



VANCOUVER ISLAND  
UNIVERSITY



# Institutional Accountability Plan and Report

2013/14 REPORTING CYCLE



## HAY CH QA' SII'EM SIYE'YU MUKW MUSTIMUXW

Vancouver Island University students, staff, faculty and administration acknowledge and thank the Snuneymuxw First Nation, Tla'amin First Nation and Cowichan Tribes for welcoming students, staff, faculty and administration to teach, learn, live and share educational experiences on the traditional territories of these nations.





VANCOUVER ISLAND  
UNIVERSITY

Board of Governors

July 3, 2014

Honourable Amrik Virk  
Minister of Advanced Education  
Province of British Columbia

Dear Minister Virk,

Vancouver Island University (VIU) is pleased to submit the Institutional Accountability Plan and Report for the 2013/14 reporting cycle.

As a leader in providing high-quality learning, Vancouver Island University supports the well being of the people of Vancouver Island and coastal British Columbia by promoting a high quality of life for their communities through commitment to student success, community engagement and associated scholarship. Consistent with the university's "open access" mandate, VIU offers a diverse range of academic programming including continuing education, developmental, trades and applied technology, as well as undergraduate and graduate programs. At the Cowichan campus, for example, new programming options are planned that encompass four-year baccalaureate degree programs, dual credit trades programming at the Cowichan Trades Centre, as well as an increased focus on Aboriginal course content.

Over the past year VIU delivered educational programming to more than 17,000 students. This included approximately 2,000 Aboriginal students (per 2012/13 ministry-provided data) and approximately 1,900 international students from more than 80 countries. Through the promotion of excellence in learning, we inspire our students and the people of Vancouver Island and coastal British Columbia as a trusted educational partner in the search for sustainable cultural, economic, environmental and social prosperity.

We are pleased to endorse the content of this report and look forward to working with the Ministry to advance post-secondary education, student success and community engagement.

Sincerely,

Ann Scott  
Chair, Board of Governors  
Vancouver Island University

Ralph Nilson, Ph.D.  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
Vancouver Island University

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## 1. INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION



Known as a regional centre of excellence for teaching, learning, and applied research, Vancouver Island University's (VIU) graduates have the academic and work-related skills in demand by employers across the country and around the world. With a focus on access for students of all backgrounds, skills, and needs, including Aboriginal and International students, VIU offers an enriched, intellectually stimulating, and culturally diverse learning environment. Offering a wide range of programs encompassing basic literacy, vocational programs, trades, undergraduate, and graduate degrees, VIU encourages all students to explore their potential, discover more about their world, and excel in both life and learning.

Our main campus in Nanaimo is located on the slope of Mount Benson and overlooks the spectacular Salish Sea. We have campuses in the Cowichan Valley and Powell River as well as a campus centre in Parksville. VIU is the proud owner of Milner Gardens and Woodlands in Qualicum Beach, recently named one of the top 10 public gardens in Canada. VIU also operates many off-campus teaching and learning facilities such as the Cowichan Trades Centre, Paine Horticultural Centre, Providence Farm, Deep Bay Marine Field Station, and Heavy Equipment Operator site.

Established in 1936 as a vocational training school, VIU has evolved into a dynamic, internationally known post-secondary institution, achieving university status in 2008. In fiscal year 2013/14, VIU enrolled more than 17,000 students accounting for over 8,300 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. A significant number, approximately 12%, are self-declared Aboriginal students from our region and beyond (as per 2012/13 ministry-provided data). In addition to serving Canadian students, VIU also offers a successful International Education program that attracted more than 1,900 students from over 80 countries, representing 16% of our total student FTEs.

VIU is proud of its ongoing contribution to the cultural, social, economic, and intellectual life of Vancouver Island and coastal British Columbia. As one of the primary employers in the region, VIU employed nearly 2,300 faculty and staff during 2013. With consolidated revenues of more than \$130 million in 2013/14, VIU is a major economic driver in the region, contributing more than \$400 million per year and more than \$38 million in tax revenues to governments.

As a regional university, our mandate is defined in the University Act and related legislation.<sup>1</sup> As specified in the Act, our governance structure is composed of a Board of Governors and a Senate, which are responsible for program approvals and oversight.

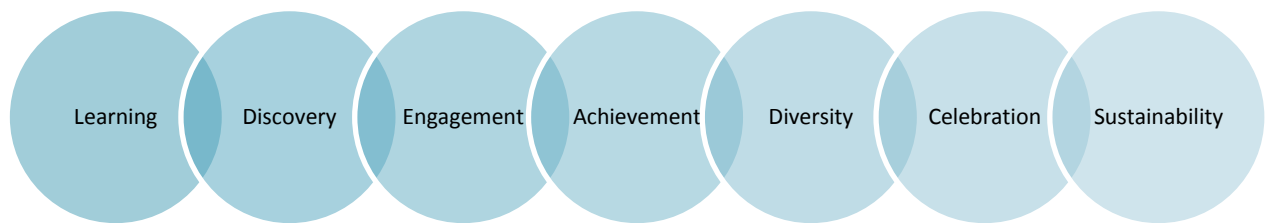
## 1.1 MISSION STATEMENT

Vancouver Island University is a dynamic and diverse educational organization, dedicated to excellence in teaching and learning, service and research. We foster student success, strong community connections, and international collaboration by providing access to a wide range of university programs designed for regional, national, and international students.

## 1.2 PURPOSE

As a leader in providing high-quality learning, Vancouver Island University supports the well-being of the people of Vancouver Island and coastal British Columbia by promoting a high quality of life for their communities through commitment to student success, community engagement, and associated scholarship.

## 1.3 CORE VALUES



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

**Discovery:** through the pursuit of free enquiry we promote an enduring learning community

**Engagement:** we value ongoing cooperation with our partners in education, with communities in our region and with colleagues throughout the world

**Achievement:** we believe in the potential of our 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 maintaining learning and working environments which are equitable, diverse and inclusive

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

**Sustainability:** we support a healthy sustainable environment through progressive operational practices and promotion of environmental awareness

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/publications/legislation.htm>



## 1.4 VISIONARY GOAL

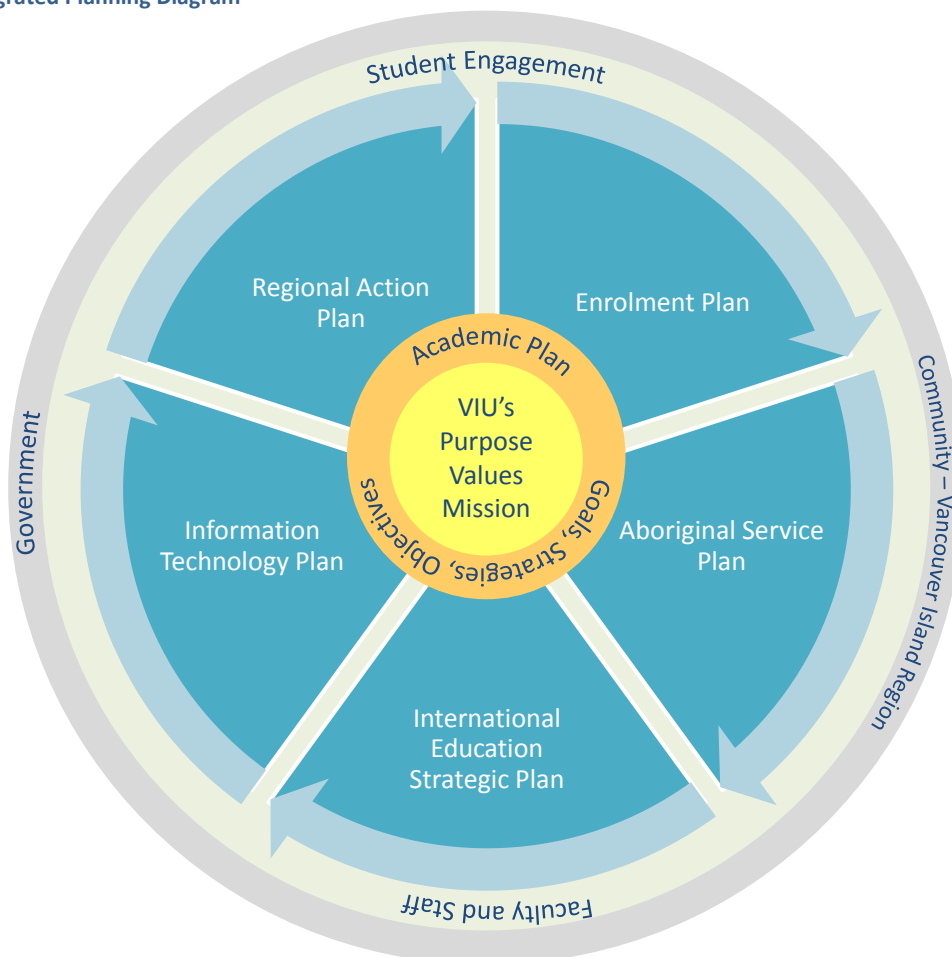
Through the promotion of excellence in learning, we inspire our students and the people of Vancouver Island and coastal British Columbia as a trusted educational partner in the search for sustainable cultural, economic, environmental and social prosperity.

