

**Olds College Academic Plan
2022-23**

Growing Careers



OLDS COLLEGE
OF AGRICULTURE & TECHNOLOGY

Growing Careers

Olds College Academic Plan

Acknowledgment of Traditional Territory

Olds College is located in the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina and the Stoney Nakoda First Nations. The area is also home to Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

Setting the Course

Message from the Vice President Academic and Student Experience

It is an honour to serve Olds College in the role of Vice President Academic and Student Experience and I am extremely proud to present this Academic Plan. Led by the Academic Plan Advisory Group, and through broad consultation with our campus community, this plan was developed to align with the Olds College Growing 2025 Strategic Plan. Olds College has served the academic needs of our communities and industries since 1913. Over the years, we have responded to tremendous change in industry and our learning environments have continuously evolved to meet these changes and the unique needs of our learners.

As we look forward, we recognize the landscape of post secondary is evolving at an unprecedented pace. New technologies, a growing population, and increased global demand and access coupled with the rapidly changing needs of our labour markets are all contributors. With a focus on high performance and exceptional quality, through this Academic Plan, Olds College is committed to ensuring our learning environments, education and training opportunities remain relevant and responsive to the students and industries we serve.

Our Process - How we got here

The Olds College Academic Plan is a dynamic framework for ideas and action that will be reviewed, adjusted, and reaffirmed annually. Developed during the 2021-2022 academic year, the Academic Plan Advisory Group reviewed the Olds College Growing 2025 Strategic Plan, the Olds College Strategic Enrolment Management plan, Olds College Board of Governors Ends Statements, the 2020 Alberta Skills for Jobs Task Force report, the Olds College Work Integrated Learning Framework and Alberta 2030. Additionally, the Olds College Academic Plan will help meet the goals outlined Alberta's Recovery Plan (2020) and Alberta's Fiscal Plan - Protecting Lives and Livelihoods (2021). The Academic Plan Advisory Group engaged with the Olds College campus community through online feedback to ensure the plan represents the interests of all students, faculty, and staff.

With a focus on high quality teaching and learning, the Academic Plan reflects our commitment to the academic excellence required to foster a highly skilled and educated workforce. Olds College provides a supportive, accessible environment in which students are able to learn and apply highly relevant knowledge and skills. Experiential learning is a hallmark of Olds College programming and is supported through the Olds College Work Integrated Learning Framework. The Academic Plan alignment with the

Olds College 2025 Strategic Plan will ensure success in meeting the organization's academic goals while also laying a foundation for the next strategic plan.

This Academic Plan weaves together existing work at the college while ensuring new ideas and goals continue to move the institution toward the Growing 2025 Strategic Plan. Its ultimate success will be based on an ongoing, thoughtful, collaborative, and engaging process for the entire Olds College community. There will be many opportunities to further shape these priorities, to suggest and organize activities that will help us advance our goals, and to offer feedback on how we are doing. As a living, collaborative endeavour, the Academic Plan will be updated annually to monitor our progress, address our challenges, and celebrate our accomplishments.

Our Context - Who we are and what we believe in

Founded in 1913, Olds College has been offering high quality hands-on education for over a century. Through our core programming including continuing education, online and blended programming, we provide accessible educational opportunities within Alberta and beyond. We are passionate about the Agriculture industry. Through our applied research and integrated learning, we are proud to be Canada's Smart Agriculture College, specializing in agriculture, agrifood, horticulture, land and environmental stewardship. We work closely with industry to advance and adapt our programming to ensure our graduates have the skills to succeed.

Olds College organizes its programs into three academic schools: The School of Life Science and Business; The School of Trades and Skills; and the Werklund School of Agriculture Technology. In addition to the academic schools, Olds College serves current and emerging training needs through its Continuing Education and Corporate Training department. The Olds College Centre for Innovation (OCCI) and all of its associated research departments lead applied research for the college and support the integration of research activities within academics.

Olds College programs require learners to acquire and demonstrate competencies defined and updated through collaboration with representative industry partners and advisory groups. The quality of Olds College programs is continuously improved through a policy-based cyclical review process that seeks input from learners, graduates, employers, industry advisors, faculty and staff.

The Academic Plan aligns with and supports the College's Social Purpose and the Board of Governors' Mission Statement:

Olds College Social Purpose:

Transforming Agriculture for a Better World.

