

# STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN



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Northern College acknowledges the traditional keepers of the land. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present. We acknowledge the drum and other sacred items.

Northern College gratefully acknowledges the MTCU for their funding support of our SEM initiative.

# INTRODUCTION

Northern College’s mandate is to serve the learning and training needs of students, communities and public/private sector organizations. This requires relevant, innovative and high quality programs and services to support the growth and development of students, communities and public/private sector organizations in the twenty-first century.

Ensuring prospective and current students, as well as alumni, meaningful learning opportunities and support in pursuing these endeavors are critical, competitive elements for Northern College. To support future growth and viability at Northern College, funds from the Ontario government’s College Financial Health and Sustainability Grant were secured to finance the creation of a Strategic Enrolment Management Plan for the organization. Effective enrolment management will determine future successes and competitive advantage to work towards Northern’s institutional aspiration of 2020 students by the year 2020 or “2020 by 2020”. Thus strategic enrolment management assists the organization in focusing policy, procedures and operations in areas that lead to financial sustainability

through long-term program and training applicability, excellence and innovation. Strategic enrolment management (SEM) is a different way of thinking about recruitment, retention, and graduation. It addresses an organization’s culture, beliefs and values as they relate to learners. SEM is mission driven and as such must reflect the institutional vision.

## VISION

Success for all through learning and partnerships.

## MISSION

To ensure quality, accessible education through innovative programs, services and partnerships for the benefit of our northern communities.

Northern College’s vision, mission and four strategic directions surround the organization’s commitment to stakeholder success and creates the foundation for the integrated planning process upon which the Strategic Enrolment Management Plan and Annual Business Plan are built.



# STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT

Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) as a tool for student enrolment, encompasses the life cycle of the student, from their first consideration of post-secondary enrolment through, recruitment, application, admission, registration, retention and on to alumni status. SEM at Northern College will address all aspects of this student life cycle as mapped over a three to five year plan. SEM is a comprehensive, college-wide process designed to assist Northern in achieving and maintaining optimal student recruitment, retention and graduation rates. SEM activities must be fully aligned with the vision, mission and strategic plan of the organization.

SEM at Northern College will provide a framework for strategic and tactical implementation of initiatives by building on exemplary past practices and innovative new initiatives along the student success continuum designed to support the institutional aspiration of "2020 by 2020". Northern College is committed to an integrated planning process that links the SEM plan with the strategic and business plans, providing foundation for an academic plan. As part of an integrated planning process, SEM must be reviewed and managed within the business and academic cycle of the college.

SEM is developed with consideration of learner needs, in response to fiscal and enrolment challenges. Providing students with the highest level of service and support to ensure continuation on their educational

path, is Northern's goal. SEM provides an overview of environmental influences that impact on learner needs and enrolment challenges. SEM has been developed with commitment to student success regardless of fiscal and enrolment constraints.

Northern College's SEM plan is based upon a core set of Strategic Enrolment Management principles:

- Promoting student success;
- Determining, achieving, and maintaining optimum enrolment;
- Optimizing program mix;
- Identifying program life cycle;
- Improving service levels
- Generating tuition revenue;
- Enabling financial planning for a sustainable future.

Northern recognizes and appreciates strategic plans are best embraced through the collection of consultative feedback from key stakeholders including faculty, staff, students, prospective students, high school representatives, local agencies and community members. Feedback of significant value was received through internal and external consultations, and used in the creation of this plan. Table 2 provides a summary of participants and the feedback methodology in this process. The College acknowledges and appreciates the valuable input of all those who contributed during the consultation process.



**TABLE 1: NORTHERN COLLEGE ENROLMENT TRENDS (2006 - 2015) \***

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Full-time Enrolment	1130	1144	1203	1548	1609	1456	1318	1307	1243
Part-time Enrolment	257	251	264	233	228	186	554	216	241
Off Shore Programs	0	0	0	0	38	94	121	153	276
Mining Eng. Technician **	14	9	0	12	6	12	8	13	11
Co-op Apprenticeship	33	20	52	46	30	17	22	35	46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1434</b>	<b>1424</b>	<b>1519</b>	<b>1839</b>	<b>1911</b>	<b>1765</b>	<b>1693</b>	<b>1724</b>	<b>1817</b>

\* Excludes LBS, Board of Governor and Certificate of Completion programs.