## 2. PLANNING AND OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Vancouver Island University recognizes the public's expectations of higher education, as well as existing conditions in the region, and plans its services accordingly. Within this context, VIU exists to serve our students as well as the island and coastal communities in our region. They look to us for relevant, responsive, and innovative educational programs and services. To this end, VIU is committed to ongoing integrated planning to ensure the decisions we make and the actions we take across the university all stream from a central vision and collective goals.

Figure 1 below illustrates the University's integrated planning process. Central to VIU's planning is our Purpose, Values, and Mission. Building on the University's fundamentals, the Academic Plan connects the Goals, Strategies, and Objectives to the five departmental plans. The action items under each of the departmental plans are implemented in the faculty-student engagement circle. Collectively these plans and activities exist to serve the needs of the outer-circle – the regional community and government.

Figure 1: Integrated Planning Diagram



The following sections outline key planning initiatives and related activities at VIU.

## 2.1 ACADEMIC PLAN

The Academic Plan, approved by the University Senate and Board of Governors in 2010, is the expression of VIU's strategic thinking and the foundation of the University's integrated plans that guide the future of VIU. This process comprises VIU's Enrolment Management Plan, Aboriginal Service Plan, International Education Strategic Plan, Information Technology Plan, and Regional Action Plan.

Collectively these plans support the central mission of VIU: to be a dynamic and diverse educational institution, dedicated to excellence in teaching and learning, service, and research. VIU's mandate encompasses not only academic programming; the University also plays a critical role in supporting social and economic activities in the local, regional, and broader international communities.

This commitment is reflected in the breadth of academic programming (continuing education, developmental, vocational, undergraduate, professional and graduate programs) as well as programming and services to support Aboriginal and International students. Major capital projects include completion of the new Cowichan Campus, the Aboriginal Gathering Place, the International Centre for Sturgeon Studies, the Centre for Shellfish Research, the Deep Bay Marine Field Station, and the Powell River Trades facility.

VIU faces several challenges moving forward. At the Nanaimo campus a number of academic programs reside in separated and aging buildings that are over 30 years old. These buildings were never intended to be permanent university-level structures, are not adaptable to current teaching methods, and are expensive to operate in terms of energy use.

As well, VIU's Information Technology infrastructure is outdated, making it difficult to support operational needs and meet government reporting requirements. Enhancements are required to enable VIU to provide students with the level of access to online academic services required in today's networked world.

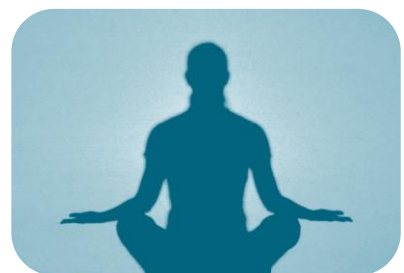
Consequently, VIU's planning priorities identified in its Five Year Capital Plan include:



### 1. Construction of a New Health and Science Centre



### 2. Information Technology Upgrades



### 3. Sports, Health and Wellness Centre

1. **Construction of a New Health and Science Centre** is required to meet the growing demand by students for health- and science-related education. The Health and Science Centre will include formal and informal teaching and learning areas, general meeting and study spaces, flexible research space and multi-functional laboratories, faculty offices and support space.



2. **Information Technology Upgrades** to replace aging infrastructure and systems are urgently required. New innovations in student learning styles and the rise of mobile internet technology have placed significant new demands on VIU. The replacement of outdated network infrastructure, aging operational systems, and inadequate classroom technology, and the implementation of an Emergency Notification System are essential for VIU to improve services and safety for students, faculty, and staff.
3. **Sports, Health and Wellness Centre.** Over the past two decades the need for a Sports, Health, and Wellness Centre at VIU has been well documented. Supporting the well-being of our community is embedded in the mission and core values of the institution and having wellness resources that are comprehensive, accessible, and based on inter-professional practice reflects commitment to achieving this end.

As VIU continues to grow and mature as a university these investments will enhance the learning environment necessary to educate highly skilled and globally-aware students who, in turn, provide the foundation for long-term sustainable social and economic growth in our region.

VIU is also committed to improving the social prosperity of the regions it serves. To this end, two initiatives were introduced this year. In September 2013, VIU became the first BC institution to offer the Youth-in-Care Tuition Waiver program to provide access to post-secondary education for former youth in care. In the first year of the program, 17 students were supported through the initiative in a variety of academic and vocational programs. In addition to tuition, the University is working in collaboration with the Representative of Children and Youth for British Columbia to raise funds for other costs such as books, living expenses and work study opportunities, as well as to encourage other post-secondary institutions in BC to introduce a similar tuition waiver programs.

VIU is also supporting the federal government's Canada Education Savings Program by promoting enrolment in the Canada Learning Bond program for low-income families. VIU students are organizing community sign-up events in Nanaimo, Duncan and other communities in the region with the support of financial institutions, Service Canada and community organizations. VIU's leadership is recognized as the only post-secondary institution in Canada to join the national Champions network for the Canada Education Savings Program.

The integrated plans that guide the strategic direction of the University are based in the [2010 Academic Plan](#).

## 2.2 ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN



The goal of the Enrolment Management Plan is to provide a framework and process that supports VIU's Academic Plan, enrolment growth, and its students. The objectives of this plan include:

- a) A strengthened reputation for quality teaching and learning and the ongoing reliable and credible operation of the institution;
- b) The establishment of an ongoing planning process that responds to fiscal and demographic realities and determines an appropriate program mix and enrolment targets for each program;
- c) The creation of a student community, the character and profile of which is described in the VIU Vision Statement;
- d) The provision of a learning process that ensures all students receive the scope and quality of educational experience as described in the VIU Vision Statement;
- e) The implementation of a service delivery concept that ensures prospective students, first year students, and returning students receive optimal support for all stages of their educational, cultural, and social experiences at VIU; and,
- f) The ongoing integration of program, service, fiscal, and physical planning.

Recommendations outlined in the [Enrolment Management Plan](#) address best practices and strategies for success in the delivery of services designed to enhance student engagement and success. These include twenty-two action items, aligned with the university's Academic Plan, pertaining to applicant and first-year student experience, enhancing student retention through inclusion in the academic community, and increased engagement with alumni. Moving forward, VIU will continue to enhance graduate education and explore the development of further high quality, in-demand Masters and post-degree diploma programs. VIU will also build on our niche of providing excellence in teaching, affordable high quality programs, small class sizes, and community engagement, to attract learners both locally and outside the region.



## 2.3 ABORIGINAL SERVICE PLAN



Increasing the participation and completion rates amongst Aboriginal students is essential for improved economic and social opportunities. Of the approximately 2,000 Aboriginal students at VIU, there is a higher proportion registered in full-time studies (as compared to non-Aboriginal students) and approximately 30% are registered in baccalaureate programs. When Bachelor programs are considered on their own, Aboriginal students' first-to-second year retention rates are comparable to those of non-Aboriginal students and, in some cases, higher.

