First Responders
NSCC has trained a number of Medical First Responders (MFR) at each site with the intention of improving medical emergency response capabilities. All security staff are trained Medical First responders.

AEDs
The Automated External Defibrillation (AED) program has made NSCC a leader in public access to defibrillation in Nova Scotia. Multiple units are deployed at several NSCC sites, including in high-hazard training areas and for remote off-site training. AEDs have been integrated into the SARA system.

The importance of this program has been highlighted on three separate occasions. Members of the NSCC community experienced cardiac episodes, during which the AED was deployed, shocks were administered, and a viable patient was handed over to EHS. NSCC participates in the EHS AED registry program.

First Aid Kits/Program
The College provides standard first aid supplies that meet and exceed requirements. Each campus is equipped with a major trauma kit for medical first responders. Each campus is equipped with NARCAN nasal spray for opioid overdose.

Security Services Accreditation
NSCC is developing and revising security management strategies and operating procedures for security staff to support our strategic direction and following the recommended path for accreditation of security services through the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA).

Safety Reporting
NSCC's incident reporting system was refreshed in 2022. The new platform improves our ability to review and filter accident/incident reports that describe who, what, where, when and why an incident occurred. It also allows the OHS&E team to analyze trends and provide targeted training, education or other expenditure of resources to reduce the potential for harm to people, property and the environment.

6.11 Summary

NSCC's intellectual and physical resources play a vital role in the College's continued recognition as a leading post-secondary institution, and we are committed to maintaining our support and investment in these integral resources. During this five-year review period, the College continued to develop and expand teaching and learning opportunities for our employee groups and implemented significant expansions and enhancements of our physical learning spaces provincewide through substantial investments from both provincial and federal governments.

Chapter 7: Response to COVID-19

Did the institution respond appropriately to the COVID-19 pandemic?

7.1 Planning Context

The COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented event. Standard approaches to risk management were not designed for pandemics. Everyday risks are tractable and can be measured, whereas a pandemic is an intractable risk with great uncertainty in frequency and consequence of potential impacts. Essentially, no benchmark or recipe existed that could be used as a model to gauge how to act in a pandemic.

The following factors made managing COVID-19 different:

- We could not see the endgame; we did not know what the end would look like.

- How long the pandemic would last was uncertain.

- It affected everyone at the same time; there was nowhere that had not been affected.

- It was a personal threat to our own health.

- It moved and changed very fast and continuously.

The question NSCC faced was "What do you do when no one knows what to do?" Harvard University's training for managing COVID-19 identified three essential elements to a response:

- Establish a structure (COVID-19 Side Table team)

- Get the right people (team at the right level who could make decisions and understood operations and community)

- Initiate a process (an iterative problem-solving process)

7.2 Response

NSCC responded with a plan that included each of these elements. In the face of this uncertain threat, NSCC leadership formed a COVID-19 Planning Team in February 2020. Staff revisited previous planning for H1N1 and began business continuity planning and implementation in the event that a significant number or essential staff became sick and unable to work.

NSCC began to feel the impact of COVID-19 following confirmation of the first positive case in Nova Scotia on March 15, 2020. The rate of COVID-19 infections spread, and the number of deaths worldwide demonstrated that the virus was much more significant than H1N1. NSCC leadership knew they would have to undertake crisis management in real time and under stress. Under the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, NSCC leadership acted and suspended classes for the two weeks following March break, allowing faculty and staff time to plan and prepare alternative learning options for our community. Upon the declaration of the Provincial State of Emergency on March 22, NSCC leadership closed campuses. Except for essential staff, staff worked at home to help contain the spread of COVID-19. Classes continued remotely; however, many work placements were not able to be completed.

The NSCC President then created and led a COVID-19 Side Table team. This highly collaborative group included a combination of senior leaders, functional leads and other decision-makers and collectively provided consultative leadership in NSCC's response to the dynamic COVID-19 environment. The team met twice weekly throughout 2020-2021 to collaborate and adjust College safety practices as related to pandemic conditions. This team also rapidly managed COVID-19-related issues, ensured effective communication and timely decisions. This team was crucial in the early days of the crisis. Some of the many actions of the Side Table include:

- Communication plans were developed and implemented.

- Cleaning and testing protocols were developed and implemented.

- Academic-related policies were adjusted to account for remote/online student learning.

- Faculty made a quick switch to remote/online teaching so students could complete their academic year.

- Teaching and Learning Commons were expedited.

- Laptop computers and internet connectivity were provided to staff and students, as needed.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, NSCC operated under three key guiding principles for all decision-making:

- We will ensure that the health, safety and well-being of our students and employees is our top priority.

- We will uphold our commitment to academic quality and integrity.

- We recognize that NSCC is an essential part of the economic recovery of the province.

Additionally, academic programming decisions were made using the following guidelines:

- Academic quality, safety and student experience will be at the forefront of decision-making.

- Program level delivery will describe what students can expect for the entire duration of the program.

- Planning will assume that we will have some on-campus restrictions in the fall, with possibly fewer restrictions as the year progresses.

- Programs will be delivered either in-person, online or in a blended format. In-person learning may have some online components of delivery in the fall term.

- Adequate technology will be provided for faculty and employees to carry out their adjusted delivery modes.

- Services and supports for students are tailored to campus needs and will align staffing resources to support academic programs and services. Many services and supports will be available both in-person and online.

- Students will be encouraged to have their own devices to access remote learning, and we will articulate this in the program supplies lists. We will work closely with funding agencies and the NSCC Foundation to improve access to technology.

Under the guidance of Nova Scotia Public Health directives, the College developed NSCC's reopening plan for the 2020-2021 academic year, which was approved by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. The plan allowed the delivery of 130+ programs through a blended format of online and on-campus classes, protected academic integrity and excellence and matched the needs and demands of our rapidly changing

provincial economy. The reopening plan was deemed exemplary by Public Health, and institutions within the Nova Scotia post-secondary education sector used it as a template for developing their own reopening plans.

Teaching and Learning

NSCC Faculty and Staff were exceptional in ensuring students' learning could continue throughout the pandemic with minimal disruption. Faculty and Staff recognized quickly how important engagement, connection, and relationships building was to keeping students connected to their programs and worked diligently to create virtual communities, virtual office hours, drop-in sessions, and even unstructured online time for students to get to know one another better. This insight proved to be invaluable as evidence emerged throughout the pandemic that emphasized how crucial connection and relationships would be to overall wellness in communities.

As a highly applied, practical learning-focused institution, Faculty knew they would need to build on their strong foundation of teaching skills in a short period of time. Faculty attended countless hours of workshops, training, Faculty Working Groups, and other teaching-driven sessions to ensure students had the best experience possible. They embraced technology that enabled learning to happen remotely when needed (e.g., via the Brightspace Learning Management system or Microsoft Teams), as well as technology that enabled continuity of applied learning experiences such as virtual simulation.

Faculty worked together and with support teams to ensure that virtual assessments and evaluations maintained the integrity of learning outcomes, while also maintaining a commitment to assess students' learning through authentic and real-world experiences. They leveraged the virtual environment to engage students with learning activities like inviting guest speakers from around the world. As campuses began to gradually reopen, Faculty were intentional about designing courses that maximized learning time on campus in shops, labs, and studios, while also ensuring they leveraged virtual class sessions to reinforce learning. Planning for students and their learning was always front of mind and NSCC Faculty's commitment to teaching quality was a key component of the College's successful academic continuity initiatives.

Training for NSCC-Endorsed Technology

The College has been diligently advancing a Technology Strategy, first developed by the Digital Innovation and Technology (DI&Tech) department in 2016. These efforts put the College in an enviable position to respond to the demands of COVID-19.

The DI&Tech department's service delivery model has shifted to favour cloud-based solutions and services over internally hosted offerings and traditional managed service agreements. This means mission critical services at the College, such as our ERP, SIS, Microsoft 365, nscc.ca and core network are all designed and hosted with high availability and disaster recovery in mind. The College's full adoption of Microsoft 365 for our communication and collaboration needs has been a tremendous success, as has been the adoption of D2L's Brightspace as our Learning Management System (LMS).

