TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING PLAN

SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC

This plan is built in support of miyo wâhkôhtowin.

This Cree phrase expresses the positive value and richness of experience that stems from interconnectedness and relationships. This worldview represents the individual and the community, and encompasses the foundation of all we do at Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

We honour this principle in every interaction, institutional practice, procedure, policy, and service we provide to learners, faculty, staff, alumni and our communities. We work together to create an inclusive, collaborative and respectful environment in which everyone can grow, thrive and lift each other up.

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We would like to acknowledge that Saskatchewan Polytechnic is situated on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territories and the ancestral lands of the Cree, Saulteaux, Dene, Dakota, Lakota and Nakoda peoples and the traditional homeland of the Métis.

Message from the Provost and VP, Academic

Learning environments are changing and Saskatchewan Polytechnic will lead the way in supporting and preparing learners for their futures through technology enhanced learning. Our Technology Enhanced Learning Plan embraces, enhances and extends learning and teaching to ensure we are delivering the best experience to our learners.

As an extension of Saskatchewan Polytechnic's *Strategic Plan "Leading the Rise"* and the *"Innovation in Action" Academic Plan*, the Technology Enhanced Learning Plan puts our vision into action. Integrating new technologies will help shape the future of our institution and deliver meaningful experiences for our learners.

At the core of this plan is our students. The skills they develop and acquire during their Sask Polytech experience are key factors in their future success. Continuously advancing technology delivers new opportunities to enhance our programming and foster innovation in teaching. Technology enhanced learning can change how learners and instructors connect and collaborate. The interaction with and use of learning technologies enriches the student experience and will improve the quality of teaching that we deliver.

In our technology-driven world, the needs of our industry partners are constantly evolving; focusing on how we can utilize technology to support high quality teaching practices and enhance the learner experience is vital—both to help industry flourish, and to achieve our vision of leading the rise of polytechnic education.

Dr. Has Malik
Provost and VP, Academic

Welcome

Dr. Mike Gillespie
AVP, Learning and Teaching

One of the more significant changes within the post-secondary landscape in recent years is the substantial increase in the use of technology in the teaching environment. Teaching and technology do not function separate from one another – they are, and should be, highly integrated. When this integration occurs effectively, it has the potential to positively impact the student learning experience. Our learners will enter a workforce that is driven by technology, it is our priority and responsibility to provide them with learning opportunities that will mirror what they will encounter upon graduation. To maximize the likelihood of success in this area, we need to be intentional in planning and identifying our priorities when it comes to technology enhanced learning (TEL).

To accomplish this, we have undertaken efforts to create a robust TEL Plan for Saskatchewan Polytechnic. This plan provides a framework for the integration of technology in our institution's instructional activities. The plan's vision, to use TEL as a platform for leading the rise of polytechnic education, is directly aligned with the vision identified in Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Strategic Plan. The content within the plan is constructed to support both the institution's Strategic and Academic Plans. When implemented over the next number of years, the TEL Plan will allow us to put initiatives into practice that support increased utilization of educational technology in our teaching.

We are proud of the TEL Plan and excited about the opportunity it presents. As we start to address the priorities identified in the plan, it will continue to expand TEL across all our academic endeavours. Further integrating technology into our teaching activities will have significant positive impacts on Saskatchewan Polytechnic. We look forward to contributing to this impact through the implementation of various TEL activities over the next several years.

