A L G O N Q U I N C O L L E G E

Strategic Programs and Services Planning (SPSP)

Final Report December, 2012

ALGONQUIN COLLEGE

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

This report marks the conclusion of the most extensive review of programs and services undertaken in Algonquin's more than 45-year history.

I commend the Board of Governors for their vision and direction to complete the Strategic Programs and Services Planning (SPSP) efforts. I thank the College community for its dedication, effort and patience in carrying out this essential exercise. We are stronger for it and we are better prepared to face—and respond to—the opportunities and challenges the next 45 years will bring.

The SPSP project looked at Algonquin with a wide-angle lens, applying a common assessment framework to every aspect of its operations, and establishing performance metrics for programs and services to facilitate data-driven decision-making. As a result of that work, we have identified numerous opportunities to use College resources more efficiently and improve our service delivery.

While the project itself is finished, its work will carry on. The knowledge generated has been successfully transferred into the College's departments, laying the foundation for a culture of continuous improvement. Our College Leadership Council is picking up where SPSP left off, integrating the project's recommendations and principles into Algonquin's business planning processes.

The SPSP project has revealed that we are making the right progress. Its findings will inform our strategic and business plans into the future. Our efforts will help guide us toward realizing our vision of becoming a global leader in digitally connected applied education and training.

Sincerely,

Claude Brulé
Vice President, Academic

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2009, Algonquin launched the Strategic Programs and Services Planning (SPSP) project to identify areas for improvement and growth across the College. Across three phases of activity, SPSP has thoroughly surveyed Algonquin's programs and services, with numerous recommendations implemented and the foundations of a continuous improvement culture firmly established.

Phases 1 and 2: 2009 to 2011 – Initial recommendations and implementation

The first phase of the SPSP project concluded in 2010 with the publication of initial findings and recommendations in a report entitled, Embracing Change, Ready to Act. Those recommendations were enacted during a second project phase in 2010/2011.

In June 2011, the SPSP Progress Report noted that many College services lacked extensive decision-making data. These findings prompted the Board of Governors to request an in-depth review of the services data that had been collected. A third and final phase was initiated with a focus on completing the College's Programs Review and performing a more comprehensive College Services Review.

Phase 3: 2011 to 2012 – Findings and recommendations

Update on College Programs Review

Responsibility for the implementation of SPSP program recommendations and regular program review rests with the Deans. Of the recommendations made in June 2010, more than 50% are complete; update reports indicate the remaining recommendations are on track. The work described in the Task Group on Services in Academic Offices update and the update on Academic Business Intelligence further demonstrates the operationalization of the Programs Review process.

College Services Review and Departmental Recommendations

As part of the analysis component of Phase 3, the SPSP Steering Committee reviewed more than 250 services and 360 department-level recommendations, which were organized into the established categories of Enhance, Revise, Maintain, Phase Out and New Opportunity.

Many services recommended for enhancement were related to the College's strategic goals of student and client success, and financial sustainability. 'Revise' recommendations focused largely on improving student and client success, and on realigning resources or tasks for greater effectiveness. Several New Opportunities pertained to the College's strategic goal of delivering exceptional service to its diverse student and client populations.

Close the gap on data and measures

Through the process of this analysis, it became apparent that additional work was required to increase the College's understanding of key data collection and performance metrics concepts. Over 30 separate training sessions and workshops were held to ensure Deans and Directors had the knowledge critical for their success. Additional data were then gathered and performance measures further refined.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

MEMBERS OF THE SPSP STEERING COMMITTEE:

Jennifer Daly-Cyr, Acting Director,
Strategic Programs and Services Planning (Chair)

