

*Centre for Teaching, Learning,
& Technology*

Teaching and Learning Plan

2016-2021

CTLT Steering Committee

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About the CTLT Teaching and Learning Plan

The Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT) Teaching and Learning Plan is based upon the priorities identified in the Brandon University Academic Plan 2015-2020. The purpose of this plan is to identify key priorities for the CTLT and to establish activities to attain these priorities over the next five years.

University Key Academic Priorities

The Academic Plan identifies the following Key Academic Priorities:

- to distinguish Brandon University as a leading student-centred institution of choice for students;
- to establish and promote Brandon University as an institution engaged in innovative research, scholarship and creative activities;
- to conduct community engagement and university service activities;
- to promote diversity and inclusive post-secondary educational opportunities;
- to foster academic program excellence, renewal, development; and
- to foster sustainable growth and development in academic programs and services.

Mandate of the CTLT

The CTLT will provide leadership and expertise in pedagogy and instructional technology in support of teaching and learning at Brandon University. The CTLT will provide leadership in the development of student-centered, evidence-based approaches to teaching within the context of learner needs and available resources.

The CTLT will enhance the practice, culture, and scholarship of teaching and learning by offering support and services to faculty members. These include:

- promoting effective student-centred teaching; including support for creative pedagogic and andragogic practices, curriculum development, and ongoing internal program reviews by:
 - establishing helpful website links and resources;
 - providing support for instructors engaged in on-line/hybrid delivery;
 - compiling and sharing course/curriculum development information and new faculty resources;
 - coordinating a faculty mentorship program; and
 - encouraging scholarship of teaching and learning.

- providing regular and focused faculty development activities by:
 - planning and implementing faculty development activities; and
 - organizing presentations/workshops on teaching/learning/technology topics.
- providing guidance and support for the adoption and use of instructional technologies by:
 - working with other resources and stakeholders to coordinate the use of a learning management system, video conferencing, and standard equipment set up for using technology in the classroom; and
 - training for the use of instructional technologies that includes when to use, what to use, and how to use the technology.

CTLT Key Strategic Priorities

There are a number of issues facing Brandon University that have an impact on our ability to attract and retain students and faculty members. These issues present themselves as both an opportunity and a threat.

The CTLT has identified four key strategic priorities as follows:

1. Establish physical and administrative infrastructure.
2. Connect theory, research, and best practice to teaching and learning
3. Promote an environment that supports a culture of teaching and learning.
4. Establish a system for responding to university faculty needs for teaching and learning.

Strategic Priority 1: Establish Physical and Administrative Infrastructure

As the CTLT is in the early years of its development, there is the need to establish a physical presence and an administrative/governance structure that fits with the needs of faculty, students, and the University.

Actions:

A. Establishing a Physical Presence for the CTLT

Permanent space is needed for the Centre, the Director, and future staff. This space needs to include opportunities for growth and expansion of services. There is promising potential for the Centre to be located in a new Learning Commons area of the Library.

B. Staffing the CTLT

In order for the Centre to fulfill its mandate and address the critical issues facing the University, a full time, permanent Director position is needed. The Centre will also require resources such as an Instructional Designer/Curriculum Developer, Learning Technology Specialist, and technology and administrative support staff.

C. Recruiting Faculty/Graduate Students

An area of growth for the Centre is the appointment of additional Teaching Affiliates and new Research and Graduate Student Affiliates. These affiliates will provide valuable support and commitment to the pursuit of teaching excellence at BU.

D. Revising the Governance Structure

A Steering Committee was initially established in 2013-14 to oversee the development of the new Centre. An Advisory Committee structure needs to be considered as a way to provide ongoing advice and governance for the Centre.

E. Promoting Inquiry through Communities of Learning

The CTLT will serve as a catalyst to conversations both in person and in virtual communities to discuss topics of interest dealing with teaching, learning, and technology. To do this the CTLT will facilitate communities of learning to discuss issues around teaching, learning, and technology.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Permanent space for the Centre will be secured in 2016
- Permanent funding for a full time Director will be established in 2016-17
- Need for new positions will be envisioned by December 2016
- Funding for positions to be secured by 2017-18
- New Teaching, Research, and Graduate Student Affiliates will be appointed to the CTLT
- Communities of inquiry will be established
- Terms of reference for an Advisory Committee will be developed and the committee will be functional by December 2016

Strategic Priority 2: Connect Theory and Practice to Teaching and Learning

For most faculty members, one third to one-half of their responsibilities involves teaching students. In many cases, faculty have expertise in a subject area but have little formal training in instruction.

Recent results on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) indicated small class sizes at BU, but less than optimal levels of student

engagement. By moving towards a more student-centred approach to teaching and learning, students will become more engaged in their learning. This engagement has been shown to improve student retention.

One of the main goals of the CTLT is to help faculty move towards more student-centred teaching and learning by applying pedagogic/andragogic theory to practice.

Actions:

A. Encourage Scholarship of Teaching

The CTLT will encourage and facilitate access to information and training in teaching. It will also address specific needs identified by faculty that concern student needs, learning environments, and teaching and learning best practices.

The CTLT will work with the campus community to establish “best-practice” principles for instructional development. It will also start a conversation about identifying the critical attributes of “good teaching” at BU. The CTLT will encourage research and innovation on teaching methods, tactics, techniques, and technology.

Professional and/or Faculty Development

Based on information gathered across the University, the CTLT will initiate presentations and discussions on important teaching and learning issues as defined by faculty members. Due to difficulties in scheduling live events, technology will be used to transmit and record sessions whenever possible.

Consultation

The CTLT will provide consultation services to support faculty members with curriculum development and using student-centred teaching and learning techniques.