The commitment to providing technology training to employees and students for NSCC-endorsed technology began in earnest in 2017 and was on full display early in the pandemic as the College shifted administrative and academic operations online. Without this capability, staff and students would have experienced even more anxiety as the institution pivoted to online delivery in a matter of weeks. As 2020 began, technology training was already established as a core service offering of the department. When the pandemic reached the province, the College was able to scale up what we were already doing.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

The first online offerings of "Getting Started with Microsoft Teams," a one-hour introductory course, were offered on March 17, 2020. By the end of March, 80 sessions had been delivered, resulting in the training of 736 community members. In parallel, intermediate and advanced Teams courses were developed and brought online in April. In all, the department's team of 20 facilitators trained over 5,000 community members in 2020. Without this capability and capacity, the institution's transition to online delivery would have been negatively impacted.
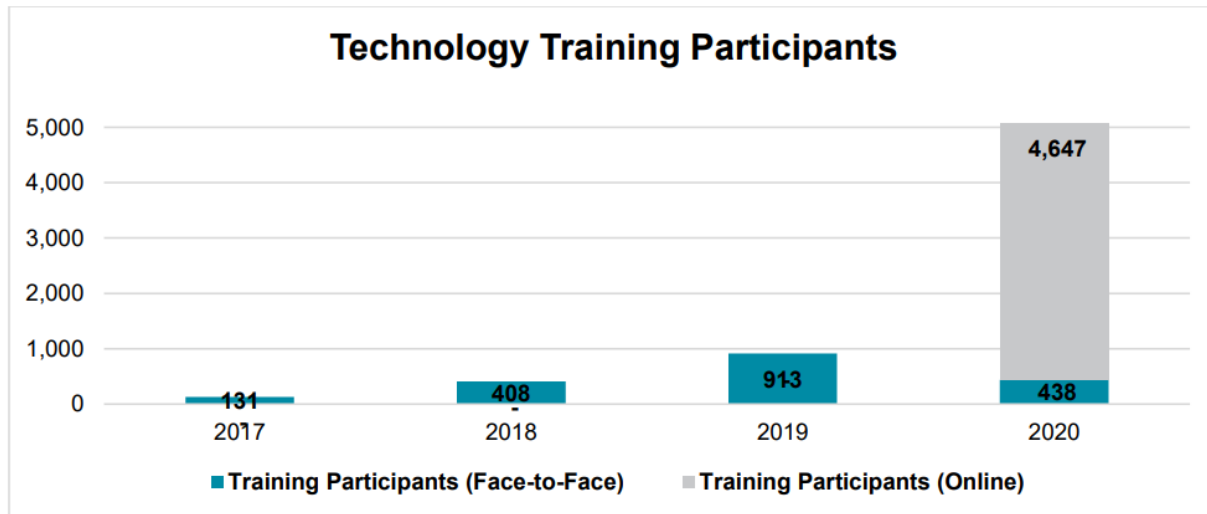
Source: NSCC Digital Innovation & Technology

Safe Deployment of Laptops to Employees, Faculty and Students
DI&Tech, working with Human Resources and campus management teams, were able to immediately deploy 200 surplus laptops to essential personnel transitioning to working from home in March 2020. This included a mix of administrative and academic staff, ranging from payroll to finance to student services.

For Faculty, 80% of whom still utilized desktop computers through 2019, planning had begun prior to the pandemic to supercharge the use of technology in the classroom and provide them with more flexibility through an accelerated transition to laptops. Fortunately, 250 Dell laptops had been procured in February 2020 that were received in mid-March and quickly deployed to faculty. As COVID-19's impact became apparent, the College was able to procure an additional 155 units to address the remaining technology gaps for faculty. These were received in April 2020 and deployed to faculty.

At the same time, there were hundreds of students who lacked the technology required to meaningfully participate in online learning. This presented opportunity for partnership between DI&Tech, the NSCC Foundation and the Library through the rapid expansion of the Library Laptop Loan Program. This program grew from a pool of 243 laptops just prior to the pandemic to 482 laptops that were purchased or leased to expand the loan program in the weeks following March 13, 2020. By the following year, the pool consisted of 659 laptops.

Other important pandemic initiatives
There were numerous other initiatives, projects and operational activities undertaken or completed since March 2020, which had a profound impact on students' and employees' ability to navigate the pandemic, including:

- **Putting a New Service Delivery Model to the Test**

September 2020 saw a 43.4% increase in support requests to the Technology Service Desk compered to September 2019. Fortunately, the College had adopted IT Service Management (ITSM) best practices in 2017 and implemented a new Technology Service Desk tool, both of which put us on track to respond to the support demands of the pandemic. Additionally, the College had invested in the capability to connect to staff and student machines over the internet and only had to accelerate our planned implementation of Live Chat, which went live in April 2020.
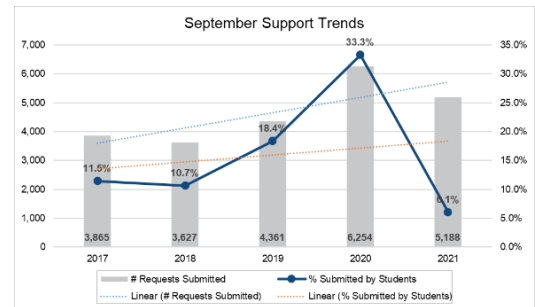
Source: NSCC Digital Innovation & Technology

With a 2021 program delivery mix that featured both on-campus and remote teaching and learning, there was a significantly reduced volume of technology support requests as compared to 2020.

- **Accelerated Adoption of Unified Communications**

After implementing Microsoft's Skype for Business in 2016 and transitioning to Microsoft Teams for employees on October 28, 2019, and for students on February 28, 2020, the College had already launched formal training program and self-service knowledge materials. The arrival of COVID-19 in 2020, saw the forced adoption of Teams utilization explode:
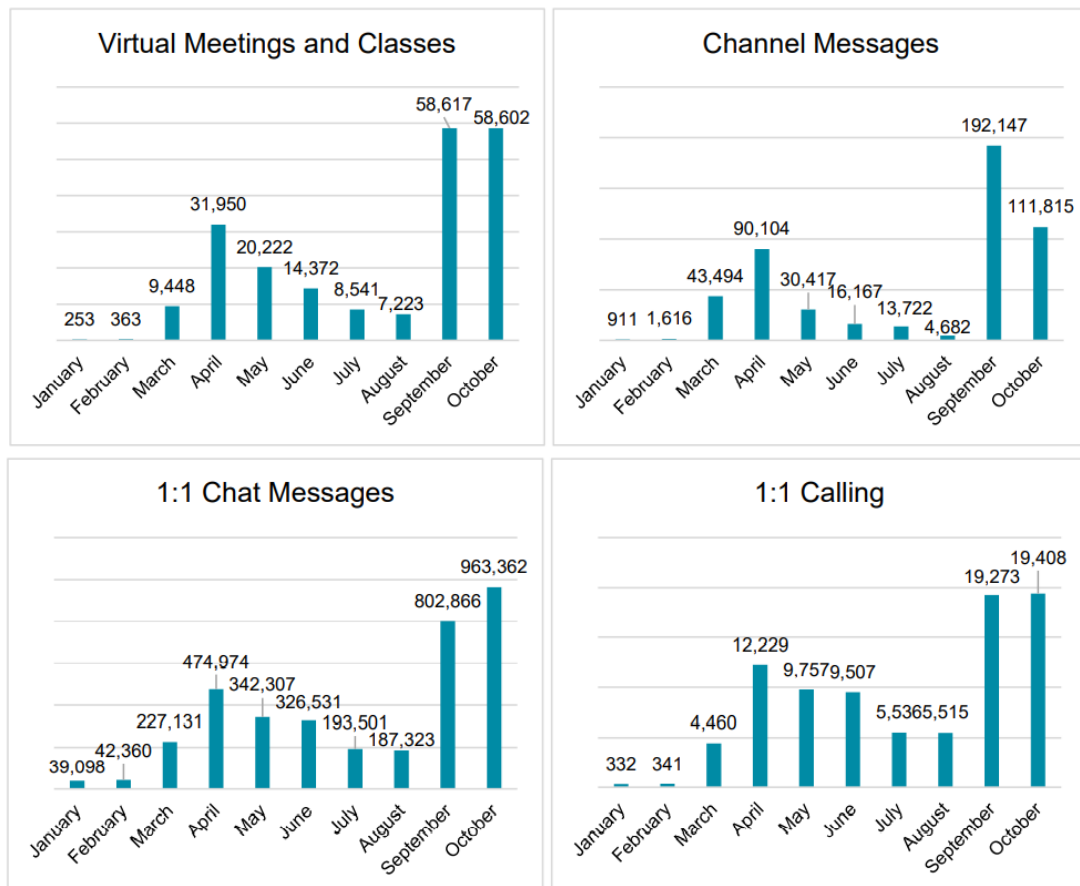
Source: NSCC Digital Innovation & Technology

- **InTune Expansion**

  InTune is a cloud-based management platform for PCs and mobile devices that allows the College to manage, secure and deploy software to devices over the internet. It creates a consistent experience whether a user is on campus or working from home. In the era of COVID-19, where minimizing unnecessary on-campus activity was a paramount safety practice, InTune enabled a simple and elegant way to remotely update, service and push software out to laptops located wherever learners and employees are based.

