

SCIENCE NATURE SUSTAINABILITY

N Northern
COLLEGE

2024/25



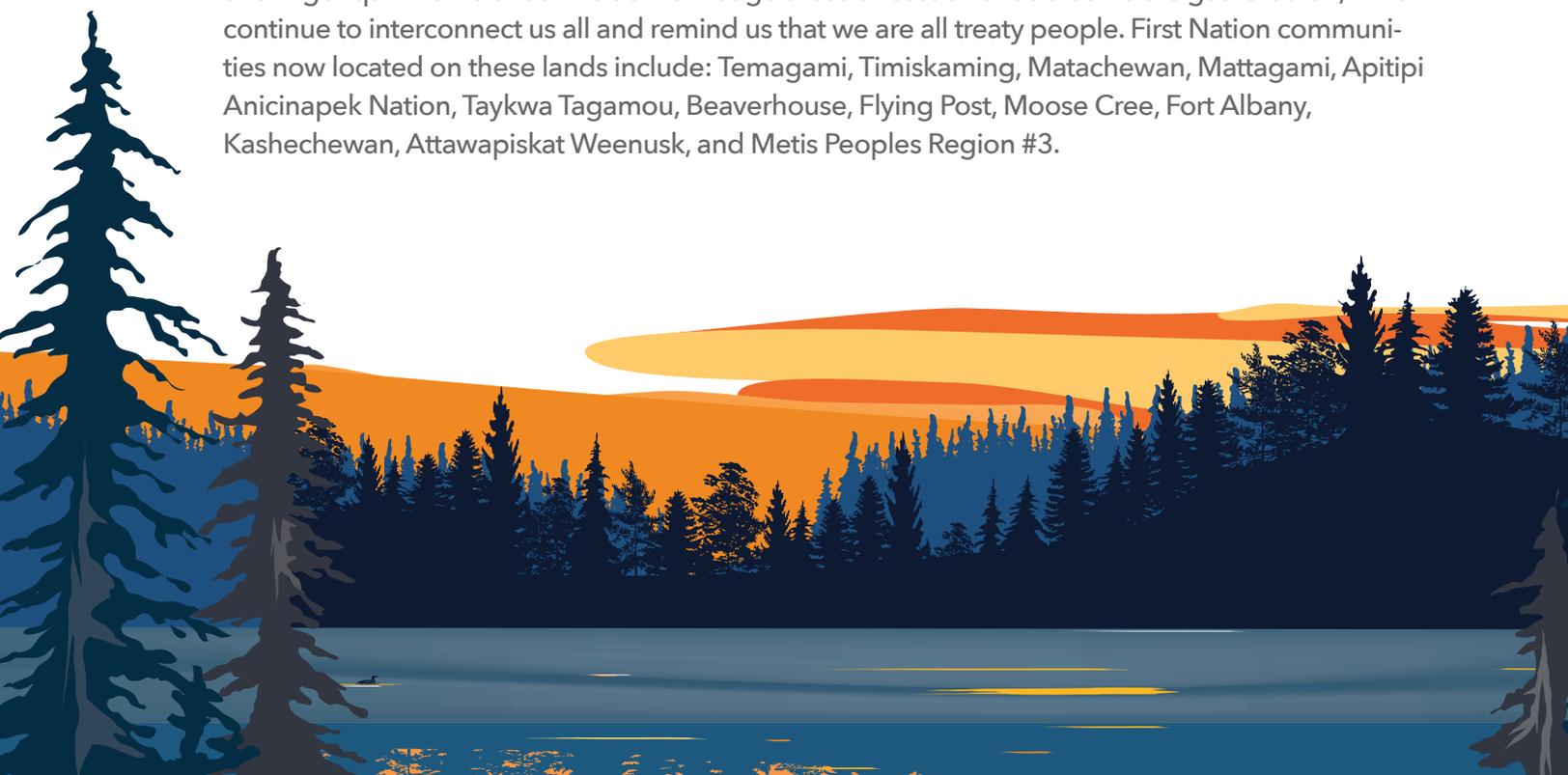
Approved by the Board of Governors
May 14, 2024

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TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional and territorial lands of the Cree, Oji-Cree, Ojibway, and Algonquin homelands. We acknowledge these ancestral lands that we are gathered on, which continue to interconnect us all and remind us that we are all treaty people. First Nation communities now located on these lands include: Temagami, Timiskaming, Matachewan, Mattagami, Apitipi Anicinapek Nation, Taykwa Tagamou, Beaverhouse, Flying Post, Moose Cree, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Attawapiskat Weenusk, and Metis Peoples Region #3.



