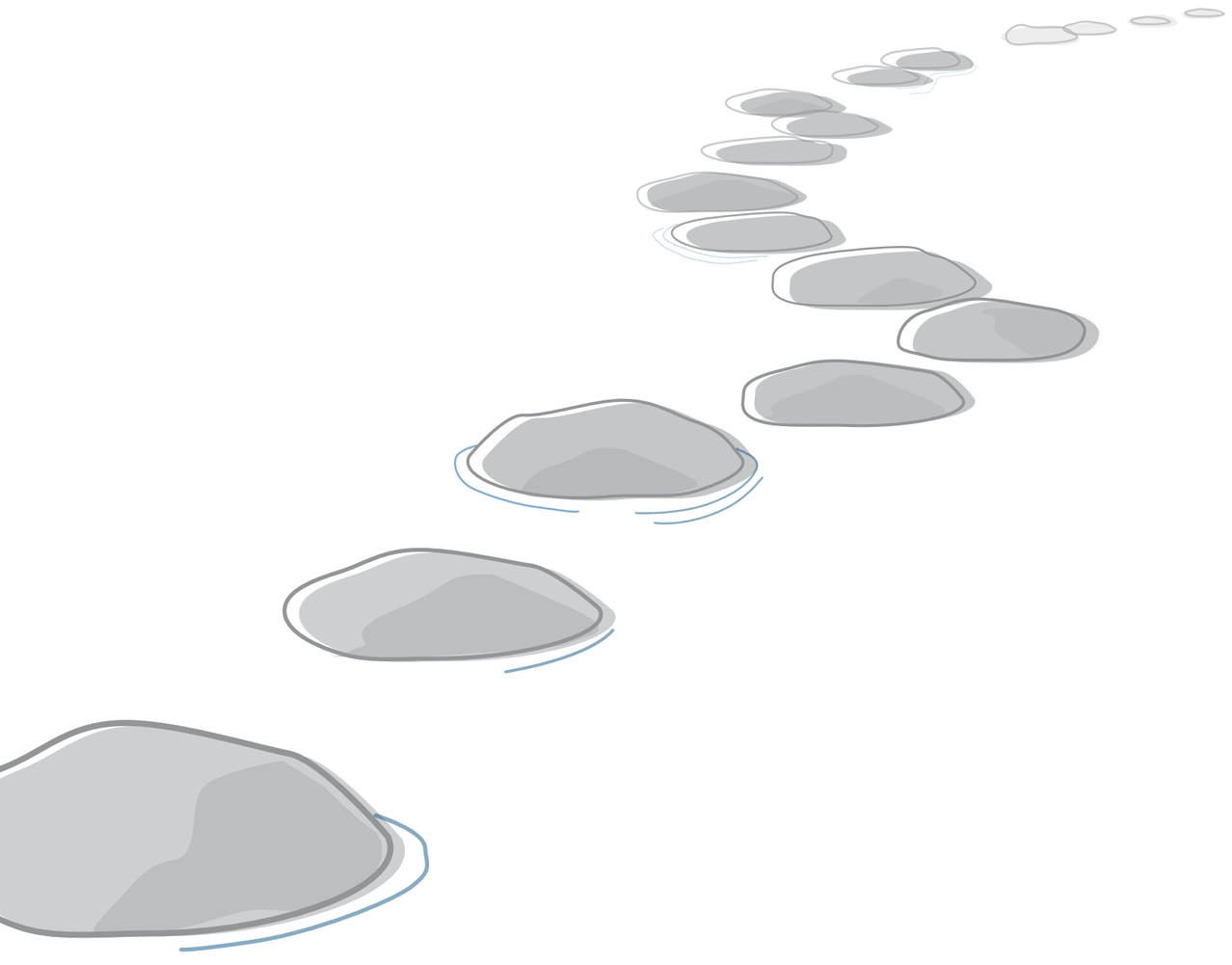
The University of British Columbia

ACADEMIC FUTURES

| 2023

December 2023

We honour, celebrate and thank the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), on whose traditional, ancestral and unceded territory the UBC Vancouver campus has the privilege to be situated. The xʷməθkʷəy̓əm have been stewards and caretakers of this land since time immemorial; to acknowledge and support this important role, UBC strives toward building a meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial partnership.



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Foreword

1.0

Higher education is changing rapidly as the world faces challenges such as population growth, declining biodiversity, inequality, and climate change. Escalating geopolitical tensions and the COVID-19 pandemic have further impacted our sense of security. However, knowledge and research tools have never been more advanced, and technology continues to accelerate change. Artificial intelligence and machine learning present both great potential and unknown risks.

At such a time, it is bold – yet never more necessary – to plan, ask and pose answers for pressing questions about what our students will want, and what our society will need, not just next week or next year but in the unknowable decades to come. Accordingly, in 2021, UBC launched a multi-year, comprehensive planning and engagement process designed to deliver Campus Vision 2050[1].

In parallel, the Academic Futures project was launched to ensure that the university's potential academic outlook is carefully considered and used to inform the planning for the physical evolution of the campus.

UBC has created a number of academic and non-academic plans and frameworks in the past five years, including UBC's Strategic Plan (2018-2028), the Indigenous Strategic Plan, the Inclusion Action Plan, as well as report recommendations from the Task Forces on Anti-Racism & Inclusive Excellence, Transgender Two-Spirit & Gender Diversity, and Climate Emergency, and various other plans. Additionally, Faculties and Vice-President portfolios have strategic plans that guide the academic directions of their respective units. Academic Futures aims to build upon these plans and amalgamate their visions to create a responsive, longer-term planning practice, including ongoing experiments to test ideas that will allow UBC to continue to be distinctive and transformative in the decades to come.

Although Academic Futures has been Vancouver-focused, the alignment and synergies with UBC Okanagan, distributed hospital sites, Robson Square, Great Northern Way, and the planning for UBC at Surrey were discussed.

This report is intended to be a first step in an ongoing and iterative process to contemplate possible futures and to test potential strategies that will enable UBC to maintain its advantage as a globally renowned research university. The hope is that the result will be a UBC well-positioned to inspire people, ideas and actions for a better world.

[1]Campus Vision 2050 is an ambitious, long-range plan for how best to transform the physical spaces on UBC's Vancouver campus to support students, faculty, and staff, as well as the residents and, critically, the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people on whose traditional territory the campus sits.

Executive Summary

2.0

This report provides an overview of the Academic Futures project, which took place from April 2022 to April 2023. It delves into the project's process, governance, guiding principles, key assumptions, and outcomes (experiments). The goal of Academic Futures was to inform physical infrastructure planning processes at UBC Vancouver. It should serve as a high-level framework, enabling the UBC community to contemplate the academic implications and opportunities that may arise from both expected and unexpected changes, and to plan for outcomes that will enhance UBC's reputation and influence in the next 10 to 30 years.

Led by a diverse co-design team, supported by three advisory circles representing students, post-doctoral fellows, early career faculty, and staff, the Academic Futures process examined UBC's current academic plans and frameworks and conducted a comprehensive review of the external higher education landscape and trends. This led to the formulation of a problem statement to facilitate the discussions:

How might we co-steward the academic future of the UBC Vancouver campus to continue to be distinctive and transformative in the next 10 to 30 years?

A set of principles and assumptions were established to guide the process, decisions, and outcomes of the project. Among the assumptions, for example, is UBC's commitment to uphold its reputation as a globally renowned research university, prioritizing research that is increasingly equitable, diverse, respectful and inclusive. Simultaneously, UBC aims to drive positive social and economic change through new knowledge and applications, while advocating for sustainability, planetary health, and climate solutions. The institution also recognizes the importance of serving an increasingly diverse and discerning student population, who may be seeking life-long learning delivered in flexible formats, pathways, and options.