- **Student Awards & Financial Support Solution**

  Following the successful *Make Way* Campaign, the Technology Governance committee approved a project to optimize the administration of awards to students. A solution was procured via request for proposal (RFP) and then successfully implemented for the spring 2020 awards cycle, with Urgent Aid beginning September 2020.

- **eBookstore Implementation**

  A key tenant of the College's pandemic response was minimizing unnecessary campus visits. The lack of an online bookstore was identified as a priority gap to be addressed. An eBookstore project was established in mid-June 2020 to procure and implement an eCommerce solution to enable online ordering and payment processing. The project team successfully launched the eBookstore solution to users on August 24, in time for the start of the fall term. Four weeks post-launch, the eCommerce site had a reported adoption rate of 43%.

- **Finance Electronic Expense (eClaims)**

  This project began in FY 2018-2019 to enable the College to optimize our previously time and paper-intensive expense claim process. The new cloud solution was successfully launched in November 2020, taking the process fully online and enabling reimbursements to occur quickly and for claims to be completed from home/remotely.

- **Vaccine Policy Implementation**

  While not originally a planned project in the College's Portfolio, this project was commissioned in late August 2021 to support immediate operationalizing of the College's new mandatory vaccine policy.

- **New QR Code check-in process at College campuses and sites**

  With vaccination rates climbing in Nova Scotia in late summer 2021, the College was anticipating a September startup that would include daily check-ins upon entry to all campuses and facilities. It was envisioned that this would help with contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 exposure.

- **Software Anywhere**

  To enable access to the 371 different software packages that students in different programs need during their respective programs, several solutions were required to overcome three key challenges:

  - Licensing Limitations – In some cases, NSCC paid for a license to run the software on a College-owned PC, not a student personal device.
  - Performance Requirements – Certain pieces of software require more computing power than a student's home computer or laptop may provide.
  - Connectivity Requirements – Specific use cases require the piece of software to interact with data stored on the College network, which is not accessible from the internet.

In response, simplified requests were built in the Technology Service Desk enabling DI&Tech staff to match the solution to the need at hand. Self-service knowledge articles were also developed that walked the

customer through how to use their software remotely, once the appropriate access was provisioned. Additionally, Microsoft Azure Virtual Desktop was implemented early in the pandemic to enable students to access College-licensed instances of Microsoft Project or Visio on personal devices from home. NSCC was the first institution in Atlantic Canada to leverage this technology and Microsoft asked DI&Tech staff to share lessons learned with other institutions looking to adopt it.

HVAC Systems

Throughout the pandemic, NSCC established the practice of inspecting, maintaining and improving HVAC systems throughout the College. We continuously monitored systems to ensure the highest level of mechanical ventilation within the operating capacity of our system. This enabled a high level of filtration to assist in preventing biological transmission. Facilities Management continued their work in a phased approach to install new mechanical ventilation systems in areas of the College that were previously unserviced. This upgrade work was accelerated during 2020-2021 due to stimulus funding received by the College and will continue.

Vaccination Program

To reopen, NSCC created the Vaccination Program for COVID-19, which fell under the NSCC *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*. NSCC has been a leader in this policy adjustment. A notable number of government, post-secondary and other employers soon followed with similar programs.

7.3 Summary

During 2020-2021, NSCC continued masking, social distancing and cleaning practices (both frequent high-touch and deep cleaning) to provide a high level of protection throughout the College. OHS&E continued to facilitate the purchase and distribution of COVID-19-related equipment, disinfectant, and personal protective equipment to help mitigate the exposure of COVID-19 at NSCC sites. While following and, in some cases, exceeding Provincial Public Health directives, NSCC was able to maintain operations, ensure academic integrity, and support the health and safety of its college community.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Chapter 8: Management Systems and Practices

Does the institution have systems that produce information that enables management to answer the above questions?

8.1 Overview

NSCC's ability to process, analyze and transform data into knowledge; make effective use of technology-enhanced communications tools; and communicate effectively with stakeholders are all critically important to our success. The College has made significant gains in these three areas during the five-year review period of this report.

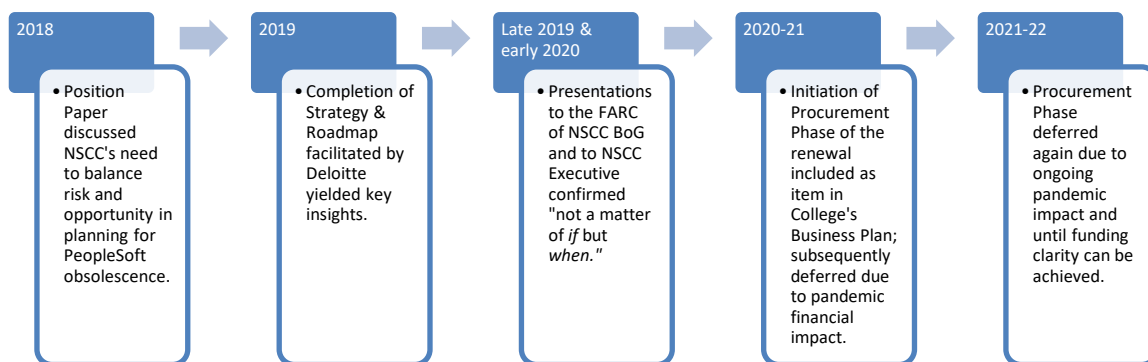## 8.2 Information Systems and Processes

Digital Innovation & Technology

The year 2021 was the fifth and final year of executing on NSCC's 2016-2021 Technology Strategy (See **Appendix C**). Work done during this period enabled the College's effective and rapid response to the pandemic, which included business and academic continuity in the face of major disruption and shifting related priorities. These challenges were met head-on, all while continuing to keep the College's technology landscape and ecosystem running securely, and ensuring that the day-to-day technology needs of students, staff and faculty were well supported.

ERP & SIS

The College's PeopleSoft Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Student Information System (SIS), which is hosted by a third-party data centre, will soon be at end of life. Oracle (PeopleSoft vendor) has evolved its planned sunset date from 2027 to 2033 as of January 2023. Regardless of the actual date, renewal of the College's ERP and SIS is both a significant and necessary College investment. Renewal planning began in earnest in 2018, with work continuing ever since.

2018	2019	Late 2019 & early 2020	2020-21	2021-22
• Position Paper discussed NSCC's need to balance risk and opportunity in planning for PeopleSoft obsolescence.	• Completion of Strategy & Roadmap facilitated by Deloitte yielded key insights.	• Presentations to the FARC of NSCC BoG and to NSCC Executive confirmed "not a matter of *if* but *when*."	• Initiation of Procurement Phase of the renewal included as item in College's Business Plan; subsequently deferred due to pandemic financial impact.	• Procurement Phase deferred again due to ongoing pandemic impact and until funding clarity can be achieved.

The Procurement Phase of NSCC's ERP and SIS renewal program was originally planned to begin in 2020-2021. However, it was (and continues to be) deferred due to the pandemic's impact and funding

clarity. Meanwhile, readiness activities identified in the 2019 strategy and roadmap are advancing in earnest.

The two most significant foundational readiness initiatives include:

- **Tuition Model Change Program**
  Program start: Spring 2021; anticipated completion: fall 2024
  This program supports the College's pursuit of the development and implementation of a consistent, equitable and predictable credit-based tuition model. The implementation will necessitate material changes to business processes and systems, including PeopleSoft configuration. By removing system complexity, reengineering business processes and ironing out business policies and procedures before embarking on the ERP and SIS renewal, NSCC will position our institution to significantly de-risk and expedite the renewal program.

- **Identity Management Solution Replacement Project**
  Project start: Summer 2021; anticipated completion: fall 2023
  This project will replace NSCC's legacy system with a modern, supported off-the-shelf Identity and Access Management (IAM) solution that will carry the College into the future. The legacy system was custom developed in PeopleSoft approximately 20 years ago to provide automated provisioning of user accounts and access to key systems and services to the College's 2,000+ employees and 20,000+ learners. The replacement of PeopleSoft necessitates replacing the Identity Management System prior to the ERP and SIS renewal. In addition, IAM has become a critical component of an organization's cybersecurity posture and technical landscape. A modern IAM solution will enable the College's digital journey, including our transition of the legacy ERP and SIS to cloud.

Many system improvements had been made to the College's PeopleSoft systems between 2016-2021, including these select highlights:

- HR system upgrade to ensure continued vendor support and enabled immediate and future functional enhancements (2020-2021).

