Message from the Senior Management Group

Greetings to all of our VIU employees,

Vancouver Island University gratefully acknowledges the Snuneymuxw First Nation, Tla’amin First Nation, Snaw-naw-as First Nation and the Cowichan Tribes for the opportunity to work, learn, play and live on their territories. We deeply honour and appreciate our relationships with our hosts on these lands.

In our roles within Vancouver Island University, we are often asked to speak about what makes our community amazing and unique. It is a task we never take lightly because we know we are speaking on your behalf and we want to do justice to the incredible contribution you make to VIU. Our most impactful and inspiring moments occur when we get to listen to you, learn from your experiences, understand what motivates you and get a sense of your own personal connection to our community.

It is that opportunity to learn from your perspective and input that excites us about the VIU People Plan: Mattering Here. It is built by the input and expertise of our people. You shared what matters to you, what you think is going well and where you want to see change.

The Steering Committee and working group have taken the information provided during the consultation process and have done their best to turn your comments into opportunities for action. We hope you see yourself in this plan. We hope you see the positive results you are anticipating from its implementation.

Each of us across the University achieves our best results for our students and ourselves when we are personally at our best. We are at our best when we are working at a place where we feel inspired and are surrounded by colleagues we trust who are engaged in their own work and who support the work of others.

Thank you for living your values through your participation, engagement, and trust in our commitment to our students, each other and the communities we serve. You Matter Here.
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You Matter Here.

A message to the people who work for Vancouver Island University

At Vancouver Island University, not only do you matter, but you are the power and the potential behind everything taking place at VIU. The high quality of the education we provide is possible because of your creativity, skills and expertise in all the ways you support our students and community.

None of us performs our roles in isolation. Our ability to work together, within and among our teams contributes to a successful university. Every single employee at VIU contributes to our Visionary Goal: As a trusted educational partner in the promotion of sustainable cultural, economic, environmental and social well-being, we inspire our students, faculty and staff, our communities and the people of Vancouver Island and coastal British Columbia through our commitment to excellence in learning, student success, respectful discourse, Indigenous ways of knowing and personal well-being.

The success of VIU and its students depends upon attracting and retaining outstanding people like you. To do so, VIU must have a culture that is psychologically, physically, socially and emotionally positive—one in which you can thrive personally and professionally.

To that end, your generous participation in the 2018 survey and consultations to help develop this People Plan are greatly appreciated. Your feedback will guide the actions to be taken over the next three years to enhance the culture at VIU.

In our Academic Plan, a series of core values that guide the work of the university were expressed. Our aim is to have these collective values of Learning, Respect, Discovery, Engagement, Achievement, Diversity, Celebration, and Sustainability and Well-being drive the culture here. These core values are included on the following page.
VIU’s Core Values

Learning: we support student success, access to education, appropriate development and use of technologies, collaboration and engagement with communities, development of literacies, communication and exchange of ideas across disciplines and locations, exploration and application of new thought and pursuit of lifelong learning.

Respect: we promote respectful engagement and support for internal and external relationships, and are committed to promoting respectful, informed discourse about reciprocity and reconciliation as identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.

Discovery: we promote respectful, ethical, transformative learning and research, scholarship and creative activity by fostering open inquiry that engages learners and supports contributions to knowledge.

Engagement: we value respectful on-going cooperation and collaboration that builds relationships with our partners in education, with communities in our region and with colleagues throughout the world.

Achievement: we believe in the potential of our community of learners and are committed to promoting the excellence and success of our students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Diversity: we value human diversity in all its dimensions and are committed to achieving and ensuring learning and working environments that are equitable, diverse and inclusive.

Celebration: we recognise and actively celebrate the achievements of all our students, faculty, staff, alumni and communities we serve.

Sustainability and Well-being: we foster sustainability in our institution through progressive sustainable operational practices, promotion of environmental awareness, delivery of supporting pedagogy, and provision for wellness in our employees and students.

Through the People Plan consultative process, you identified what you appreciate about working at VIU. You expressed that you are proud that VIU is focused on promoting sustainable cultural, economic, environmental and social well-being. For example, our work to address the growing rate of children living below the poverty line and to create new opportunities for youth to attend post-secondary education is one VIU initiative in which people who work here take pride. An example of that work is described in the following story.
Lifting Each Other Up

Like many employees at Vancouver Island University, Tia Schaefer believes everyone who desires a post-secondary education should have access to one.

“As a means of improving your life, nothing makes a bigger difference than education,” Schaefer says.

But for most of the students with whom Schaefer works, it wasn’t long ago that going to university wasn’t even a dream. “Many kids in care don’t even think about it because it just seems impossible.”

Schaefer is the Peer Support Navigator for VIU’s Tuition Waiver Program. Launched by VIU in 2013, this program—the first of its kind in British Columbia—waives tuition for students who were formerly youth under the care of the Ministry of Child and Family Development or delegated agencies.

“I help students accessing the Tuition Waiver Program receive support so they can experience success in their studies and their lives,” Schaefer explains.

Hers is the first job of its type in Canada. As the title suggests, Schaefer is also a student accessing the program, which is where the magic in VIU’s programming lies.

“I know what these students are dealing with and can help them have an easier time of it so they can focus on their work,” she says.

Schaefer reaches out through social media groups, which all students in the program are invited, but not required, to join. She also hosts workshops (always with pizza) on topics like taking care of your health by utilizing the VIU Clinic, learning how to get help from the Advising office and prioritizing workload to reduce stress. VIU employees from the area attend; consequently, when they access these services, students are familiar with at least one face and name.

“We realized quickly that waiving tuition is just a small piece of the picture in setting our students up for success,” says William Litchfield, Associate Vice President of University Relations. “The experience of most in the Tuition Waiver Program has been one of trying to navigate bureaucracy without much guidance and almost no support. This makes it hard to experience success or simply trust people they perceive to be in roles of authority.”

Removing any perception that students have to go it alone while at VIU is the reason Schaefer’s work with other departments is so critical.

Now that the Ministry of Advanced Skills, Education and Training covers the tuition and requires every post-secondary institution in BC to have a waiver program, Litchfield finds himself using VIU’s model to counsel much larger institutions.

“I get calls from universities across the country asking how to best serve Tuition Waiver students, and my answer is almost always the same: ‘Have you spoken to your students? Ask them what they need.’ And the answer is usually that they haven’t, but that is what we do. We listen and do our best to respond in a caring, supportive way,” Litchfield says.

“When someone has the support they need to achieve a goal they set, they are much more likely to succeed. You’re more likely to become a great athlete with great coaching than just a pair of running shoes and a
desire,” Litchfield says, pointing to Schaefer and her transformation, as well as that of her predecessor, Ruby Barclay, VIU’s first Peer Support Navigator.