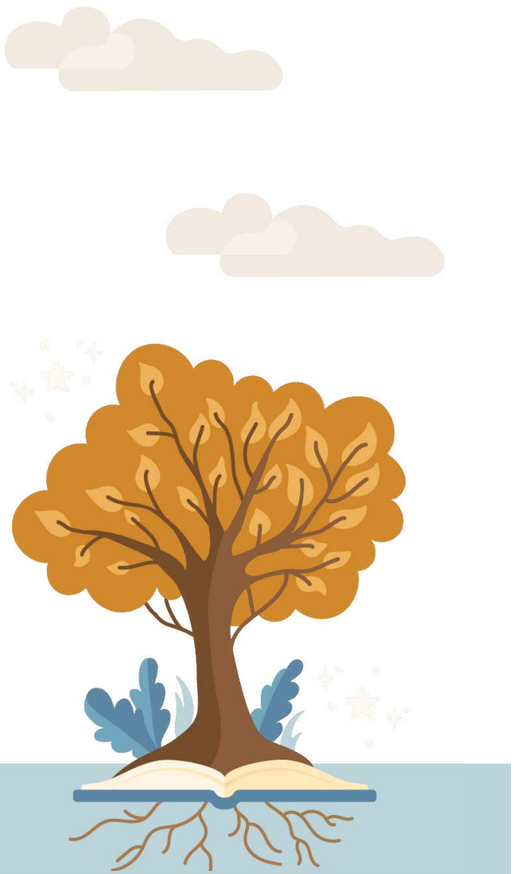
One of the main challenges was to anticipate prospective transformations, disruptions, and opportunities that may occur in the next 30 years. To address this, the co-design team explored four hypothetical scenarios, envisioning how a leading institute could evolve in the coming decades. These scenarios were not intended to be predictions, but rather as thought experiments to uncover potential challenges or opportunities that need to be considered.

As a key outcome of the Academic Futures process, a set of experiments was developed to test ideas and gather information on their feasibility, sustainability, and scalability. The proposed experiments focus on the following areas: Expanding Indigenous Place-making for Learning; Exploring 'UBC One' Pathways; Broadening Alternative Assessment Approaches; Advancing Experiential Education; Reimagining Work-Integrated Learning; Extending Part-time Learning Pathways; and Promoting Collaborative, Impact-oriented Graduate Education and Research.

The Academic Futures process is designed to be iterative, recognizing the need for adaptability and continuity when planning for a complex institution like UBC over the next 30 years. The purpose of this process and report is to cultivate a long view and a sense of urgency in ensuring that UBC continues to be distinctive, transformative, inclusive, and globally influential in the decades to come.

UBC Context

3.0 UBC is a globally renowned university, contributing world-leading research, providing distinctive excellence in teaching and learning, attracting outstanding people domestically and internationally, and collaborating with pre-eminent universities and organizations around the world. The university is guided by its Strategic Plan, Shaping UBC's Next Century, which sets out the following Vision, Purpose and Values, and reaffirms our dedication to Indigenous Engagement and Reconciliation, to the advancement of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion across all communities, and to strengthening commitments to climate justice and sustainability.



3.1 **VISION**
Inspiring people, ideas and actions for a better world

3.2 **PURPOSE**
Pursuing excellence in research, learning and engagement to foster global citizenship and advance a sustainable and just society across British Columbia, Canada and the world

3.3 **VALUES**

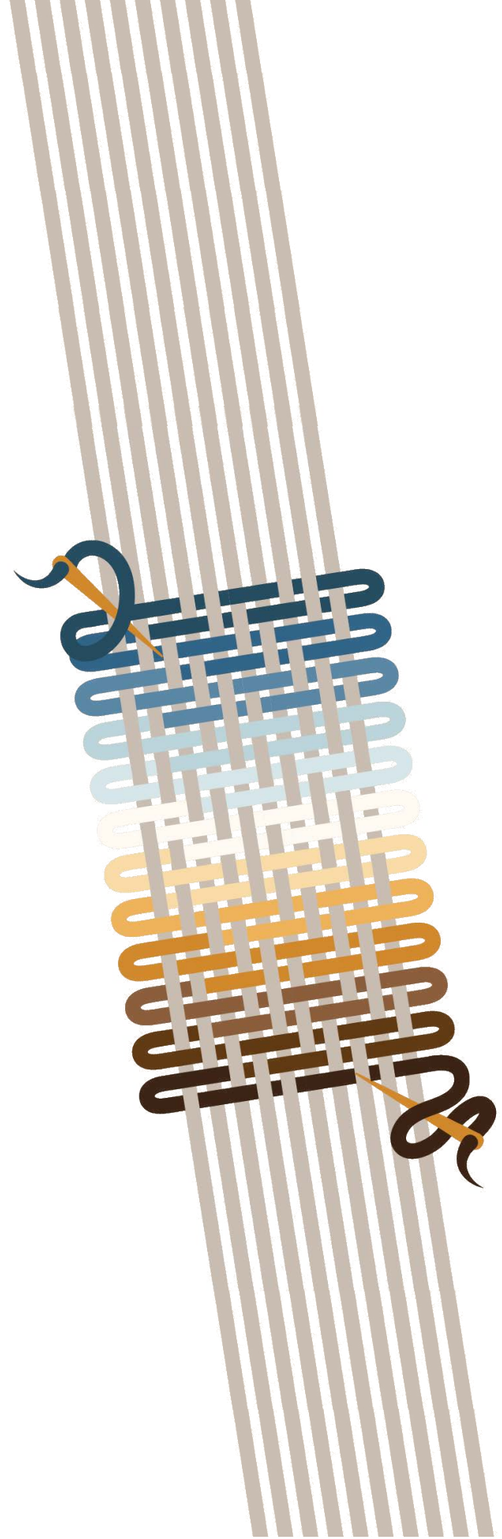
Excellence – A profound and aspirational value: the quality of striving to be, and being, outstanding

Integrity – A moral value: the quality of being honest, ethical and truthful

Respect – An essential and learned value: regard felt or shown towards different people, ideas and actions

Academic freedom – A unique value of the academy: a scholar's freedom to express ideas through respectful discourse and the pursuit of open discussion, without risk of censure

Accountability – A personal and public value: being responsible for our conduct and actions and delivering upon our respective and reciprocal commitments



Our Commitments to the Future

4.0

HONOURING PLACE AND INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

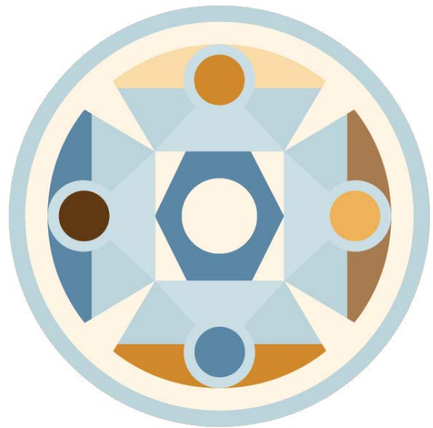
4.1

The UBC Vancouver campus is located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. The UBC Okanagan campus is located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation. The xʷməθkʷəy̓əm and Syilx peoples have been stewards and caretakers of these territories since time immemorial. As stated in the 2020 Indigenous Strategic Plan, UBC is committed to addressing its history and to building meaningful, reciprocal and mutually beneficial partnerships with the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and the Syilx peoples.

4.2

NURTURING A CULTURE OF EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

A culture of inclusion and respect is essential to creating a rich learning and research environment that fosters creativity and innovation. Excellence in research, teaching and community engagement can only be achieved through the meaningful participation of diverse peoples and the integration of diverse perspectives. The integral relationship between quality and diversity is at the core of the concept of inclusive excellence. UBC is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive and supportive place for all members of our community, especially students, faculty, and staff from historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized groups to contribute to and participate in the life and work of the university.