- Planning for similar Finance and Campus Solutions systems and supporting software and hardware upgrades (2020-2021).

- Campus Solutions 9.2 upgrade – this significant "upgrade plus" ensured continued vendor support, while also adding new capabilities and the more mobile-friendly 'fluid' view (2019-2020).

- Launch of Manager Self-Service capabilities (2018-2019).

- PeopleSoft security hardening (2017-2018) was undertaken. As part of this, an employee access audit application was developed and rolled out to college managers (2018-2019).

Learning Management System (LMS)
The College's Learning Management System (LMS) is a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution hosted within Canada. In 2016, the College transitioned responsibility for the technical aspects of online delivery of the LMS (formerly called 'Desire2Learn' or D2L, and now called BrightSpace) from Academic Services to the Digital Innovation and Technology department within College Services.

In 2017, the College completed our "D2L Cornerstone" project with the primary objective to drive technology-enabled teaching and learning by implementing a D2L course shell as a minimum requirement for all courses for fall 2017. The changes introduced impacted every student and faculty member, and ultimately provided numerous student experience benefits including:

- Developing digital literacy skills

- Developing self-directed learning strategies

- Communicating and collaborating with peers both inside and outside the classroom

- Accessing learning resources

- Contributing to a community of learning

An important integration between Brightspace and Microsoft Teams was implemented in 2020. While the introduction of Microsoft Teams enabled the College's online delivery, it had added steps for faculty when preparing for and delivering their courses. The integration capability, called "Course Connector," streamlines the setup and continued synchronization between the two systems.

Technology Governance Program – planning & delivering priority projects
The 2016-2021 Technology Strategy defined critical first steps toward establishing a technology governance program, including the development of a technology governance model and establishment of a cross-functional governance committee to provide oversight.

In March 2017, Executive Council approved the current definition of Technology Governance at the College, along with a go-forward governance model to mature in the years to come. NSCC's goal of Technology Governance is to maximize the benefit of technology investment, mitigate technology risks and measure technology performance

The Technology Governance Committee (TGc) was subsequently formed with a primary mandate to advise and make recommendations to Executive Council on the establishment and oversight of annual technology projects and technology-related strategic directions/critical issues. The committee continues to comprise senior leaders from across the College, including:

Technology Governance Committee Membership	
AVP, Student Affairs	Director, Organizational Development
Chief Financial Officer	Executive Director, NSCC Foundation
Chief Information Officer	Manager, Digital Innovation & Technology – Cybersecurity Portfolio
Director, Academic Equity & Quality	Principal
Director, Enrolment & Registrar	Principal, e-Campus
Director, Policy, Planning & Research	Senior Manager, PPMO (non-voting)

Also in 2017, the Project and Portfolio Management Office's (PPMO's) mandate was expanded to include IT Portfolio Management. Today, the PPMO leads the ongoing improvement of the Technology Governance Program, including both portfolio planning (i.e., determining the right projects in which to invest) and project delivery (i.e., ensuring projects are

Technology Governance Program	
Project Portfolio Management (PPM)	**Project Management (PM)**
"Doing the Right Projects"	"Doing Projects Right"

successfully delivered) to ultimately create opportunities to improve project successes and throughout,
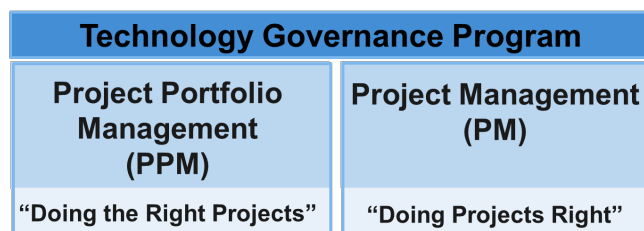
ensure achievement of strategic business objectives and achieve return on investment.

- During the five-year review period, the Technology Governance Program has:
  - Implemented a portfolio gating/planning process

  - Rolled out an Agile Idea Assessment Management process

  - Begun preparing business cases for most potential new projects
  - Developed and implemented a Business Case Scoring Model & Tool
  - Applied portfolio balancing (risk management) to the portfolio of projects
  - Incorporated resource modelling/constraints to the planning model
  - Realigned/updated the Project Delivery Work Plan at least quarterly with TGc and presented TGc's recommendations to Executive Council for final approval

- The PPMO has:
  - Successfully delivered 42+ projects
  - Managed ~five to seven+ in-flight projects at any given time
  - Cancelled two in-flight projects (due to not meeting business objectives or changed priorities)
  - Continuously managed the priority of approved projects in the queue to be delivered
  - Completed nine business cases
  - Cancelled or deferred two business cases (at the request of the respective business area)
  - Completed three due diligence/discovery phases

The PPMO has demonstrated flexibility to pivot resources and focus on NSCC's current needs. On the portfolio planning side and in response to the pandemic shift to remote work, new and more continuous processes were successfully employed to re-prioritize project investments. Optimized processes can be managed virtually, enabling the College's limited resources to be continuously directed to advancing the top priority projects, even in the face of major disruption. On the project delivery side, the shift to working remotely during the pandemic did little to slow project execution, as project managers and teams, business stakeholders, technical teams and vendors were able to continue advancing priority projects leveraging technologies such as Microsoft Teams.

Innovation and Technology

Information and Cyber Security

The College's information and cyber security practice has significantly advanced through the period in response to the increasing risks and ever-increasing sophistication of bad actors, as well as the increasing levels of remote teaching, learning and work. The DI&Tech Department has continued to take a proactive position to strengthening the College's cybersecurity posture, with many new and targeted investments, continued collaboration within the Higher Education sector, and support from a team of professional cybersecurity subject matter experts.

Since 2016, the security team has been strengthened with the:

- Addition of a Manager to provide leadership and direction to the team and consultation to other technology or business projects with information security implications.

- Expansion of the scope of the Security Analyst role.

- Addition of a second Security Analyst.

The College has also participated in several shared services and interinstitutional collaborations as integral parts of the cyber security strategy, and to supplement the internal team, including involvement with the Higher Ed IT Shared Services (HITSS) consortia of Nova Scotian post-secondary institutions, Interuniversity Services Inc (ISI), Ontario Cybersecurity Higher Education Consortium (ON-CHEC) and CANARIE's Cybersecurity Advisory Committee.

In 2017-2018, rollout began of multifactor authentication (MFA) to employee groups who regularly access the College's PeopleSoft systems, including those working in DI&Tech, Financial Services and Organizational Development/HR. The plan is to continue rolling out mandatory MFA for all employees to further strengthen the College's security.

Starting in 2016-2017, the College instituted a practice of procuring Threat Risk Assessment (TRA) services from a third-party provider on a recurring two-year cycle, a practice that continues today. TRA recommendations are reviewed and acted on to ensure the currency and efficacy of the College's information security policies, technologies and practices.

In 2017-2018 the College introduced mandatory Information Security Training for employees, which initially leveraged the learning management system. In 2018-2019, the College collaborated with HITSS to procure and implement a new behaviour-based security awareness platform (Beauceron) for employees and students. This platform continues to evolve and provide ongoing opportunities for security awareness and training.

Additional security initiatives during the five-year review period included:

- **2016-2017:** The College became certified as PCI DSS compliant and has maintained this important status ever since. This is critical to maintaining the College's merchant account in good standing and to keeping transaction fees as low as possible.

- **2018-2019:** Executive Council approved Information Security Policy and Procedures.

- **2018-2019:** Rolled out encryption technology to all College computers that support this capability.

- **2019-2020:** The College partnered with seven Nova Scotia institutions on a shared Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) initiative.

- **2019-2020:** The College participated in a national Cyber Security Advisory Committee formed by the Canadian National Research and Education Network (CANARIE).

- **2019-2020 & 2020-2021:** The College participated in a federally funded cyber security program intended to deliver new defence capabilities, increased collaboration and information sharing among Canada's 200+ research and education institutions.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

- **2020-2021:** The College completed the capital purchase and implementation of a next-generation firewall. Fortinet's Fortigate was the competitively procured solution. Work continues to fully enable its new security functionality.

- **2020-2021:** The College participated in the ON-CHEC (Ontario Cybersecurity Higher Education Consortium) security self-assessment to self-evaluate our cybersecurity posture through a series of questions from recognized Cybersecurity Frameworks (e.g., NIST and ISO 27001).

- **2020-2021**: Capital investment planned to replace end-of-life secure email 2gateway solution with a modern solution.

- **2020-2021**: The College started the Identity Management Solution Replacement Project to acquire and implement a modern, supported off-the-shelf identity and access management (IAM) solution to replace the 20-year-old legacy solution.

