World VIU: A Global University

The International Education Strategic Vision for Vancouver Island University presents a snapshot of VIU’s goals for engagement with the international community. For more than 30 years, VIU has been building a global university through attracting students from over 80 countries to our campuses and providing opportunities for Canadian students and faculty to learn in other communities around the world.

The International Education Strategic Vision draws on and augments the global engagement profile in the VIU Academic Plan: Promoting and Celebrating Access to Excellence. The Academic Plan recognizes the critical importance of global and intercultural competencies and articulates how VIU will work to facilitate the development of these skills and attitudes among students, faculty and staff. The mission
of the Faculty of International Education is to provide leadership, expertise and resources that will enable the achievement of the Academic Plan objectives.

As a teaching university, built on Indigenous lands located on the Pacific Rim, VIU is ideally positioned to educate present and future generations about the need for, and advantages of, increased dialogue and understanding among cultures and about the importance of living in harmony with our environment. The vision outlined in this document represents VIU’s commitment towards achieving the goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015, especially the goals relating to education. As a global university, VIU strives to enact the values and aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals within the communities we serve.

I am continually amazed by the transformative learning that takes place when people of different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs interact with one another and share their experiences, perspectives and dreams. I am excited by the opportunities for global engagement that Vancouver Island University offers through our global partnerships and I am proud of the contributions made by students, staff and faculty towards the creation of a more just, equitable and peaceful global community. The Faculty of International Education will continue to assiduously pursue this ideal through the programs and services we offer.

Graham Pike, PhD
Dean, International Education
I am very happy that I chose VIU for my studies because I always feel so supported. I feel I belong here and that I am part of a team!

— Amy Sun, Nanjing, China
ESL, PMBA
The President’s Commitment

Through the programs and services we offer, and the employment that is generated, Vancouver Island University makes a significant contribution to the economic and social well-being of the communities we serve. International education plays a leading role in shaping VIU’s identity as a university that specializes in providing transformative learning experiences for our students and is committed to enriching our communities. The students we welcome from around the world enhance the academic and cultural vibrancy of our classrooms, as well as creating opportunities for greater global awareness in the homes and neighborhoods where they live. Opportunities for engagement with people and ideas from different nations, whether on campus or in international contexts, offer Canadian students invaluable insights into a world that is interdependent, fast-changing and urgently requiring informed and creative solutions to current problems. VIU is committed to building bridges, not walls.

Vancouver Island University welcomes and supports the international education goals and strategies of both federal and provincial governments. The future prosperity of British Columbia, and of Canada as a whole, is inextricably tied to attracting creative and talented people who will stretch the boundaries of knowledge, as well as to continuing to build a society that is diverse, inclusive and has a deep understanding of the role that Canadians can play in fostering a more peaceful world. In this regard, VIU strongly supports the internationalization initiatives of Universities Canada, Colleges and Institutes Canada, and the Canadian Bureau for International Education.

My personal commitment to international education is profound. I value highly the collaborative partnerships that VIU enjoys with governments, institutions and personnel around the world and I appreciate the exciting opportunities for learning and personal growth that these partnerships afford. In today’s globalized world, we are failing to provide students with the skills and knowledge they require if we do not integrate international and intercultural dimensions into graduate outcomes. Vancouver Island University will always strive to foster the goals of global citizenship across our campuses and in our communities.

Ralph Nilson, PhD
President and Vice-Chancellor
It was one of the most amazing experiences for me at VIU and I find myself lucky that I was part of such an event. I actually knew more people on campus after being a part of this event. I therefore recommend everyone to be a part of and volunteer for World VIU days.

— Harnidhi Ahuja
India, MBA
Our Principles of Practice

In the Faculty of International Education, we:

- Show respect and provide equitable service regardless of gender identity, age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or opinion.

- Communicate openly, effectively and respectfully with students, colleagues and partners.

- Commit to high standards of professionalism through continuous learning and personal growth.

- Conduct ourselves in a mindful and professional manner at all times and in all communications, with particular regard to our interactions with people from a variety of cultures and traditions.

- Promote the value of global citizenship.

- Commit to the evaluation and improvement of our services.

- Explore solutions to challenges in constructive and creative ways.

- Provide support for each other in a workplace culture of empathy, grace and kindness.