INTRODUCTION

Northern College is a future-focused institution grounded in its commitment to quality, innovation, and continuous improvement in providing exceptional, industry-driven learning opportunities in Northeastern Ontario. Under the dynamic leadership of newly appointed President and CEO, Mitch Dumas, the College continues to build on a proven record of offering innovative academic programs and personalized service. Ranking at the top of the province in several Key Performance Indicator (KPI) survey result categories, Northern College is positioned to best serve its current and future students by providing highly relevant employment-focused education and training.

In marrying modern educational technology and instructional techniques with an inclusive values framework, Northern College centres itself on the innovative delivery of relevant program offerings that reflect industry needs and promote personal and professional growth.

Northern continues to aspire to be the College of choice for Indigenous learners through the ongoing and collaborative incorporation of traditional Indigenous teachings and understandings into our curricula. These actions help to ensure that Indigenous student values are recognized and included, and that all students at Northern College understand the culture and experiences of Canada's First Peoples. From this perspective, Northern College has established key markers to track the development of this approach to education. It works to build and maintain productive relationships with community and industry partners to shape an educational experience that is both culturally sensitive and culturally aware.

Modern technologies have connected people globally and increased access to Northern's high-quality educational offerings. Our focus on supporting learners and removing barriers to academic success, no matter where students are learning from, advances the College's mission of empowerment through learning to build a better world.

Northern College aims to position itself as a destination institution, leveraging its Northern Canadian geographic location to provide students with a unique educational experience in Northeastern Ontario. The College's proximity to the natural world and supportive learning environment present students with a one-of-a-kind experience and a strong probability of securing meaningful career prospects upon graduation.





COLLEGE VISION & MISSION

The Strategic Directions of Northern College are foundational to the initiatives included in the annual Business Plan.

Mission

Empowerment through learning to build a better world.

Vision

Building community across the North through partnerships and excellence in education.

Motto

Proud to be North. Proud to be Northern.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ✓ Learning for empowerment
- ✓ Accessibility for learners
- ✓ Diversity and inclusion for a progressive organizational culture
- ✓ Career opportunities through innovative education and transferable skill development
- ✓ Relevant applied experiences
- ✓ Value for investment
- ✓ Support for lifelong learning
- ✓ Continuous Improvement
- ✓ Intentional communications
- ✓ Transparency

INDIGENOUS STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

In aspiring to become the College of choice for Indigenous learners, we shall integrate the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Indigenous Education Protocols developed by Colleges and Institutes Canada; and we shall conduct ourselves with the spirit of Indigenous Peoples' teachings.

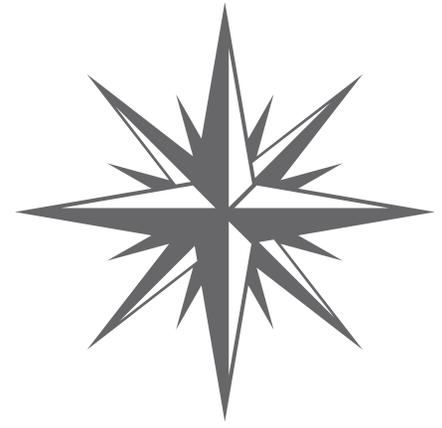
INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS

At Northern College we will:

- Support, nurture, and celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of learners and employees
- Connect our learners and communities through the application of accessible and innovative technology
- Foster and encourage a friendly, caring, and respectful organizational culture
- Establish an organizational culture that reflects the diversity of our communities
- Work respectfully, in collaboration with Indigenous peoples and communities
- Pursue partnerships and entrepreneurial opportunities to better serve community
- Enhance the quality and access to college education through global initiatives
- Engage in applied research in the pursuit of northern development and continuous improvement
- Use our natural and built environments observing conservation and sustainable practices
- Practice ethical decision making that engenders trust while safeguarding the College
- Be open, consultative, and accountable
- Act with personal responsibility and integrity
- Exceed expectations



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



**We will be courageous and steadfast in
being truly student-centred by establishing:**

**INDIGENOUS EDUCATION
AND EMPOWERMENT**

**INNOVATIVE
APPROACHES TO ACCESS**

**INVIGORATING
NORTHERN EXPERIENCES**



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS

In establishing initiatives which reflect the objectives encompassed by its Strategic Directions, Northern College remains dedicated to focusing on Indigenous perspectives, promoting access to education, and maintaining a dynamic and needs-based approach to programming that remains true to the Northern Experience.