8.3 Data Driven Decision-Making

One of the most important functions of management is decision-making. Effective decision-making calls for timely, complete and relevant information.

Business Intelligence
The Business Intelligence (BI) Program at NSCC provides an efficient process of delivering information to the organization and has created a culture of informed decision-making using timely, relevant data. These reports, delivered via an analytics solution with a data warehouse as its foundation, provide the College with management information on program demand, applications, enrolment targets and milestone counts, student profiles, graduate counts, retention, persistence and diversity. The reports serve as a single source of management reporting and enable informed and consistent decision-making throughout the College.

The BI infrastructure enables efficiencies within Institutional Research (IR) as it reports on annual enrolment figures and continues to be a trusted source from which IR conducts enrolment analysis and carries out ad hoc information requests. The College now has 10+ years of enrolment management data in the data warehouse, making it increasingly efficient to report on trends and historical data.

The College has seen growth and maturity in our use of data to drive informed decision-making over the five-year review period. The Business Analytics (BA) Team has expanded the data and reporting offerings by providing reporting capabilities from new systems such as our Brightspace LMS and Technology Service Desk. In addition, the BA Team has developed more visual reporting content that leverages the increased volume of historical data we have in our data warehouse, allowing management to better identify and respond to trends in our key metrics.

Chart 8.1 shows the subject areas for which the BA Team has developed reporting content during the review period:

Chart 8.1
Subject Areas of Reporting Content 2016-2021
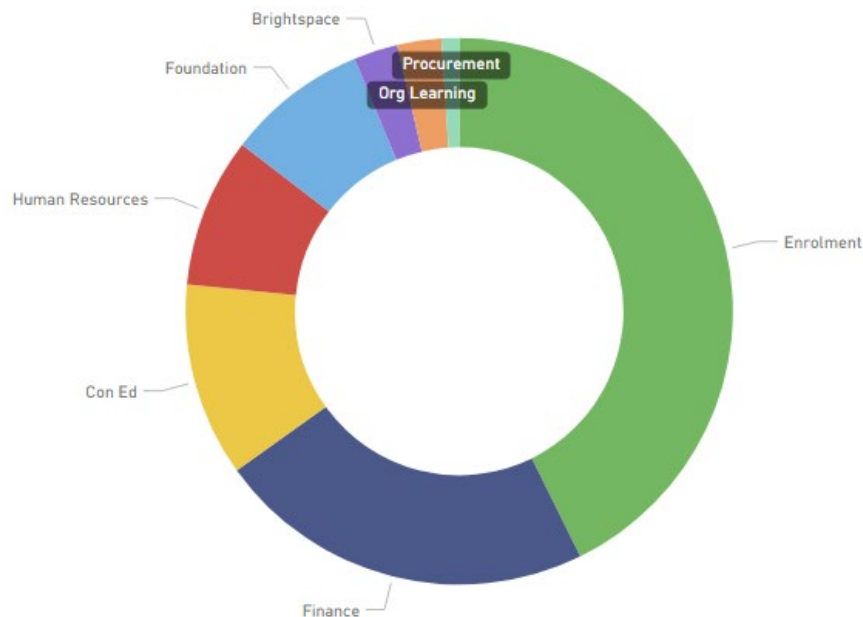
Source: NSCC Business Analytics

Institutional Research

NSCC has a dedicated department to provide unbiased, accurate and reliable information and analysis to support strategic decision-making and ensure accountability. As the official source of College statistics, Institutional Research responds to internal and external information requests and advocates for the quality, integrity and appropriate use of College data.

Institutional Research:

- Provides data on applicants, enrolled students and graduate populations.

- Oversees the development and administration of surveys for students, employees, alumni and industry partners.

- Conducts research and analysis to identify trends and support the academic quality framework, accreditation processes and student evaluations of their College experiences.

Student research is conducted through data analyses and collected through surveys. We continue to utilize a survey software that allows the administration of online surveys. The College administers three major student surveys annually:

- The Incoming Student Success Survey for first year students to gauge preparedness for the upcoming academic program.

- The Fall Student Success Survey for incoming and returning students to understand their experiences three to four weeks into the academic term and offer timely supports to struggling students.

- A student satisfaction and engagement survey to all students in the winter term.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

An annual Graduate Follow-Up Survey is administered by an external partner, Narrative Research, one year following graduation to gather feedback on graduates' experiences and satisfaction with their programs and their experiences in the workforce. Results from this survey continue to reflect consistent employment rates and satisfaction levels with NSCC.

Program Quality Data

The Academic Quality Framework lays out quality criteria and indicators across articulated quality domains. Significant work was undertaken during the five-year review period to clarify these indicators and enhance data quality and reporting. This includes enhanced program quality data reports used to support the five-year comprehensive program review process. It also includes streamlined program health reports, which provide a point-in-time snapshot that functions as a high-level diagnostic of program health, reviewed on an annual basis as an input to the program mix process. All evidence is triangulated against evidence from program industry advisory committees, faculty working groups and student and graduate feedback to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. The data can identify programs urgently requiring review outside of the normal cycle and provide evidence to support mandatory and voluntary accreditation of several NSCC programs.

During the five-year review period, several advancements improved the delivery of program quality data:

- The creation of the Academic Quality Assurance team within Academic, which includes the Manager of Academic Quality Assurance and two Academic Quality Consultants.
- Ongoing collaboration between Academic and Institutional research to enhance data quality, governance, collection and reporting.
- The launch of the annual Program and Student Satisfaction Survey to gather student feedback on satisfaction with programs and services on an annual basis.
- Exploration of Microsoft Power BI as a tool to create program quality dashboards with more responsive and user-friendly data reporting than is currently possible in Cognos;

Organizational Health Indicators

The balanced scorecard that NSCC has used since 2003 to report our key performance indicators to the Board of Governors was revised in February 2012 to refocus reporting on outcomes as Organizational Health Indicators aligned with the strategic plan. The report is focused on five key areas that are fundamental to organizational health and performance:

- Enrolment (meeting enrolment targets)

- Programs (graduate employment)

- Financial (net income and expenditures)

- Employees (employee engagement)

- Reputation (institutional reputation index)

The report is prepared annually as part of the business planning cycle and monitors the achieved results in each of these areas over the previous five-year period as compared to the set goals. NSCC's 2016-2020 Organizational Health Indicators table can be found in **Appendix B**.

8.4 Enterprise Risk Management

NSCC, through our Board of Governors, is committed to protecting against the various risks we face. To achieve this commitment, the Board approved a *Risk Management Policy* in 2015 that formalizes NSCC's approach to risk management. This policy was subsequently revised and approved by the Board in 2018.

To implement this policy, NSCC developed a *Risk Management Framework* in 2015 to guide the College's internal operations to ensure effective risk management while maintaining an innovative and entrepreneurial spirit. Approved by the Board, the framework, *Maximizing our Opportunities, Honouring our Values and Protecting our Future,* was subsequently reviewed and updated in 2018. The framework guides the College in the effective management and oversight of balancing risk and reward.

NSCC's Board of Governors has ultimate oversight and responsibility for the College's Risk Management Policy, through advice and recommendations from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee of the Board. The President is responsible for the identification, assessment, management, review and monitoring of risks, and to report on the highest opportunities and emerging liabilities to the Board on an annual basis, with semi-annual updates.

Risk management is an essential component of the daily operations of the College and a key factor in the achievement of our strategic priorities. NSCC's strategic approach to annual risk identification and assessment fosters an innovation culture whereby risk is accepted, embraced and managed by all employees.

8.5 Stakeholder Communications

Internal Communications
Effectively communicating College initiatives to employees and students in a geographically distributed organization remains a top priority for NSCC. College initiatives are supported with communications strategies, plans and tactics, which include the creation and distribution of content across several channels. These internal channels include but are not limited to intranet, email, digital signage, shared team sites, Microsoft Teams (including College-wide virtual town halls) and posters.

The Marketing and Communications team also provides crisis communications planning and plays a key role in issues management in collaboration with College leadership. The team worked closely during this five-year review period with the Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion (HREI) and Organizational Development teams to ensure the College community received timely and relevant communications regarding incidents and opportunities that affect our community. Communications worked with HREI on an approach to build ASL interpretation into relevant College communications. Marketing and Communications played a critical role in the development of internal communications strategies, tools and tactics as part of NSCC's COVID-19 response during this period.