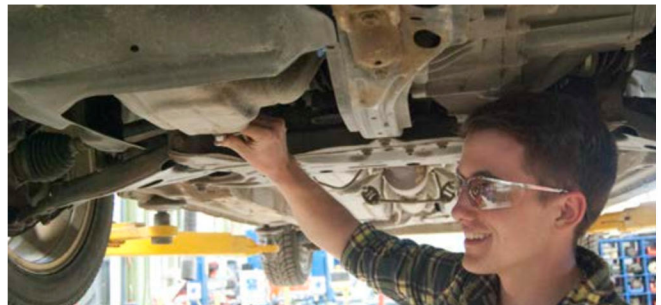
\*\* Offered through Northlands.

**TABLE 2: FEEDBACK PARTICIPANT SUMMARY**

GROUP PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES
Internal Focus Groups	102
High School Focus Group - Non-Aboriginal	25
High School Focus Group - Aboriginal	37
High School Survey - Aboriginal	6
External Survey - Community Representatives	54
Other Survey Responses - International / High School Representatives	9
On-site / Distance Survey (Full-time and Part-time)	96
<b>TOTAL PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>329</b>

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Northern College serves the post-secondary education needs of 120,000 people in the Cochrane and Temiskaming Districts of Northeastern Ontario. The Catchment area covers 160,000 sq.km and includes 65 communities, 17 of which are First Nations. With campuses in Haileybury, Kirkland Lake, Moosonee and Timmins, Northern offers the widest possible range of regional post-secondary education opportunities. There is no permanent university within the region, therefore, access to post-secondary education means making a choice to leave the area, or opt for the diploma or certificate options of Northern College.



# ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Providing post-secondary education opportunities has two purposes. The first purpose is citizenship development, which occurs when increased levels of education are available universally to the citizens of the community. All learners should benefit from citizenry development in post-secondary education. This development occurs through the learning approaches that encompass increased awareness on social issues, one example of this is environmental awareness.

The second purpose of post-secondary education is labor force training in support of economic development. Labor force development is a response to labor needs which change over time and through economic shifts. In the past, labor needs have been typically defined as local, but needs can be regional, provincial, national or global in scope. Northern exists within a global, knowledge based economy, therefore, the catchment area for Northern becomes the world. An environmental scan needs to include the status of the economy to identify potential opportunities in critical growth areas. This includes global trends as many Northern College programs have had international reach even prior to the globalized economy.

The outlook on key global economic trends include a top five concerns; rising tensions in Middle East and North Africa, widening income disparity, persistent structural unemployment, intensifying cyber threats, and inaction on climate change. These trends will dictate on a global

level much of what happens economically over the next five years. Youth unemployment is a trend in North America which has left many youth underemployed and/or underskilled to participate fully in the labor force. Northern College is active internationally and has programs with international reach, therefore, these trends are a consideration when planning the future of Northern's enrolment. Understanding the downdraft of events that directly impact program mix and planning is necessary for Northern College. Cyber security and environmental planning are two examples of potential downdrafts impacted by global trends.

Canada's economy expanded by 1.8% in 2013. Domestic consumption was responsible for that growth. Projected growth for 2014 is 2.2%. The Canadian dollar continues to lag below the US dollar which enhances Canada's export markets. Manufacturing and related industries are expected to expand in these export markets. The province of Ontario has a heavy reliance on manufacturing that has been hard hit by lower cost production countries like China, India and Mexico. However, advanced manufacturing which is dependent upon technology as opposed to manual labor is still a competitive advantage for Canada. This will become integral to economic progress and sustainability for Canada, and particularly Ontario. For Northern College, programming, related to advanced manufacturing such as Instrumentation and Control Engineering Technician can be well positioned for growth.



Residential housing will slow due to an overvalued Canadian and Ontario housing market, as deemed by the International Monetary Fund. This translates into a slowdown in the construction sector. However, an increase in gas and oil exploration, along with continued expansion of renewable energy alternatives, means a strong market for trades and continued demand for trades training an area of strength for Northern College.

Regionally, there has been strong construction throughout 2013 with new projects in the Sudbury area such as the \$63M bio solids management facility built by N-Viro Systems Canada, along with a \$25M renovation of the Sudbury Forest Fire Management Centre at the Greater Sudbury Airport. While jobs were generated in these areas, other industries in the region experienced declines.

Layoffs have occurred at several of the mining companies due to a decline in gold prices. The Timmins

District Hospital announced 41 layoffs in the fall of 2014. Mining, lumber and construction have all been cyclical in employment and are currently in a downward slope in the region. The most recent large scale layoff news came when Resolute Forest Products announced the permanent closure of its Iroquois Falls newsprint mill in early December 2014. The mill closure immediately affects 180 direct employees and will have impact on a further 264 indirect jobs. The Labor Market forecast for the Timmins and South Temiskaming regions through to 2021, predicts the strongest areas of job growth in the Sales and Service Occupations followed by Trades, Transport and Equipment operations. By comparison Health occupations are estimated to have some growth but this is small in comparison. Kirkland Lake's Labor Market forecast through to 2021 is similar, but growth in Trades, Transport and Equipment operations are ahead of Sales and Service Occupations. These forecasts point to programming in the trades and technology areas as high demand for Northern College.