Allison Burnett, Project Coordinator,
Strategic Programs and Services Planning

Cindy Chapman, Project Manager, IIRTS

Monique Cochrane, Professor, Business, Perth Campus

Denyce Diakun, Director,
Workforce and Personal Development

Dave Donaldson, Dean, School of Business

Chuck Doyle, Manager, Business Process Review

Karen Foster, Director, Ancillary Services

Barbara Foulds, Acting Dean, Health and Community Studies

Joanne McDonald, Manager,
Career Services and Student Activities

Katie Miller, Strategic Programs and Services Planning (recorder)

Claire Snasdell-Taylor, Chair, Career and Academic Access Centre

Jack Wilson, Professor, Police and Public Safety Institute

Pan-College opportunities

As well, during the Steering Committee's review, it became apparent that the approach to making final service-level recommendations had to be substantively different from the one used for programs due to the degree of inter-connectedness among services. The Steering Committee noted that changes to services in one area of the College often affected services delivered in another. This 'ripple effect' made isolated recommendations inappropriate in many cases, and led the Steering Committee to identify seven pan-College opportunities for consideration. (In addition to the pan-College opportunities, several unique departmental recommendations were put forward.)

The seven pan-College initiatives opportunities included:

1. Aligning project management processes
2. Automating academic business intelligence
3. Automating key business processes—specifically payroll and CAL999
4. Coordinating digital infrastructure and capabilities
5. Coordinating outreach to external stakeholders
6. Developing a culture of continuous improvement
7. Enhancing marketing support

Path forward

Going forward, responsibility for Phase 3 findings - including outstanding recommendations and the seven pan-College opportunities - will proceed under the guidance of the College Leadership Council as part of its strategic and business planning processes.

The principles of continuous improvement will be further embedded in Algonquin's day-to-day operations and quality assurance processes for programs and services through an ongoing commitment to professional development.

RECAP: THE STRATEGIC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES PLANNING (SPSP) PROJECT

In 2009, Algonquin College began the most extensive planning exercise ever undertaken in its history. Initiated by the College's forward-thinking Board of Governors, the Strategic Programs and Services Planning (SPSP) project touched every aspect of College operations and attracted attention from other post-secondary institutions in Canada. This final report revisits the two initial phases of the SPSP project and summarizes work done since the last update to the Board of Governors in June 2012, as depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. The SPSP process at a glance

2009 to 2011: Initial recommendations and implementation

Phase 1

The first phase of the SPSP process took place over the course of 2009/2010, engaging the entire College community in a comprehensive review of programs and services. The aim was to identify areas for improvement and opportunities for new offerings—to reveal ways of growing sustainably, ensure the ongoing relevance of programs and services, and address fiscal challenges.

That initial phase concluded in June 2010 with the a report titled Embracing Change, Ready to Act, which contained recommendations for action, grouped under the 'key directions' of:

- Learning
- Commitment to student success
- Focus on relevant, high-quality programs and services to further the College's strategic directions (with strong emphasis on becoming a digital college)
- Continuous improvement

RECAP: THE STRATEGIC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES PLANNING (SPSP) PROJECT (CONTINUED)

Phase 2

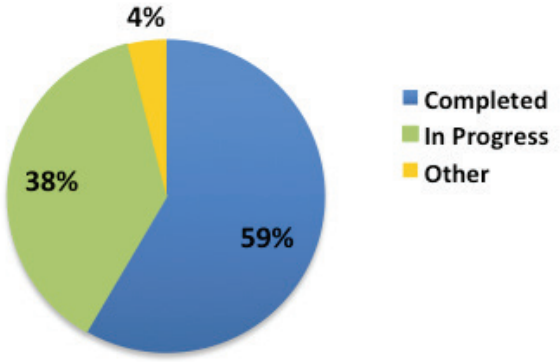
A second phase carried SPSP forward through 2010/2011, with departments across the College implementing the majority of the recommendations outlined in Embracing Change, Ready to Act. A renewed SPSP Steering Committee was formed in January 2011 to oversee SPSP implementation and reporting, and to facilitate the work of the project's four special purpose task groups:

- Service Performance Metrics
- College Programming Strategy
- Services in Academic Offices
- College Standing Committee Review

The outcomes of the implementation efforts were captured in the Embracing Change, Ready to Act Progress Report published in June 2011.