External Communications
NSCC has a broad range of external stakeholders, including prospective students, their parents and other influencers, as well as government and industry partners and donors. During this five-year review period, Marketing and Communications stewarded the Web, Social Media and Email policies, and collaboratively developed content strategies and calendars that support business, reputational and brand objectives. NSCC completes an annual community report tabled in the provincial legislature with a distribution plan that uses all internal and external corporate communications channels. The news and information section

on nscc.ca was redeveloped as part of an Information Architecture renewal project (2021), ensuring NSCC has an "always-on" approach to sharing stories (owned and earned) that demonstrate how we deliver on our mission, through the achievements of students, alumni and employees. Marketing and Communications played a critical role in the development of external communications strategies, tools and tactics as part of NSCC's COVID-19 response during this period.

Web presence – continual improvement

With over five million annual visits, NSCC's website remains the College's primary recruitment platform and a key reputational asset. Several enhancements have been made to ensure the site continues to meet evolving business goals and the expectations of our stakeholders (i.e., user needs). Marketing and Communications completed a website Information Architecture renewal project in 2021 (launched 2022), ensuring this important brand, reputation and recruitment tool reflects who we are as an organization and is easy for our stakeholders to use. Through a formal web governance process, policy and content strategy, new web requests are evaluated and prioritized to ensure they are delivering value. These processes have also assisted the Marketing and Communications team in implementing and stewarding a decentralized web publishing model and an annual quality assurance review.

Marketing

Setting NSCC apart as a first-choice post-secondary option in a competitive post-secondary landscape remains a top priority for us. This is reflected in both brand marketing and marketing recruitment activities during the 2016-2021 review period. NSCC is continually in market with paid campaigns focused on brand, program recruitment and special initiatives. During the review period, NSCC completed a search engine marketing strategy (2018), implemented the strategy (2019) and has continued to steward this "always-on" campaign. Digital and social media advertising and promotion, along with out-of-home, broadcast and sponsorship initiatives continue to play a role in marketing campaigns. NSCC completed a brand renewal process in 2018 to ensure brand goals and campaign materials reflect the evolving expectations of the audiences we aim to reach. The College strives to reflect the diverse communities we serve through all marketing and communications activities. The Marketing and Communications team adapted campaign plans and content to reflect NSCC's COVID-19 response during this period.

Brand and Reputation

NSCC views our brand and reputation as strategic assets that require stewardship and protection. The Marketing and Communications team has specific accountabilities to advance both. This includes oversight of an annual reputation index study and participation in the Reputation Monitor, in partnership with Narrative Research. Both studies continue to provide ongoing insights about the health of NSCC's brand and reputation. Results over the period of this review were very positive, with NSCC consistently placing among the top three post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Region in terms of both familiarity and reputation.

8.6 Summary

With our initial implementation of PeopleSoft, the enterprise-wide information system, in 2000, NSCC expanded the scope and breadth of the information we gather about our operations. During this five-year review period, significant improvements occurred to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of the information system and to improve information reporting and analysis. Concurrently, internal communication practices and technologies continued to evolve.

NSCC is committed to developing systems and processes that ensure accurate and valuable information is gathered and available to employees throughout the organization to support planning and decision-

making. Over the five-year period of this report, the College continued to make significant gains processing, analyzing and transforming data into knowledge.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Appendix A:

NSCC Strategic Plan 2017, *Here & Now*

Vision Statement
Transforming Nova Scotia one learner at a time.

Mission Statement
Transforming Nova Scotia one learner at a time.

Our Promise
To empower those who strive to know more, do more, be more

Our Values
NSCC's values rest at the core of what we do and how we do it. We hold ourselves accountable for the embodiment of these values in our work together every day.

Accessibility:
We commit to opening pathways and providing equitable opportunities for students to engage fully in our programs and services.

Diversity:
We are intentional in our efforts to build diversity as a core strength. We recognize diversity of knowledge, worldview and experience as an asset and a key driver of success in advancing innovation, creativity and excellence.

Employee Success:
We believe that engaged people make the difference in our environment of continued learning. Teamwork and creativity are encouraged, and innovation is expected to ensure the success of our students and our organization.

Inclusion:
We are committed to creating a culture of genuine inclusion that is free from discrimination and harassment, and where our students, employees and communities we serve are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

Innovation:
We believe there is always a better way. We find it by inspiring curiosity, openness and creativity in the pursuit of excellence.

Public Accountability:
We work with integrity in every area of the College and believe we must be fundamentally accountable for the public's trust in all that we do.

Safety:
NSCC is dedicated to ensuring the health and safety of our students and employees. We are committed to working collaboratively to foster a culture of safety, and to improving safety practices across the organization.

Student Success:
We empower students with applied learning, services and supports to propel them on their way to career success and fulfilment.

Sustainability:
We commit to the continuous development of the social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of the College and our community.

Strategic Priorities

Student Success
NSCC is committed to ensuring every student has access to programs and courses designed to support their learning needs at every stage of their careers and throughout their lives.

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- **Advising:** Personalized student and educator relationships that meet individual learning needs are core to NSCC's inclusive and respectful learning community. The Collaborative College Advising Program provides a seamless service experience for all students, no matter how they engage – online, through apprenticeship and in face-to-face, blended or customized program delivery modes. The collaborative advising program spans the full student life cycle, from prospect to alumni. It provides students with the tools, resources and advice to define, plan and achieve their learning, personal and career goals.

  NSCC will support student success. We will:
  - ensure every student has a student services advisor and an academic advisor to support their success through their entire College experience.
  - support student success through implementation of common learning systems and processes.

- **Financial aid:** Financial stress is a primary risk factor in a student's ability to remain in school and be successful. The pressure of balancing a job and school is the number one reason students abandon their post-secondary education. NSCC has made great progress implementing an improved financial aid system to address students' toughest economic challenges. The NSCC Foundation is working closely with Student Services to expand, promote and award student financial aid.

  NSCC will alleviate student financial need. We will:
  - Expand students' access to early and renewable financial awards and urgent aid.
  - Embed financial literacy in students' college experience.

- **Student processes and systems:** Students' expectations for mobile and flexible service, and seamless and cohesive digital learning experiences, are rapidly changing. NSCC is committed to adapting and embracing innovation to ensure students have access to online services and the educational technologies they need. NSCC is building a culture of service excellence to meet students' expectations across their full student experience.

  NSCC will enhance the student experience. We will:
  - Increase students' access to online and mobile programs and services.
  - Enhance students' self-serve options.
  - Expand service excellence and continuous improvement initiatives.

- **Student well-being and growth:** NSCC strives to ensure educational equity and inclusion across all student supports and services. The College is building an inclusive and diverse learning environment that develops students' resilience, competence, personal capacity and skills. NSCC believes in ensuring supportive and accessible learning environments that encourage students' development as healthy and engaged citizens and leaders.

  NSCC will contribute to students' growth and well-being. We will:
  - Develop and implement an inclusive and comprehensive mental health and wellness strategy.
  - Create tools and resources to strengthen educational equity, diversity and inclusion.
  - Expand opportunities for cultural and global experiences.
  - Expand student engagement and leadership opportunities.

Community Impact

NSCC is committed to accelerating student and community innovation and entrepreneurial capacity. NSCC is committed to the success of all of Nova Scotia's diverse students, cultures and communities.

- **Applied research:** NSCC's leading-edge technologies, applied research projects and resources allow students to actively participate in the province's high-value growth sectors, such as oceans, engineering, geomatics, environmental and marine technologies.

  NSCC will fulfil our commitment to have a positive economic and social impact on communities. We will:

- o Nurture current applied research clusters and expand into new sectors.
- o Respond to industrial and sectoral applied research needs and opportunities.
- o Increase integration of students' applied learning experiences in applied research projects.

- **Community innovation:** NSCC campuses have the educational and technological assets and industry connectivity to spur local innovation and experiential learning directly linked to community business, environmental and social issues and opportunities. Connecting students with community innovators in collaborative spaces will spark local growth, economic development and social enterprise impact. This network of student and community problem-solving will become a vibrant focal point in a provincial innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

   NSCC will mobilize and strengthen NSCC's leadership in community innovation. We will:
   - o Create a network of coordinated campus assets and resources that accelerate student and community innovation and entrepreneurship
   - o Ensure core community innovation elements—workshops/events, entrepreneurship programs, industry liaison and access to shared technologies—are present at each campus.

- **Diverse communities:** NSCC is a comprehensive access college that strives to ensure all students' learning experiences are aligned with their historic and current reality, free from systemic barriers to success. NSCC nurtures a welcoming and inclusive culture so students from all communities can gain skills and knowledge to work in the Nova Scotian and global economies.

   NSCC will respond to the needs of Nova Scotia's diverse students. We will:
   - o Enhance flexible and accessible programming in collaboration with African Nova Scotian communities.
   - o Ensure educational equity, inclusion and universal design in programs and services for all students.
   - o Enhance supports and programs for international and new immigrant students.
   - o Increase opportunities for students' global and cross-cultural experiences.