While working from a strong base, the VIU's Aboriginal Service Plan (2013/14 – 2015/16) goals are to:

- a) Increase access, retention, completion, and transition opportunities for Aboriginal learners;
- b) Strengthen partnerships and collaboration in Aboriginal post-secondary education; and,
- c) Increase the receptivity and relevance of post-secondary institutions and programs for Aboriginal learners, including providing support for initiatives that address systemic barriers.

As part of institutional base funding, VIU now supports nine Elder positions, an Aboriginal Student Transition Advisor, and an Aboriginal Projects Coordinator. A range of programs and services are now an integral part of the institution, including: Services for Aboriginal Students; programs of study with a distinct Aboriginal focus; and Aboriginal scholarships and awards. Key elements of [VIU's Aboriginal Service Plan](#) are to further enhance partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organizations, expand community-based delivery, and foster revitalization of Aboriginal languages and cultural practices.

This year VIU increased access to post-secondary studies for Aboriginal peoples by our involvement with the Aboriginal Community-Based Delivery Partnership Program (ACBDPP). VIU successfully delivered seven community-based programs funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education. The communities involved in VIU's programming included students attending community-based programming from south, central and north Vancouver Island, Powell River and the central and north coast of BC.

Programs delivered included:

1. Introduction to First Nations Culinary Arts;
2. Applied Business Technology;
3. Welding;
4. Health Care Assistant Program;
5. Bridge to Success Program for entry level positions in the pulp and paper industry;
6. Environmental Stewardship Program for Coastal Guardian Watchman; and,
7. VIU's Event Management Certificate.

Through the community-based initiatives VIU has strengthened existing community partnerships and created long term commitments with Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal organizations and industry partners. Successes from these programs have seen students move to employment with other students laddering into a variety of post-secondary educational programs. Many of the students involved viewed their successes by highlighting their new-found confidence, career goals and recognition that a post-secondary education is now possible.

## 2.4 INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN



VIU currently enrolls approximately 1,900 international students from more than 80 countries. These students contribute to the financial viability of the university and engage in a wide array of activities and programs that are designed to promote intercultural dialogue and understanding of the responsibilities of global citizenship amongst domestic students.

The [2013 – 2016 International Education Strategic Plan](#) details how the Faculty of International Education will focus on: Creating a diverse campus; Promoting international students' success; Fostering global literacy; and, Building a global community.



To fulfill this commitment within three years, strategies include:

- a) Increasing the diversity and number of “best fit” international students attending VIU and The High School at VIU each year;
- b) Strategically focusing enrolment planning and management for international students in English as a Second Language (ESL), academic, and applied programs;
- c) Achieving recruitment targets through a stronger emphasis on academic success;
- d) Improving international students’ learning, engagement, retention, and success throughout the University; and,
- e) Working collaboratively with other faculties and service departments to develop responsive new supports for international students in academic programs.

## 2.5 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Information Technology plays an increasingly critical role in the achievement of the University’s objectives. As a key component of effective teaching and learning it is therefore a major strategic institutional investment. There has been generally good fiscal and contract management by the University in relation to IT activities; however, there is a widening gap between the need for IT services to support the delivery of academic programs and the university’s ability to keep pace with increasing, and changing, demands.

The establishment of an IT governance model in 2013/14, encompassing a steering committee which is supported by an Academic Systems and an Administrative Systems committee, was an essential first step towards ensuring systems investments and activities are coordinated across the institution and are consistent with the university’s strategic and operational plans.

Recommendations and key strategies in [VIU’s Information Technology Plan](#) include:

- a) Developing a set of student, faculty, and staff (technology) competencies;
- b) Enhancing and optimizing the entire student experience;
- c) Redefining the learning environment;
- d) Implementing integration models and strategies for effective technology use in teaching and learning;
- e) Developing VIU web services;
- f) Building regional connectivity;
- g) Supporting technology in Aboriginal communities;
- h) Developing an effective governance structure that reflects VIU’s constituencies and culture;
- i) Inventorying academic and administrative systems; and,
- j) Developing technology policies, procedures, and processes.

## 2.6 REGIONAL ACTION PLAN



VIU Cowichan Campus

For over seven decades, Vancouver Island University has been committed to serving the communities of Vancouver Island and the coastal regions of British Columbia, specifically Nanaimo, Cowichan, Parksville-Qualicum, and Powell River.

The VIU region (mid- and north-Vancouver Island) has a population of approximately 250,000, accounting for slightly more than 5% of the total population of B.C. Of this, 85,000 live in the City of Nanaimo with approximately 145,000 (or 58% of the total population) living within the Nanaimo Regional District. Providing educational programs and services to the other 42% of the region's population is therefore a key component of the university's mandate.

The new Cowichan campus, completed in 2011, offers university credit courses and certificate programs in business, health and human services, trades and applied technology, and academic and career preparation courses in ABE and employability skills training. In 2014/15 a Bachelor of Education program will be delivered at the Cowichan campus and four-year degree programs will be offered within three years.

The Powell River campus on the Sunshine Coast offers programs that reflect the needs of the region, including ABE, trades programs, university programs (including Health and Human Services), ElderCollege, and online learning. Plans are to enhance access to trades programs, expand university transfer (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year courses), and offer online programs in Event Management, Management Skills for Supervisors, and Applied Business Technology.

In Parksville/Qualicum VIU has launched a new Centre for Healthy Aging and Community-Engaged Scholarship that will benefit seniors. The Centre's mandate is to promote excellence in healthy aging research, education, and practice. VIU's Parksville/Qualicum centre also offers ABE, university credit courses, non-credit continuing education courses and certificates, and an eight-month esthetics certificate program.

The [Regional Action Plan](#), completed in 2013/14, responds to the identified needs of communities across the region, builds on existing institutional strengths, and provides a framework for future strategic decision-making, financial planning, and operations.

## 2.7 EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS

The external conditions under which VIU must plan include:

- a) Shifts in the provincial and regional economy;
- b) Re-engineering of the post-secondary education system to support high-demand occupations;
- c) Changes to the student financial aid program, programs for persons with disabilities, and government goal of increasing the participation and completion rates of Aboriginal students;
- d) Growing importance of post-secondary education internationally and the government's target of having 15% of enrolments be international students;
- e) Addressing the needs of an aging population and recognizing the impact of a diminishing number of "traditional" (18 – 24 year old) students;
- f) Demands for more flexible and personalized educational programming; and,
- g) Responding to the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly globalized world (i.e. greater competition, pressures to innovate, new worldwide markets).

VIU's integrated plans provide a framework together with specific action items that directly support the above-noted factors and trends. They do so, however, within a constrained fiscal environment that is based, largely, on the number of students (inputs) rather than student outcomes and contribution to the communities within the VIU region.

In order to achieve a balanced Provincial budget in the 2014/15 fiscal year the impact on VIU, as other post-secondary institutions, includes: self-funding wage settlement in the 2012 to 2014 round of wage negotiations; reductions to base grant for the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED) supported program envelopes for three years beginning in 2013/14, and restricted ability to borrow or use reserves due to provincial focus on debt-to-GDP ratio. VIU is further constrained as ministry-supported program enrolment has fallen since the 2011 job action to below the expected enrolment performance target of at least 95%.

Notwithstanding these constraints, to achieve our purpose, values, and visionary goal we will continue to be flexible and nimble, provide a diverse set of programs designed to meet the unique regional needs of Vancouver Island, and focus on student learning, retention, and success.

