



# A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY 2019-2024





## PREFACE

The Strategic Framework for Bishop's University articulates our collective vision, mission and values, and sets out our priorities and objectives for 2019-2024.

This ambitious framework is the result of extensive consultation and reflects the contributions and ideas of people across our campus and beyond.

The framework's primary objective is to guide our future decisions and actions. It will inform the overall planning and budget allocations of the University, and it will provide guidance to faculty and staff in all academic and administrative units when undertaking their own planning activities.

The implementation of the framework depends upon engagement and commitment from every sector of the University. It challenges all of us to think strategically about the plans and activities in our own areas, and our roles in translating the priorities into concrete actions.

Guided by the framework, detailed plans will be created in a number of areas, and tools will be developed and used to assess and report on progress.

Annual reports on implementation of the Strategic Framework will be submitted to the Board of Governors, Senate and the wider University community.

## OUR VISION

Our goal is to offer Canada's foremost undergraduate education.

We aspire to be the institution of choice for outstanding young people seeking academic excellence in a community that instills curiosity, confidence, courage and a sense of responsibility in its students.

## OUR MISSION

At the heart of the Bishop's experience is close interaction between professors and students, within the classroom and beyond, in scholarship, research and creative activity.

We engage our students in their own intellectual and social development by offering programs of study and extracurricular activities that foster curiosity and a life-long interest in and commitment to learning.

We encourage both breadth and depth in our students' academic programs, to equip them to explore and solve complex problems.

We provide a small number of niche research and professional graduate programs, and we recognize that interaction with graduate students can also enhance the undergraduate experience.

We are committed to maintaining our intimate size and residential nature in order to foster the social development of our students, encourage the creation of lasting friendships and engender a true sense of community.

We invite our students, who come from Quebec, elsewhere in Canada, and around the world, to practice the respectful and informed dialogue that sustains democracy, to exercise the rights and responsibilities of good citizenship and to realize their potential for leadership.

# OUR VALUES

## **EXCELLENCE**

We value outstanding teaching, research and creative expression, and the pursuit of excellence in all that we undertake. We aim to instill the aspiration and determination to excel in our students and in all other members of our community.

## **COMMUNITY-FOCUSED**

We are a diverse, vibrant, inclusive and collaborative intellectual community of people dedicated to excellence and sustainability. With students from every Canadian province and territory and more than 60 countries, the world meets on our campus. Our small size, attractive natural and built environment in a bilingual community in Quebec provide opportunities for a high degree of engagement and close relationships among faculty, students, staff, alumni and the local community. We adhere to the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct in all activities and relationships.

## **STUDENT-CENTRED**

Bishop's highest priority is to support each of its students in achieving their full potential. As a small, residential, predominantly undergraduate, academically rigorous liberal arts institution supported by engaged alumni, Bishop's is able to provide its students the best possible student experience. Our academic excellence, cross-disciplinary learning environment, rich co-curricular and extracurricular offerings and outstanding student support services equip Bishop's to provide a rare and exceptional experience for its students.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

We value the natural beauty of our surroundings and the exceptional architectural quality of our built environment.

Bishop's University is located on the traditional territory of the Abenaki people, the original stewards of the land. We are committed to protecting our natural and built environment so that subsequent generations of Bishop's students and the wider community of the Eastern Townships will be able to enjoy them.

We promote sustainability as an overarching principle for all our activities and strategic priorities. Our holistic approach includes a concern for our environment, and a commitment to sustaining our institution through viable financial, cultural and social practices. We seek to integrate principles of sustainability into our academic programs and our individual and institutional activities.

# OUR PRIORITIES

- 1. *Elevate the quality of our academic programs and our liberal education model by promoting innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration.***
- 2. *Expand experiential learning.***
- 3. *Enhance the quality, quantity, stature and reputation of research.***
- 4. *Enhance the student experience.***
- 5. *Enhance the strength, vibrancy, diversity and inclusivity of the Bishop's community.***
- 6. *Preserve and enhance the natural and built environment.***
- 7. *Ensure financial sustainability.***
- 8. *Enhance our internal and external communications***

# **1. Elevate the quality of our academic programs and our liberal education model by promoting innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration.**

A Bishop's University education is a building block for a fulfilling life and a successful career. We prepare our students for graduate and professional studies through excellent academic programming and a learning environment where professors and staff give students the personal attention they need.

In addition to expertise in a chosen field of study, Bishop's liberal education model ensures that students develop key skills and competencies that will stand the test of time and prepare them for not only for their first job but also for their fifth job, and jobs that have yet to be invented.

***To accomplish this, we will develop strategic actions plans in each Division of the University in order to:***

- 1.1** Ensure that every department and program incorporates the development of specific skills and competencies directly into their courses and curricula or collaborates with other departments and programs to do so.
- 1.2** Advance our culture of teaching excellence by promoting evidence-based practices in teaching, learning and assessment.
- 1.3** Promote innovation through faculty collaboration and the development and implementation of unique initiatives and niche programs across the University.
- 1.4** Improve and enhance Indigenous academic programming across the campus.
- 1.5** Reimagine and revitalize the humanities in order to ensure that they continue to play an integral part in Bishop's skills and competence-based liberal education model.
- 1.6** Ensure that Science will take full advantage of the University's recent infrastructure investments, the higher government funding and the increasing popularity of STEM fields among students.
- 1.7** Initiate a process aimed at applying for and achieving international accreditation of the Williams School of Business.



## **2. Expand experiential learning.**

We are committed to providing experiential learning opportunities for all students that reinforce the relationship between their academic and post graduation goals.