- **Indigenous communities:** The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 2016 Report and Recommendations compels NSCC to expand opportunities and approaches that contribute to the elimination of education and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. As the leading provider of post-secondary education for Mi'kmaq students, NSCC is perfectly positioned to respond to this vitally important, and urgent, call to action. NSCC is taking deliberate, immediate steps to support Indigenous students' success, and to expand employment options and opportunities for Indigenous students and communities across Nova Scotia.

   NSCC will improve educational success rates for Indigenous students. We will:
   - o Develop specific strategies to address the recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation report.
   - o Become a signatory institution to Colleges and Institutes Canada's Indigenous Education Protocol.
   - o Ensure NSCC structures and approaches are in place to address Indigenous peoples' learning needs.
   - o Leverage NSCC's pan-provincial reach and network to support Indigenous-led community economic and social development.

- **Strategic sectors:** Nova Scotia must compete on a global level, not only by supporting our local economy, but also through increasing exports from our province to people around the world. NSCC is a community catalyst for growing Nova Scotia's key sectors and social enterprises in niche areas such as oceans, ICT and analytics, geomatics, alternative energy, creative industries, tourism and sustainable agriproducts.

   NSCC will maximize and leverage our industry, community and institutional partnerships. We will:
   - o Expand programs and partnerships in key national, regional and provincial industry growth sectors to align with government priorities.
   - o Expand program pathways for key sectors through strategic post-secondary and community initiatives.
   - o Use philanthropic investment to expand specialized, industry-focused learning experiences.

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Organizational Excellence

NSCC is committed to ensuring all our students and staff have the resources, systems and supports they need to learn, strive and thrive.

- **Employee well-being and growth:** NSCC is committed to modelling a culture of employment equity and mutual respect for everyone in our learning and working communities. Empowering and supporting employees to excel in times of transition has never been more important. The College is investing in initiatives to provide employees with the tools, resources and training they need so they are equipped and confident in their abilities to foster student success.

  NSCC will invest in the health and wellness of our employees. We will:
  - Infuse diversity, inclusion and employee equity across all programs and services.
  - Develop and implement a comprehensive and inclusive mental health strategy.
  - Expand programs and services to enhance employees' health, well-being, resilience and personal development.

- **Innovative and flexible technology:** Infusing leading-edge technology across all learning opportunities and business lines is a competitive imperative. NSCC recently approved a five-year technology strategy that provides direction on how the College can best respond to the current and future technology needs of employees and students. The strategy includes specific initiatives to ensure NSCC technology supports innovative learning and teaching with exceptional service.

  NSCC will maximize technology assets. We will:
  - Enhance and implement integrated practices for technology use and renewal.
  - Expand training for students and employees in current and emerging technologies.
  - Ensure technology security by providing compulsory awareness programs for students and employees.
  - Improve technology innovation and sustainability though inclusive technology governance.
  - Ensure the digital preservation of institutional resources and records.

- **Policy, planning and accountability:** NSCC employees care deeply about the organization and value our culture of informed risk taking, creativity and integrity. NSCC's ethos of continuous improvement, resource stewardship and trust ensures strong public accountability. The College's planning processes and tools ensure we work nimbly and collaboratively across all functions of our learning communities.

  NSCC will strengthen accountability, planning and governance. We will:
  - Enhance policy transparency and excellence.
  - Ensure nimble and iterative risk management, planning and governance practices.
  - Expand and align organizational health, program and enrolment accountability measures.

- **Safety and sustainability:** NSCC is a nationally recognized industry leader in sustainability practices. A dedicated and comprehensive focus on reducing our environmental impact is one of the College's core values and is deeply embedded in our culture. Doing the right thing for the planet is important to our students and gives NSCC a competitive edge. NSCC promotes a culture of safety, where risk identification and assessment are integrated into all operations and processes. The College community works diligently and collaboratively to reinforce safety and sustainability leadership in all we do.

  NSCC will ensure a safe and sustainable learning community. We will:
  - Improve practices, increase resources and foster a College-wide culture of safety.
  - Embed sustainability principles, practices and literacy in programs and services, planning and operations.
  - Meet or exceed industry best practices for sustainability and safety in post-secondary education.

- **Workforce planning and performance:** NSCC is committed to the success of every employee. The College is launching three College-wide learning programs in the areas of teaching & learning, training & development and

leadership & management. These programs will inspire employee success, promote and strengthen NSCC's inclusive culture and build diversity and cultural competence. NSCC is also introducing a holistic workforce planning model to support and empower the College's most valuable resource.

NSCC will renew and reinvest in employee development and learning. We will:
- o Implement a comprehensive, College-wide workforce planning and performance program.
- o Develop and deliver competency-based employee learning and professional development programs.
- o Expand and improve employee equity initiatives.

Academic Quality
NSCC is committed to serving the province's changing labour market needs by providing innovative, relevant and accessible programming to Nova Scotia's diverse communities.

- **Academic processes and systems**: NSCC must have a nimble and responsive program development and renewal cycle to ensure our programs are innovative, high quality and tightly aligned to the province's labour market, communities and economy. NSCC recently approved a five-year Academic Plan that includes specific initiatives to respond to both current and future needs of students, faculty and all employees.

  NSCC will strengthen academic systems and structures. We will:
  - o Ensure course and credentials standards that facilitate student mobility and academic integrity.
  - o Ensure industry currency through responsive and nimble program development and renewal processes.
  - o Implement a work-integrated learning management system to maximize experiential learning.
  - o Establish a common learning management system and platform for all programs.
  - o Optimize collaborative program and enrolment planning processes.

- **Equitable access and pathways:** It is imperative for the College, and for the province, that all Nova Scotians have an opportunity to move successfully into training and the workforce. NSCC builds diversity and inclusion into everything we do. Adult students come to NSCC because our welcoming environment is inclusive and supportive. The College is building on successful transitional programming to expand post-secondary options for all Nova Scotians.

  NSCC will expand equitable access and pathways for students. We will:
  - o Ensure educational equity and inclusion across all programs and services.
  - o Provide students with tools and services to help them make the right career and program choices.
  - o Increase flexible delivery options through enhanced program pathways.
  - o Work with the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency to align and enhance industry-connected apprenticeship training.

- **Program quality:** NSCC is focused on ensuring the highest quality learning experience so that our graduates can drive the workforce our communities and economies need. Learning that is hardwired to industry enables our graduates to transition to local and global workforces quickly and successfully.

  NSCC will ensure exceptional quality learning experiences are aligned to Nova Scotia's workforce. We will:
  - o Ensure quality and currency of experiential learning through industry-connected programs and services.
  - o Embed innovation and entrepreneurial problem solving and skills across programs and services.
  - o Embed 21st century literacies, employability skills and universal design across programs and services.
  - o Increase project-based, cross-disciplinary and diverse learning experiences for all students.
  - o Develop new programs that align with Nova Scotia's emerging economies and labour market requirements.

- **Teaching and learning excellence:** Exceptional learning experiences and the relationships between students and educators are the keys to academic performance and success. It is imperative to the province's future that

we maintain the highest standard of graduate quality while increasing our retention and graduation rates. NSCC is committed to ensuring that teaching and learning excellence reflects a standard of cultural competency and an environment of continuous improvement.

NSCC will ensure excellence in teaching and learning. We will:
- o Establish expectations and supports to strengthen excellence in teaching and learning.
- o Provide professional development and coaching programs to support excellence in teaching and learning.
- o Ensure student and faculty access to leading-edge equipment, shops, technologies and creative spaces.
- o Ensure faculty advising is a key component of teaching and learning experiences.

NSCC Strategic Plan 2012, *Now More Than Ever*

Vision Statement

As a College, we are a community committed to the success and fulfillment of every student – in education, in career and in life. We believe the future of our province lies in the power of learning. When individuals transform their lives through learning, they have the power to transform their communities. As they transform their communities, they transform our province. It is within this context that we have set the following vision…
Transforming Nova Scotia one learner at a time.

Mission Statement

NSCC's fundamental purpose, as defined in our mission statement, is concise and compelling. Our mission will provide us with clarity as we work to achieve our vision and thus, we will continue to commit ourselves to the mandate of…***Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation.***

Values

At NSCC we care about each other, and we care deeply about what we are here to do. These eight values are the fundamental driving forces within our organization. They rest at the core of what we do and how we do it. We hold ourselves accountable for the embodiment of these values in our work together every day.

Student Success:
We support and celebrate the success of our students as they undertake learning and pursue careers.

Employee Success:
We recognize and honour the vital importance of each other's contributions to the success of our students, the College and the communities we serve.