“Ruby really encouraged me to apply for the job,” Schaefer explains, “but I used to avoid applying for any job that required a cover letter. I had no idea how to write one and no one to show me. Barriers like that are everywhere for kids who don’t come from a supportive background.”

Through Barclay and others, including her fiancé, Schaefer received the support she needed to build her confidence enough to apply.

“Since I have become the Peer Support Navigator, I have taken a plane for the first time and travelled further than I ever have. I have spoken to crowds of over 100 people,” Schaefer says. “It wasn’t long ago, I couldn’t have dreamed I would have a job that would present these opportunities and also expect I was capable of delivering.”

While we have strong practices supporting many of our values, further work still needs to be done. Every interaction we have with each other should demonstrate collegiality, open dialogue, inclusivity and care for one another. We want employees to experience a workplace built on transparency, integrity, respect for academic freedom, and support for innovation. This People Plan outlines our commitment and plans to live our values and to create the culture that allows us all to contribute our best at work and enhance our energy for other pursuits. It also outlines how we will be accountable to each other and depend upon each other to make this vision happen.

One way to assess and measure the health and success of an organization is to understand what increases people’s engagement at work. Through the combined results of the survey and the consultation sessions, five key areas were identified on which we need to focus to improve organizational health, success and engagement at VIU. Because you have invited action on these areas through the consultations, these five areas are called “Invitations for Action.”

You are invited to act with all of us to make improvements in these areas. To that end, this People Plan identifies strategies, including short- and long-term objectives. Establishing and implementing these strategies will not only support the engagement and well-being of all employees but also help VIU continue to be a great place for you to succeed.
Who We Are

Known as a centre of excellence, Vancouver Island University offers a supportive campus community focused on innovative teaching methods, undergraduate research opportunities and creating an exceptional learning experience for our students. VIU produces quality graduates who are in demand by employers across the country and around the world.

VIU’s rich history and connection with its communities dates back to 1936 when Nanaimo’s first vocational training school opened its doors. Today, VIU offers an extensive range of programming, from industry-responsive trades and applied training to academic undergraduate and graduate degrees. VIU has evolved into a university that supports a student population of over 16,000 learners, including 2,100 international student and over 1,500 Indigenous students.

VIU employee groups

VIU has over 1,300 employees, making the University one of the largest single employers in the region. Its four employee groups are the BC Government Employees Union (BCGEU), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Excluded Administrators, and the VIU Faculty Association (VIUFA). A growing number of students are also employed by the University during their studies. Figure 1 shows the percentage of employees by employee group for the year 2017.

Although common practice in the Canadian post-secondary environment is to use the terms faculty and staff to quickly identify the general role one holds in the institution, the People Plan uses the word employees to describe everyone. This approach reflects the value and respect held for all people who work at VIU.

2017 Employee Groups

- **46%** VIUFA
- **29%** CUPE
- **12%** BCGEU
- **13%** Excluded Admin
Why A People Plan?


The People Plan pertains specifically to two stated objectives within that Academic Plan:

1. Academic Community
   • Attracting and retaining employees with expertise that supports the institutional vision.

2. Institutional Effectiveness
   • Ensuring a culture of respect and well-being, celebrating VIU, and providing visionary leadership that supports a values-based institution.

We are committed to investing in the development of the People Plan to support the success of each employee at VIU, which in turn supports the success of our organization and our students. The People Plan will put in place processes, practices, tools and mechanisms that encourage the continued success of all employees. VIU will monitor the successful implementation of the People Plan, and it will be renewed in regular intervals in future years.

The plan will allow VIU to adapt to the changing needs of our current and future workforce, as well as anticipate and plan for the demographic, social, technological, financial and political trends VIU faces. The Plan was developed with the views and experiences of you—our current employees—in mind. The successful implementation of the action items relies on your involvement and contributions.
How Did We Develop The People Plan?

The consultation and development process

Under the leadership of the Associate Vice-President of Human Resources, a People Plan Steering Committee was created in September 2017. This committee was comprised of 23 individuals from varying administration levels and employee groups, including faculty, staff, union representatives and excluded administrators. A core team of individuals from Human Resources, the Project Management Office and Communications supported the Steering Committee.

To create a shared sense of commitment and ownership, engaging employees from all levels of the organization was integral during the development of the Plan. In early 2018, a series of consultations and employee engagement processes were held, the first of which was a survey to all employees. The response rate to the survey (50.9%) affirms the findings to adequately represent the voice of VIU employees. Further consultations included town halls and focus groups in March and April 2018. The consultation phase concluded with a world café event in May 2018. Throughout all phases, an open invitation was issued to employees asking for their direct input and feedback through channels such as emails, face-to-face discussions, and departmental or area meetings.

<table>
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<th>People Plan Consultation Activities</th>
<th>Number of Sessions</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Town Halls</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Café Sessions</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Five Invitations For Action

During our consultations with you, five key areas emerged where we can strengthen and support our existing workplace. These areas are called our “Five Invitations for Action.” To work towards improving VIU’s workplace, the People Plan identifies the institutional commitment to focus time and resources on these actions. You are invited to take action alongside your colleagues. We have included short-term and long-term objectives, and the successful implementation of each action item will be evaluated. This diagram shows the Five Invitations for Action, which are further outlined throughout the People Plan. The Five Invitations for Action are all equally important, and all five are pillars for our success.
Invitation for Action: 
Cultivate a Healthy Workplace Culture

What?
A healthy workplace culture is one where people can thrive emotionally, psychologically, physically, spiritually and socially. It requires developing a “shared vision” for the culture we want. It also requires developing strong institutional leadership and team-based practices to achieve that vision.

Why?
When a university has a healthy culture

- You feel valued, respected, recognized, supported psychologically and emotionally, and have a feeling of balance in your life.
- You have the opportunity for input into decisions that affect you and feel free to express yourself.
- Individual and organizational resiliency is possible.
- Communication is positive, and relationships are nurtured within and among teams.

Employees who feel valued, respected, comfortable being themselves and secure bringing up issues with their supervisors or co-workers are more apt to be creative, innovative, resilient, content and engaged at work. This leads to the improved success of our students.
Our Foundation and Commitment

We are a vibrant, motivated, and energized university community comprised of people who are engaged, respectful, resourceful, collaborative and compassionate. We have a strong commitment to our Indigenous communities, and we welcome local, regional, and international learners. VIU recognizes fully the significant contributions made by all employees to the success of the institution.

VIU is a progressive university focused on fostering the ability of our employees and students to thrive. We have institutional values that build a sense of unity in our community. Employees are provided both formal and informal opportunities to inform institutional direction. We recognize the importance of good communication and strong relationships across the entire VIU community.