*To accomplish this, we will:*

- 2.1** Make experiential education integral to how our students learn, and ensure that all students have the opportunity to engage in one or more experiential learning activities during their studies.
- 2.2** Create research courses/internships in each department, in which students will be able to work closely with faculty members as research assistants and earn credits for doing so.
- 2.3** Expand COOP and workplace internships.

## **3. Enhance the quality, quantity, stature and reputation of research.**

Bishop's will invest further in an environment that supports scholarly research and creative activity in many different forms. Our Maple League university partners will be our benchmark in terms of research expectations, funding and number of Canada Research Chairs. Undergraduate and graduate students will be meaningfully engaged in research of all kinds.

*To accomplish this, we will develop an action plan to implement the University's Strategic Research Plan and:*

- 3.1** Create new academic space for faculty and student research activities for all disciplines which will promote collaboration and act as a hub for research and innovation at Bishop's.
- 3.2** Provide increased institutional support for Bishop's graduate students.
- 3.3** Support our researchers in disseminating their research and creative and scholarly activities as part of a University-wide communications strategy.

## **4. Enhance the student experience.**

Bishop's has a proud tradition of providing a safe, healthy and enriching student experience. We will continue building a transformative student life experience for our students with the goal of enhancing active citizenship and autonomy in our students.

*To accomplish this, we will:*

- 4.1** Diversify and expand our mental health resources with a focus on preventative measures.
- 4.2** Continue to pursue our efforts to prevent sexual violence.
- 4.3** Expand our transitioning services which prepare students for life after university.
- 4.4** Increase the number of first-year students living in residence.
- 4.5** Expand student and residence life programming.
- 4.6** Enhance the creative and performing arts as a core element of a creative campus.
- 4.7** Increase athletic opportunities (varsity, intramural and recreational) for the campus and wider community, and advocate for measures to promote parity in inter-university sport in Quebec and Canada.

## **5. Enhance the strength, vibrancy, diversity and inclusivity of the Bishop's community.**

Living, learning and working with people from diverse backgrounds offers opportunities for personal and institutional growth and innovation. A renewed commitment to increased diversity and enhancing our already strong sense of community will also enrich the student experience.

*To accomplish this, we will:*

- 5.1** Increase the cultural and linguistic diversity among students, faculty and staff.
- 5.2** Increase the number of Indigenous students and the support for them, and enhance our commitment to reconciliation by creating opportunities to learn with and about Indigenous Peoples.
- 5.3** Meet accessibility standards in new buildings and, whenever possible, in those being renovated.
- 5.4** Strengthen our relationships with the other institutions of higher learning in the Eastern Townships that compose the Pôle régional en enseignement supérieur en Estrie (PRESE), and with our Maple League university partners by promoting increased inter-institutional student, faculty and staff interactions and activities.
- 5.5** Contribute to preserving the vitality of the English-speaking community of the Eastern Townships.



## **6. Preserve and enhance the natural and built environment.**

Bishop's University's campus includes 550-acres of natural habitat and built environment. By being responsible stewards of this land, we will ensure that our campus remains a home for wildlife and a haven for recreation. We will protect our natural areas so that subsequent generations of Bishop's students and the wider community of the Eastern Townships will be able to enjoy them. We will protect and care for one of Canada's most attractive campuses by updating and implementing the 2012 Rose/Van Valkenburgh Master Plan. The Plan articulates an enduring and sustainable vision while at the same time being a living document which can evolve as circumstances change and opportunities arise.

### ***To accomplish this, we will:***

- 6.1** Renovate our iconic buildings, Divinity House (to become a meeting space and resource centre for Indigenous students) and McGreer.
- 6.2** Renovate the Student Centre and build a new student residence that will enhance the student experience.
- 6.3** Build an educational farm on campus to support the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program that will provide experiential learning opportunities for our students.
- 6.4** Redesign the Coulter Field entrance to make it dignified and pedestrian-friendly.
- 6.5** Redesign the roadways in order to reduce significantly the presence of cars in the heart of the campus.
- 6.6** Create a cohesive and collegial sense of community on campus through uniform and signature elements of urban furniture, signage and lighting.
- 6.7** Develop an ambitious sustainable development plan that will contribute to sustaining human wellbeing and the natural environment locally as well as globally by contributing to the fight against climate change



## **7. Ensure financial sustainability.**

Financial sustainability is the foundation upon which our academic programs and student services are based. We will support our strategic priorities while being financially responsible.

*To accomplish this, we will:*

- 7.1** Grow and optimize enrollment by creating a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan that establishes targets for the number and mix of our student population (Quebec vs. Rest of Canada, international vs. Canadian; undergraduate vs. graduate).
- 7.2** Dedicate resources to sustaining our infrastructure and reducing the accumulated deficit while operating with balanced budgets.
- 7.3** Build greater fundraising capacity and nurture an alumni and donor base that will be pivotal to the financial success of Bishop's while increasing annual and estate giving, and significant donations toward securing financial support for major projects (e.g. the Indigenous Student Centre and the women's varsity hockey program), growing the endowment and laying the groundwork for the next capital campaign.
- 7.4** Sustain our investments in government relations in order to advocate effectively for a reduction in the funding gaps between Bishop's and the other small Quebec universities.

## **8. Enhance our internal and external communications.**

The University has made significant progress in the last several years yet public knowledge about Bishop's remains limited. We have a very positive story to tell and we will work to communicate our story more effectively internally and externally.

*To accomplish this, we will:*

- 8.1** Develop and execute a communication strategy that will enhance the awareness and understanding of events, policies and governing structures amongst members of the University community.
- 8.2** Improve coherence, consistency and effectiveness in the marketing and branding of the University to domestic and international audiences.
- 8.3** Collaborate with our Maple League university partners, to promote the benefits of our educational model.