Organize an Annual Teaching Enhancement Conference

The annual Teaching Enhancement Conference has been an event that many faculty members support and look forward to each year. The CTLT will continue to organize and conduct this event using feedback from faculty and advice from the CTLT Steering Committee.

Indigenous Education

Brandon University has a long history of working with indigenous communities through programs such as BUNTEP, PENT, and FNAC. In addition, the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action Report includes recommendations related to Indigenous awareness and training for faculty members.

Global Education

Students from different countries are seeking opportunities for higher education. Faculties and departments need to be prepared to produce graduates who are aware of and responsive to global issues. The CTLT will offer assistance in the integration of global/international principles and awareness into curricula and courses.

On-line/Hybrid Course Delivery

One trend in higher education is a move towards reaching more students through on-line technologies. This may include engaging with students at a distance and/or students who are located on campus. The CTLT will support faculty in their development and use of on-line or hybrid course delivery methods.

New Faculty Members and Sessional Instructors

Support for new faculty begins with orientation (onboarding) and ongoing faculty mentorship. The CTLT will provide the infrastructure and programming needed for new faculty to begin their role in a student-centered learning environment.

Similarly, sessional instructors play an important role at BU. Given the transient and often intermittent presence of sessional faculty, the CTLT will address the learning needs of sessional instructors and support their efforts to develop student-centered teaching and engaged learning.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Critical attributes of excellence in teaching at BU will be developed
- Internal research grants related to post-secondary teaching and learning will be established by 2017
- Annual Teaching Enhancement Conferences will meet the needs of faculty
- Increasing numbers of on-line and hybrid courses will be developed
- Programs for faculty mentors and sessional instructors will be available
- Increased numbers of global/international perspectives will be included in curricula and courses Indigenous awareness training and inclusion in curricula will be encouraged
- Ratings of student engagement (NSSE) will improve
- Student-centered learning will be evident

Strategic Priority 3: Promote an Environment of Student-centred Teaching and Learning

The Government of Manitoba has a mandate to increase the number of online courses available through eCampus Manitoba by 500 over the next five years. These increased offerings will mean BU students will have other options available for degree completion. This situation presents as both an opportunity and a challenge.

A. Accessibility Plan

Many students and faculty members face barriers to accessibility. The CTLT will support the Accessibility of Manitobans Act by identifying barriers and improving accessibility to teaching and learning.

B. Learning Environment

Student-centeredness is a key element of the BU Academic Plan. The learning environments must also be set up to encourage student-centred teaching and learning. These environments may be physical classrooms, labs, and/or lecture halls or they may be the technology used to connect instructors to students.

Independent Learning

As a support to all faculty members and to those who prefer to learn through independent means, the CTLT will identify, organize, and provide links to resources to help faculty design, develop, and present student-centred learning experiences. The CTLT will also access webinars available from other sources that offer useful topics on teaching, learning, and technology. The CTLT will also update and revise the Teaching Resource Guide.

C. Incentives for Innovation and Quality Teaching

An important role of the CTLT is to promote the use of innovation in the classroom, particularly in the area of instructional technology. When technology and innovation organized are supported on campus, faculty will feel more confident in their use.

D. Ongoing Curriculum Renewal

In order to prepare students for their future roles in life, a current trend in universities is to move from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered approaches. This shift in focus will position Brandon University to be more responsive to the needs of current students and to facilitate the recruitment and retention of future students. The role of the CTLT will be to assist Faculty/Schools in their renewal of curricula and ongoing program development.

Key Performance Indicators:

- An inventory of teaching and learning space and equipment across the institution will be completed by Fall 2016
- The CTLT will support the Accessibility for Manitobans Act and work with Faculties to improve access to teaching and learning for all students and faculty members.
- Needs of users of instructional technology will be identified and improved
- The university teaching awards (Alumni, Senate, etc.) will be reviewed for consistency with aim towards student-centered learning will be completed
- A plan for incentives to encourage innovative and quality teaching will be developed
- A campus-wide strategy for curriculum renewal will be developed
- A curriculum innovation fund to promote the adoption of more student-centred strategies will be in place by 2017-18

Strategic Priority 4: Establish a Quality Assurance Program in the CTLT

Important aspects of maintaining quality programming are to identify the needs of the learners it supports and to measure the outcomes of the learning activities. The CTLT will strive to meet the need for quality teaching and learning by identifying the critical attributes of quality teaching and learning and collect data on services and supports to ensure positive outcomes.

A. Establish a System to Evaluate Quality Teaching and Learning

CTLT will strive to establish a system to evaluate teaching and learning based on sound pedagogical and andragogic principles. The purpose of this system is to identify problem or deficit areas and to find ways to improve them.

B. Construct a Framework on Teaching and Learning Quality

The CTLT will work with Faculty/Schools and teaching and learning supports on campus to develop an institutional framework to assist in the evaluation of teaching and learning quality.

C. Collect Data on Effectiveness of Faculty Development Events

The CTLT will establish a process that responds to the teaching and learning needs of the university and faculty. The process will include collecting data from faculty and other university supports

Key Performance Indicators:

- Best practices for teaching and learning will be evident in curricula
- A framework of quality teaching and learning will be developed
- An institutional wide plan for the evaluation of quality teaching will be developed
- A process to collect, analyse, and share feedback from each CTLT event will be developed

Conclusion

The Teaching and Learning Plan establishes key priorities the CTLT will pursue over the next five years to fulfil the University's mission, to uphold its values, and to place the University on a trajectory that realizes its academic mission: "To be a leading innovative engaged university".

The establishment of the CTLT in 2013-14 began the formal support of teaching and learning at Brandon University. The next three to five years will see a steady growth in the infrastructure of the Centre as it continues to identify and address the learning needs of the BU faculty as we strive for excellence in teaching and a student-centered learning environment.