# POPULATION

There are 120,000 people in the Cochrane and Temiskaming region (as defined by Stats Canada). As with the rest of Canada, the population pyramid in this region is inverted with fewer people under the age of 30 than over. The non-Aboriginal population has the largest percentage of population over the age of 35, with age 65 years and older, the fastest growing group in Canada.

An exception to the population pyramid is the Aboriginal population. Statistics Canada, 2011 data shows in Ontario, 60% of the Aboriginal population is below the age of 35, across the country, Aboriginal population growth was 20.1% when all Aboriginal groups were considered. By comparison, 27.6% of the non-Aboriginal population is over the age of 55, and only 29.4% is below the age of 25 in the same time period.

With a change in population growth, comes a trend to urbanization. In Ontario, over 80% of the population live in urban areas. While Timmins, Kirkland Lake, Haileybury and Moosonee are urban centers, the overall region that Northern College serves is a rural population that is declining. A declining population, and a trend to urbanization create two realities for Northern College. One reality is the need to rely on nontraditional learning pathways rather than direct entry as a means to recruit learners. The other reality is a need to look beyond the north eastern Ontario region for learners.

Over 2 million of Ontario's adult population do not have a high school diploma. This is a distinct disadvantage for this group when attempting to acquire post-secondary education. The exact number for the Cochrane and Temiskaming region was not available, but a safe estimate would be 10% of the existing labor force, both employed and unemployed, as 10% is the provincial average and rural populations tend to have

higher percentages. This pool of candidates needs to be tapped in order to sustain the regional economy. Offering opportunities for bridging to post-secondary means a greater emphasis on PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT RECOGNITION (PLAR), credit transfer, adult learning and upgrading centers that Northern College already offers.

## DIRECT ENTRY POPULATION

Traditionally, colleges and universities have recruited directly from high school, this pathway is known as direct entry. When the population bump rested in the under 25 age group, this direct entry approach was a lucrative source of students. However, the pool of direct entry learners has bottomed out. In October of 2014, the Timmins Daily Press ran an article citing a 40% decline in school enrolment. This direct entry pool will decline as a percentage of our total Northern College population. The good news is, while this number is lower it should remain consistent over the next ten years, with no peaks or declines predicted.

## REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

As already stated, employment in the health sector is on a moderate decline in 2014. However, increased unemployment usually translates into increased enrolment as people begin to look at expanding or renewing career options. In November of 2014, the unemployment rate for the Cochrane district was at 10.9% compared with 11.8% for Northern Ontario, 7.2% for Sudbury and 6.7% for Thunder Bay. Employment within the 15-24 year old age group was largely in part time positions. The mining sector periodically experiences declines, but the overall prognosis for mining is an estimated increase in jobs to 2020, as articulated by the Far Northeast Training Board. The cumulated hiring forecast for Cochrane to 2022 is 11,280 in the mining sector.

# NORTHERN COLLEGE CONTEXT

Conditions affecting Northern College's operating environment and ability to recruit and retain students include:

## ECONOMIC

The catchment area of Northern College is impacted more severely by changes in primary resource prices and markets. Diversification into other economies would defer this. Preparing students with entrepreneurial skills can support diversification in the local economy.

## FISCAL

The provincial government is faced with a deficit that requires prudent management. With no additional monies for operating funds, colleges have to be innovative in diversifying revenue streams. International markets can be a source of funds to improve sustainability.

## POPULATION

Northern, like many colleges, has an aging workforce in faculty, administration and support positions. In the past year, a number of retirements at Northern provided a dramatic demonstration of how the human resource picture can change in the space of 12 months. With the exception of the Aboriginal population, the regional population is declining.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration is the current buzzword, pooling resources is a reality for post-secondary institutions. As such the Northern Colleges Collaborative Programming model has begun to promote this approach as a means to assure program accessibility and sustainability.

## POLITICAL

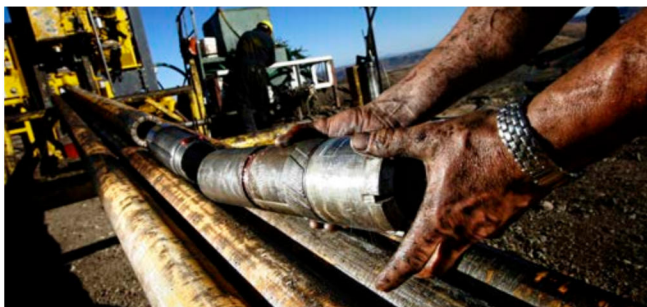
The representatives of the region, federal and provincial, have traditionally sat in opposition to the government party. This creates challenges when lobbying for specific post-secondary interests in the Cochrane area.