4.3

STRIVING FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

UBC is dedicated to actioning the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and combating climate change. As a leading centre in climate research, teaching, and learning, we lead by example in creating sustainable solutions and inspire others to act. It is our goal to foster environmental stewardship and social responsibility through academic programs, research endeavors, community engagement, and responsible campus operations. Together, we can drive positive change and contribute to a more sustainable, just, and equitable future.

Introduction

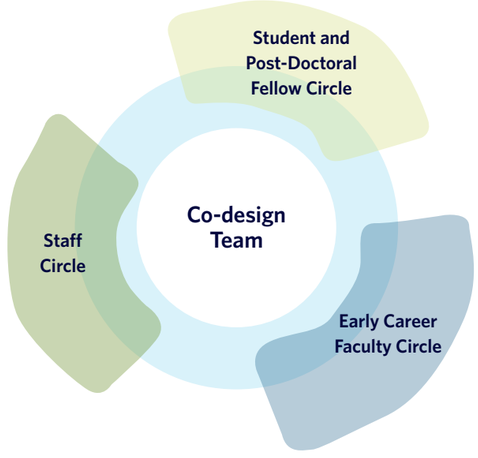
5.0

This report outlines the process, key assumptions, and results of the Academic Futures project undertaken between April 2022 and April 2023. Academic Futures was conceived as a high-level framework, enabling the community to come together and reflect on what UBC could/may be in 10 to 30 years.

In a world where the academic landscape is changing at an accelerating pace, it is clear that any effective long-term plan must include a dynamic framework for updating planning assumptions and institutional goals. For UBC, we strive to innovate and respond to local and global changes, while continuing to be a leader in teaching, learning, research, and innovation for a brighter future.

The Academic Futures process was not designed to envisage a precise amount or type of campus development, but to consider more deeply the nature of the institution we want and expect. This report is not an Academic Plan, but a thought-starter for UBC's future – a guide and, we hope, an instigation to treat planning as an ongoing opportunity and responsibility, to always maintain our focus on the implications of institutional and societal changes, even as we implement short-term projects and update long-term goals.

Our first undertaking in establishing an Academic Futures process was to assemble a co-design team with broad representation across the campus communities, ranging from senior academics and Deans to early career faculty members, students, postdoctoral fellows and staff (Appendix 1).



To complement the co-design team, we also assembled three advisory circles, soliciting assistance from three crucial communities that are heavily invested in UBC's future and who represent a broad cross-section of the complete UBC academic community: students and post-doctoral fellows; early career faculty; and staff (also Appendix 1). To ensure continuity of discussions, at least one representative from each of the advisory circles was also asked to be a member of the co-design team.

We began by setting the context, reviewing the Vision, Purpose and Values enshrined in the UBC Strategic Plan: Shaping UBC's Next Century, as well as our collective and institutional Commitments to the Future – to Honouring Place and Indigenous Reconciliation, Nurturing a Culture of Equity and Inclusive Excellence, and Striving for Sustainable Solutions.

We also considered a broad environmental scan of the changing higher education landscape – which in turn led to a series of workshops centered around the evolving UBC community, the future of teaching and learning, the future of research, the future of work, and the new and evolving academic experience. With that input, we contemplated what changes we needed to consider, prepare for, and embrace as we think about the next 10 to 30 years.

Throughout the process, we looked at a broad-ranging list of questions, including (but not limited to):

- *How will digital technology transform learning and research?*
- *How will we adapt to new modes of working, thinking and operation?*
- *How do we anticipate and meet changing pedagogical and research requirements?*
- *What kinds of spaces and places will we require – by renovation? New construction?*
- *How can we leverage our growing regional presence and fulfill our responsibility as a public institution?*

Working from this list, and a host of other considerations, we then worked to refine the ultimate question: "What problem are we trying to solve?" After several iterations we landed on:

> **How might we co-steward the academic future of the UBC Vancouver campus to continue to be distinctive and transformative in the next 10 to 30 years?**

To complement the problem statement, we drafted a list of eight key principles – to not only guide our discussions but also frame the future to which we aspire.

As the co-design team worked, we became increasingly conscious of the broad range of possible futures and the varying implications for change, depending on what drivers become most dominant and what choices UBC makes along the road. Accordingly, the team constructed a set of imagined 'what-if' scenarios that helped break down the nebulous task of imagining what the world could be in 30 years and to envision the possibilities and implications.

Finally, the team leveraged these scenarios to brainstorm a list of Experiments that could: test possible future elements to understand which of them may be achievable, sustainable, and preferable; inform policy that would help achieve the best result; and forge a new understanding of what new or revised infrastructure might be required to facilitate the best changes. The most promising of these experiments are identified in the penultimate section of this report.

The continuing challenge of the ongoing academic futures journey will be to maintain the focus on UBC's Academic Future. This report – and the process on which it is based – is not a conclusion, but a starting point, a commitment to planning and institutional innovation that is flexible, iterative and continuous. If UBC is to achieve its potential as Canada's leading post-secondary institution and as an internationally renowned research powerhouse, the whole community must share in the responsibility to consider and inspire our Academic Future.

Background: The Changing Higher Education Landscape

6.0

Understanding the broader context is essential to the success of any planning process. Therefore, it was imperative that the Academic Futures process is well-rooted in the current local, national, and international higher education landscape.

It's difficult to contemplate any planning process in 2023 without harkening back to the unprecedented disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, even before the pandemic, the global higher education community was grappling with an accelerating evolutionary paradigm shift. It is worthwhile to consider some of the major influences and aspirations in the international higher education world, as identified in May 2022 at the 3rd World Higher Education Conference convened by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)[2].

Since 1970, despite total enrollment worldwide rising to 40% from 10%, severe disparities in higher education persist Students from traditionally underrepresented and economically challenged groups continue to have lower access to digital tools and resources that are ubiquitous and ambient to others, and lower graduation rates, with lower performance and reduced labour market opportunities.

As the higher education sector continues to reinvent itself to meet the changing demands of future learners, scholars and employers, we need to consider some trends that have and will continue to affect and disrupt the academic landscape:

- Institutions need to prioritize a rich and diverse learning experience, lift the constraints of disciplines or professional practice, and foster democratic values that optimize human potential.
- Institutions should equip students to engage in inter- and trans-disciplinarity, open dialogue and build the foundations, attitudes, and habits to acknowledge and transcend their own disciplines and fields.
- Continuous learning needs to serve the diverse education needs of youth and adults, with more opportunities for multiple entry and re-entry – including integrated systems with diverse programs and personalized learning pathways that enlarge educational opportunities and build resilience in youths and adults managing changes in the future of work.
- Artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics, collaborative platforms, virtual and augmented reality, the internet of things, and distributional ledger technology (e.g., blockchain and cryptocurrency) offer potential ways of enriching teaching, learning and research, on campus and remotely.

While these changes can expand the range and capacity of higher education institutions, positioning UBC in a more competitive domestic and international environment, they also present new challenges around equity and access, privacy, and ethics, among others. It will be imperative to embrace the opportunities and acknowledge the challenges when planning the future path of the university.

[2] The 3rd World Higher Education Conference brought together stakeholders to define and prepare a roadmap for a new era of higher education. This roadmap aims to respond to the challenges faced by humanity and the planet, with special attention to the global disruption created by the COVID-19.

Principles

7.0

For the ongoing Academic Futures process, the co-design team found it important to supplement the problem statement (*"How might we co-steward the academic future of the UBC Vancouver campus to continue to be distinctive and transformative in the next 10 to 30 years?"*), with a set of principles to guide their thinking, debates, discussions, and decisions.