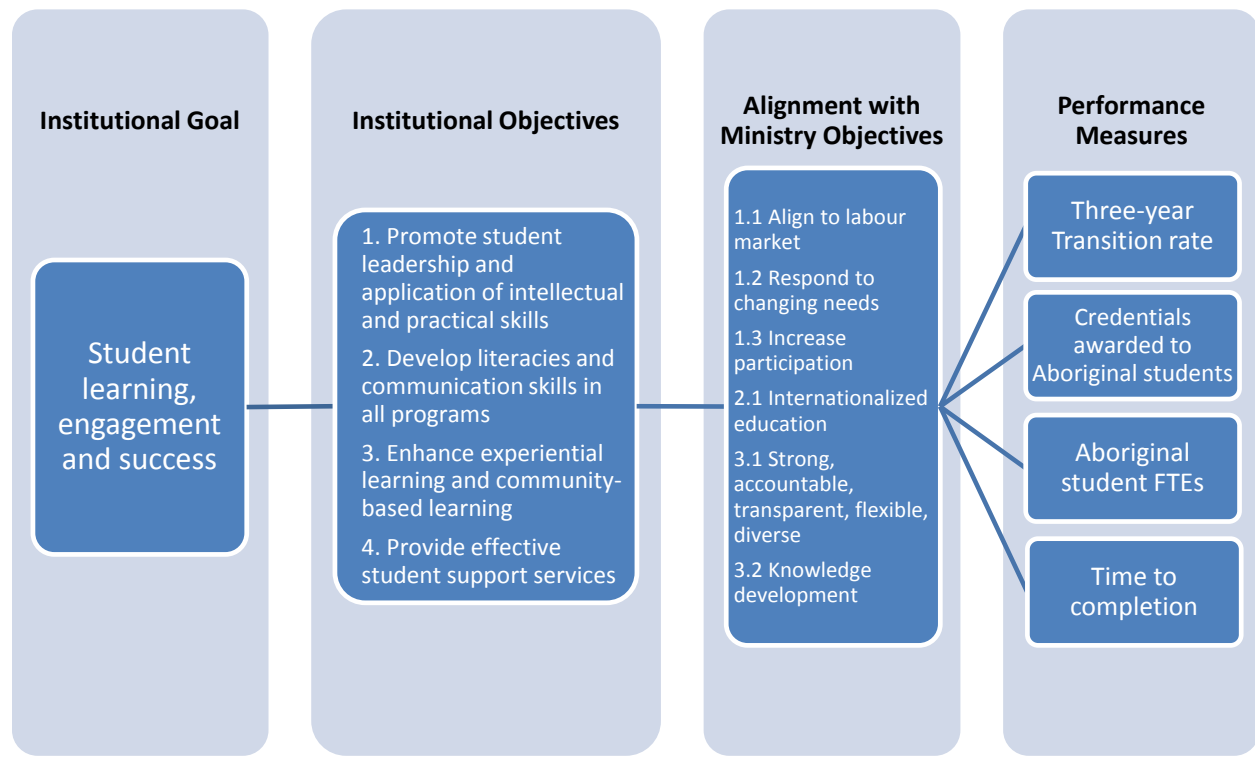
## 3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

VIU represents a new breed of educational institution in Canada; a teaching-intensive, special-purpose university that relies on integrated teaching methods, internships and co-ops, community engagement, and ladderized pathway programs, all of which are closely tied to the region.

Vancouver Island University's goals and objectives are closely aligned with those of the Ministry of Advanced Education, as enunciated in the 2014/15 – 2016/17 Service Plan, and, specifically: supporting students in the achievement of their education, employment, and training goals; maintaining quality post-secondary programs with a competitive advantage; and maximizing return on investment and supporting British Columbia's diverse communities.



### 3.1 STUDENT LEARNING, ENGAGEMENT, AND SUCCESS



Student learning, engagement, and success have served as drivers for both the Academic Plan and Enrolment Management Plan at VIU. In addition to participating in external surveys (such as the Canadian University Survey Consortium and National Survey of Student Engagement), VIU designed and developed an internal Student Experience Survey in 2013/14 to solicit student feedback on educational experience, academic programs, and utilization of campus services.

The results of the survey are being utilized extensively for planning purposes, program review, and summative program assessments. Highlights from the most recent Student Experience Surveys are provided in Figure 2 and Figure 3 below.

Figure 2: Highlights of VIU's Student Experience Survey, January 2013



**81%** of those students indicated they would recommend their program to others

**84%** indicated a high level of satisfaction with their decision to attend VIU

**87%** indicated they have good relationships with faculty

*Source: January 2013 VIU Student Experience Survey; n= 3,500*

Figure 3: Highlights of VIU's Student Experience Survey, November 2013



**91%** of students indicated they learn theories and fundamental principles in their program

**90%** responded that their program increases their factual knowledge in their field of study

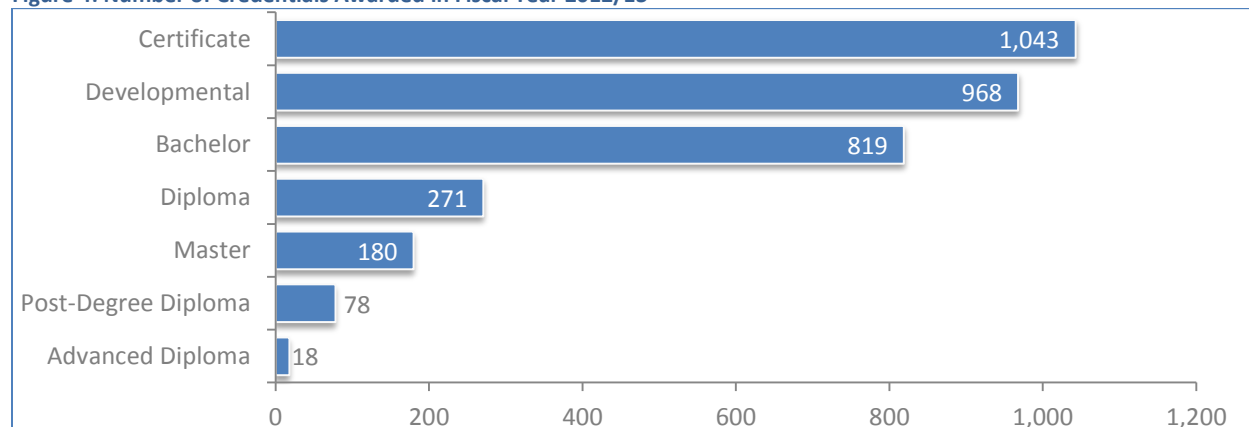
**91%** indicated they would definitely or probably complete their credential at VIU

*Source: November 2013 VIU Student Experience Survey; n= 3,000*

The Student Experience Surveys, completed by more than 45% of the approximately 8,000 registered VIU students in January, 2013 and 36% in November, 2013, provide solid evidence that VIU is meeting or exceeding students' goals. The surveys also provide insights, being used at the program, Faculty, and institutional level, as to areas for improvement. Specifically, these relate to the need to increase WiFi access on campus, technology to enhance learning, and facilities (both learning and social space).

At VIU another key indicator of student engagement and success is the number of credentials awarded, as this provides evidence of successful student completion. Figure 4 shows that VIU awarded over 3,000 credentials in fiscal year 2012/13, a consistently higher number than our peer institutes.