## SOCIETAL

Northern College is looked to for leadership in a variety of ways beyond education. Social responsibility is a core belief within the culture of the institution. For example, environmental issues are often brought to light at Northern through program advisory committees. There is no university in the district to support or augment post-secondary education.

## TECHNOLOGICAL

Northern College has been a front runner in the use of technology for distance delivery. However, keeping up with technological changes is challenging from a professional development and fiscal standpoint. How programming is delivered is as much a part of enrolment as what is delivered.



# IDENTIFICATION OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

There are potential pools of students for Northern College. These markets each offer unique opportunities and growth potential. While not an exhaustive list, the following represents potential markets for Northern College, beyond traditional direct entry learners. Critical to the success of SEM is selection of target markets on a yearly basis, and concentrated efforts on the most lucrative markets. General approaches were valid in the past, when the overall pool was larger. Targeted approaches are necessary as the pool changes.

- Aboriginal students
- International / out-of-province students
- Distance students
- Local elementary / middle school systems and home schooled students, students from Southern Ontario
- Mature students
- Students without a traditional high school diploma
- Other College or University transfer students
- Alumni seeking second or higher level credentials
- Post graduates from other institutions
- Part time students
- Individuals classified as “incomplete” or “dropped out” but who are near program completion OR could have their credits applied towards another program
- Apprentices

Northern College offers both on-shore and off-shore educational opportunities for international students interested in a personalized, high-quality and accessible learning experience designed to support their individual

goal attainment. The recruitment and international office at Northern College continues to work closely with agents in both China and India to promote and market the institution as a learning destination of choice for students looking for a unique, individualized learning experience. In Northern Ontario, the balance between classroom learning with practical training is a formula for ensuring student success and future workplace employment. This becomes an attractive marketing tool giving Northern a competitive advantage.

Off-shore, international programming at Northern College is a growing operational area focused upon the development of formal partnerships with post-secondary institutions in other countries. Program needs are identified by partner academic enterprises and agreements are signed outlining Northern’s program curriculum delivery by partner faculty, on partner campuses, to international students. Partnership development efforts, thus far, have centered on China. Northern College currently has four approved partnerships with post-secondary institutions, of which, four are currently offering Northern programs. There are several signed partnership agreements between Northern College and Chinese institutions that are awaiting government approval and additional ‘draft’ agreements that remain to be negotiated between Northern and other partners in China. In addition, other international areas may be targeted in the near future for recruitment.



# PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS

Based upon the environmental scan and the context for Northern College, the following principles and assumptions for this SEM plan are:

- The planning process and its recommendations are consistent with the college's vision and mission statements, commitments and values.
- Each of the four strategic directions are guided by the four planning principles; innovation, partnerships, accessibility and relevance, values that are firmly rooted in the culture of Northern College.
- Northern College students are a key stakeholder group so acquiring an implicit understanding and implementing strategies to address their financial, academic, advising and co-curricular needs is an important focus in improving Northern College's ability to recruit and retain them.
- Focus remains on service quality, choice and access needed to facilitate learner and community success in post-secondary education.
- All four campuses have an important role to play in implementing strategies and goals.
- Understanding Northern College's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the market opportunities and threats within each program area is an important research focus (opinions supported by qualitative and quantitative data) that will drive future, strategic marketing, recruitment, advising, academic and partnership development efforts for the college.
- SEM will drive the need for an academic plan to bridge the SEM actions with Northern College's Business plan.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- Northern College's strategic enrolment plan will be seamlessly integrated with the strategic and business plans, as well as the student success continuum in order to facilitate continuity, understanding and clarity for Northern College employees, project teams, senior management and the Board of Governors.
- Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based (SMART) student enrolment goals are established for each strategic direction
- SEM objectives will be delegated to Project Leads through the business planning process and report to the Academic Operations Working Group (AOWG) on progress. Achieving objectives will be measured using identified metrics / outcomes. The SEM Objectives will inform an academic plan and the yearly business plan.
- Strategic SEM objectives are designed to achieve SMART student enrolment goals. Associated tactics are linked within the business plan and define outcomes/targets, associated metrics, inter-departmental teams and leads (faculty, admin., and support staff) and timelines for the project to be piloted. A Plan / Do/ Study / Act (PDSA) model will be implemented by each team to measure growth, development and completion.