Figure 2 shows the status of the June 2010 recommendations as of November 2012. The majority of the program and service recommendations have been completed. Those in progress have been transferred successfully to the individual departments responsible.

Figure 2. Status of June 2010 SPSP recommendations



RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTED

Examples of successfully implemented SPSP recommendations can be found in every department of the College, as the following show:

Academic

The College's Academic division aligned the operations of the Centre for Continuing and Online Learning (formerly the School of Part Time Studies) with other Academic areas. Opportunities for future business development are being explored.

Advancement

The Advancement Division consolidated its web and creative services units to formally form the Marketing Department, providing the College community access to modern marketing skills and support.

Finance and Administration

In Finance and Administration, the functions of shipping/receiving, purchasing and accounting have been consolidated—bringing greater cohesion to College supply chain logistics, reducing costs (through the elimination of three FTE positions), and enabling resource re-allocation to enhance department value.

Human Resources

Human Resources at Algonquin phased out responding to pension estimate inquiries, which are better handled by the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) Pension Plan. Today, all such inquiries are directed to CAAT, making a more efficient use of HR resources.

Student Services

Automation and online services have been explored further by Student Services to offer a greater range of service options to clients, improving their overall experience of the College.

Task group updates

The four SPSP task groups concluded their work in 2011. Each group's activities were linked to a specific Key Recommendation from the 2010 SPSP Final Report.

Service Performance Metrics Task Group

KEY RECOMMENDATION TO ADDRESS: Develop an annual administrative College Services Review model.

The SPSP Services Performance Metrics produced performance metrics for every College service—in many cases, for the first time, representing an initial opportunity to collect data in a focused manner. The metrics were implemented during the College Services Review.

College Programming Strategy Task Group

KEY RECOMMENDATION TO ADDRESS: Develop a comprehensive College programming strategy.

This task group's recommendations are now being operationalized by the Academic Development department, and include finalization of the College market research study. Algonquin's Strategic Enrolment Management Committee (SEMC) is working on projections that will be aligned with the College programming strategy.

Services in Academic Offices Task Group

KEY RECOMMENDATION TO ADDRESS: Conduct an organizational design study related to structure, delivery and support in the academic area.

A common set of metrics identified by the task group was implemented during the Phase 3 College Services Review. Analysis of results reported against those metrics shed light on the performance of the College's academic offices in several key areas. A cross-section of academic office staff was engaged in focus groups and interviews about SPSP analysis and their offices' data needs. Coming out of this, the SPSP and business process review teams conducted a joint a workshop with the academic office Chairs in October 2012.

That workshop focused on identifying labour-intensive processes that could be made more efficient and deliver value-added services to students. Prioritized in order of importance/urgency, these included: repetitive, cyclical HR processes; non-standardized, multi-platform (Genesis and Excel) reporting processes; and loading and scheduling processes that currently require cyclical data re-entry.

As well, business requirements for a program-focused dashboard were created for the College's Academic Offices. Once implemented, such a dashboard could eliminate a significant number of hours currently spent manually entering data into spreadsheets and reports.

College Committees Review Task Group

KEY RECOMMENDATION TO ADDRESS: Re-examine existing committee structure.

This task group recommended changes to the structure, function and membership of College committees and working groups. These recommendations were reviewed by the President's Council and an implementation plan is being developed

2011 to 2012: Operationalizing continuous improvement

Phase 3

The third and final phase of the SPSP project commenced in June of 2011 and consisted of two components:

- An updated College Programs Review, leading to the operationalization of data-driven program-related decision making within the College's academic area, guided by principles of continuous improvement.
- A College Services Review that included identifying and refining performance metrics based on factors such as relevance, demand, quality and resource utilization and analysing the related data for all College services.

