Teaching and Learning Framework 2023
Descriptions of Key Terms

This document contains descriptions of three key terms in Memorial University's Teaching and Learning Framework 2023 – **student accessibility, engagement,** and **success** – which conceptualize the student educational experience at Memorial. The descriptions were prepared for the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning (SCTL) by a working group of the Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL).

The process that was followed to create the descriptions of terms included:

1. A review of university documents and website.
2. A review of scholarly literature.
3. The integration of input from the university community on two questions:
   a. What are important ideas that should be considered when creating descriptions for each of the terms – student accessibility, student engagement, and student success?
   b. Are there any key descriptions or resources that you currently use to guide your work around student accessibility, student engagement, or student success?

Consultations Sought From	**Received**
Alumni Engagement	
Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning	Yes
Grenfell Campus	Yes
Graduate Student Representation	Yes
Information Technology Services	Yes
Internationalization Office	
Labrador Institute	
Library	
Marine Institute	
Office of Public Engagement	
Office of Research	
Registrar Office	
School of Graduate Studies	
St. John's Campus Faculty (convenience sample)	
Student Life	Yes
Undergraduate Student Representation	Yes

The Teaching and Learning Framework sets out a renewed focus on Memorial's student educational experience through the integration of student accessibility, student engagement, and student success. The descriptions of the three key terms related to the student educational experience are intended to be a reference tool for the SCTL in its discussions on approaches to monitor and support the recommendations of the TLF. The CITL working group acknowledges that these descriptions will require further development and validation prior to being used more widely by the broader institution in the implementation of the TLF. The CITL working group welcomes the feedback of the SCTL.

Accessibility

Providing accessible educational experiences for postsecondary students is a notion that few would argue against, but many would struggle to define. Operationalizing the construct of accessibility is, indeed, challenging but ultimately necessary. What follows is an attempt to articulate key concepts and considerations regarding how Memorial can provide accessible, inclusive and equitable educational experiences for all learners.

Lenses of Accessibility

Beyond simply viewing accessibility as a concern for students with identified disabilities, a shift in perspective is required. This perspective requires us to broaden our understanding of how Memorial can create and sustain accessible educational experiences. In addition to disability status, a view towards accessibility and inclusivity should consider all students' prior educational experiences and account for various levels of academic readiness. It will require us to consider other aspects of diversity including, but not limited to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, as well as racial, ethnic and Indigenous identities. While concerted efforts will continue to be required towards marginalized and underrepresented student populations, enhanced accessibility and inclusive practices should benefits all learners who choose to attend Memorial.

Fostering an Ethos of Shared Responsibility

Creating and supporting accessible educational experiences cannot remain the responsibility of one or even a few small service units. Students experience inclusive and equitable educational practices when we work collectively to identify and remove barriers to meaningful access. Such barriers could be attitudinal, systemic, technological and/or physical. Leveraging the expertise that currently exists on our campus, we will be called upon to think holistically, and work collaboratively, to allow students to thrive.

Considering the Student Life Cycle

Throughout the student life cycle, considerations of accessibility, inclusion and equity are crucial towards creating meaningful educational experiences. From pre-application to convocation, all students can benefit from enhanced accessibility and inclusion. Each milestone along the student life cycle will require careful reflection, consultation and purposeful action by administrators, faculty and staff to support all students along their educational journey. Consultations with students is critical to informing this work.

Supporting All Learners Through Universal Design

All students experience affirming, supportive and inclusive practices when campus administrators, staff and faculty apply principles of universal design in the planning and implementation of physical spaces, information technology, student services as well as in teaching. Whether designing buildings, washrooms, websites or courses, universal design frameworks exist to assist us with providing meaningful, and inclusive educational experiences for students. These frameworks are supported by bodies of literature and best practices. Considering the variability and neurodiversity of students can assist instructors and course developers with designing equitable and meaningful educational experiences.

Equity of Access and Opportunity

Memorial is not the only postsecondary option for students. Continuing to provide affordable access, being thoughtful of the transportation and mobility needs of students, as well as considering the unique needs of distance learners helps ensure that the student population remains diverse and allows for increased participation rates for those who choose to attend Memorial University.

References and Readings

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This Accessibility document was prepared by Jason Geary, Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, as a reference for the Teaching and Learning Senate Committee, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Summer 2019.

Engagement

Engagement is a dual-faceted concept of academic quality focused on the attainment of student learning outcomes and institutional excellence. As a standard of practice by which Memorial will achieve its vision for teaching and learning, **engagement** may be defined as (1) the time and effort students meaningfully invest relative to their studies and related educational activities and practices, and (2) the supports, appropriate environments, and effective educational practices which the institution employs to optimize the student experience. The **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)** widely deployed throughout the United States and Canada elaborates upon **Engagement Indicators** and **High Impact Practices** that are grounded in best practices in **Experiential Learning**.

Academic Challenge

Students are challenged to work autonomously and in groups to engage in higher-order learning, reflective and integrative practice, a variety of learning strategies, and quantitative reasoning. Metrics include evaluation of individual/class work, assignments, quizzes, and other qualitative, authentic, and performance-based assessments of student learning.

Learning with Peers

Students actively participate in collaborative learning experiences and discussions with diverse others in which learning relationships are fostered. Opportunities exist to ask other students for help or to explain course material to one or more students inclusive of those of a different race or ethnicity, economic, religious, or political background. Metrics may include the use of rubrics, course projects, and group assignments.