- Know that our success depends on the positive, ethical and responsible actions of all individuals.

- Pursue the internationalization goals of the University in ways that are in harmony with our Principles.
STRATEGIC VISION GOALS

The Faculty of International Education incorporates the English Language Centre, The High School at VIU, and all of the services that support international students, facilitate education abroad and promote internationalization at Vancouver Island University. The high-level goals that follow represent the current vision of the Faculty, organized under four headings:

- Creating a Diverse Campus
- Promoting International Students’ Success
- Fostering Global Literacy
- Building a Global Community

Plans for the implementation of these goals, with specific actions and timelines, are developed and updated annually by International Education faculty and staff. Excerpts from VIU’s Academic Plan and Graduate Attributes, as well as from the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development, are given to provide local and global contexts.

1. **Creating a Diverse Campus**

- Review and enhance international strategic enrolment management practices on all campuses and collaborate with the Associate Vice-President Marketing & Communications to ensure maximum effectiveness.

- Develop and refine recruitment strategies that are tailored to the needs and interests of international students in specific regions and for different sectors (graduate, undergraduate, ESL, High School)

- Support innovative marketing and recruitment initiatives through utilizing the networking expertise of our regional representatives and alumni.

- Increase the number of high quality international students, on all campuses, through the creation of more diverse programs catering to emerging student interests.

- Enhance the overall citizenship diversity on all campuses and increase the number of countries from which there is a regular flow of 100 or more international students.

- Improve the rate of conversion from prospective to registered students through enhancing communications between applicants, agents, partners, and VIU personnel.

- Review and enhance international admissions policies, procedures, systems and processes to ensure timely, efficient and welcoming responses to applicants.
- Review and enhance programs and services to ensure new international students receive comprehensive pre-arrival information and opportunities to access university services and connect with peers.

- Review and improve strategic data management and systems within International Education, in collaboration with other areas in VIU, to enhance reporting and planning functions.

- Continue to develop an international student scholarship program that rewards academic excellence and community service, with a special focus on deserving students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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**Academic Plan Core Values**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Sustainability and Well-being:** we foster sustainability in our institution through progressive sustainable operational practices, promotion of environmental awareness, delivery of supporting pedagogy, and provision for wellness in our employees and students.
The academic experience for me has been so rich, and the things that I have learned here, I know I wouldn’t have learned anywhere else. The teachers here are so helpful and welcoming, and that is something I think, only comes with a school this size. They reach out to you in a way that feels like home.

— Dweeja Mehta United Arab Emirates
The High School
2. **Promoting International Students’ Success**

- Review and enhance health and wellness supports and services for international students on all campuses.

- Improve levels of student satisfaction and support through enhancing customer service in the Faculty of International Education.

- Review and enhance the student advising model in order to expand access and reach, improving satisfaction levels.

- Enhance the effectiveness of services and programs within International Education through improved communication, collaboration and celebration among faculty and staff.

- Facilitate international students’ engagement with peers through activities, clubs and associations.

- Extend and complement orientation information through a series of workshops and information sessions throughout the year, and via relevant and accessible online information.

- Increase cross-cultural competencies for new and current international students, allowing them to be more successful living in, and integrating into, the local community.

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**Academic Plan: VIU’s Niche**

Adjacent to the rugged coastline of the Salish Sea and within the traditional territories of the Coast Salish People, Vancouver Island University is proud of its unique history and culture as a teaching university that:

- Welcomes and celebrates learners, from local, regional and international communities, and non-traditional students, as the heart of the institution;

- supports and celebrates student success;

- provides high quality teaching, affordable high quality programs and multiple ways of knowing;

- promotes campus communities offering small class sizes that encourage rewarding faculty/student engagement;

- supports Indigenous learners and connections to Indigenous communities;

- fosters a global awareness within the campus and external communities; and

- promotes community engagement for students and faculty that fosters undergraduate and applied research.
VIU’s location in Nanaimo on beautiful Vancouver Island is one of the reasons I love to study here. Also, the small class sizes make for quality learning environments.

— Noriko Ando, Amagasaki-shi, Japan
Bachelor of Tourism Management
2. **Promoting International Students’ Success**

- Continue to improve international student retention through more effective academic advising and support for academically at-risk students.

- Restructure courses in the English Language Centre to improve the delivery of ESL programs.