PHASE 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Update on College Programs Review

Responsibility for the implementation of SPSP program recommendations and regular program review rests with the Deans. Of the recommendations made in June 2010, more than 50% are complete; update reports indicate the remaining recommendations are on track. The work described in the Task Group on Services in Academic Offices update and the update on Academic Business Intelligence further demonstrates the operationalization of the Programs Review process.

College Services Review

Of the two elements of Phase 3, the College Services Review was the more intensive exercise, demanding significant time and effort. While College programs can be assessed more or less individually, services tend to be interconnected and interlinked, making data collection both challenging and complex. A significant finding of the College Services Review was related to the connectedness of College services, which helped reveal opportunities for pan-College improvement initiatives. (See the section titled "Seven pan-College opportunities" in this report for more detail on these.)

Many participants in the College Services Review remarked that the analysis component provided a great opportunity to work collaboratively and share ideas with colleagues and staff across departments. In keeping with Algonquin's digital college objectives, this phase of the SPSP project saw analysis and reporting templates automated via a SharePoint platform.

As detailed in a previous update to the Board of Governors, concluding the College Services Review consisted of four steps:

- Close the gap on data and measures
- Review departmental recommendations
- Identify pan-College opportunities
- Align SPSP efforts with the College's business planning cycle

Close the gap on data and measures

The June 2012 SPSP Update Report noted that many services lacked extensive decision-making data. The Service Performance Metrics Task Group and related cross-College efforts had laid a solid foundation for extensive service reviews, analysis and reporting. Armed with the results of the 2012 College Services review, this extensive data gathering effort was carried out during the summer and fall of 2012.

Key actions included:

Figure 4. Outcome of data collection efforts

Gathering missing data

The June 2012 SPSP Update Report showed that 12% of performance measures were missing data. This was due to challenges of data collection, the definition of meaningful measures, and the correlation of findings to department-level recommendations. The fall 2012 College Services Review update showed the gap has narrowed to 8%. (Results are captured in the departmental Services Review updates of October 4, 2012.) As momentum builds and departments continue to deepen their collective knowledge of performance measurement and related data collection, this gap will narrow further.

Refining performance measures

In June 2012, 25% of College services indicated they were working with incorrect measures, and 42% indicated additional measures were required. Since then, a full third of services (29%) either removed or added measures to strengthen their service performance metrics. Departments eliminated over 10% of the original measures; several new measures were added in fall 2012, and others will be incorporated as departments and schools become increasingly comfortable with performance measurement and analysis.

Sharing knowledge through workshops

To support data gathering and efforts to refine performance metrics, a substantive effort was made to raise the level of knowledge. SPSP held more than 30 separate training sessions and workshops:

- Quality workshops: Focused on discussing quality measures and data
- Dean/Director meetings: SPSP representatives met with Deans/Directors to address their measures and data gaps, and support completion of the service review update
- Departmental workshops: To help departments as a whole review and update their data and measures

The SPSP team also worked with Ancillary Services' new restaurant, Phogos, and the School of Hospitality and Tourism, Savoir Fare, to pilot a mobile feedback tool for gathering customer satisfaction data from students and other College clients.

The most significant impacts of the College Services Review have been: to instill a data-driven decision-making approach within individual departments and service areas; and to produce a pan-College view of issues and opportunities that will allow departments to work even more collaboratively and productively—with greater alignment of resources—to better serve the full range of College clients.

Departmental recommendations

The SPSP Steering Committee reviewed more than 360 department-level recommendations covering more than 250 services as part of the final phase of the SPSP project. The College Services Review alone resulted in 99 business unit reports and 29 Dean/Director reports.

PHASE 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

Overall, department-level recommendations were fairly evenly split across the five SPSP categories of:

- Enhance
- Revise
- Maintain
- Phase Out
- New Opportunity

Of the five, the category with the fewest recommendations was 'Phase Out'. This is not surprising, as the vast majority of services are critical to delivering exceptional programs at the College, and/or are tightly integrated with other services. Both make it extremely difficult to recommend phasing out a service. That said, aspects of a service might be phased out—which in most cases then falls under 'Revise'.