At VIU we are committed to asking you what you want VIU’s culture to be. In keeping with our Academic Plan, VIU is committed to create a culture of accountability, respect, safety, transparency and well-being. In other words, we want to ensure our workplace culture is positive and healthy—one in which we can be proud, one where we feel valued, one where we can make great connections with others in the community and, as a result, contribute our best.

We believe that effective communication, quality working relationships, ongoing recognition and balance in our lives are important factors in maintaining a healthy work culture and environment. VIU is committed to enhancing internal communications and encouraging and promoting quality working relationships within departments and across the institution. This commitment will ensure extensive opportunities for employees from the regional campuses to participate in all aspects of University operations and planning, which will enrich our decision making and our daily university life.

Opportunities to connect with other employees in social, recreational, and campus-wide activities and events strengthen our relationships and our culture. To that end, the People Plan identifies a commitment to create more informal and formal gatherings for VIU employees.

Here is a story about an employee who recognized a need to support her colleagues to get through the winter months and came up with an easy, innovative solution involving social and physical connection.
Fun in Healthy Forms

For many people, the winter blues set in when the glow of the holiday season and the promise of a new year have worn off. The feeling usually occurs sometime in February, making motivation and happiness a struggle to find for many.

With the winter blues in mind, MARCOMM Assistant Kara Walsh decided to create the MARCOMM Wellness Challenge – a month’s worth of fun, health-promoting activities to build and buoy team spirits. With the arrival of record snowfall and temperatures at or below freezing for weeks, February 2019 turned out to be the perfect month for the Challenge.

Walsh created a calendar in which each day featured a different activity designed to get bodies moving and minds focused on fun and gratitude. She sent the calendar to everyone in her department with an invitation to participate.

The activities were specifically designed to be achievable at work and create a fun break in the day. Some activities had a mental health focus like “list five things you’re grateful for and post it on the whiteboard.” Others had a physical health focus like “go to lunchtime yoga or do 20 squats and 20 push-ups.”

“I just wanted to get everyone thinking about how we might be more engaged and present at work,” Walsh says. “Yes, we all work hard, but short breaks with a fun focus help people feel connected to their team and their work. In the winter, it’s pretty easy to slide into the mentality of head-down-get-it-done—it’s almost like going on autopilot. I thought this could maybe help.”

Walsh was pleasantly surprised with participation. The lists of gratitudes are still posted on the office whiteboard and colleagues spent time talking about the activities.

“Not only is February right in the thick of winter, it is also a really busy month at VIU in my experience,” says Jenn McGarrigle, Communications Advisor. “It’s easy to get through the entire day without even thinking about a break and that gets pretty wearing. I think this helped us be more mindful of the small things we can do to be happier.”

There was no pressure to become involved, and the casual nature of it seemed to click with people. The change was noted by the area’s leadership.

“I think the small acts each day had a cumulative, positive effect on the team,” says Jean Maltesen, Associate Vice President, MARCOMM. “It was not resource-intensive, either. The only thing Kara asked me for was a Friday where everyone could leave an hour early to go for a walk around Westwood. I’m grateful she showed the initiative and did it.”

“February can be a hard month for lots of people, so I thought why not build a positive focus for us all? I knew Jeannie would support anything that helps us feel better,” Walsh says. “We are happier at work and usually more productive then.”

The Wellness Challenge illustrated that activities do not have to be complicated or long to be effective and fun.
We also know that as each of us practices and lives our values, we can create the culture that allows us all to contribute our best at work and to go home energized and fulfilled. To achieve this, the action plan outlines how we will build these practices and be accountable to each other to create this culture. Team culture and organizational culture are built on what we practice on a daily basis. Positive, resilient teams increase organizational performance and significantly increase the resilience of individuals. We are committed to providing team training on ways to build effective and positive team practices that contribute to the culture to which we aspire.

Recognition of employee efforts promotes an experience where employees know their contributions are valued and make a difference to the institution. VIU commits to building a culture of recognition, where we recognize, respect and show appreciation to each other. This culture will recognize the efforts individuals make to balance personal, professional and community activities and, in doing so, to live the values of this organization.

What Does Success Look Like?

Building and maintaining a healthy workplace culture is an ongoing journey, not an end goal. We recognize this continual need to improve. Our action items intended to cultivate a healthy workplace culture are found in the next section.

We aim to build a culture where

- People feel valued, respected, recognized, supported and have a feeling of balance in their lives.
- Positive relationships exist within and among teams and people feel they are a part of a healthy culture.
- People experience a sense of community and shared purpose.
- Open, timely and transparent communication exists throughout the institution.
- Individuals feel free to express themselves and have meaningful opportunities for input.
To cultivate a healthy workplace culture, we will

• Develop a culture of recognition
  • Identify existing recognition activities and share best practices with all VIU departments.
  • Implement awards for service excellence and consider the development of an annual employee recognition day.
  • Establish a process for recognizing and celebrating educational achievements of employees who receive higher degrees, diplomas, certificates and designations.
  • Encourage and recognize employee involvement in institutional service.
• Develop a plan to provide training on team/departmental practices that cultivate a healthy culture with the aim to
  • Increase recognition, appreciation and gratitude practices within our teams.
  • Increase the number of positive and resilient teams on campus by developing clear team roles and objectives and inspiring purpose, by developing positive team practices, by learning how to use appreciative inquiry and conduct effective debriefing, by rewarding positive behaviours and by increasing the social and emotional support of teams.
• Expand and support VIU gatherings and encourage employee participation
  • Through our internal communications, build greater awareness of events and encourage regional campus representation.
  • Encourage further cross-institutional opportunities for employees to gather and interact.
  • Promote employee participation in student-driven events including Global Citizenship Week and World VIU Days.
• Implement the key aspects of VIU’s Internal Communications Strategy
  • Replace the VIU DIGEST with an internal e-Newsletter.
  • Increase communication pertaining to recognition, rewards, and achievements of employees.
  • Provide workshops on effective communication strategies for employees (for example, by encouraging the use of inclusive language and respectful conversations).
  • Develop social media guidelines and hold workshops on the effective use of social media.
  • Assess viability of a VIU Employee Intranet.
• Enhance regional campus representation in VIU initiatives and communications
  • Encourage departments to include regional campuses in their initial planning stages.
  • Encourage opportunities for employees to work on occasion and as appropriate on other VIU campuses and centres in order to build inter-campus relationships and information sharing.
  • Advance the Inter-Campus Collaboration Committee.
• Enhance employee orientation activities
  • Enhance New Employee Orientation day and add additional orientation activities.
  • Provide supplementary orientation information via the HR webpages.
  • Include an introduction to effective communication and to team practices that
    cultivate a healthy culture.

