



GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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Program Advisory Guidelines

Contents

President’s Message	1
The College’s Vision, Mission and Values	2
Strategic Plan	
Student Experience	3
Contemporary Learners	3
St. Lawrence College Board of Governors	4
Program Advisory Committees	
The Need for Program Advisory Committees	5
The Advisory Committee Structure	5
The Role of Program Advisory Committees	6
Program Advisory Committee Meetings	7
Communications	8

President's Message

At St. Lawrence College we take great pride in our dedication to student success, academic excellence and leadership in our communities. We are committed to meeting and exceeding our high program standards to maintain our position as one of the top educators among Ontario's colleges. We consistently rank among the top colleges in the system for the Key Performance Indicators, which measure the satisfaction of students, graduates and their employers, something we could not achieve without the dedication and commitment of our staff and a community of volunteers and supporters.

One of the strengths of Ontario's publicly-funded colleges is the development and use of advisory committees to guide academic program curriculum content and provide links to industry. As a result of this innovative approach, the College and the communities it serves have developed a strong partnership to ensure the relevance and the responsiveness of each program offered to the public.

St. Lawrence College has been fortunate throughout the years to have had advisors of the highest caliber. This commitment of time and energy, combined with in-depth industry expertise, has greatly contributed to the success of our programs and our students. We welcome you to St. Lawrence College as an advisor, and look forward to participating with you in achieving our ongoing goal of ensuring student success through excellence in our programs and delivery methods.

We are now in our third year of our strategic plan, Our Future. Thanks to the high level of engagement from our students, communities, alumni, board of governors, advisory committee members and staff, we have made significant progress in achieving our vision over the past three years. We look forward to the next two years of our plan, and invite you to familiarize yourself with it at stlawrencecollege.ca/ourfuture.

Thank you for sharing your time and wisdom with St. Lawrence College. Your involvement makes a very positive difference, and helps us get closer to our vision of preparing career-ready graduates who will become leaders in their fields. Your support and efforts are greatly appreciated by both the College and our students.

Glenn Vollebregt
President and CEO

The College's Vision, Mission and Values

VISION: Rooted in our communities, we will be a globally recognized college delivering innovative learning opportunities and preparing career-ready graduates to be leaders in their fields.

MISSION: We are dedicated to student success, academic excellence, and leadership in our communities.

VALUES: For the first time in more than 10 years, our strategic planning process engaged stakeholders in a meaningful conversation about values. The conversation highlighted the importance of a shared set of beliefs to guide behaviour. Values serve as the foundation of our plan's framework, connecting our vision, mission, strategic directions and multi-year objectives. The concepts below were expressed by stakeholders and helped to shape our values.

Part of our core mandate as an educational institution is to put our Students First. Our staff is committed to providing our students with the programs, services and personal support to ensure their success. Simply put, we are here because of our students.

Our College succeeds because of Teamwork. Our dedicated and talented staff works together to achieve our collective mission. We are committed to fostering the skills, knowledge and passion of our team to deliver excellence in all that we do – for our students, our colleagues and our communities.

Providing educational opportunities that deliver value to our students requires us to be resourceful and creative. This will ensure our College thrives as an institution and is resilient to external pressures. We believe building upon our achievements and focusing on Innovation will advance the College and allow us to meet the evolving needs of our students now and in the future.

As we work toward our vision and mission, we strive to continually build trust with our students, staff and community partners. We exemplify Integrity; it governs our actions and decision-making processes. We believe honesty, inclusivity and accountability are the pathways to success.

See the entire plan at: <http://www.stlawrencecollege.ca/ourfuture/>

Strategic Plan

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

At St. Lawrence College, we believe student success is closely linked to engagement. The “college experience” extends beyond the classroom and is enriched through all learning and living experiences students have while at the College. The level of student engagement and richness of experience can be nurtured with extracurricular activities and a positive, inclusive and dynamic environment that supports success through life balance and peer support, and fosters pride and a sense of allegiance among graduates and alumni. We are committed to supporting a successful college journey by continually assessing and advancing services with great attention to such areas as the demographics of our student population, their preparedness, physical and mental well-being, cultural needs, lifestyle, financial ability, and social and recreational interests.

