

# Sheridan

*Character*

*Quality*

*Accountability*

**S**

**Academic Plan**  
**2019-2024**



We would like to acknowledge that the land on which we gather has been and still is the traditional territory of several Indigenous nations, including the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat, the Métis and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Since time immemorial, numerous Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples have lived and passed through this territory. We recognize this territory is covered by the Dish with One Spoon treaty and the Two Row Wampum treaty which emphasize the importance of joint stewardship, peace and respectful relationships. Sheridan College affirms it is our collective responsibility to honour and respect those who have gone before us, those who are here and those who have yet to come. We are grateful for the opportunity to be working and living on this land.

Dear colleagues:

Over the past year, the Sheridan learning community – governors, senators, students, faculty and staff – engaged in a robust strategic planning process. Sheridan’s Strategic Plan, *Galvanizing Education for a Complex World*, sets a clear direction for our institution that builds on our strengths and character and asserts a unique role for Sheridan in the academic ecosystem. *Galvanizing Education for a Complex World* builds beautifully on the Academic Plan that was created in 2017 and brings both strategies together.

As your Provost and Vice President Academic, I am immensely proud to lead at Sheridan. This pan-institutional, academically-driven document was collegially developed in 2016-2017, involving a diverse array of stakeholders. This Academic Plan has been refined to purposefully enact the institution’s 2024 Strategic Plan, which builds on our strengths and positions us for the future. Specifically, the Academic Plan will fuel Sheridan’s mission to cultivate communities of resourceful, highly skilled, creative people through cross-pollination, active learning and the relentless incubation of new ideas.

Our aspiration to create a visionary educational experience that transcends traditional college and university structures gives us tremendous license to create a learning environment where faculty, staff and students push boundaries in teaching, learning, creative activities and research. Over the next five years, we’ll create innovative connections through our people, programs, creative activities and research. We’ll be unwavering in our commitment to exceptional academic programming differentiated by disciplinary and industry expertise, research, new ideas, innovation, educational development and academic quality. We’ll continue to nurture creativity, curiosity, collaboration and courage. Together we’ll strive to fulfil the individual potential of each member of our learning community and collectively find the answers to the tough questions facing our world.

Sheridan’s vision and mission provide us with a shared sense of purpose to cultivate resourceful, highly skilled, creative people and communities that flourish in the face of change. Continuing to focus on character, quality and accountability, we’ll use our unique character to foster community, advance quality teaching and learning, promote and support creative activities and research, fuel the academic and career success of our students, enhance the student experience and continue to foster a culture of planning, accountability and continuous improvement.

I am tremendously excited about the impact our Academic Plan will have on living our commitment to *Galvanizing Education for a Complex World*.

Sincerely,

**Melanie Spence-Ariemma, PhD**  
Provost and Vice President Academic

*Character*

*Quality*

*Accountability*

Moving forward to 2024, the Sheridan learning community will invigorate our enviable organizational *character*; maintain and intensify our pursuit of *quality*; and, continue to develop, implement and deploy tools that promote individual and organizational *accountability*.

#### ACADEMIC PRIORITIES

- » Build community by embodying Sheridan's unique character.
- » Advance quality teaching and deep learning through inclusive, learner-focused design and academic support services that embrace the diverse strengths of our students.
- » Cement our commitment to ground-breaking education by promoting and supporting scholarship, research and creative activities.
- » Fuel academic and career success by actively supporting the potential of students and pushing for unfettered access to ongoing learning.
- » Enhance the student experience through programs, services and space design.
- » Develop an operational culture of planning, accountability and continuous improvement.

## Build community by embodying Sheridan's unique character.

“I'm very focused on our institutional character because I think it distinguishes our learning community in the broader postsecondary system. This 'theme' speaks to creativity, community, growth-mindset and partnerships. Included is our commitment to innovation, interdisciplinarity, communication, engagement, Indigenizing Sheridan, accessibility and inclusivity.”

– Dr. Janet Morrison,  
President and Vice-Chancellor



Undeniably, character distinguishes Sheridan as a premier, internationally-renowned postsecondary institution. We pride ourselves on being a socially responsible, inclusive, caring and generous learning community. Explicit in Sheridan's character is a commitment to creativity. Creativity matters: it's the precursor to innovation and it inspires collaboration. Sheridan will continue to focus on purposeful creativity and creative problem-solving to enhance creative leadership and innovation performance across the institution. We'll fuel creativity through interdisciplinarity.

