Incorporating key aspects of the evolving horticulture industry

This two-year Ontario College Diploma program delivered in a condensed format over 16 months incorporates key aspects of the changing horticultural industry including sustainable urban agriculture, green roof and living wall technology, nursery production and management and urban and rural landscape design, installation and maintenance.

YOUR CAREER
In addition to supervisory and project management opportunities, graduates may find employment in:

- Landscape maintenance
- Landscape construction
- Landscape design
- Local/urban food production
- Nurseries and garden centres
- Tree care industry
- Public parks and recreational areas

This program is well-suited for students who place a high personal priority on enhancing the environment, are interested in landscape design from concept to implementation, and are concerned about the safety of our environment and sustainability of our food source.
Will I find the physical work of this program too difficult?
A normal level of fitness is all that is required. With mechanisation in the landscape industry, a lot of the heavier work is now done by machinery. You will be able to work within your own physical limits and students of all physical abilities have succeeded in this program. You should enjoy working outdoors and not mind getting dirty.

How much hands-on training will I receive?
About half of the hours of the program are “learning by doing” outside the classroom. All the areas around the Horticulture Centre have been constructed and maintained by students of the program which you will continue, as well as potentially working on projects elsewhere on the campus and off-campus.

What special equipment do I need?
The program is laptop compulsory. CSA-approved steel-toe boots and program shirts are compulsory for all outdoor activities. Hard hat, safety vest, and ear and eye protection are also required for some of the outdoor classes. Since you will be working outdoors in a variety of weather conditions, you need a good quality rain-suit and also sun protection. You should have a good selection of warm clothing available as weather can change rapidly during a day. You are required to provide your own secateurs (pruners) and other small hand-tools for landscape maintenance and construction classes.

I am an older student - is everyone else going to be straight out of school?
Our typical student has been several years out of high school and we have a number of second-career students as well, so the student body has a broad age-range.

What are my career prospects when I complete this program?
The landscape industry is a thriving, expanding industry with a high demand for skilled workers. Graduates have no problems finding employment. As well, it is relatively easy to start your own small business and many of our graduates do that after gaining experience with industry employers. Most jobs are seasonal (April to November) but employers often ‘bank’ overtime (which is commonly worked during the summer) and continue to pay your regular wages well into the winter season. The nursery industry often keeps key employees throughout the winter and many construction companies plough snow and do renovations throughout the winter months.

What kind of further studies can I do after this program?
Graduates have gone on to complete degrees in Landscape Architecture, Horticulture and Plant Science. Advanced courses in Golf Course Management are another option. The program has an articulation agreement with Olds College in Alberta, which gives graduates two years advanced standing in their four-year degree program in Horticulture. The program also prepares students to challenge sections of Landscape Ontario’s certification program at the Technician level.