The principles that follow are connected to the foundational values of the UBC Strategic Plan (2018 – 2028), which include excellence, integrity, respect, academic freedom, and accountability. They also serve as criteria for evaluating the output of the process, ensuring that the ideas under consideration align with and support the identified principles. These principles are designed to advance us towards meeting the SDGs and have also embedded relevant academic and social needs that have transpired across Canada and the world in the last few years. Our goal is to embody UBC's purpose of *"pursuing excellence in research, learning and engagement, to foster global citizenship and advance a sustainable and just society across British Columbia, Canada and the world."*

In all aspects of advancing our academic mission, UBC commits to honour and attend to diverse peoples and perspectives. We aim to understand and safeguard what Indigenous peoples and other historically, persistently or systemically marginalized groups value most in education and research. As we transform our intentions into actions, we shall be guided by the following principles[3]:

1 RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP that is responsible, relevant and accessible.
UBC researchers are dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and addressing problems through both disciplinary and interdisciplinary excellence while focusing together to build a sustainable future for the planet and all its inhabitants.

2 TEACHING AND LEARNING that is enriched and holistic.
UBC educators strive to mentor and foster an open, challenging, and inspiring environment, through which learners develop deep disciplinary and cross-disciplinary knowledge, cultural awareness and sensitivity, and a broader range of competencies and capabilities.

3 RESPECT for land, for community, for knowledge, for academic freedom.
In all its relationships, UBC respects the contexts that diverse community groups bring. We respect the contributions of ancestors and acknowledge the long-term impacts of today's decisions on future generations.

4 LEADERSHIP that is purposeful, candid, and responsive.
As we seek to improve governance and decision-making, UBC leaders will endeavour to listen, learn, and act on inconvenient truths and complex realities on our campus and beyond.

5 OPPORTUNITIES that are local, global, and meaningful.
UBC educates global citizens, champions access, and offers distinctive pathways for learning, growth, and self-determination, including for historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized communities. Our academic offerings and facilities are designed to lead to the betterment of all.

6 OPENNESS to traditional and innovative ideas.
UBC promotes an environment of creativity, flexibility, and curiosity to solve the complex challenges of today and tomorrow through time-tested methods while prioritizing meaningful community engagement.

7 COURAGE for fullhearted, sincere, and thoughtful actions.
In our fast-changing and unpredictable environment, we aim to be bold yet humble, and to embrace varying perspectives, ideas, experiences, and risks.

8 COLLABORATIONS that are reciprocal, collegial, and joyful.
At UBC, we will connect across disciplines and experiences, building and honouring communities while sharing knowledge and excitement to develop a culture of kinship, dialogue, and trust, locally and globally.

[3]These principles are designed to support the goals and aspirations outlined in the UBC Strategic Plan, serving as a complement to one another.

Assumptions for Our Academic Futures

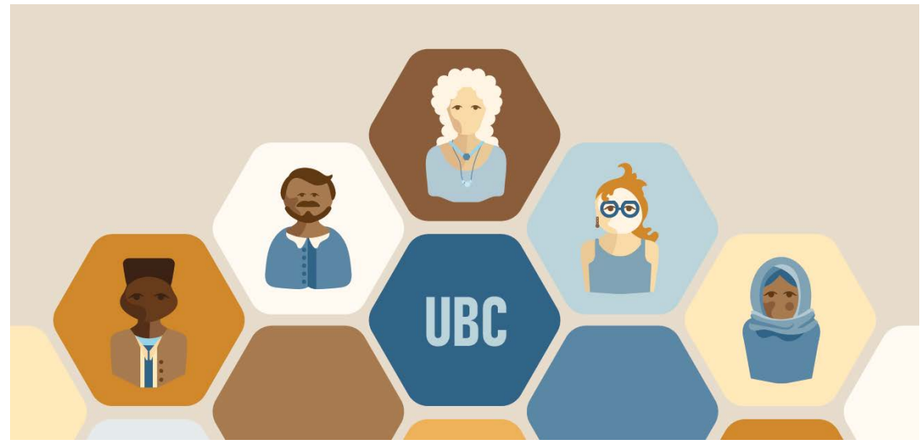
8.0

We began the Academic Futures process by articulating our assumptions as a useful context not only for thinking ahead in a blue-sky way but also to understand the group's respective biases. These assumptions were refined throughout the Academic Futures process and it will be essential to continue to evaluate, to confirm if assumptions continue to ring true, and to adjust as circumstances change or assumptions become obsolete.

It is important to stress that the assumptions in this section are neither predictions nor aspirations for UBC's future. Rather, they are selected speculations of what may prevail at UBC and in the wider higher education sector in the next three decades based on current trends in teaching, learning, and research, as well as the changing technological, geopolitical, and social climates.

The following is an abbreviated list of high-level assumptions, which represent a foundation for discussion and are offered here for context.

8.1 GENERAL ACADEMIC ASSUMPTIONS[4]



Retention and renewal of faculty and staff will continue to be a priority

UBC will continue to strive to attract and retain outstanding faculty and staff to secure our most aspirational academic future – while recognizing the impact of workload and life balance. UBC will have to face the challenges of competitive salaries, housing affordability, childcare demands, investments in traditional start-up and support, and high-quality research and teaching environments for academic and professional careers. The new challenges and opportunities of hybrid work will also affect talent recruitment and retention.

The campus environment and global awareness will become even more important

We must continue to be responsive to the changing needs of learners and continue to build on the best of our disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs, incorporating elements of experiential, applied and integrative learning. Learning should be curiosity-driven, linking research with teaching to optimize knowledge creation and advancement. Along with engendering broad knowledge and skills, local-global connections are essential. Student development, responsibility and leadership are paramount.

[4]Some of the assumptions presented in this section have been adopted from an earlier version of UBC's Academic Plan: Think about it. June 2000. pp 4-11 authored by Members of the Academic Plan Advisory Committee. Provost at the time: Dr. Barry McBride.

Broadened cultural awareness and commitment to inclusivity

We see future demands for broadening cultural awareness through research, teaching, learning and community engagement. This will include Indigenization of curriculum and programs, as well as increasing literacy in Black, Asian, LGBTQIA2S+ and Disability studies.

UBC will continue to focus meeting the SDGs as we advocate for sustainability, planetary health and actively seek climate solutions

UBC will strive to be a centre of excellence to conduct research, learn about and implement solutions to address the climate emergency. We will foster an environment that will attract the best professoriate, and create educational programs, research projects, and collaborate with local, national, regional, and global communities. There will be numerous academic pathways for scholars to engage, interact, learn, and research, with sustainability at the forefront of academic life.

8.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING ASSUMPTIONS

Hybrid/multi-access learning is here to stay

While the learning modality shifted almost entirely to remote access during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for the return to in-person teaching and learning demonstrates its continued desirability and value. UBC is choosing to build on this in-person value proposition while continuing or expanding online offerings where the pedagogical approach can support program needs and learner contexts. We also expect some deliberately designed hybrid and multi-access courses, with a focus on increasing access[5], affordability and an enhanced learning experience.

Life-long and continuous learning is the new normal

Given the evolving workplace and demographics, we anticipate that an increasingly diverse learner population will enter the higher education ecosystem, for different purposes, at different times, and with different needs. Moving away from a model in which most UBC students enter full-time programs immediately following high school, working while learning will become increasingly common and well-supported. Higher education learning will also be more continuous – life-long as opposed to one-time. This reflects an accelerating need, and appetite, for evolving workplace skills and knowledge.

[5]'Hybrid,' in this context, means a mix of in-person and online experiences across courses, programs and student support activities, with all students following the same modalities. In contrast, 'multi-access' permits either in-person or online activities for students, as designed by the instructor.

Learners will expect holistic, personalized, accessible, and flexible learning experiences and pathways

Social changes, technological advances and evolving workplace requirements are likely to increase learner demand for more flexible and personalized learning and teaching options. For example, more learners may wish to skip or delay contiguous four-year degrees in favour of micro-credentialing, competency-based education, nano-degrees, and curated degrees. This could require the unbundling of tuition, with fees instead itemized separately for teaching, campus experience, and so on – raising economic implications if some students choose to opt out of some of the traditional aspects of university life.