Indigenous Education and Empowerment

Grounded in the culture and history of Northeastern Ontario through its connection to its four campus communities, Northern College recognizes the disparity and trauma caused by a national history of inequality and injustice toward the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. We continue to address the long-term impact of colonization on our organization and those who choose to learn with us by systematically and operationally dismantling racism across our institution.

Northern College is committed to this strategic direction through the achievement of the initiatives outlined below to connect respectfully and meaningfully with Indigenous communities, address Indigenous learners' needs through purposeful programming, and respond effectively to emerging changes that may impact Indigenous learners.

Objective: Northern College will fully engage with Indigenous communities.

Continued from 2023-2024

Northern College renews its ongoing commitments and actions towards Truth and Reconciliation. Each connection made with Indigenous communities, agencies, and organizations presents an occasion for relationship building, respectful dialogue, and meaningful collaboration. To this end, the College will continue to develop formal protocols for outreach to Indigenous rights holders, communities, educational authorities, and Tribal Councils. The implementation and maintenance of these protocols across the organization will necessitate a comprehensive education and training plan.



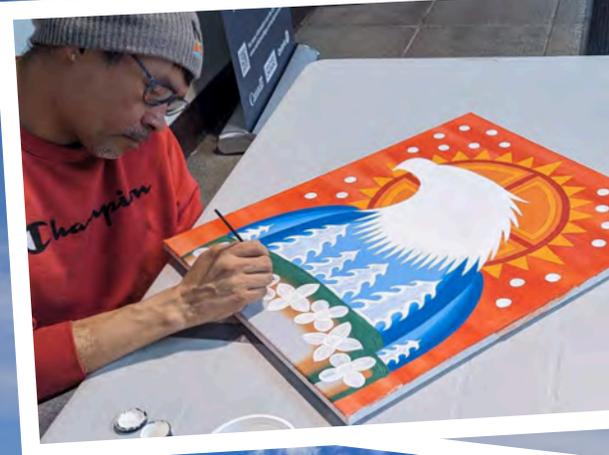
Objective: Northern College will include programs of study that recognize all aspects of Indigenous learners, their environment, and their future success.

Continued from 2023-2024

The College is committed to developing and adopting promising practices for creating and/or integrating Indigenous cultures and land-based activities into programming. Indigenous Learning Outcomes (ILOs) were introduced at a course level at Northern College in 2022. Revisions to these ILOs were undertaken during the 2023-24 academic year, and a third-party Indigenous training partner was identified to assist in building capacity with course outline writers and faculty to meaningfully adopt ILOs. With its Indigenous training partner, Northern aims to conduct an environmental scan to inform the creation of a guiding document on decolonizing teaching and learning.

Objective: Northern College will respond proactively to change and the changing environment in a collective manner.

Providing opportunities for the respectful exchange of culturally diverse histories, perspectives, and ideologies is one strategy that an organization can adopt in advancing the ninety-four calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This initiative will see the development of an in-person, Indigenous-themed professional learning opportunity on the calls to action for staff during the 2025-26 academic year.



Strategic Direction Two: Innovative Approaches to Access

Northern College acknowledges that barriers to learning exist for many, and that the challenges posed by these obstacles can prevent individuals from leading their best life.

Focused on removing barriers to student learning, growth and development, the College will engage in open and honest dialogue around policy and operations as they pertain to supporting student success. These measures will be implemented by impactful and dynamic teams to deliver best-in-class programming that is responsive to industry trends and designed to meet the needs of a diverse student body.



Objective: Northern College will enhance the learner's success through focused initiatives.

Continued from 2023-2024

Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) planning is a data-informed process that is woven throughout all aspects of College operations - from recruitment to admissions, to retention and alumni services. Northern College has identified a SEM tool which will enhance its ability to collect, organize, and evaluate student enrolment data as it advances the implementation of an overall Strategic Enrolment Management Plan and culture for the organization. Planning for SEM will consider the use of data and analytic tools, as well as predictive modelling, optimization of program offerings, identification of gaps in student support, and opportunities for alumni engagement.

Objective: Northern College will be creative and innovative in its programming (content/delivery/methodology) in response to the emerging changes in society.