Figure 4: Number of Credentials Awarded in Fiscal Year 2012/13

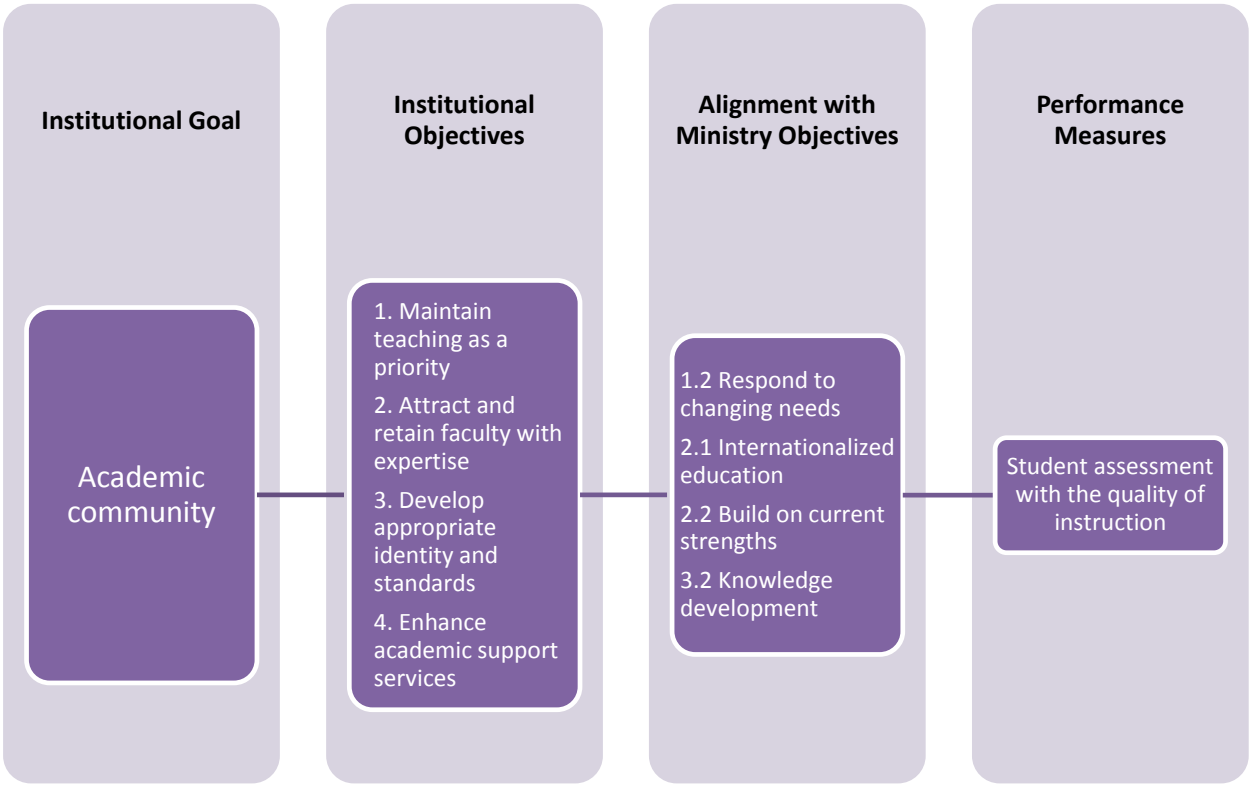


Source: Ministry of Advanced Education's Central Data Warehouse (CDW), October 2013 Data Submission. Credential types Apprenticeship, Short certificates, Other, and None are excluded from credential counts.

Provincially and nationally Aboriginal youth are under-represented at the post-secondary level. VIU, however, has historically achieved ministry performance targets relative to Aboriginal student enrolments with approximately 2,000 Aboriginal students representing 12% of the student body in fiscal year 2012/13; fourth highest amongst the twenty-one B.C. post-secondary institutes that participate in the Central Data Warehouse. VIU offers a number of programs specifically designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal students including: Bachelor of Arts, Major or Minor in First Nations Studies, Child and Youth Care First Nations, Arts One—First Nations, and Aboriginal University Bridging Program Certificate.

In 2013 a research study was undertaken at VIU to assess Aboriginal student success. While it was determined that Aboriginal student retention and completion rates are comparable to non-Aboriginal students there continue, however, to be financial, personal, and academic challenges for Aboriginal students. The report recommended several action items to enhance Aboriginal student success including financial management workshops, increased awareness for Aboriginal services with a focus on student health and wellness, and community-based programming and curriculum development.

3.2
ACADEMIC COMMUNITY



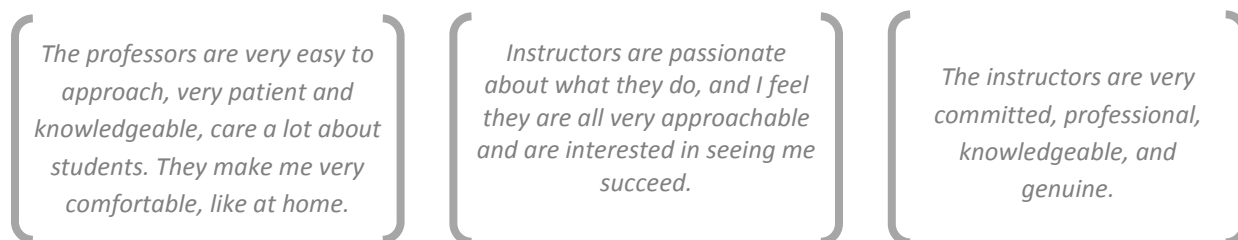
Studies consistently show that faculty are central to student engagement and success. As a teaching-intensive university, VIU’s faculty therefore play a critical role in developing citizens with the knowledge and skills to fully participate in the labour market and within their communities.



Results from the Student Experience Survey suggest that VIU faculty are doing an exceptional job.

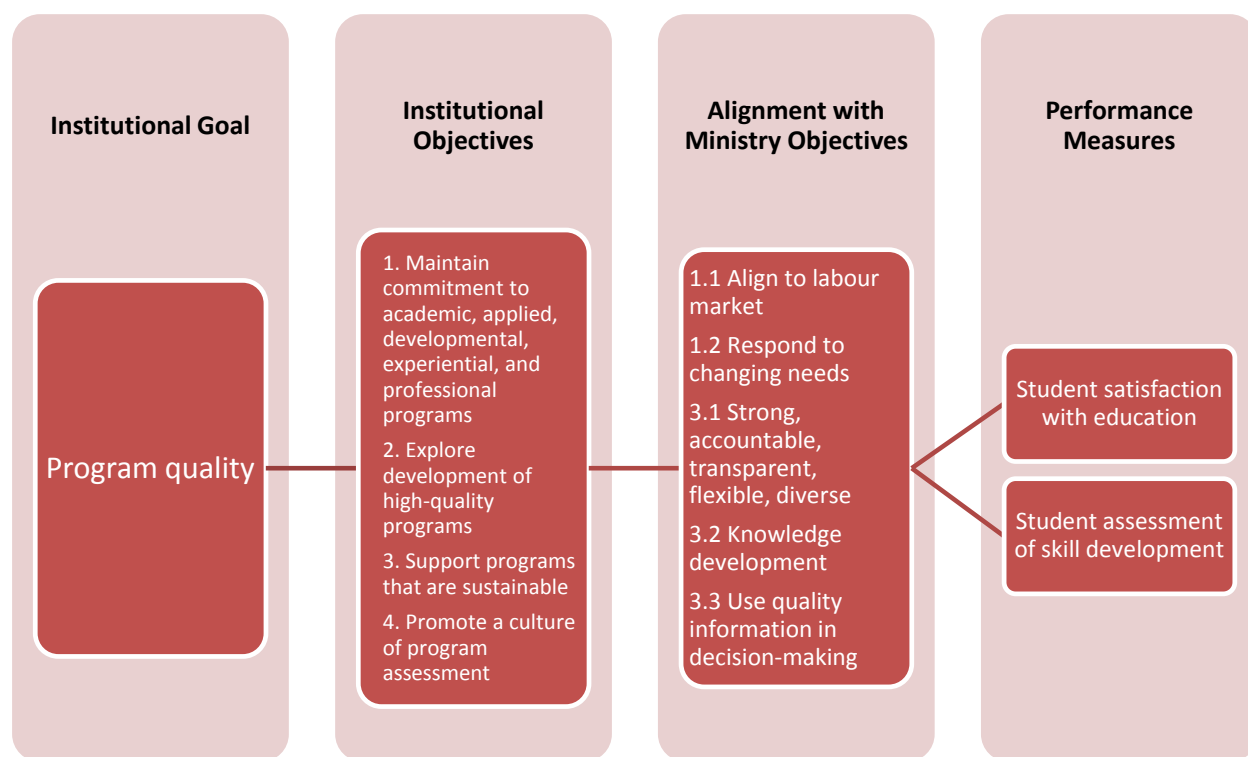
- 91% of students indicated their instructors interact with students in a respectful manner;
- 89% agreed that instructors encourage students to participate in class discussions; and,
- 92% responded that instructors are knowledgeable in their field of expertise, are approachable, helpful, and understanding.