Plan development

This plan is the culmination of significant efforts from across the institution. A TEL Working Group (TELWG) was formed at the start of the 2020-21 academic year. This group was composed of faculty and staff from across the institution. The TELWG spent several months engaging in tasks such as analyzing technology-related plans from other post-secondary institutions, speaking with colleagues about their views on TEL and what should be prioritized within our plan, and working on numerous iterations of the initial version of a TEL Plan. Thank you to the TELWG for their work in leading the initial stages of this initiative; their efforts culminated in the creation of a draft plan. The members of the TELWG include:
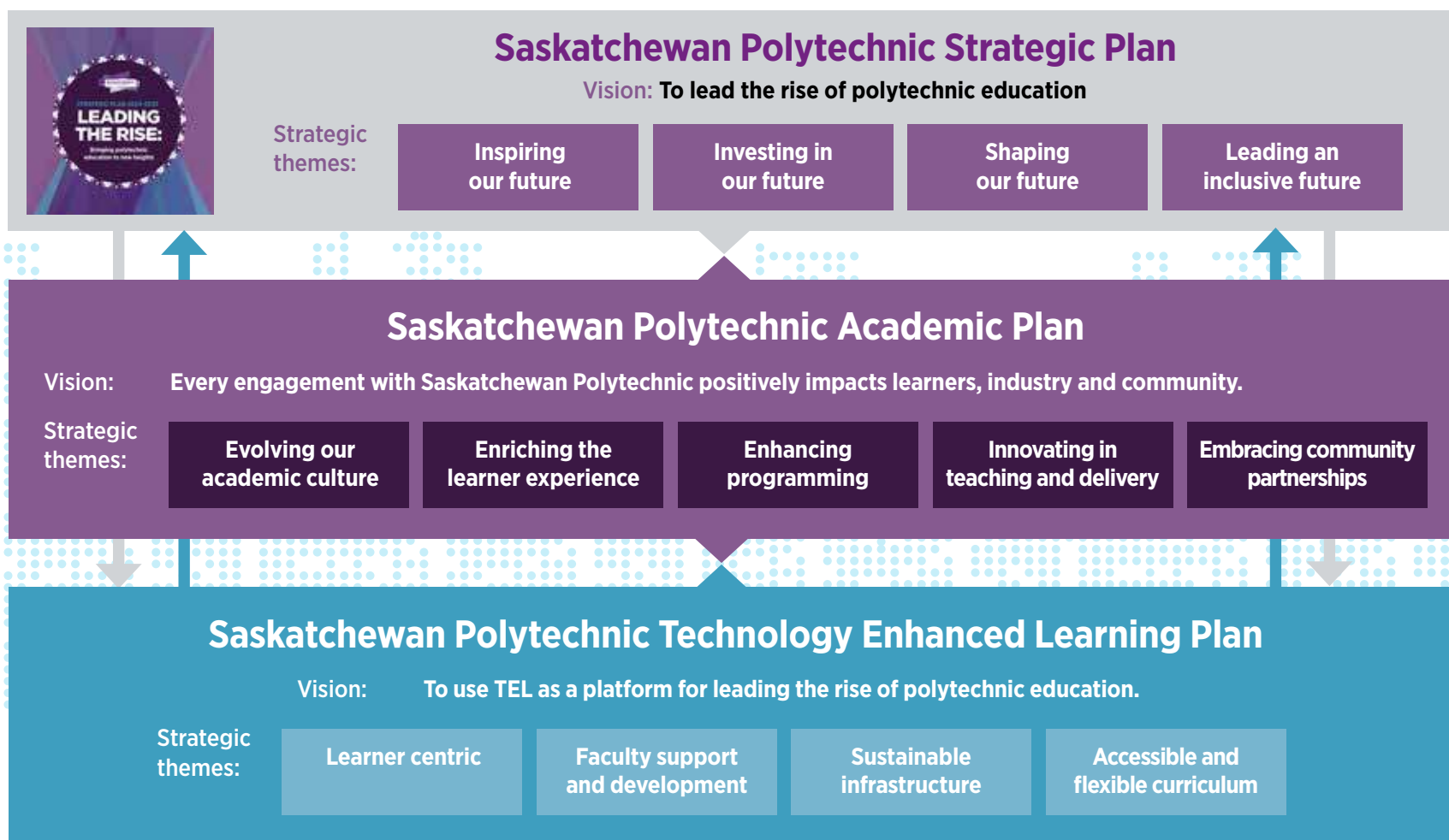
- Ben Bodnaryk
- Blaine Langman
- Lisa Taylor
- Doug Dombrosky
- Scott Lipsit
- Myra Zubot Mitchell
- Dasha Kinelovsky
- Sue Mack-Klinger
- Jen Frook
- Dalton Mervold