12 to 36 Month Action Plan

To cultivate a healthy workplace culture, we will

• Implement and deliver training on team practices to cultivate a healthy culture
  • Create a culture of recognition within teams.
  • Develop team practices to create positive and resilient teams.
  • Provide templates, examples, training and suggestions for departmental use from
    Human Resources.
  • Continue to highlight existing recognition initiatives and opportunities.
• Create further opportunities for relationship building
  • Support existing and additional VIU gatherings and encourage employee
    participation.
  • Create employee “spaces” to build relationships. For example, redevelop current
    spaces on all campuses to be designated for employees’ lunchtime use during
    weekdays; also consider allocating that space for other employee events. Deploy
    creative uses of this space to encourage people to start using it.
  • Conduct a workplace experience survey every 1-2 years to measure satisfaction on
    action items within the People Plan and to assess employees’ desired vision for the
    culture.
  • Continue to evaluate employee orientation to assess where updates are necessary.
  • Encourage flexible work arrangements that are appropriately supported.
Invitation for Action:
Foster Diversity, Fairness and Truth and Reconciliation

What?

VIU endeavours to be a university that inspires and achieves equity, diversity, inclusion, transparency and fairness of process. We recognize the vital importance of “diversity of identity and thought, with room for a variety of ideas, geographies, cultures and views.”

In seeking to achieve fairness, VIU recognizes the inherent difference between equality and equity: that where equality implies and seeks sameness, equity implies and seeks fairness in both process and outcomes. Equity encourages listening and seeking to understand views and experiences beyond our own; in embracing equity, we in turn embrace collaboration and transparency in setting goals and creating fair processes to achieve them. The values of equity, diversity and inclusion ultimately create and support an educational community of mutual trust and respect, with a shared passion for access to excellence in learning.

VIU committed to fulfill the recommendations of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It also supports the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We work together to develop community-based education, support communities to increase and build capacity, create a sense of belonging for Indigenous students on campus, support faculty in bringing Indigenous ways of knowing and being into their courses and provide supports and services to Indigenous students. VIU’s focus is to build on the existing relationships we have with First Nations in our regions and deepen our partnerships, working collaboratively with communities to ensure Indigenous students have access to relevant and positive postsecondary education.

Why?

A university is enriched by being an inclusive community, where equity is deeply embedded and diversity is welcomed. Our thriving university culture is enhanced by the values of openness, fairness and acceptance.

Universities are called to engage in truth and reconciliation and Indigenization. VIU has a deep commitment to the founding peoples of our region, on whose traditional territories we operate, and a recognition that diversity of VIU’s people is a strength. The presence of Indigenous students and their cultures is a benefit to VIU. This presence makes our campuses more open, with wider sources of discovery and knowledge. “Mutual respect for different ways of knowing and recognizing the intellectual contributions of Indigenous people is essential to building trust, understanding and sharing. The cohabitation of Western science and Indigenous knowledge on campuses has the power of opening a dialogue among cultures and enhancing our shared knowledge.”

   https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-equity-diversity-inclusion/

   https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-on-indigenous-education/
Our Foundation and Commitment

As a member of Universities Canada, VIU follows the shared values of openness, fairness and acceptance to our approaches to teaching, research and community engagement. VIU is a leader among Canadian universities in bringing forward truth and reconciliation with our Indigenous communities.

VIU has specific positions designated for Indigenous persons, including Elders, counsellors, research chairs and faculty. Ongoing professional development opportunities related to Indigenous issues are available for students and employees.

Equity, diversity and inclusion awareness training is provided to students and employees on an ongoing basis throughout our institution. VIU welcomes students and employees from over 90 countries around the world and celebrates the cultural diversity of our campus communities through events such as Global Citizen’s Week, World VIU Days and ongoing projects and workshops.

VIU’s current structure includes entities such as the Office of Aboriginal Education, the Human Rights and Respectful Workplace Office, Shq’apthut, the Positive Space Alliance, Disability Access Services and the Faculty of International Education.

In the spirit of advancing opportunities for Indigenous students, VIU supports the Universities Canada statement that higher education offers great potential for reconciliation and a renewed relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.

VIU seeks to foster equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the University and all its operations, by development of evidence-driven practices and systems that will bring about sustainable institutional changes. The University commits to attracting and retaining faculty, staff and leaders from all backgrounds.

Additionally, VIU commits to improve transparency and clear communication, which are important factors for promoting fairness and equity in the workplace. Supporting a workplace that is respectful, courteous and fair, as well as valuing individual differences, encourages a positive workplace culture. The vision is for all campuses within our institution to constitute an inclusive workplace where differences are fully utilized; where you feel seen, heard, respected and valued; and where opportunities for cross-jurisdictional collaboration exist.

The following story demonstrates the commitment to Truth and Reconciliation at our Cowichan campus.
Living Truth and Reconciliation

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada stated in its 2015 report that post-secondary institutions across Canada play a crucial role in achieving the Calls to Action outlined the report. Vancouver Island University made reconciliation a major focus many years before the Commission completed its findings. Nowhere are these efforts more obvious than at VIU’s Cowichan campus in Duncan.

Advocating for reconciliation with Canada’s First Peoples permeates every aspect of life on the Cowichan campus. The moment you approach the building, which opened in 2011, you get a sense of the partnership between VIU Cowichan and the Cowichan Tribes, the Malahat Nation, Stz’uminus Nation, Penelakut Nation, Halalt Nation, Lyackson Nation, Lake Cowichan Nation and the Métis Nation. The entrance is adorned with totem poles. The building is replete with cedar accents, and its design is reminiscent of a longhouse.

Beyond the building itself, the way education and business are conducted at the Cowichan campus are influenced greatly by the close relationship between the institution and the Indigenous communities it serves. Today, the campus has the largest proportion (28%) of self-identifying Indigenous students of all VIU locations.

Years ago, VIU recognized how underrepresented Indigenous students were in its population and began taking steps to change it. In 1990, a VIU alumna and Cowichan Tribes member was hired as a Native Programs & Services Coordinator for the campus. This, and other initiatives, helped build ties between VIU and the local Nations, from which all groups have benefitted. A recent example is the partnership with the Malahat Nation in which VIU carpentry students built two more in a series of houses on the Nation’s land. VIU has learned much about creating programs that reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and has developed programs that provide credit to Indigenous students for lived experience. Each year, more and more Indigenous students graduate with a post-secondary education they turn into fulfilling careers.