# SEM GOALS

Based upon the research, stakeholder input, and environmental scan as applied to the context of Northern College, the SEM goals are linked to Northern College’s strategic directions.

Note: The goals emphasize recruitment within strategic enrolment. Retention, graduation and alumni are also considerations of strategic enrolment management and are addressed to varying degrees within the objectives and from there through tactical applications. There are currently limitations on how retention can be addressed as there is no standard definition to measure retention. This makes strategies to address retention difficult to measure. Therefore, retention measures in SEM will need to be addressed in more depth. Northern College will develop a working retention definition within one year and, retention strategies will be incorporated based upon this definition. A more in-depth review of alumni data and information is necessary to incorporate alumni goals within this SEM plan. As this is a dynamic document, this will be developed in year three of the SEM.

## ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

**GOAL 1A:** Northern College will increase full-time student enrolment by 10% by Fall 2017.

**GOAL 1B:** Northern College will increase part-time and continuing education students by 3% by Fall 2017.

## SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

**GOAL 2A:** Northern College will increase full-time student enrolment in signature program clusters by 3% by Fall 2017.

## THE NORTHERN EXPERIENCE

**GOAL 3A:** Northern College will meet, if not exceed, provincial averages in student satisfaction key performance indicators by Fall 2017.

**GOAL 3B:** Northern College will meet, if not exceed, provincial averages in both graduate and employer satisfaction key performance indicators by Fall 2017

## ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES

**GOAL 4A:** Northern College will increase full-time post-secondary aboriginal student enrolment by 25% by Fall 2017.

**GOAL 4B:** Northern College will increase aboriginal part-time and continuing education student enrolment by 25% by Fall 2017.



# ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

**GOAL 1A:** Northern College will increase full-time student enrolment by 10% by Fall 2017.

**GOAL 1B:** Northern College will increase part-time and continuing education students by 3% by Fall 2017.

To achieve these two goals stakeholders told Northern:

- Complete an audit of all classroom facilities to optimize and improve video/distance delivery
- Foster a customer experience management culture allowing students and potential students the benefit of working through one staff member for all their needs, including admissions, career planning, pre-testing, advising, etc.
- Leverage technology to promote multiple pathways to student success
- Aggressively market and secure additional new bursary and scholarship opportunities to increase financial aid support to incoming and returning students
- Expand and enhance distance delivery programs and courses.
- Develop aggressive marketing strategy for the Pre-Service Firefighter/Paramedic Bridging and Environmental Technician programs to attract applicants from other colleges to Northern using the unique aspects of these programs as a “Northern” feature

## OBJECTIVES

### 1. PRIORITIZE TARGET MARKETS ON A YEARLY BASIS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

With a decline in direct entry market potential, the need is to identify 2-3 years in advance what the target markets are and realign marketing strategies accordingly. For example, underemployed 23-30 year olds are a prime market in the current economy, and this would apply equally to non-aboriginal and Aboriginal populations. It is important on an annual basis to

utilize an environmental scan to assess new markets as they emerge. It is also necessary to be vigilant about Ministry mandated initiatives that impact on markets such as Second Career. Direct entry potential is in decline, therefore, they should be lower on the list of target markets.

### 2. RECRUITMENT STRATEGY DEFINED FOR EACH TARGET MARKET ON A YEARLY BASIS

Along with the priorities in target markets comes the need to define a recruitment strategy specific to each target market. This strategy will be evaluated year over year, and as target markets change. Study North is an example of a recruitment strategy tapping into new markets. The effect of this effort can be tracked over the next 3 years and evaluated for success.

### 3. ASSESS APPLICATION/CONVERSION RATES IN THE FIRST YEAR OF SEM AND DEFINE AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

With recruitment comes a need to identify where in the recruitment process more effort is needed. Therefore, conversion rates of application to confirmation, and confirmation to registration need to be determined. Conversion rates will be determined in the first year of SEM, with target increases established yearly for each conversion rate. Strategies to address improvement will be defined at each specific point in the process, and reviewed yearly for efficacy.

### 4. DEFINE RETENTION AT THREE POINTS, FIRST SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR CONVERSION, AND GRADUATION

A definition of retention is needed that is universally applied at Northern College. Retention at various points in the student life cycle needs to be assessed to assure every strategy is used to retain

students. This data is readily available through existing sources, but established timelines and dates are needed to give consistent evidence. Student success strategies and policies can be focused upon the life cycle needs of the learner based on this evidence. Therefore, measuring retention at first semester, first to second year, and at graduation gives Northern three points of reference to assess strengths and needs in retaining learners. Retention definitions and baseline data will be established in the 2014-2015 academic year with yearly targets established for improved retention.

