



2015-2020 TLSS Strategic Plan

EXCELLENCE | VISION | PASSION

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INTRODUCTION

At the Teaching and Learning Support Service (TLSS), our work in the fields of university education and technopedagogy is two-fold: we support the efforts of faculty members and we strive make these concepts more engaging to students. Our endeavours with faculty allow us to offer students a flexible, high-quality education and knowledge about the pertinent use of technology, which both have a direct impact on the student experience at the University of Ottawa.

Our team is comprised of professionals in the field of university education and specialists in educational technology in an academic environment. Supported by a team of highly experienced executives, the TLSS has a unique offering that has become essential to the University of Ottawa.

THE TLSS OFFERING IS BASED ON FOUR MAIN AREAS

Pedagogical training for faculty and faculty members

A training and professional development program focused on university education that encompasses individualized consultation services for educational support in teaching, and for faculties who wish to assess and enrich or develop their study programs.

Support for the pedagogical use of educational technologies

Ongoing support for professors who make use of a range of technologies that allow for classroom, online or hybrid teaching as well as video or audio conferences. In addition to, implementation of, and training on, the use of educational technologies following the trends in both education and learning.

Classroom design and planning

Design and selection of equipment for the classroom to provide faculty members with the highest quality teaching materials, thereby facilitating education and the implementation of new pedagogical concepts, such as active and collaborative classroom design.

Assistance in designing interactive and engaging courses

Developers, graphic designers, and course design professionals employ numerous teaching approaches to assist faculty members in developing university courses, learning objects, and learning environments.

These four main areas of focus and the expert team members who make them a reality are the backbone of our strategic plan, also in line with the University of Ottawa's strategy, Destination

2020. Our goal is to establish the University as a place of excellence for both teaching and learning and to ensure that students benefit from an exceptional university experience.

OUR VISION

We have revised our vision to reflect our actual impact on the University of Ottawa:

"To promote the University of Ottawa as a leader in the fields of teaching and learning."

OUR MISSION

We want to support faculty members and enrich university teaching to foster quality learning and enhance the student experience.

OUR VALUES

Our values are:

Quality Customer Service

Through its knowledge, the TLSS team is accessible, attentive to your needs, and flexible to support faculty members in their pedagogical development.

Respect and Appreciation

The TLSS demonstrates respect and appreciation of its team and faculty members and places a great deal of value in their work in the community as well as openness to new ideas and directions.

Innovation and intellectual curiosity

The TLSS is leading the way in developing methods that characterize university teaching. Our team demonstrates intellectual curiosity and fosters a spirit of learning while staying apprised of current research to expand our knowledge and perfect our skills.

Valuing and fostering quality teaching

The TLSS imparts preferred pedagogical approaches. It advocates the quality of education to professors, both full-time and part-time, PhD students as well as teaching assistants, and promotes these methods through communication efforts that reach faculty and students.

Group and individual expertise

The TLSS has gathered a team of diverse individuals who possess a broad range of skills and experience to create an environment that inspires professional development and the use of leading edge technologies. Its expertise is based on an environment where interactions between professors, other institutions, and TLSS team members create a renewed and improved teaching experience.

Quality Achievements

The TLSS team members and each of their actions are detail-oriented to ensure that their support and their accomplishments are of the utmost quality and respect planned deadlines.

Collaboration

To ensure that the University of Ottawa is positioned as a leader in the field of university teaching, the TLSS must work in partnership with other large-scale institutions and organizations. This collaboration will allow them to learn from other initiatives and build upon their expertise, as well as share their experiences and accomplishments.

By its vision, mission, and values, the TLSS team has implemented numerous successful projects that have also gained sizeable recognition (See following page).

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PREVIOUS STRATEGIC PLAN

The TLSS combines services that guide and support professors as well as students throughout their teaching and learning career to influence their experience in a positive manner. There were numerous initiatives set forth and managed by the TLSS in its previous 5-year strategic plan that have marked the evolution of the University of Ottawa's culture.

Here are a few examples:

Activities for new professors: organize and host leisure and training activities to welcome and direct new groups of educators while continuing to establish and promote the University of Ottawa brand.

Program assessment (undergraduate and graduate levels): implement support processes and resources for each program in partnership with the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Manage the Blended Learning Initiative: coordinate and apply the broad scale development of hybrid courses (including classroom sessions and online presentations of sizable segments of learning activities originally destined for the classroom) that help transform and guide the University of Ottawa in its mission to make education more flexible by capitalizing on evolving technologies for the benefit of pedagogy.

Blended and Traditional Course Design Institute: surrounded by a team of experts in their respective pedagogical and technological fields, professors work collaboratively on every course component through activities in line with their expertise.

Online course development: working together with faculties, the TLSS fosters and develops courses that are exclusively online. The TLSS oversaw the development of numerous online (and blended) courses in an initiative by the Vice-President Academic and Provost. Since 2014, he has also managed various proposals from the Ontario Ministry of Education, supported faculty, program directors and professors concerning the development of online courses. These courses

will eventually be placed on a provincial portal thereby allowing every student in Ontario a greater access to postsecondary education.