Also in the 1990s, VIU began employing Indigenous Elders as faculty members in the Child and Youth Care First Nations Program in Cowichan. This eventually led to the Elders-In-Residence program and the recognition of these esteemed members of the VIU community as one of the institution’s greatest resources. They not only provide wisdom and guidance to all VIU students, but also help everyone at VIU go about their work in a proper, respectful way. They are accorded the highest levels of respect from all VIU employees and assist employees in building capacity in areas of cultural knowledge and understanding. An Elder-In-Residence is a member of the Cowichan Development and Management team, which handles campus decision making and planning. At the Cowichan campus, the portraits of the Elders-in-Residence hold a special place of honour on the main floor.

VIU’s Cowichan campus has taken to heart the importance of Truth and Reconciliation and embraced the fact that strengthening the education of the region’s Indigenous peoples benefits the entire community.
What Does Success Look Like?

We are successful when

- VIU’s employee composition has addressed the underrepresentation of the four designated groups (FDGs)—women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and members of visible minorities.
- All our communication is clear, transparent and respectful.
- We all participate in openness, fairness and tolerance in our approaches to teaching, research and community engagement.
- You, as an employee at VIU, feel seen, heard, respected and valued.
12-Month Action Plan

To foster diversity, fairness and truth and reconciliation, we will

- Develop and enhance employees’ knowledge and understanding to support VIU’s Indigenous Commitment and Truth and Reconciliation
  - Encourage, celebrate, and promote participation in Na’tsa’maht Shqwaluwun: Understanding Indigenous Perspectives Learning Series.
  - Ensure orientation material includes extensive information on the Learning Series, particularly the Coast Salish Protocol Sessions, the KAIROS Blanket Exercises and Soup and Bannock: Lunch and Learn Series.
- Create additional Indigenous student employment opportunities at VIU
- Implement focussed efforts to prioritize hires from under-represented groups
- Engage directly with the newly formed Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Project Steering Committee and complete institution-level responses including examining policies, procedures and systems that are in place or are missing at VIU that could constitute barriers to individuals in underrepresented groups
- Encourage the use of inclusive language, particularly the use of the term “employees” where possible
- Ensure transparency in VIU’s hiring process
  - Review and modify current tools and training to the search and hiring committees.
  - Increase awareness of unconscious bias and diversity in the hiring process.
  - Ensure candidates are supplied information regarding feedback mechanisms.
- Use existing communication channels like the HR webpages to enhance transparency and accountability
  - Continually provide enhanced and newly created key materials, guidelines, information and statistics to VIU employees.
12 to 36 Month Action Plan

To foster diversity, fairness and truth and reconciliation, we will

- Implement truth and reconciliation within human resources strategies and efforts
  - Consult with relevant resources across all programs areas to create mechanisms for increasing awareness of and response to truth and reconciliation.
  - Develop an employee recruitment strategy for Indigenous students to stream to employment opportunities at VIU after graduation.
- Develop a comprehensive, evidence-based, and sustainable equity, diversity and inclusivity program that will influence both institutional- and individual-level changes through training and education
  - Identify and remediate areas requiring improvement for inclusivity and celebrate areas of strength.
  - Identify and address barriers to diversity encountered by future and current employees.
  - Implement and develop institutional practices for celebrating diverse culture in the workplace.
- Develop a respectful environment policy statement with a focus on respect and civility.
- Increase opportunities for cross-jurisdictional collaboration
  - Encourage job shadowing.
  - Build relationships and collaboration through institutional committees, working groups and team-building opportunities.
Invitation for Action:
Support Transformational Leadership and Professional Development

What?
We strive to be a learning organization where we are responsive to our community through a culture of trust in which we can learn and develop from mistakes to become more innovative. Identifying individual goals and development plans that align with the organization’s overall mission will contribute to people performing to the best of their abilities and for the organization to be high performing. We all look up to leaders who are accountable, transparent, positive and trustworthy; such leaders have integrity and empower us to be our best. At VIU we expect our leaders to lead in a way that is consistent with our values.

Why?
Personal and professional development strengthens our learning, increases our satisfaction and resilience, keeps us current in our thinking, helps us to become leaders in the roles we play and provides us with new tools and skills for innovation in our work.

Transformational leaders inspire others, communicate in a positive way, engage people in healthy dialogue, and coach for high performance while setting goals and providing feedback. Research shows that regular feedback, recognition of achievements and linking individual goals to organizational goals are fundamental drivers of employee engagement and success. Within a university, this contributes significantly to the success of our students.
Our Foundation and Commitment

VIU places high value on supporting the development of all employees. We offer a variety of training and development options, designed to better the performance of individuals and the organization. VIU employees can attend certain courses on campus free of charge, and they are provided professional development opportunities, courses and expense reimbursement.

We support employees in furthering their post-secondary education. Many employees have completed their MBA or Masters of Educational Leadership at VIU, or external programs such as the MA in Leadership at Royal Roads University, or doctoral studies while working at and supported by VIU. Another way VIU has nurtured professional development is by supporting individuals to complete professional certificate programs, such as the NeuroLeadership program. These employees are applying that knowledge within VIU.

VIU is fortunate to have many examples of effective leaders throughout all levels of the institution. These leaders operate with integrity, sincerity, vision and courage. In the Action Items section, the objectives identified will assist our leaders to further develop and strengthen their transformational leadership qualities. Building transformational leadership qualities will help VIU move toward its goals while keeping the well-being and best interests of our employees in mind. They will also foster the development of new and emerging leaders within the institution and support our culture where leadership is demonstrated across all levels of the University.

VIU is committed to supporting your professional and personal development. While we recognize that the provisions for the time and funds available for professional development are articulated in Collective Agreements, as well as in the Terms and Conditions for Administrators, the University is intent on supporting and providing additional opportunities that enhance development. VIU has invested in building competency through training programs, such as change management and project management. We are committed to sustaining these programs and providing additional institutionally funded training and professional development. One of our long-term objectives is the implementation of an Employee Development Program. In addition, we recognize the importance of having information regarding career development in a centralized place for you to access.

The following story demonstrates the impact of transformational leadership on a specific department within VIU.
Strong Leadership Transforms Culture

Great organizations have great leaders. They inspire their employees, create cohesive teams and improve productivity.

Vancouver Island University’s Information Technology Services Operations Department has achieved incredible improvements for VIU under the leadership of Darren Eveleigh.

The improvements include an institution-wide Network Remediation Project (NRP) to update legacy systems that were 40 years old in some cases, upgrades to support the replacement of all of VIU’s enterprise systems, an overhaul of cyber security protection and much more. These improvements are all in addition to the daily work of keeping systems running, responding to helpdesk requests, responding to security threats and helping departments with technology management.

“The work our IT team does touches every employee and student at VIU,” Eveleigh explains. “I try hard to help the team understand exactly what that means and the importance of their work. When people believe their work matters, they care more about their jobs and that makes them more engaged.”