Advisory committees assist the faculty and administration in monitoring existing programs and in establishing new programs. They make recommendations on programs to the Board of Governors through the usual administrative process and, therefore, cannot be held responsible for the effectiveness of College programs. Advisory Committee recommendations merit serious consideration, but the ultimate responsibility for decision making and action taken after the advice is received rests with the administration and the Board of Governors.

CONTEMPORARY LEARNERS

Post-secondary education is experiencing a period of transformation. It is critical that we prepare our students and ourselves for the rapid technological changes occurring in the higher education sector. In light of these advancements, it is not about ‘technology for technology’s sake’; we need to use technology to provide enhanced learning outcomes and flexibility for our students.

During this transformation, we must teach our students to be effective digital learners without losing sight of the fact that foundational skills – literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, team work, reflective practice and others – remain critical to graduates’ success. The need for these essential employment skills has never been stronger and must be enhanced as we introduce new technological literacies. Applied learning remains at the core of our programming. We are committed to offering learning opportunities that increase the quality and availability of real-world experience in our courses and programs while enhancing foundational and technological skills.

Concurrently, we are committed to supporting our staff in acquiring the knowledge and skills they need as contemporary educators, to support the rapidly changing needs of contemporary learners. Professional development has never been more crucial to the success of our students and our College.

St. Lawrence College Board of Governors

St. Lawrence College is a Crown corporation, and its Board of Governors reports to the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development. Members of the Board are volunteers. Governors are appointed by The College Compensation and Appointments Council. Of the 17 governors, 12 are external members from the region which we serve and four are internal members elected by their constituent groups- academic, administration, support staff and students. The College President and CEO is a voting member and Secretary to the Board. The College’s Executive Committee members serve as a resource to the Board. The Senior Vice President Corporate Services serves as the Treasurer to the Board. The Board is responsible for setting the College’s strategic direction and for ensuring the effective operation of the College within the Board’s mandate to meet the needs of the community. The Board has responsibility for hiring and evaluating the performance of the President whose task is to carry out the strategic direction and to oversee the day-to-day operation of the College.

Another important role of the Board of Governors is to approve the programs the College offers, consistent with the Minister’s Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction and following the Ministry’s Funding Approval of Programs of Instruction Procedures 1. Credentials awarded to graduates must be consistent with the credentials framework, and the Board of Governors ensures that programs are reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis. The Board of Governors is responsible for ensuring program advisory committees are established.

The Board of Governors meets regularly as a committee-of-the whole. Sub-committees of the Board meet monthly and/or on an as needed basis to address issues and bring information and recommendations to the Board. The Academic sub-committee has responsibility for the Program Advisory Committee process, and its membership serves as board liaison to the advisory committees. The Board of Governors will remain informed of the work of the Program Advisory Committees and seek formalized feedback as deemed appropriate.

1 Policy framework documents and operating procedures set out roles, responsibilities and requirements, under the governing Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002 and O.Reg.34/03.

Program Advisory Committees

THE NEED FOR PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Advisory Committees integrate community and College expertise to identify the local and larger community needs, as well as workplace and professional trends. Appointments to committees are made by the Associate/Campus Dean on behalf of the Board of Governors. Student members are elected or appointed by their constituent body. At St. Lawrence, we believe that listening to experienced professionals helps us to be more effective in program development and in delivering educational services. Our communities see the outcome of the learning opportunities we provide being put into practice every day. It is imperative for our Program Advisory Committee members to provide practical, meaningful suggestions and recommendations to continuously improve programs. The College strives continually to modify, review, and evaluate program performance and compares these against key performance indicators. Contributions and suggestions from Program Advisory Committees are critical to successfully meeting these indicators and providing quality learning experiences for our learners and well-prepared graduates for our communities.

Program Advisory Committees assist the faculty and administration in monitoring existing programs and in establishing new programs. They make recommendations on programs to the Board of Governors through the usual administrative process and, therefore, cannot be held responsible for the effectiveness of College programs. Program Advisory Committee recommendations merit serious consideration, but the ultimate responsibility for decision making and action taken after the advice is received rests with the administration and the Board of Governors.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Program Advisory Committees are volunteers from our communities – representatives from industry, business, labour organizations, and professionals related to particular program disciplines. Each College program will have an affiliated Program Advisory Committee. At the discretion of the Associate/Campus Dean a Program Advisory Committee may represent multiple programs in the same general discipline. From time to time a member of the Board of Governors may attend Program Advisory Committee meetings.