Typical comments received from students included:



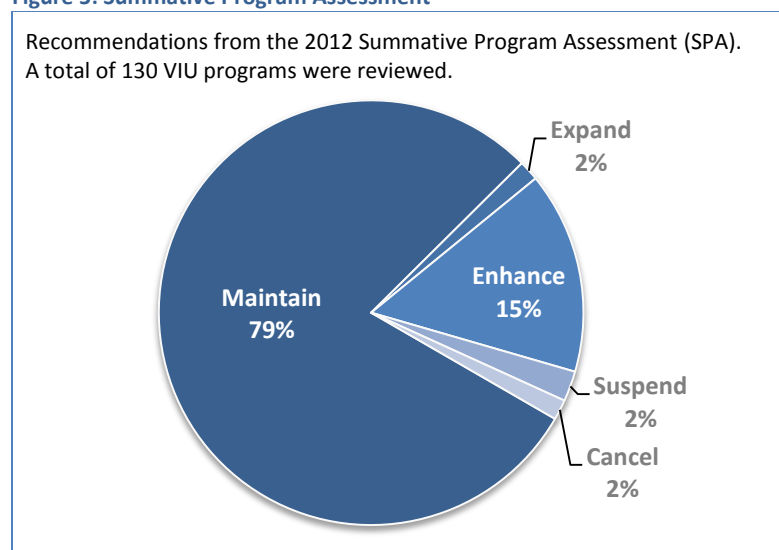
Assisting faculty is the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning (CIEL), which promotes and supports innovation and excellence in the creation and development of high quality and curriculum-supported learning opportunities. Implementation of an online delivery platform (Desire2Learn) is now being used consistently at VIU for fully online, blended, and web-enhanced courses. As part of the revised formative program review process at VIU, CIEL is also now actively supporting faculty with reviewing their teaching and learning practices, refining program learning outcomes, and evaluating assessment tools and techniques.

### 3.3 PROGRAM QUALITY



At VIU program quality is reflected throughout the University's academic, applied, developmental, experiential, and professional programs. In 2012/13 VIU completed a comprehensive evidence-based summative assessment of all instructional programs (Figure 5). This assessment was based on standardized criteria related to program context, relevance, quality, financial performance, access, and strategic priority. The program quality assessment addressed the learning objectives, academic standards, qualifications of faculty, student success, and whether the facilities, learning resources, technology and equipment was sufficient to support each program's learning objectives. This comprehensive review will be undertaken again in the 2015/16 academic year.

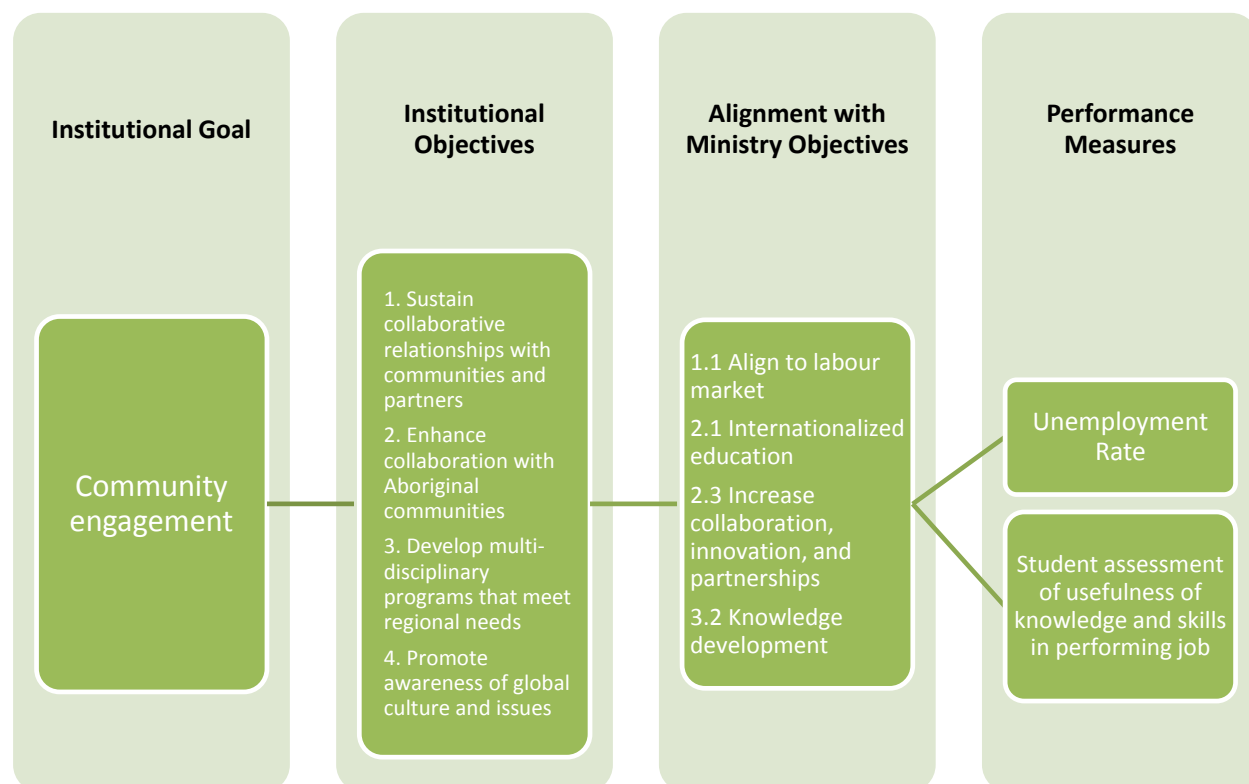
**Figure 5: Summative Program Assessment**



As well, VIU revised the (formative) program review process in 2013/14 and established a 5-7 year review cycle for all instructional programs. To support this effort (and reduce duplication of effort) online program profile reports, using data from the student information system and Student Experience Survey, were created to support both the formative program review as well as the summative program review processes.

Student satisfaction with education is one of the ministry's performance indicators of program quality. The student outcomes surveys, administered by BC Stats, provide feedback from graduates of all credential types from B.C. public post-secondary institutions. Overall, student satisfaction targets are set at 85% or 90% at the provincial level. VIU's student outcomes typically achieve or substantially achieve these targets.

### 3.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



VIU has a mandate to provide educational services on central and northern Vancouver Island and coastal British Columbia. VIU therefore provides a wide range of programs to meet the diverse needs of this geographic area. Delivery of these services necessitates ongoing dialogue with regional communities to address not only educational needs but also cultural, social, and economic conditions in our region.

As well, VIU is one of the largest employers on central Vancouver Island, with an annual operating budget of more than \$130 million, generating substantial economic impact, not only by providing educational services, creating employment opportunities, and supporting local businesses, but also by producing citizens who are more knowledgeable, more skillful, and more productive within society itself.

In 2013 an Economic Impact Analysis was conducted by Roslyn Kunin and Associates that embraced community engagement as a key objective. As such, valuable data was collected through 65 structured and open-ended telephone interviews with a variety of community stakeholders including representatives from municipalities, regional districts, school districts, First Nations, industry associations, business improvement associations, non-profit agencies, housing providers, the VIU Students' Union, as well as VIU faculty, staff, and related unions.

Overall, VIU's total economic impact is \$406 million, with over \$204 million in value-added impacts including an annual \$42.5 million contribution from international students to the regional and provincial economy.

All community stakeholders acknowledged VIU as a positive force in the region, capable of attracting new people to the area, retaining the region's youth, and providing the regional economy with a skilled workforce. Through consultation with industry and employers, VIU has ensured its programming is responsive to local demand and



drives demand by offering innovative programming in the region thus making the region a destination for new business, entrepreneurs, and start-ups.