Eveleigh coaches his employees on the concept of small “l” leadership–meaning everyone is a leader of their area.

“There is acknowledgement from the people with leadership titles that the people doing the work are experts in their field and can lead from the bottom up,” says Lemuel Mayona, IT Senior Network Administrator. “People see the possibilities and develop innovative ideas to get the work done. This allows everyone to find their own way to solve a problem. The ways people do things differ, and it’s fine as long as the result is successful.”

He goes on to say that even if the result is not successful, a learning opportunity has been created.

“Darren talks about ‘progress, not perfection.’ Learning is progress,” Mayona says.

Arwen Schewe is the ITS Client Services Manager. She sees her primary role as one of support and leading by example.

“The last six months have perhaps been the craziest ever in our department, so I spend a lot of time checking in with my people to see how they are doing,” she says. “Every day I ask, ‘Are you okay? Do you need time off?’ I think people are honest in their answers. When they say they need time off, they get it.”

Every month, Schewe and Eveleigh send out an anonymous survey to their team asking whether or not they would recommend working at VIU. Even though people can make more money in the private sector, responses are in the 80 percent satisfaction range.

Despite the workload, Schewe finds her stress levels are lower than they were in the past because she knows she also has the support she needs to look after herself.

“As leaders, we need to live what we are saying. When I know my team is working lots, it is tempting to constantly be there, but then I can’t give them 100 percent,” she says. “We’re all supporting each other—we can’t let someone drop off the ship because we won’t get to our destination.”

Eveleigh believes his role to provide the tools the team needs, get out of their way so they can do their work and then recognize their accomplishments with celebrations, badges, food and making sure all overtime is either paid out or banked and taken.

“If people feel cared for, they will be loyal and take pride in their jobs. I genuinely believe I have the best team around, and I want to make sure they know that,” he says.
What Does Success Look Like?

We are successful when

- Your individual goals and development plans are aligned with the overall mission of the organization.
- We have a culture of accountability, respect, safety, transparency, and well-being.
- We are embracing a culture that learns and develops from its mistakes.
- Our leadership is consistent with VIU’s values.

12-Month Action Plan

To support transformational leadership and professional development, we will

- Consider establishing a dedicated day for annual institutional development and training for all employees
- Provide expanded institutional professional development in targeted areas such as change management
- Provide training and development information on the human resources web pages
- Inspire a culture of dialogue across the institution by encouraging and creating opportunities for discourse and exchanges of ideas
- Enhance leadership and management skills, practices, knowledge and abilities
  - Identify and develop appropriate leadership development programs and opportunities.
  - Implement a monthly management series for all administrative managers.
- Deploy targeted, relevant and timely skill development, such as media training, evaluations, project management, process development/design and fundraising.
- Create and implement annual development planning and evaluation for administrators
To support transformational leadership and professional development, we will

- Implement a cohesive employee development process
  - Include a career planning component that focuses on growth, includes long-term goal setting, is measurable and is continually reviewed.
  - Provide competency-building training and workshops to all employees.
  - Include job shadowing and temporary appointment opportunities and initiatives.
- Institute a program for individualized coaching and mentorship
- Implement additional leadership development opportunities for employees at all levels in VIU
- Provide increased functional training opportunities across the institution, including a focus on software and technology tools
- Consider establishing a Competency Framework for VIU
  - Develop key competencies for VIU employees.
- Continue to utilize and enhance employee evaluation processes to support growth and development
- Develop new manager support and training for new and existing managers
  - Areas of focus include positive one-on-one and team meetings, workload management, workforce planning, best practices for employee orientation and employee development.
Invitation for Action:
Encourage Employee Well-being

What?
Health and well-being are nurtured by working in a culture where you can be psychologically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and physically well. This Invitation for Action outlines our commitment to your wellness within the workplace. Various programs and services are offered at VIU that support your wellness in all these dimensions. These programs include activities such as mindfulness training; drop-in meditation; drop-in yoga classes; free access to the VIU gym; fun excursions like surfing, kayaking and skiing; biometric health screening; free flu shots; and our annual Thrive Week, which teaches a way of thinking and acting that promotes positive mental well-being and resilience.

Why?
When we are at our best psychologically, emotionally, socially, spiritually and physically, we can contribute our best in all the roles in our lives. When we are at our best in our roles at VIU, our students receive the best educational experience we can offer. Developing practices that build resilience allows us to positively adapt to stressful situations and maintain our mental and emotional health or come back strong after difficult experiences. Our well-being affects everything we do at work, at home and in our community.
Our Foundation and Commitment

VIU is committed to establishing a Well-being Framework. VIU is informed by the Coast Salish concept of “one heart/one mind,” and the framework will recognize that all relationships impact our well-being, including family, community and the environment.

In this work VIU also recognizes the tenets of the Okanagan Charter (2016) which states that “health promoting universities and colleges infuse health into everyday operations, business practices and academic mandates.” The Charter articulates how health promoting universities and colleges enhance the success of our institutions; create campus cultures of compassion, well-being, equity and social justice; improve the health of the people who live, learn, work and play on our campuses; and strengthen the ecological, social and economic sustainability of our communities and wider society.

Our vision is to encourage an environment that supports employees’ physical, social, emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being and is conducive to healthy living, learning, working and playing. Together, we will promote health, well-being, healthy lifestyles and resilience among all students, employees and community members. The establishment of the Well-being Framework will include a University-wide application and integration in the planning, delivery and allocation of resources to organizational well-being initiatives and training, academic programming, co-curricular activity and community partnerships.

As laid out in our Academic Plan, we are committed to promote wellness and associated holistic approaches to your well-being. We believe that investing in the well-being of the people at VIU is essential. The following is a story that demonstrates the value and benefit of well-being at our University.

Together, We are Healthy and Happier

Living a healthy life and having work-life balance create a uniquely personal journey. Glynis Steen (Dean of the Faculty of Trades and Applied Technology) supports an environment where employees can chart their own paths.

“I try to do whatever I can to support my employees in creating a healthy lifestyle,” she says. “It is something I am passionate about. I believe exercise and healthy choices are important parts of helping people be their best. We spend such a large part of our lives at work that healthy lifestyle choices must integrate with our work day.”

Working alongside Steen in the Faculty of Trades and Applied Technology, Tanya Reiber (Coordinator, Enrolment Services and Operations) and Kellie Spence (Program and Registration Assistant) attribute their team environment to making significant healthy lifestyle improvements.

“I take my lunch every day between 1:30-2:30 p.m., which may seem late for some people and some departments, but the gym is much quieter then,” says Reiber. “It is easier to leave my desk and exercise when I know my colleagues and bosses fully support it. We keep a fun, supportive environment—at least that is my experience of it. And the gym membership is free for all VIU employees—that’s a few hundred dollars a year I’m saving.”