#### **5. BUILD FLEXIBLE PROGRAMMING MODELS**

Northern College is known for innovative program delivery. More flexible learning pathways, individualized pathways, and collaborative pathways are examples of where Northern can continue to grow. The Northern College Collaborative Programming model is an example of flexibility to assure sustaining program delivery. Partnerships with other institutions and joint programming are also avenues for growth. Programming models that allow multiple entry and exit points also offer more flexibility to a learner that may not have 2 years to dedicate to study. Increased application of credit transfer and PLAR build opportunities for students to learn at their own pace and in their own way. Articulation agreements will be reviewed, and where possible new agreements struck, to assure learners who go to Northern have opportunities at multiple institutions throughout their learning journey.

#### **6. DEFINE TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY**

Stakeholders have identified the need to assure flexible delivery models and utilization of technology enhanced education. A plan for renewal, upgrade and/or expansion of technology at Northern is necessary to support this. When defining the infrastructure needs it is also important to address pedagogical and professional development needs associated with technology

enhanced education. In order to expand delivery in this area and create more flexibility, infrastructure needs, pedagogical direction and support for faculty are required to assure quality education. Defining the strategy is the first step and will occur in the first year of SEM. Implementing the strategy will occur over the next 3 to 5 years.

#### **7. ESTABLISH PROGRAM LIFE CYCLES THAT OFFSET ENROLMENT FLUCTUATIONS**

Programs that run in two year cycles, create an imbalance in revenue stream for Northern. It is important to identify short term offerings that offset the imbalance, to create consistent revenue streams year over year. This needs to be completed within the first year of SEM implementation. This means defining a series of options in program offerings that would run for 2 or 3 cycles and subsequently be replaced by other programming. New program development will come with sunset time frames to address changing sector and labor force needs. Establishing program life cycles creates more flexibility in program and fiscal planning.

#### **8. REVIEW AND DEFINE ALUMNI RELATIONSHIP**

Northern alumni are part of the student life cycle. Involving alumni in ongoing enrolment strategy is a multi-faceted approach to enriching the student experience, while engaging Northern alumni. Northern needs to review this relationship to determine how alumni can be more intricately involved in retention and recruitment. This will happen in the second year of SEM. Alumni are not only past students, but potentially the friends and family of future students. They are also a key element in foundation planning. Where there is potential to grow alumni relations, the College needs to do so. Knowing how the relationship currently stands, the ability to build 'friend' status in alumni relations grow. Designing alumni activities is part of enhancing this important relationship.

# SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

**GOAL 2A:** Northern College will increase full-time student enrolment in signature program clusters by 3% by Fall 2017.

To achieve this goal, stakeholders told Northern:

- Development of a strategic plan for each signature program
- Identify a second tier of signature programs from current
- Northern College offerings based on market trends
- Increase experiential learning opportunities for students
- Develop a marketing/recruitment plan for each signature program

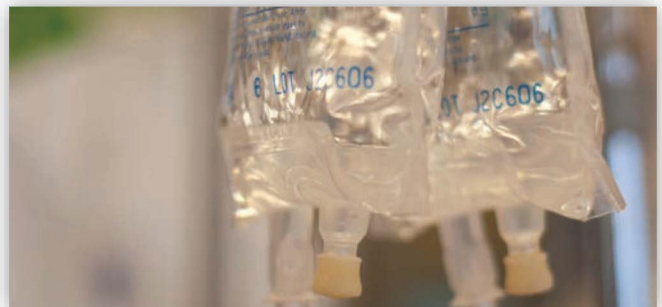
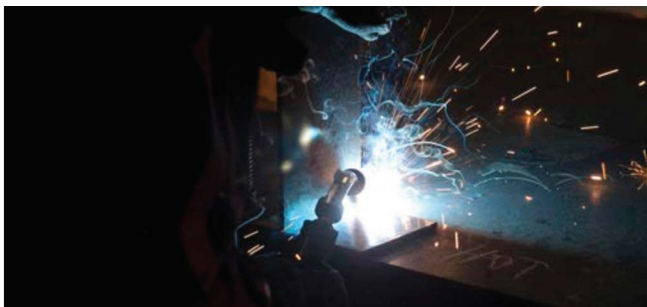
## OBJECTIVES

### 1. EXPAND SIGNATURE PROGRAM CLUSTERS IN PREPARATION FOR NEXT STRATEGIC MANDATE AGREEMENT

Ongoing student enrolment will depend on the employability of Northern graduates. Employability is tied to market need, and in that respect how Northern is differentiated to deliver signature program is a consideration. Assuring signature programs and clusters are established with a five year horizon helps to expand where Northern can go when it comes to growth in signature areas. This philosophy of signature programs or market niche needs to be grown within faculty to generate new ideas on program development, specialization and enhancement.