Olds College Board of Governors' Mission Statement:

Alberta's agriculture community has the talent, knowledge and thought leadership to lead globally. This result will be produced in a manner that demonstrates stewardship and sustainability.

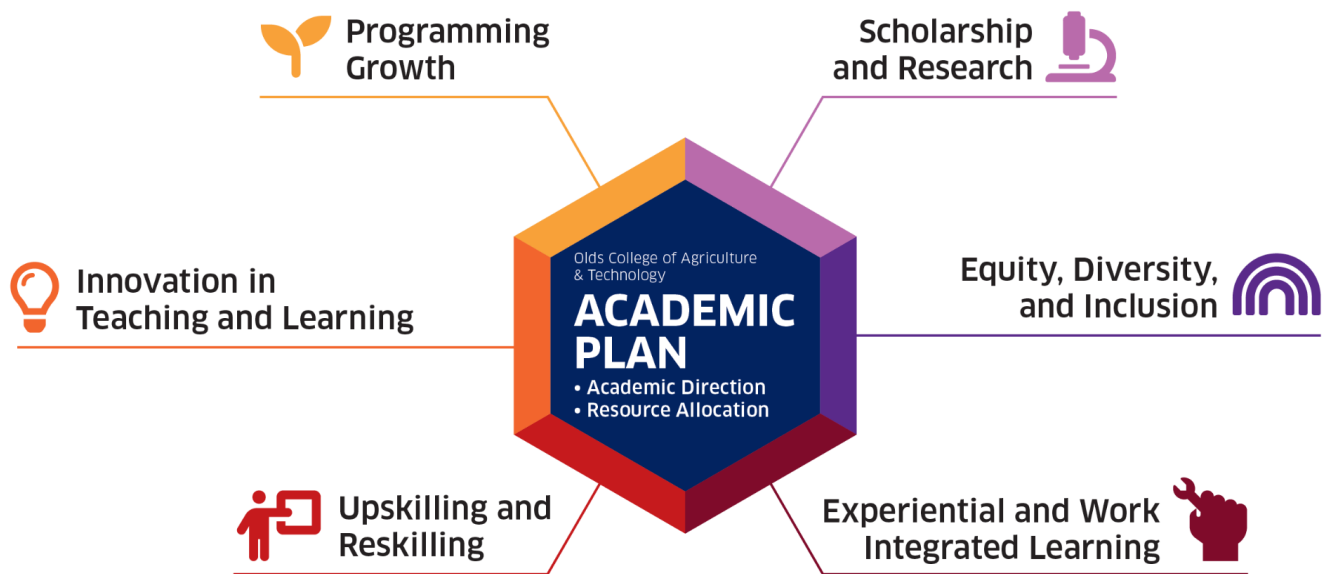
What does “Agriculture” Mean? Olds College utilizes an expansive definition of agriculture, recognizing the complex nature of the sector, and the broad range of related subsectors. Agriculture not only includes the science of cultivating soil, growing crops, and raising livestock, but also an array of associated fields, including food, beverage and processing, animal science, horticulture, technology, trades, land & environment, business, communications, etc. Each of these areas support agricultural activities across the development cycle, from planning and creation, to production and marketing.



Core Academic Beliefs

These core beliefs will underpin our work towards our academic priorities:

- **Learner-centered** - our actions will ensure an excellent student experience and student success. At Olds College, we develop personal connections with our students, and see students as our partners in learning.
- **Hands-on and experiential learning** are cornerstones of all programs
- **Connected to Industry** - through strong collaboration with industry, we bring new skills for employment, career advancement, further post-secondary education and lifelong learning to our global community
- **Guided by our Social Purpose** - Transforming Agriculture for a Better World



Our Plan

With the foundation of our social purpose, mission statement, and core academic beliefs, we will focus on the following six priorities during the next five years. These six priorities will guide the academic direction and resource allocation, and will influence the next strategic plan.

- Innovation in Teaching and Learning
- Scholarship and Research
- Programming Growth
- Upskilling and Reskilling
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Experiential and Work Integrated Learning

Each priority has specific goals, and we will develop and implement comprehensive action plans for each goal. The action plans will build upon the work already being done in each priority area. The comprehensive action plans will be developed by Lead Working Groups for each priority. The core Lead Working Groups are identified with each priority listed below. These Lead Working groups will bring in additional members and seek feedback as appropriate to ensure the action plans are relevant and meaningful. Some goals may cross with multiple priorities, and the Lead Working Groups will communicate and collaborate with each other in the development of the action plans. Lead Working Groups will keep our plan dynamic, encourage innovation and enable further collaboration across disciplines and between academic and support areas.