Spence agrees. She has been on a journey of transforming her health and, in doing so, brought new habits to the office.

“My journey began with a focus on weight loss, which started with cutting out some specific foods,” Spence says. “Losing weight inspired me to really get into healthy eating and trying new recipes and investigating and experimenting with things like superfoods. Pretty soon, Tanya and Glynis and I were sharing what we learned and were exchanging healthy recipes and tricks.”

Spence embraced exercise and incorporated more walking into her days.

“One of the best days occurred when Tanya came to me and said, ‘We’re going to Starbucks. You can do it.’ That is a long way up the stairs from Building 180. But for the first time I said okay, and I did it. Tanya encouraged me, and I made it up all the way to the top. It was such an accomplishment, and I shared it with my wonderful colleague. Coffee had never tasted so good!”

Steen believes more options are available to people at VIU than most realize. She is fan of the classes offered through VIU’s Recreational Services, such as lunchtime and morning boot camp, which are offered at below-market rate. She is also a big proponent of “storming the stairs” with a few colleagues.

“I love talking with Tanya and Kellie about nutrition—we get into it and discuss our ‘macros’ (macronutrients). Kellie has all these fantastic recipes for healthy food that also tastes good. I think we keep each other on track,” Steen says.

It’s a collaborative effort—everyone is invited, but not obliged, to participate.
What Does Success Look Like?

As identified in the 2017 Academic Plan, VIU is committed to invest in the well-being of our community.

We are successful when

- We are supporting the well-being of our community through programs, practices and operational systems.
- Senior leadership leads by example in demonstrating positive leadership practices, positive well-being and work-life balance.
- Well-being as a way of thinking is incorporated in all that we do.
- Harmony exists between our well-being goals and our day-to-day practices.

We recognize that improving and maintaining well-being is a continual process and not an end goal.
12-Month Action Plan

To encourage employee well-being, we will

• Determine the practices that can be adopted to increase well-being
  • Continue to assess what training is needed to develop practices to support employee, team and organizational well-being (for example, change management tools, training to develop more positive and resilient teams, and transformational leadership training).
• Strengthen employee well-being through targeted campaigns and training
  • Commence implementation of key well-being initiatives.
  • Recognize that one size does not fit all; continue to ask employees appreciative questions and to evolve what supports, services and training are offered.
  • Consider current initiatives underway at a department level for institutional application, for example the Healthy Mind Platter approach within IT.
  • Develop proactive and preventative training and support where possible to help employees adapt to change and stress.
  • Continue to develop Thrive Week Initiatives and support the annual event.
  • Increase awareness of Healthy-U initiatives that are developed for all employees.
  • Continue to provide crisis support for employees, including grief counsellors, workplace training for suicide awareness and prevention, critical incident debriefing and workshops on adequate self-care.
  • Promote Manulife “Mental Health Training,” a 30-minute online training module available to all employees to raise awareness about mental health.
  • Improve communications mechanisms to share updated information regarding benefits, services and wellness initiatives.
• Work with Manulife to address feedback gathered through the anonymous surveys completed by employees who have utilized short-term and long-term disability services
12 to 36 Month Action Plan

To encourage employee well-being, we will

- Continue to develop and offer health and wellness initiatives
  - Develop health and wellness initiatives for employees, such as departmental health challenges and team-based health and wellness events.
  - Initiate health and wellness pilots based on existing VIU demographics and benefit usage.
  - Continue to provide educational opportunities and building awareness about mental health literacy and well-being for employees.
- Strengthen the VIU Community through the lens of the Okanagan Charter
- Develop a mechanism by which employees can suggest new practices, tools and training
- Implement an ongoing communications strategy to promote the well-being initiatives at VIU
Invitation for Action:
Advance Operational Effectiveness and Innovation

What?
An effective organization is one that can achieve its goals in an efficient and innovative manner. At VIU we are committed to an effective Integrated Planning Process. To be innovative, we must cultivate a learning culture where we learn from situations that do not go as planned and develop innovative solutions and resilience through all our experiences. Ideally, we align the way we work with appropriate resources and services. This practice will allow us to support institutional activities in a sustainable manner.

Why?
VIU is continually growing and evolving to meet the needs of our community and our student population. With such a dynamic environment, ongoing co-creation and communication of VIU’s goals and overall vision align the mandate of the University with department activity. Moreover, this process enables VIU not only to be flexible, innovative and agile but also to build further resiliency of the institution and its employees. A reasonable work capacity that allows for operational effectiveness and resilience provides the opportunity for employees to contribute their best and for VIU to support the character, achievements, strengths and principles of our community.
Our Foundation and Commitment

VIU has exceptional and highly motivated people who want to help the organization evolve. We recognize that reasonable work volume allows people to be resilient and contribute their best. We recognize that scholars on campus have expertise in and conduct research on resiliency. We can tap into this knowledge and research to utilize within our own community.

VIU’s Integrated Planning Process ensures an effective integration of vision and direction-setting throughout the University. The Integrated Planning Process recognizes VIU’s history, builds on our institutional strengths and moves the University forward by engaging the community in deliberate planning activities that are integrated across the institution.

We are committed to improving internal processes, systems and approaches to achieve institutional objectives while addressing current concerns about work capacity. One means is through the development of standard operating procedures for our work. We will enhance our institutional human resources policies and guidelines. Moreover, we will communicate clearly about VIU’s mission, vision, values and principles with links to standards and expectations that will support employees.

We will act to increase the positivity and resilience of teams throughout our organization through all of the Invitations for Action within the People Plan. We can improve our team work by supporting each other, developing clear objectives, improving role clarity and holding positive meetings. These practices will also assist in our commitment to advancing innovation.

We are committed to creating a culture of innovation and to being an exemplary learning organization.

At the heart of the concept of Operational Effectiveness is fairness, equity and respect for all employees. The following story illustrates how a department embarked on a process to build this foundation.
Creating Fairness Through Process and Policy Improvement

At the heart of the concept of Operational Effectiveness is fairness, equity and respect for all employees.

Years ago, a desire to develop a respectful, equitable approach to policies and procedures led VIU’s English Department to create a handbook, thereby improving the department’s operational effectiveness.

“We wanted to improve departmental policies so professors could be freed up to focus on teaching, rather than caught up in departmental process issues,” explains Dr. Marni Stanley, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

Stanley, along with others in the English Department, knew transparency was key for the process to succeed.

“Any changes that were going to be made had to be made for good reasons, backed up by proper research and good governance best practices,” she says.

The process began with a deep dive into several years’ worth of meeting minutes.