Individually and collectively, we're committed to leveraging the diversity of the Sheridan community to unleash the potential of everyone within our organization. A signature palette of skills and capabilities will be designed to foster lifelong learning, critical thinking, initiative, agility, collaboration, equity and creativity. Together we'll build on Sheridan's First Principles that define the core capabilities, and explore how best to integrate and embed them into the Sheridan experience.



### AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2019-2024

- Signature palette of skills and capabilities
- Creativity
- Communication
- Collaboration



Advance quality teaching and deep learning through inclusive, learner-focused design and academic support services that embrace the diverse strengths of our students.

“Using creative problem-solving techniques in the classroom allows students to deconstruct and understand sources in new and sophisticated ways. They gain greater self-awareness of the critical investigatory process and agency in their own scholarship.”

– Dr. Christian Knudsen,  
Professor, Cultural History



Academic quality is the cornerstone of our commitment to excellence.

That commitment rests on the strengths of Sheridan's outstanding faculty and their enviable capacity to design innovative, learner-centered programs and pedagogy that embrace diversity. Our teaching environment is richly supported and reinforced by strategically aligned academic and learning support services. As we look to the future we'll continue to build on and strengthen our teaching excellence, hands-on learning, creative activities, research and innovation in order to prepare students to navigate the future.

We'll focus on opportunities for educational development that ensure currency in all of our disciplines and bolster our investments in smart technologies that reinforce our commitment to accessibility and inclusivity. Sheridan will ensure that every student has access to experiential education through a renewed commitment to innovative work-learn opportunities.

Our commitment to past, present and future Indigenous students rests on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, and on the Colleges and Institutes Canada Indigenous Education Protocol. Over the next five years and in collaboration with our Centre for Indigenous Learning and Support, Sheridan will commit resources to design and implement a variety of curricular and co-curricular activities to promote Indigenous learning and success.

International students are a significant part of our community. Robust success in recruitment must be joined to a holistic integration of international people, perspectives, knowledge and networks. Addressing enrolment management, international student services, education abroad and faculty development, our internationalization strategic process will assess, affirm and integrate the potential of international members within our learning community.



#### AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2019-2024

- Educational development
- Indigenous knowledge
- Internationalization strategy
- Technology-enhanced learning
- Work-Learn opportunities

Cement our commitment to groundbreaking education by promoting and supporting scholarship, research and creative activities.

“You learn to take risks, make stronger choices, and you learn first-hand from the writers how to dissect new music and create new characters.”

– Vanessa Sears,  
Honours Bachelor of Music Theatre Performance, '15  
and participant in the Canadian Music Theatre Project



Sheridan is committed to cultivating and supporting a differentiated culture of Scholarship, Research and Creative Activities (SRCA) – one that is inclusive and broad, and engages our students, professors, staff and the communities we serve.

SRCA is fundamental to Sheridan's identity. With its connection to industry, community organizations and 'real world' challenges, SRCA enhances student and faculty engagement and promotes deep learning through the development of critical thinking, creative problem-solving and collaboration skills. It also creates social and economic benefit to our region.

To advance Sheridan's unique commitments to Scholarship, Research and Creative Activities – which are grounded in Boyer's 1990 model of scholarship – we'll actively encourage and support faculty, staff and student involvement. This will include embedding SRCA across our curriculum, enhancing and tracking our community/industry connections, engaging more visibly with the outside scholarly community, and creating a new framework that effectively balances the teaching, SRCA and service work done by faculty.



#### AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2019-2024

- Promoting and supporting participation in SRCA
- SRCA plan
- Coordinated community and industry partnership/connections

Fuel academic and career success by actively supporting the potential of students and pushing for unfettered access to ongoing learning.

“Your creativity is a catalyst for your own liberation in this life. I see students beginning to open themselves up to the possibility that their world could be radically different and I’m most inspired when they demonstrate the courage to make it so.”

– Dr. Michael McNamara,  
Professor of Creativity and Creative Thinking



Sheridan takes a comprehensive view of student learning, seeking to foster a mindset that ties educational attainment with intellectual curiosity, the pragmatics of applied learning with a sense of purpose that is reflected in professional readiness, and the value and joy that comes from persevering with realizing one's potential and attaining a goal.

Sheridan is committed to ensuring that students in our certificate, diploma, apprenticeship and degree programs are provided with the supports they need to meet the challenges of postsecondary education and thrive in a competitive labour market. We'll explore how to creatively embed a signature palette of skills and capabilities in our programming in order to promote the agility, confidence and the ability needed to flourish in an innovation economy. This experience will be truly unique and learner-centred, positioning students to navigate an unpredictable, possibility-filled world with confidence.