Once the draft plan had been created by the TELWG, the next step in the process was to engage in consultation with a variety of stakeholder groups. During the Spring of 2021, numerous consultation sessions were held with over 300 faculty, staff and students participating. These sessions allowed people to understand the rationale for development of the plan, get a chance to see the proposed content and provide feedback. The input from these consultations was tremendously informative and allowed for the generation of the final version of the plan.

Strategic alignment

The vision and content of the TEL plan are inspired by Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Strategic and Academic Plans. These plans are a part of the foundation on which the TEL plan was developed. Each of the themes and activities outlined throughout this plan support Saskatchewan Polytechnic's vision for the future.

Saskatchewan Polytechnic Strategic Plan

Vision: To lead the rise of polytechnic education

Strategic themes:

Inspiring our future	Investing in our future	Shaping our future	Leading an inclusive future

Saskatchewan Polytechnic Academic Plan

Vision: **Every engagement with Saskatchewan Polytechnic positively impacts learners, industry and community.**

Strategic themes:

Evolving our academic culture	Enriching the learner experience	Enhancing programming	Innovating in teaching and delivery	Embracing community partnerships

Saskatchewan Polytechnic Technology Enhanced Learning Plan

Vision: **To use TEL as a platform for leading the rise of polytechnic education.**

Strategic themes:

Learner centric	Faculty support and development	Sustainable infrastructure	Accessible and flexible curriculum

Vision

To use TEL as a platform for leading the rise of polytechnic education.

Guiding principles

As we consider TEL and what it means for us as an institution, the following principles should guide us.

That we bring the spirit of miyo wâhkôhtowin into all of our TEL activities and initiatives in a way that aligns with the direction set out in our Strategic and Academic Plans.
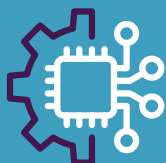
The primary focus of TEL should be on the learner, rather than the technologies being deployed.

The utilization of TEL at Saskatchewan Polytechnic should be specific to our context.

How TEL is deployed to enhance learning may look different from one area to the next.

Sustainable investment in people and technology are vital in achieving our TEL ambitions.

Technology is meant to support and supplement, rather than supplant, high quality teaching practices.

Themes

TEL can mean different things to different areas of the institution and to us as a Polytechnic versus other parts of the post-secondary landscape. Through this notion, four themes emerge, highlighting the primary areas of attention and consideration for our institution in realizing our vision and aspirations for TEL.

Within each of the four themes, several activities have been identified. These actions represent achievable and tangible steps that Sask Polytech can take to address TEL in a meaningful way across all the themes and in alignment with our guiding principles. Each of these activities do not exist in isolation of others – there are connections and dependencies between separate activities and themes.