Some examples of the departmental-level recommendations are outlined below.

Services to Enhance

Departments brought forward several recommendations to enhance services, with many of those services supporting the College's strategic goals of student and client success, and financial sustainability in particular. These ranged from aligning Algonquin's Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process with other colleges so students can more easily have experience recognized to acquiring credit cards for vendor payment, which is more efficient than paying by paper cheque.

Services to Revise

Almost all departmental recommendations to revise services were related to improving student and client success. Many 'Revise' recommendations were about realigning resources or tasks for greater effectiveness—for example, assigning responsibilities more logically across departments, and refining existing processes.

Services to Maintain

Many services across the College have consistent performance and require minimal revision or improvement. Services departments recommended maintaining included events offered through the Mamidosewin Centre, as well as some of the services provided by the Centre for Continuous and Online Learning.

Services to Phase Out

As mentioned, the integrated nature of services at the College makes it difficult to recommend full phase outs. Departments instead proposed phasing out aspects of services (considered to be revisions), and in fact many aspects of services originally tagged for Phase Out ended up bundled with the pan-College opportunities.

New Opportunities

Many opportunities identified by/for departments focused on the College's strategic goal of delivering exceptional service to its diverse student and client populations. These included establishing a centralized curriculum development centre—an idea brought forward by multiple departments along with a proposed transition strategy. The opening of the new campus in Pembroke was seen as a tremendous opportunity to better serve students, staff, and the community at large by expanding food services and bookstore offerings. Other opportunities centered on the financial sustainability of the College. Some of these involved potential cost efficiencies, while others suggested new revenue sources—related to partnerships, for example, or new facilities.

Pan-College opportunities

Once the Steering Committee had completed its first round of analysis, it discussed key themes emerging from the College Services Review. Quickly, it became evident that most college services were inter-connected, with changes in one having an impact on others. This significant finding revealed the complexity of College services. The SPSP team used these themes to 'tag' each of the departmental recommendations and determine which themes were most prominent or common. The resulting seven pan-College opportunities identified included:

1. Aligning project management processes
2. Automating academic business intelligence
3. Automating key business processes—specifically payroll and CAL999
4. Coordinating digital infrastructure and capabilities
5. Coordinating outreach to external stakeholders
6. Developing a culture of continuous improvement
7. Enhancing marketing support

Several of these are at the idea stage, needing further refinement to better determine their scope and 'actionability'. With the conclusion of the SPSP project, it is now the responsibility of the College Leadership Council to lead the further exploration of these opportunities as part of Algonquin's business planning processes. Key considerations include implementation costs, potential impacts on other areas of the College, and timeline to launch.

As part of becoming a 'continuous improvement College', emphasis must shift from making recommendations to developing a process for departments to advance opportunities or proposed changes from concept to implementation.

The seven pan-College activities are outlined below.

1. Aligning project management processes (Strategic Pillar – Financial Sustainability)

Several departments across the College are project-driven. Many of them identified opportunities to align project management skills and processes, such as creating a project management office as a shared service responsible for delivering projects of all sizes and types, and re-evaluating existing project management processes to improve their effectiveness and reduce outsourcing costs.

Further analysis is required before a conclusive solution can be brought forward. To advance this opportunity to its next steps, business process review/value-stream activities are needed for project management processes across the College and a business case must be developed—identifying the benefits and financial impact of adopting a central project management office.

2. Automating academic business intelligence (Strategic Pillar: Financial Sustainability)

The June 2010 SPSP Final Report called for greater access to business intelligence—echoed by numerous departmental recommendations. Immediate academic business intelligence needs include rapid access to program data and greater access to student and staffing information across schools/departments.