The Academic Plan will be evaluated and updated each year to monitor our progress and celebrate our accomplishments. The engagement and dialogue that helped to form this academic plan must continue as the plan is implemented.

Priorities and Goals

Innovation in Teaching and Learning



Lead Working Group: TLCI and Academic Schools

High quality teaching and learning is the core of our work. The academic division works collaboratively, with students and industry as partners, to meet the diversity of our campus community, changes in subject matter, content and technology, and evolving delivery approaches. Exemplary teaching is supported by extensive student support services, meeting the needs of all learners and ensuring student success. This will be achieved by:

- a. Developing a framework for a quality learning environment to support innovation and quality in teaching and curriculum design.
- b. Ensuring accessibility for learners by:
 - i. Developing a strategy to ensure flexible and responsive delivery modes are supported and enhanced.
 - ii. Developing a plan for enhancing student supports to ensure all students have the resources they need for academic success.

Programming Growth



Lead Working Group: Programming Growth Committee and Strategic Enrolment Management Governance Committee

In alignment with the Growing 2025 Strategic Plan, we strive to meet or exceed the goals of 2000 Full Load Equivalent (FLEs) and 50% growth in non-FLE enrolment by 2025. We will do this by:

- a. Using our Programming Growth Framework as a guide, grow programs by:
 - i. Responding to new opportunities as they emerge in credit, non-credit and dual credit programs.
 - ii. Leading the development of innovative, future-focused program concepts including alternate delivery models and new student intake streams.

Upskilling and Reskilling



Lead Working Group: Programming Growth Committee

Supported through strong collaboration with industry, we will meet the life-long learning goals of employees through flexible, responsive, and accessible learning pathways. Both upskilling and reskilling will be realized through:

- a. Developing and introducing microcredentials, apprenticeable learning and post-diploma credentials to the industries we serve.
- b. Expanding continuing education and corporate training opportunities.

Experiential and Work-Integrated Learning



Lead Working Group: WIL Implementation Committee

Olds College places high value on experiential, hands-on learning. We will ensure high quality experiential and work-integrated learning experiences, as defined in our [Work-Integrated Learning Framework](#), for our students through:

- a. Implementing the Olds College Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) framework to ensure 100% of students at Olds College in provincially approved credit programs have at least one WIL opportunity.
- b. Developing a plan to utilize the Olds College learning assets as key learning platforms for experiential learning.

Scholarship and Research



Lead Working Group: Research and Scholarly Activity Committee

Olds College supports the creation and dissemination of knowledge by fostering scholarly activities and research, in an environment of open inquiry, academic freedom, creativity, and innovation. Scholarly activities and research will be further enhanced by:

- a. Establishing an Office of Research and Scholarship to support the scholarly and research activities of faculty and students.
- b. Developing a plan to purposefully connect the research activities in the Olds College Centre for Innovation with academic programs, faculty and students.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



Lead Working Group: To Be Determined early in the 2022-2023 academic - Explore possible connection to existing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

Olds College believes the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are essential for a welcoming and rich academic environment. The Academic Plan will ensure diversity, equity and inclusion by working collaboratively with the college community to:

- a. Create a plan to embed the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion into the academic division.
- b. Continue to promote equity, diversity and inclusion with organizations, clubs and events in the campus community.

Closing Statement

This Academic Plan provides the broad priorities and goals for the academic division at Olds College for the next five years. Every member of the Olds College academic community will find opportunities for engagement and growth in this plan, and it will continue to evolve through an annual cycle of assessment and revision. Through ongoing communication with the campus community, this living document will also help provide direction for the next strategic plan.

Academic Plan Advisory Group

Debbie Bailey, Sr. Manager Continuing Education and Corporate Training

James Benkie, Dean, Werklund School of Agriculture Technology

Dalin Bullock, Dean, School of Life Science and Business

Amy Christiansen, Manager, Faculty Support and Academic Resources, Teaching and Learning Centre of Innovation

Dan Daley, Dean, School of Trades and Skills

George Gaeke, Faculty

Peter Mal, Associate Vice President, Students and Registrar

David McKinnon, Student

Andrea Mix, Faculty

Berton Sullivan, Director, Institutional Research and Programming Growth

Andrew Thun, Student

Debbie Thompson, Vice President Academic and Student Experience



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