



Academic Plan 2010-2015

Nova Scotia Agricultural College

June 2010



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College

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Overview

- Academic Plan at a glance
- Complexity of Challenges
- Excitement of Opportunities
- Highlights of Academic Plan Priorities in relation to NSAC Strategic Plan
- Prioritized Work Plans



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Academic Plan at a Glance

- Developed in the context of the Strategic Plan
- Establishes and communicates clear strategic directions for technical, undergraduate, graduate and continuing education programs at NSAC
- Facilitates necessary dialogue with and among departments and units to envision, optimize and offer academic contributions
- Assists in resource prioritization and allocation

Complexity of Challenges

External

- Impact of demographic shifts in the Atlantic region over the next two decades
- Changing face of Agriculture and resulting enrollment declines across all faculties
- Program innovation initiatives at other Atlantic institutions create increased competition in relation to our programming

Complexity of Challenges

Internal

- Some programs do not have optimal student enrollment
- Need for stronger alignment of emerging discipline strengths in research and academic programs
- Need to refocus or drop programs with low student interest and explore alternate methods of delivery



Excitement of Opportunities

External

- Continue to be a unique centre of expertise for agricultural education and research in the Atlantic region
- Reputation of producing excellent graduates
- Infrastructure
- Industry linkages



Excitement of Opportunities

Internal

- NSAC is well positioned to innovate programs
- Atlantic mandate and niche expertise broadens linkage and partnership capacity
- Recent transfer of Agrapoint International Inc to NSAC enhances extension and knowledge transfer capacity to the sector



Guiding Principles

- Fits within NSAC's mandate & support the goals described in the most recent strategic plan.
- Prepares students to be active and productive participants in society
- Defines competency outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the qualification
 - Provides opportunities for authentic learning
 - Encourages students to engage in "lifelong learning" behaviors
 - Fosters higher level thinking by integrating current research knowledge.
- Consistent with the Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework or Ontario Qualifications Framework



Guiding Principles

- Where possible, integrate with current NSAC academic programs, processes, diversity of students
- Integrate concepts and techniques of scholarly enquiry
- Provide the opportunity to study internationally
- Meets its enrollment targets
- Is delivered by scholars or technology specialists who use modern teaching and assessment methodologies
- Supports graduation in a timely manner & securing relevant employment or additional education



Academic Priorities

The Academic Plan:

- Identifies the highest priorities related to academic offerings;
- Is a living document;
- Is essential to our ongoing dialogue in the NSAC community.





Strategic Plan Goal #1 – Continue to develop and offer academic and research programs of high quality

NSAC STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-13



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Corresponding Academic Plan Priorities 2010-2015

- Promote ongoing renewal of programs in response to student and market needs, and implement recommendations from the academic planning and other review processes.
- Develop Post-Baccalaureate programs to address industry needs and access new market groups.



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Corresponding Academic Plan Priorities 2010-2015

- Develop collaborative linkages and/or programs with other institutions
- Develop methods and strategies to further internationalize the curriculum
- Implement a coordinated approach to facilitate improvements in teaching and learning and the use of new educational technologies



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Corresponding Academic Plan Priorities 2010-2015

- Strengthen the capacity and accessibility of NSAC's library resources
- Review, and if necessary revise, NSAC's academic governance structures to ensure we can respond rapidly to changing program needs while maintaining academic quality and responsible allocation of academic resources.



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Strategic Plan Goal # 2 – Attract, enroll and retain exceptional students in increasing numbers and to support them in reaching their highest potential.

NSAC STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-13



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Corresponding Academic Plan Priorities for 2010-2015

- Engage the entire NSAC community in the recruitment and enrollment of high quality students
- Prioritize recruitment and marketing activities to target new student markets
- Develop and implement a retention strategy
- Develop and implement a graduate enrollment plan
- Foster student participation in activities and programs that support academic performance



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Program Decisions

- The Academic Plan priorities will be continuously monitored and evaluated in accordance with NSAC's internal environment and the external environment in which we operate



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Achieving Strategic Balance

- NSAC will continue to strategically plan and manage enrollments so as to balance the shifts/trends we are seeing in terms of:
 - Diploma and Degree
 - Domestic and International Student numbers
 - Adult Learners
 - Transfer Students
 - Articulation Agreements



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Prioritized Work Plan For:

- 3.2.1. Program innovation and renewal
- 3.2.2. Development of Post-Baccalaureate Programs
- 3.2.3. Development of collaborative linkages and/or programs with other institutions



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Summary

NSAC needs to:

- Undergo significant academic renewal;
- Continue to shift to a more student-centred model;
- Maintain enrollments in some programs while growing enrollments in others;
- Continue to monitor and improve all academic and support services in light of organizational changes associated with its governance transition.



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