SPSP, Academic Operations and Planning, and Academic Development collaboratively developed the academic business requirements for enhancements to Algonquin's enterprise reporting portal and for building a program dashboard that will highlight key financial, quality and access indicators for each program in the College. IIRTS is currently reviewing these requirements and looking to leverage the newly implemented Cognos platform for the solution. SPSP has developed an interim pilot dashboard for use within the academic area.

PHASE 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

The SPSP and Business Process Review teams worked together to address common and recurring issues raised by Chairs across the schools of the College—for example, to improve and make more accessible reports generated through the Genesis student information system.

The potential benefits of efforts to automate academic business intelligence include:

- Data-based strategic enrolment decision-making
- More effective resource allocation, reducing time spent on manual data input in favour of more strategic, higher-value activities
- Greater insight and better information from access to student and staff data in Genesis
- Maximizing investments in Algonquin's Cognos systems and phasing out legacy systems and customized reports

3. Automating key business processes (Strategic Pillar: Student and Client Success)

Of the many business processes at the College that represent good candidates for automation, payroll and CAL999 were cited most frequently.

Payroll

Departmental recommendations noted that manual processes related to part-time payroll are overly labour-intensive: SPSP data show that academic offices allocate more 2,500 hours per semester (equivalent to 70 weeks, or ~1.3 person years (PY)) to part-time payroll administration. Finance, HR, and the Academic Offices, all of which are affected by payroll, recommended moving forward with payroll automation [1].

A working group spearheaded by Algonquin's Business Process Review is developing an interim solution for automating part-time payroll that would migrate from timesheets to exception reports and leverage the digital capabilities the College has invested in, such as SharePoint.

While it is unlikely automation would decrease a person year associated with payroll because of the way the payroll workload is dispersed, automation stands to contribute to more effective resource allocation by reducing the time spent on manual data input and increasing the time allocated to more strategic, higher-value activities.

CAL999

Curriculum review is strategically important to Algonquin, as student enrolment, engagement and retention are all premised on the quality of the curriculum. Yet there is a recognized need to re-examine the curriculum quality review process so it better reflects the College's strategic direction. Deans across the various schools felt the review process could more efficient, and almost all academic offices recommended the CAL999 Annual Curriculum Review (ACR) process be revised. (Currently, it is entirely manual and involves printing and re-entering data multiple times into different systems.) It was suggested that the Annual Curriculum Review and Program Quality Review processes be automated, from data entry to review and approvals.

The CAL999 annual curriculum review is recommended for value-stream analysis in 2013. Streamlining the process through automation will help improve employee engagement and empowerment, and align with the College's strategic goal of leveraging technology to modernize business processes.

4. Coordinating digital infrastructure/capabilities (Strategic Pillar: Student & Client Success/Financial Sustainability)

Algonquin's goal is for most Level One students entering full-time postsecondary programs in fall 2013 to have wireless-capable computing devices for Mobile Learning Programs (MLPs). To enhance the College's MLPs and take advantage of new opportunities, departments recommended:

- Creating a roadmap for rolling out online resources to students
- Increasing collaboration among key departments involved in implementing MLPs
- Identifying impacts and risks associated with expanding MLPs, and developing a risk-management strategy

To cost-effectively support the new delivery method of MLPs, it was also recommended a coordinating body be created to treat acquired software as a tracked asset rather than a departmental purchase. Examples of software purchases that need to be transitioned to a single platform include Live Chat, customer relationship management, and voice and video services.

Further discussions will be held with key stakeholders to determine the most appropriate plan for creating a shared digital infrastructure.