With a continued focus on Quality Assurance (QA), Northern College will integrate QA processes and measures across its academic operations and programming. Leveraging the success of its new Program Review Process (i.e. Comprehensive and Annual), the College will undertake a thorough examination and revision of its Academic Policies and Procedures. This progress, combined with other QA initiatives, is successfully led and supported by the addition of a Quality Assurance Officer to the Northern College team. With the pending College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) scheduled for Fall 2024, Northern demonstrates its commitment to QA through initiatives such as the transition to COMMS3, the creation and updating of Master Courses, the development of a Work Integrated Learning inventory, and the recruitment and retention of additional Program Advisory members.



Objective: Northern College will prepare students to respond to a rapid and ever-changing economy.

An effective student-centered education is a personalized learning experience which extends beyond a single course. This can be accomplished through the provision of services that change and evolve to meet the unique needs of learners during the entirety of their program of study. To provide the necessary supports for learners, Northern College aims to develop an individualized, application-to-alumnus Student Coaching Program. The initial focus will be on building and delivering a training module in preparation to pilot the coaching program with a cohort of international students during the 2025-2026 academic year. This enhancement to Northern's already extensive network of student supports will provide a more comprehensive level of service that will improve learner achievement and growth, while differentiating Northern College from other institutions.

Objective: Northern College will focus on an invigorated effort to enhance communication and enrich relationships to create a stronger, more effective team.

Cultivating a workplace environment characterized by high-levels of self-efficacy, strong interpersonal relationships, and meaningful inter-departmental and cross-college connections is essential to achieving Northern College's vision and mission. Orienting new employees to their roles, responsibilities, and colleagues is key to fostering a working environment where staff are motivated and inspired. With this goal in mind, Northern College will build and deliver a coach/mentor training module to support the pilot of a twelve-month Employee Mentorship Program for all new and recently hired staff to be launched during the 2025-2026 academic year.



Strategic Direction Three: Invigorating Northern Experiences

The expansive natural landscape of Northeastern Ontario surrounds each of the four campuses of Northern College which also overlook freshwater lakes. Leveraging our proximity to the natural environment, Northern College plans invigorating outdoor learning experiences for staff and students which improve quality of life and overall well-being.

Northern College is committed to creating respectful and engaging learning environments for students and staff. Exemplifying quality and excellence, these uniquely northern experiences support the growth and development of all learners, while positively informing and shaping their futures and lives.



Objective: Northern College will be creative and innovative in programming (content/delivery/methodology) and prepare students to respond to the present and emerging changes in Northern Ontario and the global environment and offer solutions.

In fostering alignment and excellence across the organization, the College will work to create and maintain Master Courses and Course Outlines in COMMS3. Northern College will develop and provide curriculum mapping training for all faculty members, supporting the provision of seamless academic experiences for learners and quality in all aspects of academic curriculum development and delivery.

With a future-focus, Northern College will create a research strategy based on a needs assessment for Northeastern Ontario that is compliant with established degree accrediting bodies. College applied research partnerships and outcomes are vital to Canada's economic productivity, commercialization, innovation, employment, and workforce development. The research strategy developed will serve to align departments and assist in faculty recruitment and development efforts while contributing to continuous organizational improvement and the quality of life in the region.

Objective: Northern College will be more collaborative internally and externally to the benefit of the College, its students, and its staff.

The effective delivery of academic programs and services across Northern's multiple campuses is consistently met through the excellence and dedication of Northern College teams and individual staff members. To ensure continuity of service across all departments and operational areas, Northern will develop a formal cross-training strategy and implementation plan. This organization-level initiative will help enhance flexibility, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among staff, while bolstering Northern's ability to provide a seamless service experience to its students and communities.



Conclusion

Each academic year presents Northern College with a new opportunity for growth and improvement by harnessing and applying acquired knowledge, skills, and experience in charting a future course. Efforts are intentionally focused on continuous improvement and quality assurance to differentiate Northern College in the competitive post-secondary education sector.

Northern College's commitment to quality begins with the student experience both in the classroom and on campus with the ultimate goal of retaining graduates to work in our beautiful region of Ontario. Northern's unique mix of post-secondary education, training, and experience provides a welcoming atmosphere supportive of student growth and industry development.

A purposeful environment produces quality leaders, civic-minded citizens, and lifelong learners, fueling our fundamental belief that anyone can achieve their vision of success given the right opportunity, access, and support.

In the development and implementation of this business plan, Northern intends to move post-secondary education and training forward in significant ways to grow our region, workforce, and province well into the future.





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