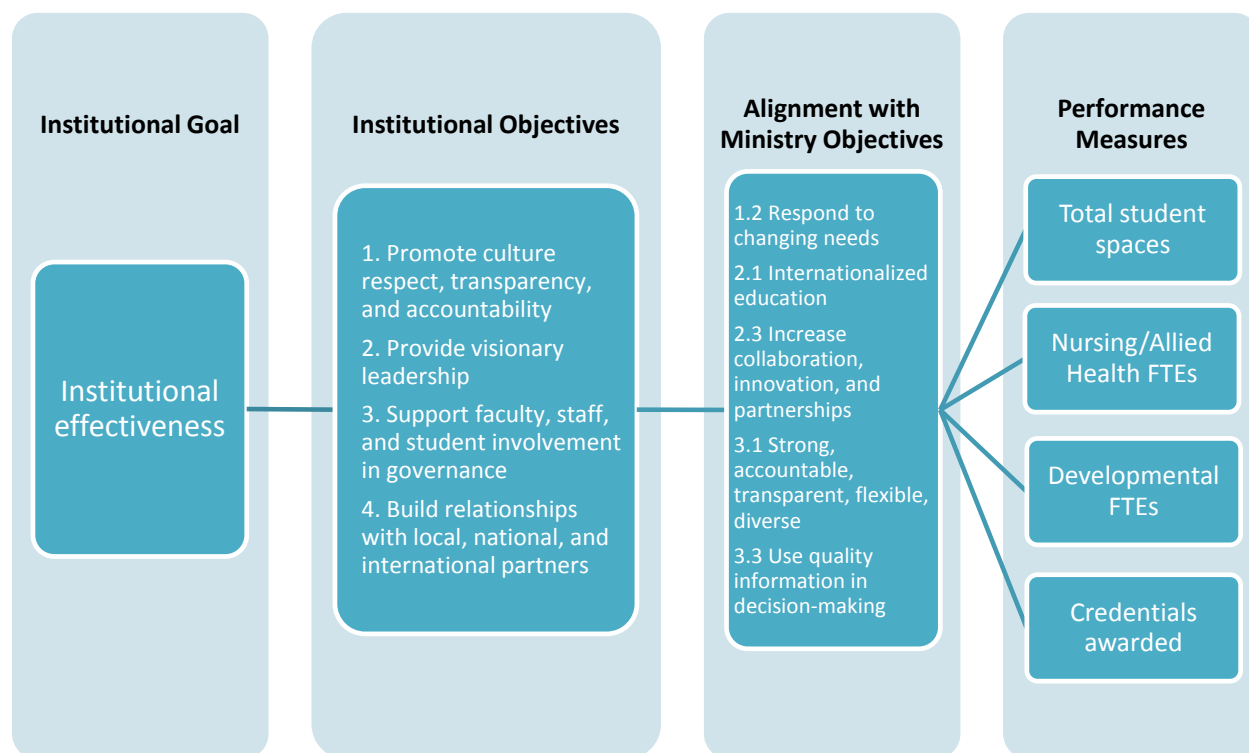
In addition to its role in the economy, VIU plays a critical role in the social and cultural life of the region. From small speakers' series to large conferences, VIU hosts a wide range of events and facilitates community dialogue on a variety of subjects. As an impartial and knowledgeable leader in the social and cultural life of the community, VIU impacts the community in ways no other organization can.

VIU's impact in the communities of Powell River, Parksville/Qualicum, and Cowichan is proportionately greater due to their small size. Small communities face unique challenges in retaining young people and attracting new people to settle there. In light of an aging population, retaining youth in the community and attracting new young people and families is necessary to ensure the future of these communities.

The Cowichan campus is one example of VIU working hard to better serve students and meet the needs of regional communities. It has not only served to strengthen relationships with First Nations groups, the City of Duncan, and the District of North Cowichan, but also to improve access to education. VIU's successful partnership with Providence Farm in the Cowichan Valley is a recent example of how the University is working with the community to support relevant training options for students. In February 2013, VIU's Culinary Arts program was moved to Providence Farm and a new restaurant – The Farm Table - was opened to rave reviews. Culinary Arts students use many of the ingredients grown on the farm to prepare dishes for the restaurant with a local, organic, field-to-table ethos. VIU's commitment to strengthening stakeholder relationships is also evident by our recent partnership with Cowichan Tribes to offer a 14-week pre-Culinary Arts program for Aboriginal students. Students get a valuable experience in culinary arts and at the same time prepare food for the Cowichan Valley school lunch program.

Moving forward, VIU is working with the Cowichan school district to offer Dual Credit Trades programming at the recently closed Koksilah Elementary School. The 'Cowichan Trades Centre', as it has been named, will see new and existing trades programs to support the region's educational goals and skills training.

### 3.5 INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS



Institutional effectiveness is a key theme in our Academic Plan and includes specific action items related to maintaining a viable mix of high-quality programs that are aligned with student and labour-market needs. This includes collaborating with other Vancouver Island and B.C. post-secondary institutions to ensure seamless delivery of programs for students in a cost-effective manner. In this regard, a revised process for assessing proposed new programs is being developed at VIU that includes an assessment of student and labour-market demand, opportunities to increase seats for international and under-represented students, enhancing access through alternative and innovative delivery methods, and laddering or transfer opportunities. VIU will continue to leverage existing resources, such as the BC Labour Market Outlook 2010-2020 and BC Labour Market Scenario Model, to provide useful workforce projections and to better understand the education and training needs for both the province and the Vancouver Island region. Using this information, a feasibility and labour-market analysis is now being completed for all new program proposals.

In 2012/13 VIU enrolled a total of approximately 17,000 students, which equated to approximately 8,350 student Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs). Of these, approximately 6,000 FTEs were registered in “ministry-countable” programs, 1,150 FTEs were in Industry Training Authority (ITA) funded programs, and 1,200 FTEs were international students. The 6,000 student FTEs in ministry-countable programs represented approximately 90% of the 2012/13 ministry target of 6,659. In fiscal year 2013/14, VIU provided education to 5,873 full-time equivalent (FTE) students in ministry-countable programs, hereby achieving 88% of the ministry's 6,678 target. This represents a continued decline in the number of domestic students enrolled at VIU over the past three years and is largely attributable to the declining number of grade 12 graduates in the VIU region, the low (relative to the Provincial average) immediate Grade 12-to-post-secondary transition rate, and the effects of lengthy job action in 2011. At the same time, however, the number of international students enrolled at VIU has been increasing.

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### 3.5.1 FACTORS IMPACTING STUDENT ENROLMENT

The future for domestic enrolment in the VIU region will remain challenging with projections for high school graduates over the next ten years indicating a continual decline at a greater rate than the provincial average. Further, the VIU region has, traditionally, had a lower post-secondary participation rate with Grade 12 to post-secondary transition rates of 44% (immediate) and 64% (over three years), below the provincial average of 68% and target of 70%.

In 2013/14 the position of Director, Enrolment Management was established with responsibility for implementing the 22 strategies related to student recruitment, retention, and success. A focus on strategic recruitment, improving connections with regional high schools to enhance immediate transition rates, and improved first-to-second year retention will provide a basis for addressing total student enrolment numbers.

A study conducted in 2013 found that VIU has a disproportionately high number of part-time students and a considerable number of those students work more than 20 hours/week. Of those students who “stopped-out” after one year of study – approximately 25% of all first year students – the predominant reasons given were financial or work-related factors.

While VIU is committed to increasing ministry-countable student enrolments (FTEs) there are many factors outside the university’s control and, hence, a primary objective is to create the conditions that foster successful outcomes for our students. In the past year a number of initiatives have been undertaken including: a planned and coordinated effort to provide information to applicants, Open House and orientation for new students, and implementation of an early warning system for students who are having difficulties during their first term.

Through the Student Outcomes Surveys, VIU graduates consistently report that the knowledge and skills developed during their post-secondary education are useful in employment. As well, Bachelor degree graduates report a very low level of unemployment, 7.8% in 2013/14, exceeding the ministry target of  $\leq 12.4\%$ .