The COVID-19 pandemic has already forced an intensive experiment in adjusting the learning and teaching paradigm, generating hard-earned insights into what was effective and what was not, from the different perspectives of teachers, learners, academic units and the institution.

Increasing demand for learning by doing and curiosity-driven learning

While there is always strong demand for learning by doing, there is a clear and increasing appetite among learners and prospective employers for integration of higher and vocational education – a new blend of theoretical and applied learning. This challenges the traditional university model. With some exceptions (e.g., teaching in many health professions), few university programs currently include extensive periods in practice, and work-experience programs are hard to scale up in the university's current operating model.

As a research-intensive university, UBC has a significant advantage in infusing curiosity-driven learning and research-based teaching, including land-based research, into our curriculum. Our professoriate has the capacity to bring their research insights into the learning environment, and to involve students in the research mission. This will further distinguish UBC and contribute to the UBC value proposition.

Meaningful indigenization of curriculum and programs

Indigenous ways of knowing, culture, histories, experiences, and worldviews will be embedded in curriculum delivered across Faculties, programs, and campuses. UBC will continue to partner with Indigenous communities locally and globally to develop accredited post-secondary Indigenous knowledge programs that can be delivered on campus as well as in the larger community. Faculty may increasingly connect curriculum to the local land and language – including integration of Indigenous and other traditional knowledge systems into western paradigms, incorporating local knowledge in a way that demonstrates UBC's respect for local Indigenous people and its commitment to reconciliation. This will strengthen local relationships, opening yet more opportunity to work with Elders and community experts to expand curriculum further.

International student mobility will rise in a more competitive global market

International student mobility has been growing at an unprecedented rate. Over 5.4 million students were studying abroad globally in 2017, a nearly threefold increase from just over 2 million in 2000. And despite a COVID-induced pause, this figure is forecast to grow to 8 million by 2025[6]. That movement may also supplement virtually as cultural and regulatory resistance to programs offered online by foreign institutions diminishes. Aided by technology, learners have myriad educational options that were once blocked by language, geography, costs, etc.

Education bolsters global stability, advancing multicultural awareness and understanding, and student exchanges increase the potential for international connection, so a competitive market in international higher education holds a potential benefit for all. As an established, high-performing international research institution in an open and stable democracy, UBC can expect to maintain a competitive advantage in that environment.

Technology innovations and disruptions will accelerate

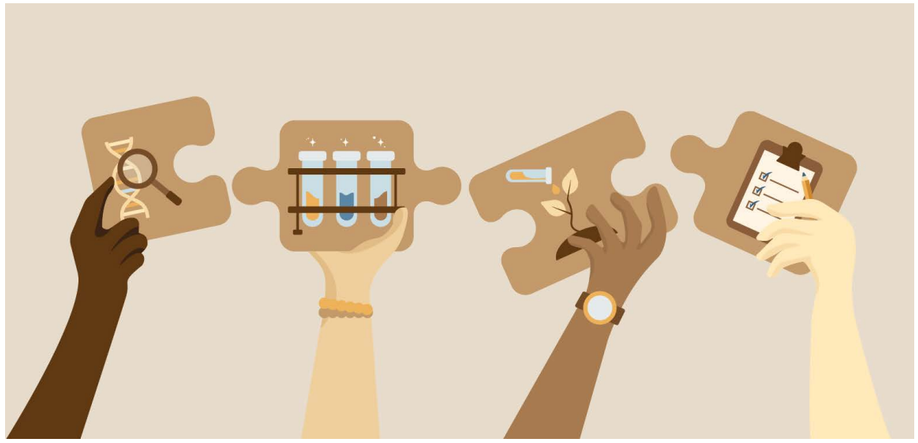
Technological advancement including artificial intelligence (AI), augmented and virtual reality (AR & VR), internet of things (IoT), automation, and robotics, are transforming businesses and will contribute to spur economic growth via contributions to productivity. While these have the potential to help address societal challenges ranging from health to climate change, new technologies will also disrupt the workplace, forcing more mid-career learners to acquire new skills and adapt to the increasingly capable machines alongside them.

These innovations will also improve educational options. The written word is already being accompanied by video, mixed reality, and simulations, with realistic holograms a possibility. Smart, discipline-based digital assistants for every subject open up the potential for personalized learning at scale, monitored by advanced learning analytics. And learners may access an increasing number of these opportunities remotely, especially as a new generation quickly adapts and incorporates these features.

[6] UNESCO, WHEC2022, Beyond Limits – New Ways of Reinventing Higher Education

8.3

RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS



UBC will continue to grow as a research powerhouse of national and international scope and importance

As an established research powerhouse, UBC can expect to build on its world-class research performance across many fields. Our research has had a profound impact on nearly all areas of society. Continued success will require both disciplinary depth and collaboration within and across disciplines and communities. It will also require resources to enable researchers to continue to achieve excellence in a highly competitive landscape.

Research will be more equitable, diverse, and inclusive

UBC is a leader in developing the principles and practices that define a collaborative and inclusive research culture, which supports mentorship, scholarship, discovery, and creativity. Addressing the problems facing society requires the contributions of all, and UBC will continue to encourage diversity in perspectives and approaches, supporting a research culture that interacts positively and respectfully with Indigenous people and Indigenous knowledge, and that welcomes the participation of members of other historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized groups. We also will prioritize inclusive, transparent, and collaborative science, at all stages of discovery and mobilization.

Working with other research institutions, funding organizations, and communities, UBC will develop and promote research excellence that honours the three principles: equity (fairness); diversity (representation); and inclusion (valued participation). In this way, knowledge transfer/ mobilization/ exchange, multiple ways of knowing, and non-traditional research methodologies and outputs will stand as cornerstones in Canadian research.

By removing systemic barriers to accessing research funding and research opportunities, as well as embracing a diversity of peoples and perspectives, UBC will enhance the participation and retention of outstanding researchers, empowering the full breadth of UBC's scientific talent.

UBC will drive positive social and economic change through new knowledge and solutions

UBC recognizes its responsibility to make academic knowledge more accessible, understandable, and actionable. The university strives to be a unique, engaged partner in collaborative research programs and in the sharing of research outputs that enrich the lives of local and global communities. Our research will contribute to local and national debates, provide unique insights, and address complex global challenges, including climate change, migration, racism, discrimination, inequality, and the complexities of emerging technologies such as AI.

UBC will work with communities, businesses, and governments to create and mobilize knowledge to improve people's lives. From influential publications that push the boundaries of knowledge to new inventions with commercial applications, from discoveries that influence public policy to new developments in medical practice, we see UBC becoming an ever-more-effective catalyst for positive social and economic change.

Open Science will be widely adopted

Building on the principles of academic freedom, research integrity and scientific excellence, UBC will continue to promote science that is more accessible, inclusive and transparent, furthering the right of everyone to share in scientific advancement and its benefits as stated in Article 27.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Open Science has the potential of making scientific process more transparent, inclusive, and democratic. It is increasingly recognized as an accelerator for achieving United Nations SDGs and for bridging gaps in science, technology, and innovation.

Enhanced inter-institutional, inter-sectoral, national and international collaborations

While creating value within the institution, UBC will continue to prioritize and support collaborations that benefit our communities and partners, and foster new alliances in areas of shared, strategic importance. Within our campus and many learning and

research sites—and through our connections in BC and beyond—UBC is well positioned to cultivate collaborative efforts within and across institutions and sectors, as well as partnering with federal, provincial, and international partners.

Supporting research that is Indigenous led and promotes Indigenous peoples' self-determination

UBC will work to support to Indigenous research, recognizing the barriers that currently restrict access to research funding, resources and other supports for First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and other Indigenous scholars. We will continue to build relationships with Indigenous scholars and communities; supporting research priorities of Indigenous Peoples; and championing Indigenous leadership, self-determination, and capacity-building in research.