### 2. IDENTIFY GRADUATE CERTIFICATE FOR EACH SIGNATURE PROGRAM CLUSTER

To assure market growth in signature program areas, Northern needs to develop a graduate certificate in each signature program area. Graduate certificates are a pathway to longer term employment for students. They are also opportunities for returning students, and new students from the non-direct entry market. Former students who have a positive experience at Northern are more likely to return to continue their training with Northern. A one program per year approach over the next five years is feasible within existing capacity.



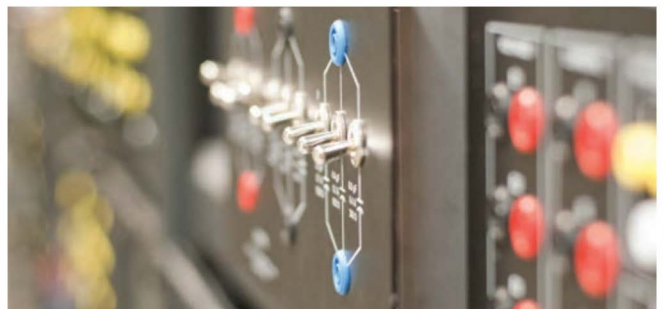


### 3. IDENTIFY 3 DEGREE PROGRAMS (COLLEGE 3 YEAR DEGREES) WITHIN SIGNATURE PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

To expand Northern College's reach, taking advantage of a three year degree option is important. This process has not yet been established by MTCU, however, preliminary preparation for establishing three year degrees is strategically sound. There are two pathways to move to three year degrees. One pathway is existing advanced diplomas. In this case, the curriculum development and alignment is minimal. Where graduate certificates exist, alignment of curriculum mapping will be required to morph programming together into a 3 year degree program. Being ready for this opportunity is advantageous to Northern given the lack of university presence in the region. This objective will occur in year 2-5 of SEM, dependent upon MTCU approval.

### 4. DEVELOP APPLIED RESEARCH, CO-OP, OR INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH SIGNATURE PROGRAM

The role of applied research, co-ops or internships in developing 21st century skill sets is well documented. Establishing applied research projects as capstone projects within signature programs/clusters and/or co-op/internship industry opportunities adds to the skill set of Northern graduates. This is particularly attractive for mature and international learners. Assuring these real life opportunities are available for learners is a way to attract and retain students.



# THE NORTHERN EXPERIENCE

**GOAL 3A:** Northern College will meet, if not exceed, provincial averages in student satisfaction key performance indicators by Fall 2017.

**GOAL 3B:** Northern College will meet, if not exceed, provincial averages in both graduate and employer satisfaction key performance indicators by Fall 2017.

To achieve these two goals the following stakeholder input is noted:

- Develop aggressive marketing strategy for the Pre-Service Firefighter/Paramedic Bridging and Environmental Technician programs to attract applicants from other colleges to Northern using the unique aspects of these programs as a “Northern” feature
- Creation of a Strategic International Enrolment Management Plan (SIEMP)
- Develop and implement a multi-departmental “Northern Experience” delivery plan
- Enhance teaching excellence and classroom engagement culture college-wide as a retention initiative
- Enhance facilities and campus appearances college-wide
- Review program curricula for opportunities to provide work-experience and leadership opportunities within the community/industry
- Increase promotion and awareness of student life activities as a recruitment initiative



## OBJECTIVES

### 1. ESTABLISH STUDENT LIFE ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Many learners bypass Northern to head to other centers because of the student life. Students evaluate where they go by what the institution has to offer academically and socially. Activities and student life at Northern can be enhanced through clubs and sport teams. These create a sense of belonging, as does, community integration. Development of student clubs and programs that offer active social integration with the community are proven retention strategies. Northern needs a comprehensive plan for student social integration.

### 2. CREATE EXCITEMENT ABOUT STUDY NORTH

The province has funded a joint marketing program that supports recruiting learners from southern Ontario, where capacity is maximized, to northern colleges where space is available. This strategy has great potential for Northern. Once attracted to the northern region for study, a seamless approach for students in every aspect of registration, finding a place to live and orientation to life in the North is important. The friendliness of the North is an attractive asset that needs to be shown to its best advantage. Faculty and staff are key players in helping create the energy that encourages interested learners to become Northern students.



### 3. ESTABLISH A COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMMING MODEL WITH SIX NORTHERN COLLEGES

The provincial government has invested in this concept. It is up to the colleges of the North to assure it happens. The work to do this is complex. As the infrastructure becomes aligned to make this happen, the potential to sustain and grow enrolment needs can be assessed. Building on the first pilots into this program, where else can collaboration be applied to assure sustainable programs and access for learners?