THEME 1:   **Learner centric**

THEME 2:   **Faculty support and development**

THEME 3:   **Sustainable infrastructure**

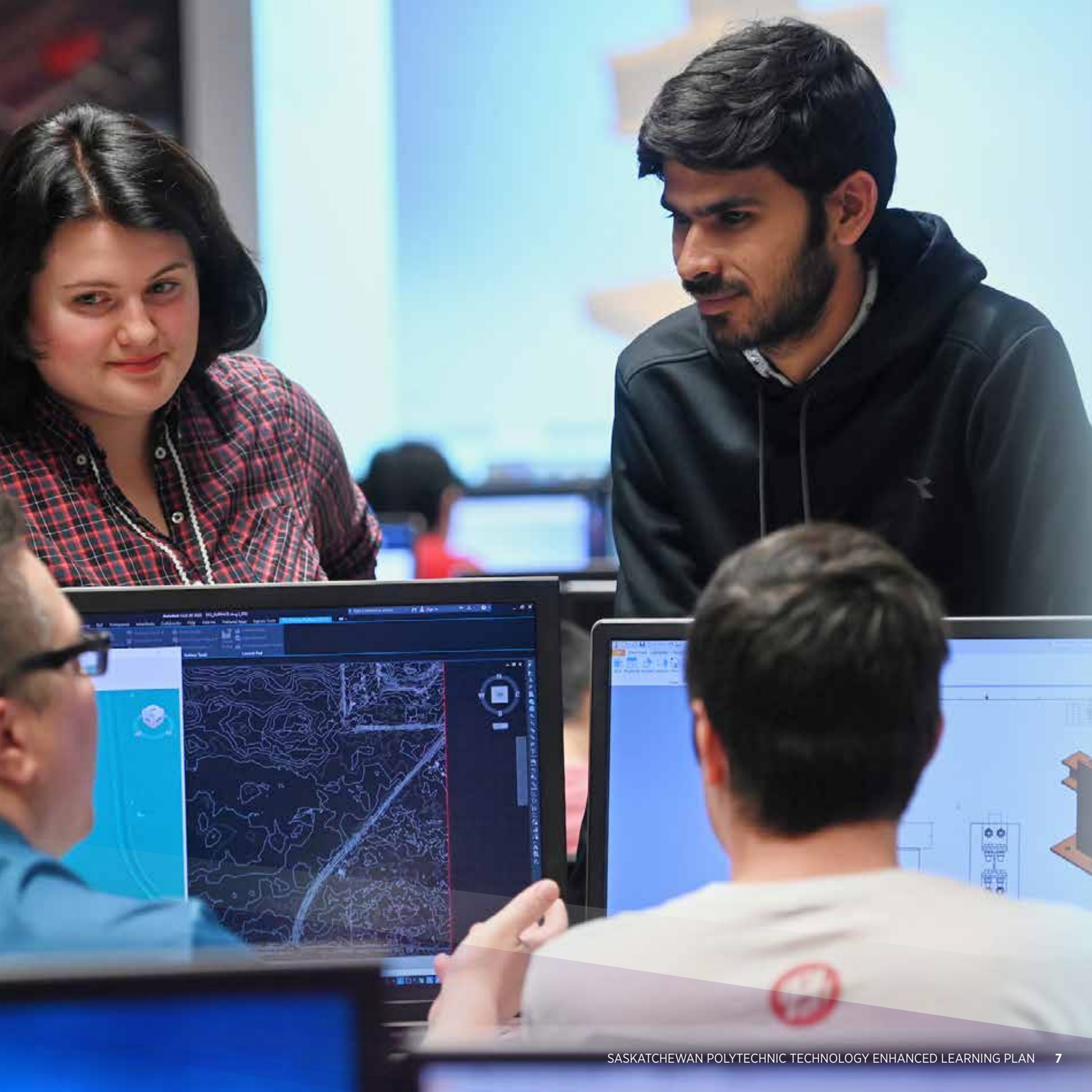**THEME 4:**   **Accessible and flexible curriculum**

THEME 1 Learner centric

The primary focus of TEL must be the learner. Considering the use of technology with the learner at the center of the experience is crucial. Some of the activities within this theme will occur directly via learning that students engage with as part of their studies with us, while others will be part of their overall experience with Saskatchewan Polytechnic. Our learners participate in a technology-driven world, and the digital literacies they develop and acquire during their studies with us are key success factors for them as their careers progress.