Simultaneously, UBC will continue to respect and uphold the rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determine the management of Indigenous research data.

8.4 ACADEMIC GROWTH ASSUMPTIONS

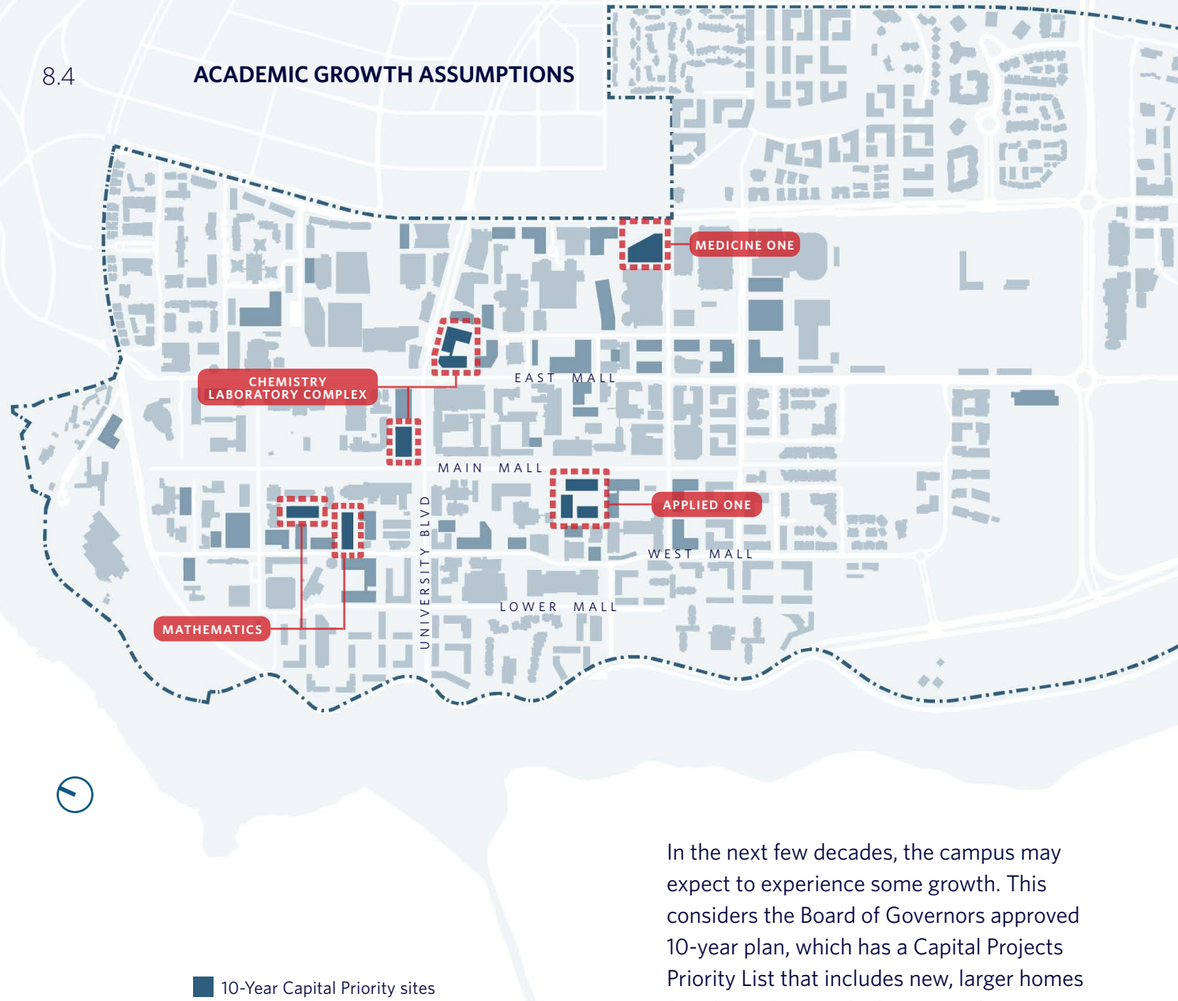


Diagram is for illustrative purposes only. Future design and layout of buildings, streets and open spaces are subject to more detailed planning.

In the next few decades, the campus may expect to experience some growth. This considers the Board of Governors approved 10-year plan, which has a Capital Projects Priority List that includes new, larger homes for Chemistry, Applied One, Medicine One, and Math, as well as planning for the replacement or upgrading of seismically vulnerable facilities. At the same time, many existing spaces may be repurposed to adapt to the changing ways of learning, research and working.

A number of scenarios were developed through researching and analyzing data on domestic and international population projections, admissions trends, as well as student transition rates (K-12 to post-secondary) to understand potential areas of growth for the university.

While it is challenging to predict how learner behaviours and preferences will shift in 30 years, current research suggests that UBC Vancouver has enough capacity to meet increases in enrollment due to population growth. However, potential growth will depend on a combination of demographic trends of traditional learners in BC and Canada, and on how UBC chooses to accommodate different types of learners. For example, it's likely that more older learners will return to university, and that younger learners may stay longer, to attain higher levels of skill and competence.

Although enrollment growth can offer numerous benefits to an institution, it is crucial to consider the challenges that it can pose and approach growth with caution. Enrollment increases may strain resources, infrastructure, and spaces – as well as potentially overburdening faculty members. Additionally, there will be increased pressure to deliver a high-quality educational experience. For instance, some programs may need to be redesigned to accommodate larger classes or to provide more small courses to maintain the same learner experience. Universities must carefully balance their desire to grow with their ability to maintain high academic standards and deliver an enriched learning experience.

As UBC continues to evolve in a rapidly changing academic landscape, the importance of thoughtful growth planning cannot be overstated. While the Vancouver campus has adequate space to accommodate potential academic growth, there are numerous uncertainties and external factors that must be considered. Regular reassessment of assumptions and academic needs will be crucial to ensure that UBC continues to fulfill its academic mandate. As such, a dynamic and flexible approach to growth planning will be necessary for the institution to remain competitive and responsive to the changing trends in higher education.

Experiments

9.0

While exploring our Academic Futures, the co-design team, with input from the three advisory circles, began to generate potential experiments that could be used to explore or demonstrate alternative academic approaches or opportunities. Some ideas that emerged directly supported our goal of *ensuring that UBC will continue to be distinctive and transformative*. Success in such experimentation could give UBC evidence for adjusting its academic planning and practice in the decades to come.

As an institution of research, we want to use this opportunity to conduct pilot initiatives or expand on previously successful pilots, to assess their long-term feasibility, sustainability, scalability, and benefits. These programs and pilots, if successful, could point the way for wider UBC adoption and model success for other institutions of higher education. If not successful as replicable programs, they would nevertheless succeed as experiments, once again helping to inform where UBC should, or should not, apply its focus and resources as the academic landscape evolves.

It is important to note that many of these experiments have been playing out on the campus for some time. Our suggestion is that we focus on supporting and resourcing them, evaluating their effectiveness and scalability, reviewing their impact on other systems and structures, and determining the feasibility of expansion. A high-level description of the seven proposed experiments follows:

Experiment 1:

EXPANDING INDIGENOUS PLACE-MAKING FOR LEARNING

Under Goal 5 of the Indigenous Strategic Plan – Enriching Our Space: Enrich the UBC campus landscape with a stronger Indigenous presence - Actions 19-23 call to include Indigenous spaces in the design of the campus, and particularly that the campus plan integrates spaces for non-traditional ways of learning and knowing into all buildings with Faculty support, helping to build respect for traditional ways of knowing/ communication/ knowledge/ learning/ teaching.