Membership should represent a cross-section of the community, including representation from employers/employees, alumni and students. Each committee should consist of not less than five, and no more than 12 voting members. College staff are ex-officio, non-voting members that serve as resources to the committees.

The normal term of office for a Committee member is three years. Members may be reappointed to serve for a successive three-year term. A term may be extended through recommendation to the Associate/Campus Dean for approval.

Each Program Advisory Committee elects a Chair whose term of office is one year in length. The Chair may be re-elected for any number of subsequent terms at the discretion of the Committee. All voting members are eligible to serve as Chair. The Chair of each Program Advisory Committee is responsible for maintaining an active link with the program representative, setting the meeting agenda, providing leadership to the committee, liaising with the Associate/Campus Dean, and with the Board of Governors as appropriate. The Associate/Campus Dean (or designate) will perform the duties of the Chair for new programs under development.

Program Advisory Committees are responsible for recruiting active members. Nominations for membership can be made by the Committee, by individual members, or by College resource staff. The Committee will recommend new members to the Associate/Campus Dean. Appointments and replacements alternate, allowing new members to join the Advisory Committee while maintaining essential continuity. If a member misses more than two consecutive meetings, the Chair can declare that position vacant. The Chair of the Advisory Committee will assist in the orientation of new members. Program Advisory Committee members are invited to key College events (Convocation, Academic Awards, etc.), to recognize their valuable contribution to the College as a whole.

THE ROLE OF THE PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Advisory Committees may be asked to advise on:

- vocational outcomes and the employability skills essential in the graduate;
- the development of action plans to improve a program's performance on key performance indicators as per the annual program review;
- community training needs;
- the feasibility of new post-secondary and post-diploma programs, part-time and customized opportunities for learning;
- the establishment of scholarships and bursaries for learners and assist in obtaining these;
- professional issues, emerging legislative issues, employment trends and new developments related to program currency and relevancy;
- government policy issues that affect graduate employment;
- opportunities for work experience, such as co-operative training, field placement, and clinical practice;
- employment opportunities for graduates and where appropriate, assist in job searches;

- promoting and advocating for the College;
- the suitability of College facilities and equipment and where appropriate, identify opportunities to access new equipment, software, etc.
- scope, relevance and currency of program curriculum.

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Each Committee will endeavor to meet at least twice a year. During periods of program development, change or any other activity required to meet the mandate, Committees may meet more frequently and/or strike sub-committees. This decision will be left to the discretion of the Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the Committee as a whole and the Program Coordinator and/or Associate/Campus Dean. The Office of the Sr. Vice-President Academic will maintain a tracking system to ensure that program advisory committees meet at least once/year. If a meeting is not held within a year, a Non-Compliance Form will be issued by the Office of the Sr. VPA requesting the respective Associate/Campus Dean consult with the Coordinator and the Chair of the Program Advisory Committee and provide a rationale.

The Board of Governors does not require a formal structure for Program Advisory Committee meetings except that a quorum must be considered a simple majority. When there is a formal vote, only appointed members are eligible. When formal rules are to be followed, “Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised” is recommended.

Minutes of Program Advisory Committee meetings are recorded by a designate, and upon receiving approval by the Associate/Campus Dean and Program Advisory Committee Chair, minutes are forwarded to the following individuals within two (2) weeks:

- All members of the committee
- Program faculty
- Associate/Campus Dean of program
- Program Coordinator
- Sr. Vice-President Academic
- Minutes of the meetings will be stored in the program’s quality assurance file.

A schedule of meetings will be developed at the beginning of each academic year. The Chair of the Program Advisory Committee and the College resource person will collaborate to prepare the agenda. Members for the Committee shall receive the agenda package at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

It is the responsibility of the Associate/Campus Dean to keep the Program Advisory Committees informed of College issues that affect the work of the PAC. The Associate/Campus Dean shall provide other information necessary to assist the Program Advisory Committee work.

The Associate/Campus Dean will receive and respond to any recorded recommendations of the Program Advisory Committee. The Annual self-audit process tracks recommendations and key issues, and an update is presented to the Board of Governors each Fall.

In the event that any Program Advisory Committee is having difficulty meeting its role and mandate, then the PAC Chair and/or the Associate/Campus Dean may contact the Senior Vice-President, Academic.

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