“We needed to know where we had been from an objective perspective,” she says. “So, we assigned workload to a senior department member to go through and analyze all our historical meeting minutes.”

Recommendations came forward on how to ensure workloads were equitable, voices were heard, and responses to concerns were no longer “because that’s how we have always done it.”

New policies were written for meeting agendas, a term length was developed for the Chair position, and mechanisms were created for people to bring forward issues or concerns.

“The result was a handbook outlining policies and procedures that apply equally to everyone,” Stanley says. “In a department this size, you are never going have every single person happy about what decisions are made, but everyone knows that the rules are fair and everyone can expect the same level of respectful discourse. It also gives us a set of policies to rely on with regards to student behavior and challenges like mobile phones in the classroom.”

All the policies are amendable, and the handbook is updated annually to reflect the year’s revisions.

Such a marked change occurred that then Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities Ross MacKay launched an initiative for each department to complete a handbook template based on the English Department’s model.

“We spend less time in meetings we don’t need to attend, we have more fairness across the department, and now throughout the faculty,” Stanley says. “People from other institutions have learned about our success and are asking for the templates. We know these operational challenges are in no way unique to VIU, but it is great to be tackling them.”
What Does Success Look Like?

We are successful when

- The institution is achieving its goals, while you are contributing your best and going home with energy, fulfilment and a sense of balance.
- When things do not go as planned, we learn from the situation and develop innovative solutions.
- With proper planning and suitable resources, you have the capacity, support and resilience to reach your goals.
- Meetings are positive, efficient and effective.

12-Month Action Plan

To advance operational effectiveness & innovation, we will

- Create a short-term task group with the mandate to undertake improvements to support employee and organizational effectiveness
  - Establish the task group and targeted sub-groups that have clear mandates, roles, supports and timelines. Pull together individuals for this group who have demonstrated capability in operational effectiveness.
  - Address the abundance of ad hoc activities and the need for clear procedures and guidelines.
  - Develop and utilize training and educational opportunities as a key means of increasing employee and organizational effectiveness.
  - In response to changing student body and academic workloads, consider strategies for blended delivery, reduced marking and student-directed assessment.
  - Develop and communicate strategies and best practices to address leave coverage and backfill challenges.
  - When evolving past practices, ensure employees are equipped with training, information, policies and procedures.
- Create a People Plan Implementation Council to ensure active and ongoing implementation of action items
  - Provide ongoing guidance on institutional human resources initiatives.
  - Conduct quarterly meetings to obtain input and feedback.
  - Provide updates to the VIU community on a bi-annual basis regarding the implementation of the People Plan strategies.
To advance operational effectiveness & innovation, we will

• Seek advice from the operational effectiveness task group on processes and structures for prioritization of institutional initiatives
• Engage members of the organizational effectiveness task group in supporting department leads (through dialogue and materials)
  • Craft strategic plans that take into account organizational effectiveness, work capacity and resiliency.
• Improve organizational effectiveness with protocols and processes
  • Use institutional templates to be provided by Human Resources.
  • Establish standard operating procedures to save time.
  • Establish organizational commitment for reasonable timelines and expectations.
  • Develop clear procedures, role clarification, guidelines and rationale for new jobs and new hires.
  • Provide training on how to make meetings positive and effective.
• Articulate how VIU can encourage innovation, entrepreneurial approaches and risk tolerance, and establish institutional commitments to measurable actions that support a learning culture
• Direct managers and supervisors to report annually on effectiveness actions underway as a component of their annual performance review and development process
• Establish protocol where relevant members of regional campuses receive updates on changes to policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures
• Expand student experiential learning and employment opportunities in ancillary services, academic and administrative areas, and elsewhere within the University
• Enhance institutional employee-related policies and guidelines, such as the Standards of Conduct for Employees
Appendix

Further Considerations for Institutional Success

In addition to the Five Invitations for Action that emerged through the People Plan survey, town halls, focus groups and World Cafés, feedback was received on workplace environmental challenges. The primary areas were parking, IT systems and infrastructure, facilities maintenance and cleanliness, and budget constraints.

We are currently undertaking various initiatives to address these concerns. Projects AURORA and Borealis are intended to replace legacy information systems and VIU’s underlying IT infrastructure. The new Health and Science Building and the new Automotive and Marine Trades Redevelopment project created new classrooms, state of the art research and teaching laboratory spaces, new offices and student common spaces.

VIU’s Five-Year Capital Plan calls for significant infrastructural initiatives, such as a new gym, Phase 2 of the Health and Science Centre and ongoing operational improvements.

The additional feedback you provided to us in this area is summarized below as specific considerations for Institutional Success:

- You are interested in being assured that service area annual and multi-year plans, such as facilities and IT, address current employee concerns and that each area provides updates on initiatives undertaken to address them.
- You have concerns regarding the Nanaimo campus versus regional campuses in terms of funding, program and course offerings and staffing allocations.
- Considerations regarding IT and technology supported service delivery include
  - The need to develop further technology solutions to help address inefficiencies, to promote departmental cooperation and to better integrate regional campuses.
  - The need to create remote classrooms.
  - The need to increase online training options for employees.
- You would like to be informed of our sustainability strategy.
- You asked that we
  - Focus facilities attention on minor renovations to address current deficiencies and to enhance/brighten spaces on campus.
  - Communicate the building cleaning and maintenance standards as well as expectations of the maintenance contractor.
  - Have cleaning supplies available for emergency use.
  - Encourage the use of technological means to alert of needed facilities repairs.
  - Schedule classes for less overlap to reduce parking challenges.
  - Consider a graduated parking fee structure based on employee income.
Acknowledgements

This Plan is the result of many hours of work from a large number of people. However, we would be remiss if we did not start by thanking everyone who took time to participate in the consultation activities—without this participation there is no basis for the People Plan. Thank you for caring about making VIU a better place for you and your colleagues to work.

The creation of the Plan has taken two academic years, and many people have been involved from the very beginning to the very end. To those, we are grateful for your time, professionalism, insights, expertise and desire to see the Plan released and put into action. These individuals are listed below by their role.

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Special Recognition

To Sylvie Lafreniere who oversaw the VIU Employee Survey with rigour in a way that provided us with much of the data we needed to begin our analysis.

To Laurie Dean for the endless hours of writing, planning, research and data analysis.

To Maxwell Stevenson and Tine Reimers for their expertise in running the focus groups.

To Pam Shaw and the Masters of Community Planning Students who ran the World Café and performed the initial data analysis.

To Cynthea Masson who provided editorial advice.

To the Marketing and Communications team for making the People Plan readable, inviting and on VIU’s brand.

Sincerely,

Dan VanderSluis,  
Associate Vice-President Human Resources