MOOC - Massive online open courses: aware of the rising popularity of MOOCs and their potential role in democratizing knowledge and promoting the expertise of its institution, the University of Ottawa has launched its first series of MOOCs in French. This pilot project allows us to measure the amount of effort required to implement the structures and resources necessary to develop courses in both official languages. It allows the TLSS to assess technological challenges and production costs associated to this type of full-scale project.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Every year the TLSS receives national and international recognition and excellence awards:

- Prix du recteur pour l'excellence du service
- Two AMX Canada Innovation Awards
- Award from the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education
- Video message from the 2014 President highlighting the University of Ottawa's assets and TLSS's accomplishments (with a particular focus on the state-of-the-art facilities in their classrooms)
- Leadership Award from the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education
- Award of Excellence from the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education in the category "Excellence and Innovation in the Integration of Technology in Instructional Design."
- Award of Excellence from the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education in the category "Excellence and Innovation in the Integration of Technology in a Formal or Non-Formal Educational Program", attributed to the Centre for e-Learning (2015)

OUR BACKGROUND

With our previous TLSS strategic plan having expired at the end of 2014, we began a comprehensive strategic planning exercise to develop a framework that would guide our efforts through the next five years.

The continuous evolution of pedagogy and technology used in postsecondary education, such as increased development of online courses, multiple initiatives in relation to blended learning, increased interest and criticism of massive online open courses (MOOC) and similar programs, offers us many opportunities to demonstrate our knowledge in each of our respective fields.

We must also involve our employees more and more throughout this process, as exemplified in the preparatory consultation that took place before the strategic orientation exercise, and continue to do so at every stage thereby allowing us to skillfully define areas of activity as well as performance indicators.

We have created a flexible plan that will evolve according to our needs, but that will also allow us to measure the impact of our ongoing efforts in reaching our strategic goals through the use of specific benchmarks.

To firmly anchor our actions, we have redefined our vision. It closely resembles our previous planning yet positions us as a key player in the University of Ottawa's ongoing efforts to improve teaching, learning, and the overall student experience.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Consulting with our teams

In April and May 2014, members of the TLSS participated in a SWOC analysis to assess our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.

Using this same tool, we have also consulted with:

- Professors and teaching assistants
- deans and vice deans

Executive Committee Retreat

The Executive Committee also completed their own SWOC analysis during their retreat, where members acknowledged and analyzed the results of various SWOC analyses.

The themes that were selected and identified as most important for the participating groups were compared with those highlighted by the Directors to define possible variances: it has since been concluded that there are very few discrepancies and that all members share the same vision.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES ADOPTED FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS

The five goals that were identified allow us to uphold the quality of our current services and continue to respond to the needs of the faculty members and our mandate.

These goals have a direct impact on the University of Ottawa's strategic plan: Destination 2020.

1. Focus on our employees

- Take into consideration each's expertise and strength;
- Promote teamwork;
- Place value on individual and team achievements;
- Allow each team member to continue its professional development in his or her field of expertise and continue acquiring new skills;
- Identify financial resources to create permanent employment from contract positions, of three years or more, that are crucial to the efficient functioning of the service.

2. Communicate with our partners
 - Inform the university community of the services and support we offer;
 - Change the perception of our service as working in silos (four sectors) and adapt our communication strategy to promote our services;
 - Refresh our website that acts as the cornerstone of our overall evolution and implement a global communications plan;
 - Develop new communication tools.

3. Evaluate and streamline the TLSS structure
 - Define the roles and responsibilities of each TLSS sector to create a single entry point to our services;
 - Assess the possibilities of moving our teams to one unique location to create new synergy and remove the current silo effect;
 - This strategy would strengthen our commitment toward creating one unique window for our services;
 - Identify the areas of convergence to take better advantage of available opportunities and move forward with the necessary changes to improve our service offer;
 - Reorganize the structure of the four sectors to encourage economies of scale;
 - Consolidate the organizational structure following the forthcoming retirement of certain employees;
 - Implement a succession plan for senior management and employees planning to retire.

4. Consolidate and expand our partnerships
 - Share our successes with other universities throughout the province, Canada and the rest of the world by promoting our knowledge and expertise;
 - Develop new strategies and services with the assistance of faculties and other institutions;
 - Encourage faculty members to develop collaborative relationships through their courses with other universities throughout Ontario;
 - Work in collaboration with faculties, programs, etc., on a number of large-scale projects.

5. Focus on the university community
 - Develop collaborative relationships with faculties, programs, professors, etc.;
 - Develop training activities and instructional resources;
 - Value teaching and the work of professors who exemplify open-mindedness and innovation through their teaching methods;
 - Offer quality training to educators to equip them to deliver training workshops in the future.

CONCLUSION

This strategic plan will make the TLSS a seamless service that responds and fulfills the needs of faculty, beyond the borders of our institution.

To continue supporting faculty members in their use of engaging, comprehensive and innovative pedagogy, our department assesses and reviews its structure to adapt to the needs of students. This support has a direct impact our goal concerning the student experience as outlined in the University of Ottawa's strategic plan, Destination 2020.

The TLSS has developed a new website and a “one-stop shop” where faculty members can easily find the services they need.

Our department is presently considering reviewing its leadership structure and improving its operations and efficiency in every key area of responsibility. A future name change is also possible to reflect this new reality. The TLSS continues to support each of its team members to provide a motivating and challenging work environment that allows them access to professional development activities.

In addition to the usual channels and available tools, the TLSS is currently revising its communication strategies to utilize fast-moving, mobile communication tools that best respond to the needs and expectations of professors and students.

We want to disseminate technology-supported university teaching while continuing to cultivate the benefits of classic educational methods. Technology supported learning has evolved and moved toward the forefront in past few years due, in part, to the emergence of new teaching methods such as flipped classrooms, hybrid learning, online courses and the use of interactive learning classrooms where students are placed at the centre of their learning experience.

We want to ensure that technology remains at the service of education by training professors on the optimal use of available tools in a way that corresponds to the learning objectives highlighted in their courses.

By its actions, the TLSS has had a significant impact on the University of Ottawa which is recognized for its quality of teaching and learning.