5. Coordinating outreach to external stakeholders (Strategic Pillar: Financial Sustainability)

Algonquin College plays a significant role as a contributor to the local workforce and the region's economic development. It maintains extensive relationships with businesses, government departments and other organizations. As part of the Phase 3 College Services Review, several College departments indicated that nurturing and growing these relationships in a strategic, coordinated manner will be critical to achieving the College's strategic goals and to providing:

- A complete picture of activities underway with any community partner/employer
- A means of avoiding duplicate requests to partners
- The foundation for a strong brand reputation in the community

Moving forward, a strategic stakeholder relationship management plan, process and supporting infrastructure will be essential to achieving growth objectives. Key components of such a plan include: an internal and external stakeholder analysis; an analysis of gaps between the current and desired state; a vision statement for how departments work and interact with external stakeholders; a communication strategy; alignment and updating of all marketing collateral and digital materials; and a CRM solution that all departments can benefit from.

Coordinating outreach to external stakeholders will allow the College to better leverage its strategic business partnerships—with more Applied Research projects, work-integrated learning opportunities and opportunities for donations through the College Foundation all benefits, along with better resource allocation for external-facing events.

6. Develop College-wide skill in applying the principles of continuous improvement (Strategic Pillar: Student and Client Success)

The approach of the SPSP process to defining measures and analyzing results left room for individual departmental interpretation. During the 2009/2010 Service Review, performance measures were identified but the analysis was primarily qualitative: departments subsequently received guidance on how to determine more quantitative measures. Data collected through the 2012 College Services Review revealed that each department had a slightly different interpretation of what service quality meant, evident in the variety of measures identified. This led to workshops on how to identify quality measures.

[1] *Payroll was considered within the College's HR Process Review: recommendations to integrate with HR's Process Review initiative will be brought forward to the President's Council.*

PHASE 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

A significant number of surveys were conducted or proposed for collecting quality data across the College. Some used standard measures such as KPI data, while others were unique to a specific area and executed using their own tools and questionnaires. The risks of this decentralized approach are: a) the lack of quality control with respect to the types of surveys created; and b) survey fatigue, which will likely occur if students and other stakeholders are constantly bombarded with questionnaires. As well, the use of resources is not optimal if each department is investing time in developing, administering, analyzing and monitoring surveys. To cultivate College-wide skill in applying the principles of continuous improvement Algonquin needs to:

- Create a process for developing and administering service-related surveys. Services should operate in a similar manner as programs: one College-wide platform for all, with a consistent branding application.
- Provide ongoing education and training to those responsible for service, department or school quality and other continuous improvement topics.
- Help departments develop skill in applying the principles of continuous improvement to data collection and analysis, documenting their ideas, and developing business cases.
- Pilot new solutions that enhance departments' understanding of the client's voice, such as mobile feedback tools.
- Create a standardized measurement tool that will enable better data comparisons and reduce the time required to create and administer surveys.

Carrying out these activities will help streamline research and improve the quality of survey tools—and therefore results.

7. Enhancing marketing support (Strategic Pillar: Champion Applied Education and Training)

Several departments indicated that additional marketing support was required for their initiatives. Those offering services to the external community—such as Corporate Training and Applied Research—have large growth targets and require more support to market and promote their offerings. Internal departments also expressed the need for additional support to market their offerings to faculty, students and staff. Learning & Teaching Services also highlighted that MLPs should be promoted more strongly to students.

Related to this initiative, departments need to articulate the specific activities and deliverables they require and estimate the time/effort required to complete them. With such information in hand, a formal resource request could be brought forward for either contractors or full-time resources, depending on the needs.

Enhanced marketing support will improve Algonquin's brand position in the marketplace.

Align SPSP efforts with the College's business planning cycle

Throughout Phase 3, every effort has been made to ensure SPSP work aligned with the College's strategic and business planning processes. Regular updates have been provided to individual managers, the College Leadership Council and the President's Council, laying the foundation for the transfer of knowledge and responsibility back to senior management.

PATH FORWARD

Going forward, responsibility Phase 3 findings - including outstanding recommendations and the seven pan-College opportunities - will proceed under the guidance of the College Leadership Council as part of its strategic and business planning processes.

The principles of continuous improvement will be further embedded in Algonquin's day-to-day operations and quality assurance processes for programs and services through an ongoing commitment to professional development.