As part of a comprehensive support system, we continue our work on a First-Year Experience Strategy that accounts for the diversity of our students and the differences in life experiences, perspectives and circumstances that inform their learning. We'll also refine a pan-institutional and outcomes-based model of academic advising, and enhance our focus on student mental health and well-being. These initiatives will complement the already robust programming Sheridan offers.

As an educational institution, Sheridan values lifelong learning, and believes that intellectual and imaginative growth continue throughout the lifespan. This commitment is reflected in our career-focused programs and on the pathway opportunities that Sheridan has developed. To help prospective, transfer and current students leverage their education and experiential background and ensure the timely completion of credentials, Sheridan will also increase the utilization of pathways by making them more effective and efficient. We'll work to ensure that a Sheridan degree, diploma certificate or apprenticeship program will open up diverse options for work and enable seamless transitions to ongoing education.



#### AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2019-2024

- First-year experience
- Academic Advising
- Student well-being
- Signature palette of skills and capabilities
- Unfettered access to ongoing learning

Enhance the student experience through programs, services and space design.

“The design concept for the Hazel McCallion Campus expansion project was grounded in the belief that learning and creativity are best fostered in settings that provide open and inspiring interstitial spaces which encourage investigation and (collaboration) beyond the traditional classroom and are connected to the larger urban context.”

– Daniel Teramura, Moriyama & Teshima, and Daniel Ling, Montgomery Sisam, Hazel McCallion Campus expansion architects



Students come first at Sheridan; student success and the student experience are priorities for every faculty and staff member.

Recognizing that student success is uniquely defined by each learner, Sheridan has adapted a Student Success Model that encompasses five dimensions: identifying or discovering career and personal goals, the development of the whole person, an ignited passion for learning, the mastering of skills and capabilities, and academic and professional achievement.

The student experience at Sheridan transcends the classroom to include both curricular and co-curricular spheres. It is enhanced by interactions with peers, faculty and staff. We know from decades of research that student engagement is correlated with a broad array of success and development outcomes, including satisfaction, persistence, retention and GPA attainment. Informed by theory and based on evidence, Sheridan will develop a plan to more broadly engage its students. Consistent with Sheridan's character and first principles, this will include a focus on trailblazing, radical engagement and emotional acumen.

Our goal is to create healthy and vibrant communities on each campus and across Sheridan through design, wellness practices and physical spaces that bolster our community members and their ideas, and nurture diverse approaches to creativity and innovation. Sheridan is committed to ensuring that our spaces – physical and virtual – are purposefully designed to promote success.



AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2019-2024

- Student Space Enhancement and Campus Master Plan
- Student Engagement and Wellness Strategy



## Develop an operational culture of planning, accountability and continuous improvement.

*“We bring together cutting-edge knowledge and job readiness guided by new models of learning that empower personal capacity. Sheridan graduates will be known for thinking critically, creatively and having the bold confidence to navigate an unpredictable, possibility-filled world with hope and optimism.”*

– Dr. Cherie Werhun,  
Strategic Lead for the Sheridan Factor Framework



Sheridan is proud to be an employer of choice in our communities. The institution's reputation for quality and excellence rests on the faculty and staff who work tirelessly to support our mission to cultivate resourceful, highly skilled, and creative people and communities through cross-pollinated, active learning and the incubation of new ideas. To ensure that the investment of our people is fueled and recognized, Sheridan will – in keeping with our People Plan – focus on talent management, employee recognition and employee well-being.

To ensure that our commitments to character and quality remain viable, Sheridan will focus on the stewardship of our most valuable assets: people, space and revenue. Specifically, we'll invest in projects and practices that increase the sustainability of our organization, including an integrated planning framework, strategic enrolment management, and activity-based budgeting. Further, we'll pursue pan-institutional initiatives to optimize space usage and increase our awareness of administrative and academic program costs.



### AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2019-2024

- People Plan
- Integrated planning
- Operational effectiveness

## MEASURING OUR PROGRESS-TO-PLAN

To achieve the promise of this plan, we must demonstrate success across measures of the learner experience, financial health, employee experience and internal processes. The success of Sheridan's Academic Plan rests on the community's collective capacity to 'live' it between now and 2024.

### *Living the plan*

This strategy will build and evolve in the coming years and the determinants of success; leadership, integrated planning, effective change management, communication and ongoing monitoring are inherent in 'living' the plan. Our Academic Plan priorities and related goals will be measured using Sheridan's Performance Management Framework.