## 4. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This section reports the 2013/14 Accountability Framework Performance Measures provided by the Ministry of Advanced Education. Ministry assessments are based on the following scale.

Target assessment scale	Description
Exceeded	110% or more of the target
Achieved	100% - 109% of the target
Substantially achieved	90% - 99% of the target
Not achieved	Less than 90% of the target
Not Assessed	Survey results with less than 20 respondents or a margin of error of 10% or greater, descriptive measures, and measures without targets

### Performance Measure: Total student FTE spaces (excluding Industry Training)

2012/13 Actual	6,009
2013/14 Target	6,678
<b>2013/14 Actual</b>	<b>5,873</b>
<b>Assessment:</b>	<b>Not achieved</b>
2014/15 Target	6,636
2015/16 Target	6,636
2016/17 Target	TBD

VIU's FTE utilization rate in AVED programs was 88% in fiscal year 2013/14, down from 90% in 2012/13. This represents a continued decline in the number of domestic students enrolled at VIU over the past three years and is largely attributable to the declining number of grade 12 graduates in the VIU region, the low (relative to the Provincial average) immediate Grade 12-to-post-secondary transition rate, and the effects of lengthy job action in 2011. At the same time, however, the number of international students enrolled at VIU has been increasing.

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### Performance Measure: Student spaces in nursing and other allied health programs

2012/13 Actual	530
2013/14 Target	594
<b>2013/14 Actual</b>	<b>527</b>
<b>Assessment:</b>	<b>Not achieved</b>
2014/15 Target	582
2015/16 Target	582
2016/17 Target	TBD

VIU has implemented a bridging program for licensed practical nursing graduates to enter the fourth semester of VIU's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. This collaboration between VIU and North Island College sees the delivery alternate between the two institutions. VIU includes seventh and eighth semester from North Island College as part of our Bachelor of Science in Nursing-FTE target. This strategy is expected to increase graduates as new students enter the program at the end of second year. We have also implemented an over-enrolment strategy in the fourth and fifth semester which will require an additional clinical section and additional placements. Discussion is underway with the Island Health Authority to accommodate placements.

VIU has also adjusted policies on student progress in licensed practical nursing to help address attrition in this new and revised program. In addition, if a student is struggling after the first year, he/she is encouraged to take some time to upgrade the concepts that were found challenging and re-enter the program the following year. These strategies will become visible in academic year 2014/15. Additionally, VIU has just completed three on-line course designs to implement a part-time option for students unable to study full-time initially. This will be implemented in academic year 2015/16.

**Performance Measure: Student spaces in developmental programs**

2012/13 Actual	828
2013/14 Target	805
<b>2013/14 Actual</b>	<b>737</b>
<b>Assessment:</b>	<b>Substantially achieved</b>
2014/15 Target	TBD
2015/16 Target	TBD
2016/17 Target	TBD

Demand for developmental programs at VIU remains strong and we have achieved or substantially achieved ministry targets over the past three fiscal years. Last year VIU experienced a slight decrease in developmental FTE due, in part, to decreases in unemployment in the region, aggressive competition from school districts, and changes to ESL funding models.

A new Foundations for Success program is currently under development at VIU that will not only enhance students' academic preparedness for university programs, but it will also improve skills supportive of student success and persistence in post-secondary. Additionally, VIU is examining the possibility of implementing Integrated Basic Education Skills and Training (I-BEST) programming to better support students who have gaps in basic level skills but do not require entire upgrading courses prior to entering Trades programs. Finally, recent changes to ASE programming, including the elimination of admission requirements, has increased access for people with disabilities, and altering ABE delivery models to incorporate blended learning will provide much more flexibility for adult learners and will aid in recruitment and retention.

**Performance Measure: Total credentials awarded**

2012/13 Actual	3,152
2013/14 Target	3,079
<b>2013/14 Actual</b>	<b>3,242</b>
<b>Assessment:</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
2014/15 Target	≥ 3,183
2015/16 Target	TBD
2016/17 Target	TBD

**Performance Measure: Aboriginal student spaces**

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Assessment
Total Aboriginal student spaces	986	N/A	<b>1,383</b>	Not Assessed
Ministry (AVED)	864		<b>1,196</b>	
Industry Training Authority (ITA)	122		<b>186</b>	

In 2013/14 there were 332 more spaces for Aboriginal students in Ministry-countable programs and 64 more spaces in ITA programs, representing a 40% increase in overall Aboriginal FTEs from 2012/13. VIU is committed to supporting Aboriginal student success and a range of programs and services are now an integral part of the institution including: Services for Aboriginal Students; programs of study with a distinct Aboriginal focus; and Aboriginal scholarships and awards. Key elements of VIU's Aboriginal Service Plan are to further enhance partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organizations, expand community-based delivery, and foster revitalization of Aboriginal languages and cultural practices.

**Performance Measure: Student satisfaction with education**

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Assessment
Former diploma, associate degree and certificate students	89.9%	≥ 90%	<b>92.2%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Apprenticeship graduates	92.4%		<b>95.0%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Bachelor degree graduates	95.5%		<b>93.0%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>

**Performance Measure: Student assessment of quality of instruction**

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Assessment
Former diploma, associate degree and certificate students	93.2%	≥ 90%	<b>93.6%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Apprenticeship graduates	96.0%		<b>96.9%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Bachelor degree graduates	97.4%		<b>94.2%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>

**Performance Measure: Student assessment of skill development**

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Assessment
Former diploma, associate degree and certificate students	76.7%	≥ 85%	<b>78.3%</b>	<b>Substantially achieved</b>
Apprenticeship graduates	80.2%		<b>81.1%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Bachelor degree graduates	87.8%		<b>87.8%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>

**Performance Measure: Student assessment of usefulness of knowledge and skills in performing job**

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Assessment
Former diploma, associate degree and certificate students	87.0%	≥ 90%	89.2%	Achieved
Apprenticeship graduates	92.8%		95.5%	Achieved
Bachelor degree graduates	88.3%		88.6%	Achieved

**Performance Measure: Unemployment rate**

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Assessment
Former diploma, associate degree and certificate students	7.3%	≤ 12.4%	9.8%	Exceeded
Apprenticeship graduates	9.5%		14.7%	Achieved
Bachelor degree graduates	3.5%		7.8%	Exceeded

**Performance Measure: Former diploma, certificate, and associate degree students' assessment of skill development**

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Assessment
Skill development (avg. %)	76.7%	≥ 85%	78.3%	Substantially achieved
Written communication	68.3%		71.4%	
Oral communication	72.3%		71.2%	
Group collaboration	85.1%		83.9%	
Critical analysis	77.2%		82.5%	
Problem resolution	75.7%		77.8%	
Learn on your own	79.7%		79.8%	
Reading and comprehension	78.9%		81.6%	

**Performance Measure: Apprenticeship graduates' assessment of skill development**

	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	Assessment
Skill development (avg. %)	80.2%	≥ 85%	81.1%	Achieved
Written communication	68.9%		79.2%	
Oral communication	71.2%		81.6%	
Group collaboration	83.3%		86.3%	
Critical analysis	87.8%		83.3%	
Problem resolution	79.1%		75.3%	
Learn on your own	86.9%		78.7%	
Reading and comprehension	83.9%		80.9%	



**Performance Measure: Bachelor degree graduates' assessment of skill development**

	<b>2012/13 Actual</b>	<b>2013/14 Target</b>	<b>2013/14 Actual</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Skill development (avg. %)	87.8%	≥ 85%	<b>87.8%</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Written communication	83.7%		<b>84.1%</b>	
Oral communication	87.5%		<b>89.1%</b>	
Group collaboration	90.9%		<b>91.6%</b>	
Critical analysis	93.0%		<b>89.2%</b>	
Problem resolution	84.1%		<b>81.6%</b>	
Learn on your own	89.5%		<b>91.2%</b>	
Reading and comprehension	85.4%		<b>88.0%</b>	

## 5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Vancouver Island University's audited financial reports can be viewed on the VIU website at:

<http://www2.viu.ca/financialplanning/financialstatements.asp>



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