At the same time, ISP Goal 4, UBC has committed to include Indigenous ways of knowing, culture, histories, experiences and worldviews in curriculum delivered across Faculties, programs and campuses. The Indigenous Health Research and Education Garden (IHREG) is located at UBC Farm and the garden's traditional xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) name is xʷc̓ic̓əsəm. With an emphasis on teaching, learning, and research, xʷc̓ic̓əsəm Garden aims to serve educational and research needs related to Indigenous knowledge and its intersections with other ways of knowing.

ACTION

Test the capacity of the concept of xʷc̓ic̓əsəm Garden at UBC Farm to create a series of learning spaces across the UBC Vancouver campus in partnership with Musqueam. Assign specific learning objectives to each space and observe the curriculum and learning connections for place-based learning.

Experiment 2:

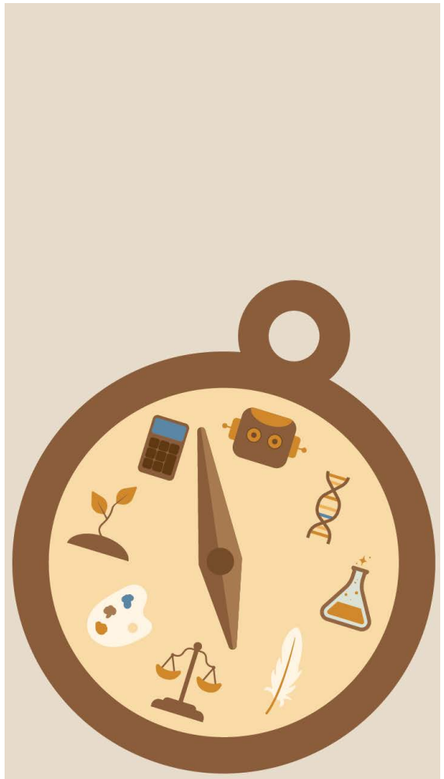
EXPLORING 'UBC ONE' PATHWAYS

Historically, UBC has led in creating successful, integrated first-year learning experiences such as Science One/Arts One/ Land One. These programs are competitive and popular, and students from these programs have provided positive feedback on how the 'One' approach has enabled their subsequent success.

There are many ways to think about a UBC One – there could be a suite of One programs: e.g., Climate One, Health One, Justice One, Community One, Indigenous One, or Artificial Intelligence One. Alternately, we could create a UBC One that would re-consider "new basics" and possible pathways – interdisciplinary learning, traditional ways of knowing, cultural awareness, planetary health – all integrated into a more personalized first-year learning experience.

ACTION

Test the idea of UBC One with a small cohort of students to evaluate the set of skills and competencies that will be most suitable for first year students.



Experiment 3:

BROADENING ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

Currently, final examinations are used by most first and second year courses to gauge a learner's understanding and competency at the end of the course. Many studies suggest that across many disciplines, reasonable alternative assessment tools (e.g. papers, projects, presentations, mind maps, reflections, etc.) can more effectively promote student learning and help them to demonstrate their learning.

ACTION

Review prior Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) projects to see where alternative assessment methodologies have been piloted. Test the idea of wide implementation of alternative assessment approaches (including integrated assessments that allow learners to demonstrate consolidation of concepts across courses) by partnering with a Faculty to expand on existing successful pilots from prior TLEFs to see how widely alternative assessment can be adopted. The age of generative AI represents both a challenge and an opportunity with respect to assessment; these tools can be used to reframe assessment to support authentic learning in various disciplinary contexts.

Experiment 4:

REIMAGINING WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING

UBC's Strategic Plan's Strategy 13: Practical Learning focuses on how we are expanding experiential, work-integrated and extended learning opportunities for students, faculty, staff and alumni.

The UBC Co-op program is a very successful example. It allows students to gain industry work experience (applying their classroom knowledge to hands-on experience), subsidizes the students' education and enables students to try diverse opportunities in determining what they would like to do post university. However, co-op is not available to all students and the current structure does not meet the needs of all disciplines.

ACTION

Test a few ideas with one Faculty that will broaden the work-integrated learning offerings. Explore redesigning some work-integrated learning programs to integrate simultaneous classroom learning and work learning. Explore expanding existing work-integrated learning programming to include a wider range of learning opportunities including shorter internships, multi-student projects, and community engaged learning.

Experiment 5:

EXTENDING PART-TIME LEARNING PATHWAYS

Most UBC programs are offered to full-time learners, i.e., a learner cannot work full-time and continue their education at the same time. It is expected that many in the existing workforce will return to campuses to seek education to upskill and reskill over the next few decades.

Many industry partners have also raised the concern that the workforce requires new knowledge, skills and competencies, and employers are looking to higher education institutes to help them bridge such gaps.

ACTION

Explore decreasing barriers to continuing education for returning learners by, (a) expanding partnerships between Extended Learning (EL) and Faculties to allow EL to help the Faculty create a few part-time, short-term, flexible and quick non-credit programs (including testing various business models, e.g. corporate subscriptions, to understand feasibility and demand); (b) develop/refine an expedited approval process for non-credit courses, accelerated through Senate or be exempt from Senate approval altogether; and, (c) explore allowing self-paced part-time learning in a few mainstream credit courses – allowing learners to complete a course at their own pace or challenge a course by demonstrating competency.

Experiment 6:

PROMOTING COLLABORATIVE, IMPACT-ORIENTED GRADUATE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Whether to meaningfully tackle grand challenges or, more broadly, to work effectively in today's complex and interconnected world, the ability to seek out diverse perspectives and work collaboratively with multiple partners across disciplines and sectors is critical. Many graduate students are eager to work in partnership within and beyond the university in ways that will make a positive difference in the world. Conventional approaches to graduate education do not always support the development of collaborative capability or impactful scholarship.

ACTION

a) Explore ways to enhance transdisciplinary collaboration opportunities amongst graduate students and acceptability of team-based thesis scholarship; b) Pilot funded cohorts of graduate students dedicated to collaborative, impact-oriented thesis research across disciplines and sectors.

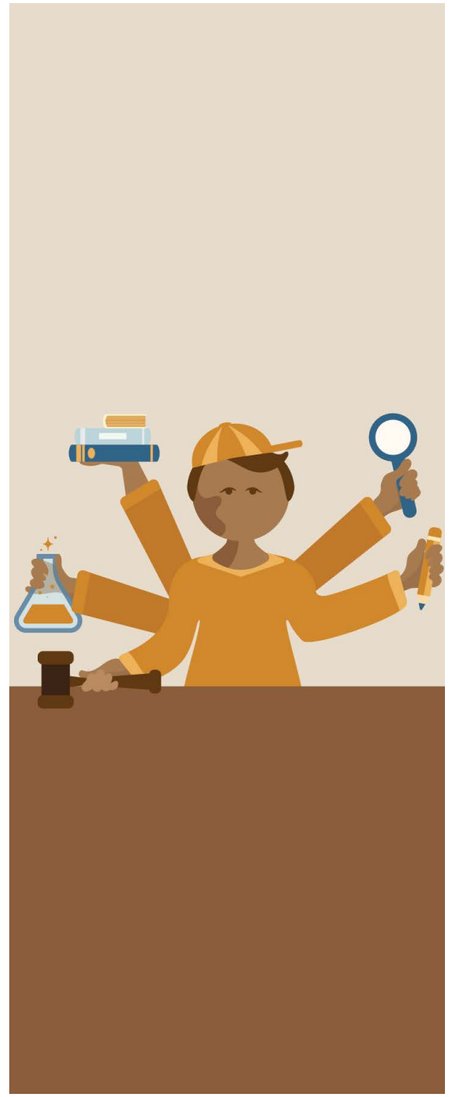
Experiment 7:

ADVANCING EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Experiential education is essential for the quickly evolving global context – it is a key way to prepare students to be creative, resilient, and collaborative agents of change. Hands-on experiences allow students to put concepts into practice, receive feedback and reflect on their choices. Experiential learning teaches engaged citizens to rise to our global challenges and contribute where they can, even if they do not have all the answers. UBC's Strategic Plan guides us to engage in capacity building in strategies on practical learning, interdisciplinary learning, public relevance, global networks and coordinated engagement.