- Develop students’ leadership skills through mentoring, training and volunteer opportunities.

- Create engaging group programs that meet students’ learning objectives through customized content, cultural immersion and recreation.

- Develop innovative programs that reflect current research around student success in high schools.

- Foster a campus-wide culture that has high expectations for international students and values the diverse range of skills and experiences they bring to VIU.
As an MBA student at VIU I have had the opportunity to challenge myself and take my learning to the next level as well as have the enriching experience of getting involved with many student groups and community organizations.

— Thao Nguyen, VIU MBA Student
Da Nang City, Vietnam
I was the valedictorian for the ESL Semester Celebration in July 2017. I enjoyed my ESL studies at Vancouver Island University because of the skilled teachers and the friendly community. If you’d like to continue your academic or English studies, VIU is the best choice for you and the best atmosphere for studying.

— Hanna Alsaleh
Jordan
3. Fostering Global Literacy

- Continue to develop intercultural awareness on VIU campuses through enhancing intercultural competencies and skills development for students, staff and faculty.

- Improve education and information for VIU host families in order to better support international students living in their homes.

- Continue to develop relationships with faculty and staff in other Faculties to better meet the needs of our international students.

- Expand mobility opportunities and increase the involvement of students, faculty and staff in global engagement and community development activities worldwide.

- Improve Education Abroad systems and processes to better serve and support students, faculty and staff.
- Improve communications and outreach strategies to strengthen the profile of Education Abroad and to better engage with, inspire and mobilize the VIU community.

- Offer short-term programming that supports self-reflection, personal growth and intercultural competence.

- Explore the interface of International and Indigenous Education and develop meaningful and mutually rewarding partnerships.

- Foster the development of global citizenship on our campuses and in our communities through internationalization activities that entertain, inform, provoke and challenge.

- Promote, implement and support activities and programs that help students achieve VIU’s Graduate Attributes, with a special focus on Civic Engagement.

**VIU Graduate Attributes**

**Institution-level Learning Outcomes**

At VIU, we believe that through our graduate attributes we can help students to become valued contributors in their chosen communities, no matter their backgrounds, starting points, how long they are with us, or when they leave.

Our graduate attributes are grouped into three “pillars,” which we believe form a solid foundation of citizenship.

**LITERACIES**

- Reading
- Written Communication
- Oral Communication
- Information Literacies
- Scientific Literacy
- Technological Literacy

**INTELLECTUAL AND PRACTICAL SKILLS**

- Disciplinary Expertise
- Critical Thinking
- Creative Thinking
- Inquiry & Ways of Knowing
- Historical Understanding
- Safe & Ethical Practices
- Collaboration
- Active Learning

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

- Indigenous Perspective
- Local Knowledge in a Global Context
- Intercultural Perspective
- Capacity to Engage in Respectful Relationships
- Foundations for Lifelong Learning
- Ethical Reasoning
- Integrative Learning
Thanks to VIU’s programs and teachers I have grown as a person. They supported me by giving me advice, valuable experience in my field of study and a sense of community.

— Brian Brito
VIU Bachelor of Education Student
Caracas, Venezuela
4. Building a Global Community

- Review International Education staff and faculty satisfaction levels and deepen their engagement through professional development and responsive management.

- Enhance collaboration with other Faculties through developing joint initiatives and programs with an international dimension.

- Expand and improve communication strategies, campus-wide and with community partners, to increase the awareness and engagement of international and education abroad students.

- Continue to develop strategies to foster global citizenship through WorldVIU Days, Global Citizens Week and other campus and community initiatives.

- Build capacity within VIU and in the community that supports the inclusion of international students and their integration with domestic students.

- Collaborate with campus and community partners to increase off-campus housing options and support for international students.

- Expand intra-university, inter-university and community partnerships to support global engagement and international development.

- Build and enhance global partnerships through effective and mutually beneficial cooperation with high schools, colleges and universities worldwide.

- Conduct all operations in International Education in ways that demonstrate our Principles of Practice.

United Nations Declaration

Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015.

The New Agenda: 36
We pledge to foster intercultural understanding, tolerance, mutual respect and an ethic of global citizenship and shared responsibility. We acknowledge the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognize that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to, and are crucial enablers of, sustainable development.

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

4.7
By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.