



To: StFX University Community
From: Elizabeth Yeo, Vice-President (Students), Quality of Life Committee Co-Chair
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Subject: Student Experience and Opportunity Plan, September 2021 Updates

Background

In March 2019, StFX Senate Quality of Life Committee embarked on a strategic planning process that will present a distinct vision for the student experience at StFX for the next five years (2022-2027). This is an opportunity to set priorities and establish measurable goals that will set StFX apart from other universities, based the wholistic student experience we provide.

This planning exercise will give members of the StFX community the opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved - what is working, what did we learn, what work do we still have ahead of us? The community will also have the opportunity to consider lessons learned through our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

StFX University Senate Quality of Life Committee

The Senate Quality of Life Committee is concerned with matters pertaining to the development or maintenance of programs and services which serve to nurture students' personal well-being and a healthy community. The Committee is committed to ensuring that the emerging plan is inclusive of the shared knowledge, experience, and vision of members of the StFX community.

An equity lens shall inform planning and be embedded within all strategic areas. Membership from equity-deserving groups shall be included in the process through membership on the planning teams and opportunities to participate in a number of campus-wide and population-specific consultations sessions.

Fall Consultation Sessions

Over the past year, targeted consultations have occurred within the Quality of Life Committee, interviews with StFX faculty and staff, the Senate Student Life Forum, and students (through Student Union committee discussions, student surveys and data, an open Student Town Hall session and targeted student "talk back" forums). These consultations have resulted in the identification of the following three strategic areas for further exploration:

- I. Student Mental Health and Well-being
- II. Experiential and Co-Curricular Learning



III. First-Year Experience

These strategic areas are not meant to be prescriptive or exhaustive, rather they provide a “starting place” for deeper investigation and discussion. These themes will become further focused and additional strategic areas or priorities may emerge through the Academic Plan, the Student Experience and Opportunity Plan, and the President’s Action Team on Anti-Racism consultation and planning processes.

Strategic Theme Sub-Committees

To assist with developing the Student Experience and Opportunity Plan, Sub-Committees have been struck for each of the three themes identified below. The Sub-Committees are comprised of students, faculty and staff representing various areas of the university. The Sub-Committees are preparing discussion documents with recommendations to advance the work of StFX in these strategic areas. The leads of each Sub-Committee are in bold.

Mental Health and Well-being	Experiential and Co-Curricular Learning	First-Year Experience
By taking a whole campus approach to mental health and well-being, students feel supported in their personal and academic journey through accessible programs and services that promote, inspire and foster their ability to flourish.	Students will be able to plan and access experiential and co-curricular learning and can articulate the knowledge they acquire through academic and non-academic engagement; learning that expands their adaptability for the future of work, skills that empower them to define their unique pathway for individual success, and values that demonstrate social responsibility.	All first-year students have access to resources, programs and initiatives that support meaningful and authentic campus connections, which build the foundation for their personal success and continued academic achievement.
Margie MacKinnon Ivan Drouin Claire Betkers Leo MacPherson Kara Thompson Tiffany Bondoc Lily Turnbull Dylan Meraw Jenny Li Hunter Park Sarah Breen	Elizabeth Yeo Jane MacDonald Megan Turner Gracie Fleet Margaret Gillis Meredith Cudmore-Keating	Jacqueline De Leebeeck Elizabeth Yeo Bob Hale Jack Irvin Kyler Bell Matthew Girard Brian Scriver Sophia Fabiano Nathan Penman Sydney Phelan Rodrigo Soares Margaret Gillis



Progress Summary

Below is an outline of our progress to date:

A. Consultations

- Each Sub-Committee is meeting regularly to explore the following themes:
 - Student Mental Health and Well-being
 - Experiential Learning
 - First-Year Experience
- These groups have started to meet independent of the full Quality of Life Committee.
- They are being supported and empowered to consult the campus community throughout the fall term.
- A draft campus-wide Consultation Plan was shared with the leads of each Sub-Committee for review and feedback.
- The Online Forum (hosted on Moodle) was launched in mid-September as one pathway for campus-wide consultations.
- A series of 1:1 consultations have been initiated with staff and faculty working with equity-deserving populations. Their feedback will also inform the development and delivery of the Community Conversations and Listening Sessions. These sessions will take place in October-November.
- In addition, we have identified the need to better understand the unique experiences of student athletes. A series of consultations sessions are currently being planned with StFX Athletics and Recreation to gather some initial insights and ideas.

B. Data Collection and Analysis

- Existing data pertaining to the Student Mental Health and Well-being, Experiential Learning and First-Year Experience have been collected and consolidated. A summary of data is provided on the Open Forum (hosted in Moodle)
- An audit of student mental health and well-being was conducted in Winter 2021, including data collected in the Canadian Campus Wellness Survey (CCWS, 2020-21), Canadian Post-Secondary Alcohol and Drug Use Survey (CPADS, 2019-20), StFX Students Union Satisfaction Survey (2020-21), and Town-Hall related comments. The audit is aligned with aligned with the [National Standard for Mental Health and Well-being for Post-Secondary Students](#) and will inform the work of the Student Mental Health and Well-being Working Group.
- Experiential Learning Sub-Committee engaged external consultant, Krista Steves, in a review of experiential learning at post-secondary institutions in Canada. The report will be used to identify priorities and inform the Experiential Learning Framework.



- The First-Year Experience Sub-Committee has engaged external consultant, Leigh Gillis, in the development of a discussion paper that will also be informed by the 2021 Residence Renewal Project.

C. Communications

- A new strategic planning website and are developing social media content that includes videos and micro-surveys to gather campus-wide input on a variety of strategic themes.
 - Online feedback form submissions accepted through the website.
- Mass emails to students, faculty and staff.
- Micro-surveys are being developed to solicit broad campus feedback through social media – promoted using videos of Sub-Committee members asking questions. The micro-surveys will be launched in late October to early November.

D. Integrated Planning

- The Quality of Life Committee is establishing a 4-session consultation process in tandem with the Office of the Vice-President, Academic on topics that overlap between the quality of life and academic areas: first-year experience, experiential learning, distance students, mental health. The sessions will be planned for mid-October.
- In addition, the Student Experience and Opportunity Plan will align with the StFX University-wide strategic plan and the President's Action Committee on Anti-Racism.

Next Steps

As a next step in the process, we invite all interested students, faculty and staff to provide input into the continued evolution of the Student Experience and Opportunity Plan through the open online Moodle Forum.

Additional consultations with the University community will be held in during the fall term with a series of topical conversations on Student Mental Health and Well-being, Experiential Learning, and the First Year Experience. We will also host a general Student Life Forum.

As Dr. Hynes, VP Academic, stated earlier in June, there will be some overlap between the work being completed by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee and the Quality of Life Committees. There will also be overlap with the President's Action Committee on Anti-racism. We look forward to collaboration through joint planning sessions in addition to sessions specific to Student Experience and Opportunity.