ACTION

Identify existing experiential learning opportunities (including innovative ways to use generative AI tools for course and curriculum design and for learning) and test ways to further increase experiential education access for all students through improving access to information (website or a digital assistant similar to chatbot) and articulating pathways for students, so they can increase their experiential education quotient.



The Ongoing Academic Futures Journey

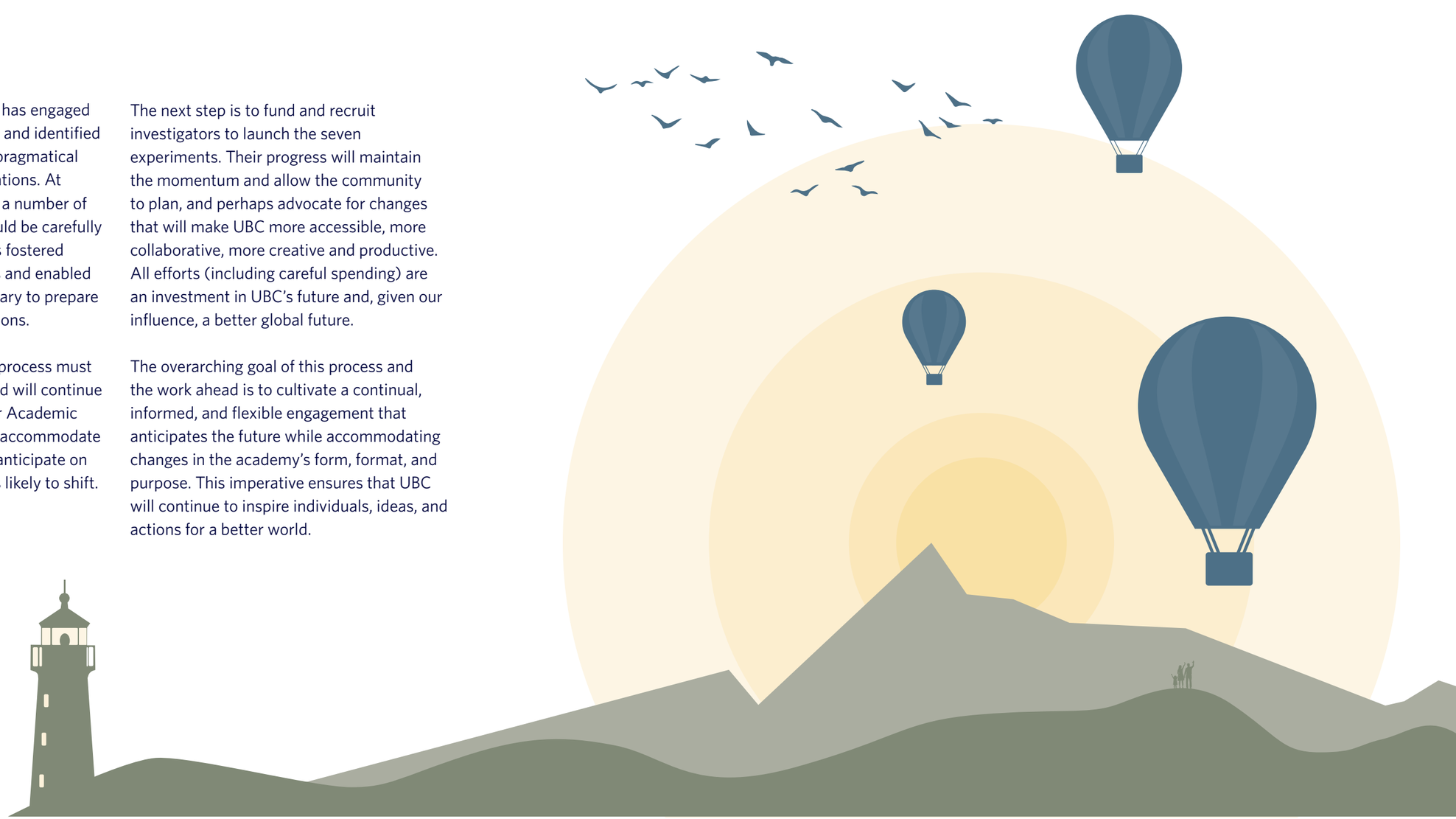
10.0

The Academic Futures process has engaged a diverse academic community and identified a range of opportunities, from pragmatical necessities to ambitious innovations. At the same time, it has identified a number of challenges and issues that should be carefully considered for the future. It has fostered cross-pollinating conversations and enabled the thoughtful foresight necessary to prepare for future challenges and decisions.

However, to truly succeed, the process must be ongoing. The academic world will continue to evolve beyond this particular Academic Futures exercise and while can accommodate the expected changes that we anticipate on campus today, the landscape is likely to shift.

The next step is to fund and recruit investigators to launch the seven experiments. Their progress will maintain the momentum and allow the community to plan, and perhaps advocate for changes that will make UBC more accessible, more collaborative, more creative and productive. All efforts (including careful spending) are an investment in UBC's future and, given our influence, a better global future.

The overarching goal of this process and the work ahead is to cultivate a continual, informed, and flexible engagement that anticipates the future while accommodating changes in the academy's form, format, and purpose. This imperative ensures that UBC will continue to inspire individuals, ideas, and actions for a better world.



Appendix
Academic Futures Participants

Academic Futures co-design team

- Rumee Ahmed, Vice-Provost International *pro tem*
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- Tara Ivanochko, Academic Director, Climate Hub
- Marcus Johns, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Sustainable Nano Biocomposites Lab, Department of Wood Science, Forestry
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- Joanne Proft, Associate Director, Community Planning (Campus Vision 2050)
- Moura Quayle, Vice-Provost and AVP, Academic Affairs
- Arig al Shaibah, AVP, Equity and Inclusion
- Laia Shpeller, Student Senate Caucus Co-Chair, Senate Academic Building Needs Committee (SABNC) Chair
- David Shorthouse, Executive Director, Academic Portfolio Initiatives
- Leona Sparrow, Director of Treaty, Lands and Resources, Musqueam
- Jody Swift, Director, Strategic Initiatives, Applied Science
- Teresa Syrnyk, Acting Director, Facilities Planning
- Dana Turdy, AMS VPA/Anisha Sandhu, Interim AMS VPA & UA
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- Michael White, Associate Vice-President, Campus + Community Planning (Campus Vision 2050)
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- Lisa Nathan, Associate Professor, Coordinator, First Nations Curriculum Concentration, iSchool (School of Information)
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- Ania Bogoslowski, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Life Sciences Institute
- Sabah Haque - Graduate student, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs
- Marcus Johns, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Sustainable Nano Biocomposites Lab, Department of Wood Science, Forestry
- Kamil Kanji, Vice-President Academic and University Affairs AMS (Elect until May 1), Student Senator-at-Large
- Christian Kyle, EUS President
- Yongzheng (Parker) Li, Ph.D. Candidate, Political Science
- Angela Low, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Early Child Health
- Simangele Mabena, Graduate student in LLED
- Jessica Schaub, Graduate student, Institute for Oceans and Fisheries
- Dana Turdy, AMS VPA/Anisha Sandhu, Interim AMS VPA & UA

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- Sarah Dupont, Head, Xwi7xwa Library
- Ray McNichol, Assistant Dean, Finance, Resources & Operations, Science Faculty, Office of the Comptroller
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- Afsaneh Sharif, Faculty Liaison/Senior Project Manager, CTLT
- Jody Swift, Director, Strategic Initiatives, APSC
- Martina Valkovicova, Assistant Dean, Hari B. Varshney BCC, Sauder School of Business
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