Accessibility:
We commit to opening pathways and providing equitable opportunities to access our programs and services.

Diversity and Inclusion:
We provide a learning environment that welcomes and embraces individuals from diverse communities, and we take every opportunity to become more inclusive.

Safety:
We focus on creating a culture of safety and well-being within our entire NSCC community and beyond.

Innovation:
We believe there is always a better way, and we will find it by inspiring openness, curiosity and creativity as a basis for excellence.

Sustainability:
We commit to the continuous development of the social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of the College and our community partners.

Public Accountability:
We work with integrity in every area of the College and believe we must be fundamentally accountable for the public's trust in all that we do.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1
Community Connections

NSCC is committed to building and sustaining strong connections with our communities to ensure future prosperity and well-being.

The "community" in Community College is at the heart of why NSCC exists and what we strive to support and sustain.

We are an educational hub for the many rural and urban communities our campuses serve. We are committed to helping our communities thrive and prosper through service-learning opportunities for students and employee participation in community organizations. By promoting diversity and inclusion, NSCC offers a nurturing environment for learning, living and thriving locally. We value the importance of relationships, working closely with all levels of government, local communities and employers. These relationships are developed by inviting communities to participate in the daily lives of our campuses through activities, celebratory events and planning initiatives.

The future prosperity and well-being of communities will determine the overall strength of Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life. Therefore, we will continue to strengthen and deepen connections with our communities so true innovation and entrepreneurship can flourish, contributing to the well-being of learners, families, communities and the province. We will fulfill our commitment to communities through the following Goals:

- We will ensure we provide a nurturing environment for learning, living and thriving locally by embodying our values of diversity and inclusion.
- We will connect regularly with the citizens and communities that make up all of Nova Scotia, enabling us to better understand and address their learning needs and concerns while building more mutually beneficial partnerships.
- We will work to ensure the learning and applied research activities we provide enable communities to take full advantage of new opportunities for economic and social prosperity as they emerge.
- We will actively participate in the life of our communities so that together we can inspire innovation and entrepreneurial spirit and contribute to our collective well-being and sustainability.

Strategic Priority 2
Program Quality

NSCC is committed to graduating learners who possess leading-edge skills and knowledge, and who are immediately prepared to use their talents in their work and communities, continuing to learn and grow throughout their lives.

NSCC must deliver programs of exceptional quality to ensure that the skills, knowledge and abilities our graduates take with them into the workforce are highly valued in the economy.

We have always been committed to regular review and renewal of our programs to keep pace with the changing needs of employers, industry and best practices in post-secondary learning. We have made great investments in providing learning and professional development opportunities for our employees. Now, it is time to build on our history of strong programming and commit to reaching that next level of quality. We will fulfill our commitment to program quality through the following goals:

- We will engage students in learning experiences that are of exceptional quality so they can excel in the workforce.
- We will provide applied learning and research experiences that align with the innovation and technology needs of the economy.
- We will work closely with employers and industry in designing programs that meet their needs, helping build Nova Scotia's economy through a well-educated and highly skilled workforce.
- We will invest in the capabilities of our employees to enhance teaching and service delivery.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Strategic Priority 3
Operational Excellence

NSCC is committed to providing an exceptional learning experience to every NSCC learner in all the programs and services we provide.

NSCC will ensure that we are effective stewards of the resources with which we are entrusted. We have worked effectively over the past decade to build and grow a modern college with respected and relevant programs for Nova Scotia. In the process, we have been nimble and responsive in ensuring that the basic processes, systems and services are in place to serve the needs of learners as they navigate their learning journey with us.

An exceptional learning experience consists of more than what happens in our classrooms, shops and labs. It is the sum of every service, process and connection our students experience – from the time they begin to consider NSCC as a place to learn, through graduation and having successful careers – it is a journey of lifelong learning. It is now time to take a comprehensive look at all our systems, processes and practices to ensure they are adding value to the whole learning experience of our students. We are a complex organization that spans the entire province, operating in unique communities, each with their own opportunities and challenges.

Therefore, as we continue to be an employer of choice, we will ensure our planning processes are rooted in deep collaboration. With shared accountabilities, we will recognize interdependencies across college functions. As an entire college community, we will work together with a continuous improvement mindset to ensure operational excellence. We will fulfill our commitment to operational excellence through the following goals:

- We will refine and improve our services, policies, and communication to ensure clear and effective business practices.
- We will design and renew our technology to enable innovation and excellence in all aspects of our work.
- We will build effective processes and planning tools that help us work nimbly and collaboratively across all functions of the College.
- We will invest in improving our safety practices throughout the College.
- We will invest in building leadership skills throughout NSCC.

Strategic Priority 4
Access to Success

NSCC is committed to ensuring learners make the right program choices for them and are prepared for the successful achievement of their learning goals.

The future prosperity and well-being of the province depends upon many more people having the ability to acquire, and continuously upgrade, the skills and knowledge required to build prosperous lives and vibrant industries.

With more than 120 programs covering every sector of the economy, from entry level skills to highly advanced knowledge, earners have access to programs and courses designed to support their learning needs throughout their lives and at every stage of their careers. The opportunities and challenges facing Nova Scotia over the next decade provide a clear focus for the work we will do as a college.

We will continue to provide a broad suite of relevant programs and increased flexibility in terms of access to these programs. We will enable as many people as possible to overcome the barriers and learning challenges that are keeping them from participating fully in Nova Scotia's workforce. We will work with our industry partners to strengthen the long-term viability of their enterprises by providing their workforce with access to lifelong learning opportunities in a manner that recognizes their unique operational realities. We will undertake this work with the imperative of enhancing the support we offer to NSCC learners. This support will include an increased emphasis on engaging our students in choosing programs that are well suited to their interests, abilities and career opportunities, as well as helping to ensure they have the necessary academic readiness for successful post-secondary learning. We will fulfill our Access to Success commitment through the following goals:

- We will become a more welcoming and diverse college community.

- We will enhance and expand our learning pathways for Nova Scotians who are not academically prepared for success in pursuing a post-secondary credential.
- We will provide learners with tools to help them make the right program choices for their interests, abilities and career opportunities.
- We will help ensure every learner is prepared to meet the academic challenges of a modern community college.
- We will provide learning opportunities for Nova Scotians to continue acquiring leading edge skills and knowledge throughout their lives.

Appendix B:

2016-20 NSCC Organizational Health Indicators

Key Area	Objective	Milestone Measure	Results Achieved					Goal	Additional Context
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020		
Enrolment	Enrolment targets met	September 30th enrolment as a % of fall enrolment targets	103.5%	101.8%	100.7%	101.8%	101.3%	Within 99 to 101% of Target	This includes enrolment of students declared in certificate, diploma, and advanced diploma programs. Reflects modified target adjusted due to COVID-19 restrictions.
Programs	Graduates apply their skills and knowledge	% of graduates in the labour force who are employed	87%	87%	88%	90%	82%	84 to 88% of graduates in the labour force employed one year after graduation	These results fall outside of our desired goal range; however, they reflect employment in June 2020 during the height of the government restrictions due to COVID-19.
Financial	Net budget is achieved	Net Income as % of total revenue	3.37%	0.13%	0.09%	-0.10%	1.10%	Within +/- 0.5% of total revenue	Conversion to Public Sector Accounting Standards (PSAS) was completed in 2013. The two measures together will provide a complete picture of financial health. The results are derived from the non-consolidated financial statements.
		5-Year rolling average net income as % of total revenue	0.95%	0.95%	0.89%	0.76%	0.92%	Positive 5-Year rolling average	
	Balanced Academic & Administrative Expenditure	% of operating expenditure devoted to academic programs and services to students	78%	77%	76%	76%	78%	75 to 80% of budget allocated to learning, services to students, IT, and library resources.	Average for Nova Scotian universities is 76% (2013-2014). Source: CANSIM 477-0059
Employees	Employee engagement	Employee engage-ment rate	n/a	83%	n/a	84%	n/a	Overall engagement index between 80% and 90%	The Employee Engagement Survey was redesigned in 2015. The survey has been simplified and refined to focus on intrinsic motivation- the key indicator of success and performance as an organization.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Reputation	Institutional reputation	Institutional reputation index	81.0%	78.6%	79.4%	79.9%	*8.0/10	Index score between 78% and 82%	*Overall reputation survey was not conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19, but the Atlantic Reputation Monitor shows NSCC retains a very high reputation, 1st in Nova Scotia and 2nd in overall Atlantic Canada post-secondary institutions.

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD

Appendix C:

NSCC's 2016-2020 Technology Strategy at a Glance

Approved by the NSCC Board of Governors: TBD