### 4. ESTABLISH AN INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN THAT INCLUDES ON-SHORE, OFF-SHORE AND MID-SHORE APPROACHES

Northern is already established in international programming off shore. As an already distributed model, this delivery is understood by Northern faculty and staff. There is room to develop more on-shore programming for international students. Attracting international students from off-shore programs to complete studies in on-shore programs is one avenue with growth potential. Direct recruitment is another opportunity. Mid-shore programming could be available for international students, whereby Northern delivers in Canada, at other sites. A clear map of what on-shore, off-shore and mid-shore programming will look like over the next 3-5 years is necessary to grow the international student population at Northern.



# ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES

**GOAL 4A:** Northern College will increase full-time post-secondary aboriginal student enrolment by 25% by Fall 2017.

**GOAL 4B:** Northern College will increase aboriginal part-time and continuing education student enrolment by 25% by Fall 2017.

To achieve these two goals the following stakeholder input is noted:

- Develop intensive, proactive Aboriginal Advising Services to better support and retain Aboriginal students
- Increase housing options for Aboriginal students
- Develop new and innovative Aboriginal focused programs accessible to all levels of learners
- Increase Aboriginal partner feedback and networking with a view to developing early pathways for Aboriginal learners

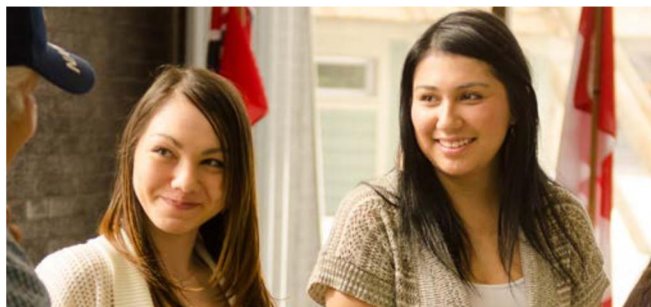
## OBJECTIVES

### 1. ESTABLISH ABORIGINAL PROGRAMMING BASED UPON ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING

While programming at Northern is well recognized and highly regarded, it is developed from a traditional non-Aboriginal perspective. Assuring programming has the Aboriginal perspective requires development of curriculum that relies on Aboriginal ways of knowing. This means developing programs that not only meet Aboriginal needs but also recognize Aboriginal pedagogical approaches.

### 2. DEFINE ABORIGINAL PROGRAMMING NEEDS

Aboriginal populations have micro economies. The education and training needs of these various communities are often unique when compared with other regional communities. Defining specific needs and identifying programs that meet those needs is critical to support both Aboriginal communities and Northern's need to build programming potential. Aboriginal programming needs to be incorporated in an optimal programming mix.



### 3. DEFINE CREDENTIALS PATHWAYS SPECIFIC TO ABORIGINAL POPULATIONS

While all programs at Northern must be delivered to quality standards, the design of credentials that are relevant to a specific population is important. Credential pathways can be tailored to meet specific needs in the micro economies of Aboriginal communities. Assessment strategies should include Aboriginal ways of knowing utilizing authentic assessment. Pathways for credential recognition can be provided, as well.

### 4. DEFINE ABORIGINAL PLAR PROCESS

Existing PLAR processes are tailored to nontraditional, non-Aboriginal learners. Learning occurs in a variety of ways and informal learning needs to be recognized. Aboriginal informal learning can be measured if the measures reflect Aboriginal ways of knowing. Therefore, Aboriginal PLAR access and processes need to be refined and developed.

### 5. ESTABLISH FORMAL PERSONALIZED LEARNING PATHWAYS FOR ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

Not everyone learns in the same way or at the same rate. This is true of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners. However, for Aboriginal learners in a non-Aboriginal institution, pathways to define how and when they will learn, empower them to move through the learning process in their own way and at their own pace. These personalized pathways should be readily accessible, easy to navigate, and accessible to all Aboriginal students.

## SUMMARY

These objectives provide the markers for SEM strategies. Each objective has a corresponding set of tactical actions imbedded in the Northern College Business Plan. These tactical actions are measurable with finite timelines. As actions are complete, new actions will be taken on to continue the process of making SEM a cultural way of life for faculty and staff at Northern College. As events and the environment impact on Northern, the goals and objectives will be revisited to reflect current and ongoing needs. Implementation of SEM comes with a commitment to continuously review and improve all actions that impact on the student life cycle. This SEM Plan will continue to be actioned over the next three years as a function of the College's annual Business Plan.