Experiences with Faculty

Student-faculty interaction throughout the academic year might include discussing career plans, course topics, ideas, or concepts outside of class or working with a faculty member on activities other than coursework such as through committees, student groups, and research. Faculty may engage students in discussions of effective teaching practices by clearly explaining course goals, providing clear illustrations to explain difficult concepts, engaging students in learning design, providing meaningful feedback to students, and encouraging students to provide feedback on their teaching.

Campus Environment

The provision of enriching educational experiences and a supportive learning environment for students on campus includes purposeful interactions designed to support and enhance the overall student experience. These interactions may include access to inclusive environments and classrooms, student support units (Blundon Centre, Library, Career Development and Experiential Learning), volunteer and student work experiences, campus activities and events, recreation and health facilities, student groups, academic advisors, administrative staff and offices such as campus life, registrar, financial aid, and events that address social, economic, and political issues.

Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning is essential in fostering engagement and generating high quality learning. When instructors intentionally immerse learners in direct learning experiences steeped in interdisciplinary and constructivist learning and accompanied by focused reflection students increase their knowledge, skills, and values to make meaning and, in turn, to make meaningful contributions to their environments. **High Impact Practices (HIPs),** a medium by which experiential learning occurs are intentionally designed and delivered teaching practices that include activities that place students in close proximity to instructors and peers over an extended period of time. They serve to foster high levels of student engagement where students have the opportunity to **apply, analyze, synthesize, and reflect** on their learning experience resulting in deeper approaches to learning. Such activities are deemed to be *"high-impact"* and life-changing because they result in improved academic achievement; engagement in purposeful activities; student satisfaction and; student persistence. When **HIPs** are well executed students are actively engaged in *hands-on, integrative and collaborative learning experiences* (Kuh, O'Donnell & Schneider, 2017). Eleven **HIPs** have been identified: (1) First year seminars and experiences; (2) Common intellectual experiences; (3) Learning communities; (4) Writing and inquiry intensive courses; (5) Collaborative assignments and projects; (6) Undergraduate research; (7) Global learning; (8) Service or community-based-learning; (9) Internship and field experiences; (10) capstone course and projects; and (11) ePortfolios.

The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) has identified **Work-integrated learning**, as an additional engagement theme to further build on the above indicators of engagement. Work-integrated learning includes the integration of work experience into studies: work terms; clinicals; internships; laboratories; and work experiences. Metrics may include work-term reports, internship reports, clinical assessments, and other relevant measures.

References and Readings

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This Engagement document was prepared by Joyce A. Fewer, Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, as a reference for the Teaching and Learning Senate Committee, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Summer 2019.

Student Success

Student Success is a relative construct and may be defined in a variety of ways. Previously rooted in traditional metrics, current descriptions reflect a shift towards applied and holistic measures. This shift allows institutions to move away from a focus on reducing failure, towards a focus on scaling for success. The following are frequently used indicators of student success from Memorial University and the greater post-secondary community. Common metrics are included to highlight the focus of the indicator.

Educational Goal Attainment
Entering students attain their degree, program or other educational goal. Traditional metrics include graduation rates and time to completion. Modern measures include identification of student educational goals and expectations, and exit measures to determine if personal educational goals have been met.

Personal Skill Development (Intellectual, Emotional, Social, Physical)
Students develop skills for acquiring and communicating knowledge, life-long learning, and how to think critically and deeply. Students acquire skills needed to support physical and emotional well-being, as well as capacities for awareness, attention and reflection. Students are able to enhance the quality and depth of interpersonal relationships, and are supportive collaborators with particular regard to diversity of interests. Metrics include personal narratives, exit surveys and other qualitative measures.

Student Retention
Entering students persist and continue in their post-secondary education. Metrics include enrolment data and persistence to subsequent academic years. Modern approaches do not limit measures within one institution, but include transfer data and exit surveys.

Attainment of Learning Outcomes
Students are knowledgeable and competent in their field, achieving desired learning outcomes through satisfactory or superior levels of academic performance. Metrics include grades, academic achievements, awards, accreditation-based testing, avoidance of academic probation, and graduation rates.

Student Advancement
Students proceed to subsequent educational and occupational endeavours (independent from program completion). Traditional metrics include graduate employability, salary, and career outcomes for which the program was designed. Modern metrics include longitudinal employment data, employer ratings of abilities, self-defined career success, career satisfaction, and entry into unrelated professions or training.

Ethical Development and Citizenship
Students demonstrate ethical, moral and intellectual integrity that guides life choices and personal character. Students are responsible citizens who appreciate diversity, integrate into political life, and promote equity, fairness and justice. Metrics include exit surveys and other qualitative measures.

Student Experience
Students participate and integrate into the university community. Students are able to find personal meaning and purpose in the university experience. Metrics include student expectations, satisfaction, quality of experience, and indicators of participation.

Spiritual Development
Students demonstrate self-awareness and confidence in convictions. Students are able to overcome personal obstacles to realize their unique contributions and find personal meaning. Metrics primarily involve personal narratives.

References and Readings

Direct links are provided for articles that are not accessible through Memorial Libraries

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This Student Success document was prepared by Amy M. Todd, Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, as a reference for the Teaching and Learning Senate Committee, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Summer 2019.