Activities:

- Enhance the existing laptop loan scheme for students.
- Establish digital literacy outcomes for students that will be integrated into credential programs.
- Develop a comprehensive set of student supports for online and remote students.
- Create overt guidance for students outlining the technology expectations for their program.
- Establish a bursary scheme designed to support students with their educational technology needs.
- Enhance "just in time" student services and supports through the use of technologies such as artificial intelligence alongside the support provided by our teams.
- Include TEL-specific questions on student engagement and experience surveys.
- Include questions on TEL in course evaluation surveys.
- Establish a student steering committee to create a forum for ongoing student feedback related to their experience with TEL.
- Increase the utilization of technology-driven learner analytics and adaptive technologies to better understand and personalize student experience.

THEME 2 Faculty support and development

Ensuring our faculty are supported and developed appropriately is a critical factor in working towards the success of our TEL aspirations. Our instructors are the key interface for our learners and how they will engage with technology as part of their learning at Sask Polytech. A variety of professional development initiatives that are designed to provide our faculty with relevant training and support will be expanded and/or launched.

Activities:

- Establish, and continually revisit for relevancy purposes, faculty competencies related to TEL.
- Develop and administer a modular, micro-credential-based pathway for ongoing faculty development in TEL.
- Establish a TEL Community of Practice.
- Explore opportunities for faculty to engage in applied research as it relates to TEL.
- Create professional development funding support mechanisms that allow faculty to explore new and emerging technologies.
- Hold an annual TEL Showcase where faculty can share their practices with peers.
- Utilize faculty to facilitate PD events allowing them to share best practices with colleagues.
- Ensure digital teaching competencies are assessed when recruiting new faculty.
- Develop and implement a minimum standards framework for faculty to guide online and blended course teaching.
- Enhance and further develop online resources to support faculty in developing fully online, blended and web-facilitated courses.
- Create mechanisms for ongoing dialogue with faculty related to their instructional technology utilization and needs.

THEME 3 Sustainable infrastructure

While the primary focus of TEL must be on the learner, it is paramount that we are mindful of the technology that supports the enhancement of student learning. Some of these technologies will be specific to particular programs or industries, while others will be applicable and relevant to instruction across all disciplines. In addition to the technology necessary to support TEL, there are various other imperatives that warrant attention to develop a sustainable infrastructure in this area of activity.

Activities:

- Review of existing policies and procedures to ensure TEL is appropriately reflected.

- Ensure sustainable levels of technology investment exist to allow the activities within the TEL plan to be supported.

- Ensure sustainable levels of human resource investment exist to allow the activities within the TEL plan to be supported.

- Establish a process and criteria for identifying and prioritizing the adoption of emerging instructional technologies such as AR, VR, etc.

- Increase the overall number of technology-enhanced, active learning classrooms.

- Create a Learning and Teaching sandbox space at each campus for faculty and students to explore and experiment with educational technologies.

- Establish a remote teaching classroom at each campus.

- Develop strategies to meet the TEL needs of learners with various challenges related to technology and/or internet access.

- Establish a TEL Steering Committee that provides input informing investment of appropriate technology infrastructure when developing online and blended courses.

THEME 4 Accessible and flexible curriculum

Activities designed to progress our TEL ambitions must consider our curriculum. Opportunity exists in the design and delivery of our curriculum to explore different paces, places and modes of instruction in different ways than we have previously, opening up more flexible and accessible options for our learners.

Activities:

- Create guidance within the Curriculum Framework on how to incorporate TEL within courses and programs.

- Develop mechanisms within quality assurance processes to allow for evaluation and development of TEL incorporation into the curriculum.

- Prioritize and increase the utilization of appropriate instructional technologies in course and program delivery.

- Identify opportunities to increase the overall number of online courses and programs as part of existing planning processes (e.g. three-year program plans, multi-year business plan).

- Significantly increase the number of standalone and stackable micro-credentials and digital badges.

- Increase the overall number of blended and web-facilitated courses offered across the institution.

- Increase the utilization of open educational and other no/low-cost learning resources within courses and programs.

- Ensure Universal Design for Learning principles are followed when developing online and blended courses.