

STRATEGIC MANDATE AGREEMENT

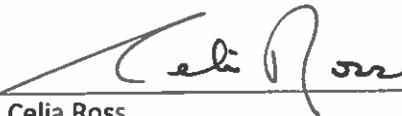
Algoma University
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development
2017-20

SIGNED for and on behalf of the Ministry of
Advanced Education and Skills Development
by:


Sheldon Levy
Deputy Minister

Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of Algoma University by:


Celia Ross
President


Date



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Preamble

This Strategic Mandate Agreement between the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development and Algoma University outlines the role the University currently performs in Ontario's postsecondary education system and how it will build on its current strengths to achieve its vision and help drive system-wide objectives and government priorities.

The Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA):

- Identifies and explains the shared objectives and priorities between the Ontario government and the University;
- Outlines current and future areas of program strength;
- Supports the current vision, mission, and mandate of the University and established areas of strength within the context of the University's governing legislation;
- Describes the agreed-upon elements of the new university funding model, including:
 - a University's enrolment plans as well as their projections of their enrolments relative to their corridor midpoint and any desired changes to their corridor during the period of this SMA; and
 - differentiation areas of focus including metrics and targets.
- Provides information on the financial sustainability of the institution; and
- Informs Ministry decision-making and enables the Ministry to align its policies and processes to further support the University's areas of strength.

The term of the SMA is from April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2020.

The agreement may be amended in the event of substantive policy or program changes that would significantly affect joint commitments made in the SMA (e.g. Major Capacity Expansion, Highly Skilled Workforce, etc.). Any such amendment would be mutually agreed to in writing, dated, and signed by both signatories.

Ontario's Vision for Postsecondary Education

Ontario's colleges and universities will drive creativity, innovation, knowledge, skills development and community engagement through teaching and learning, research, and service.

Ontario's colleges and universities will put students first by providing the best possible learning experience for all qualified learners in an affordable and financially sustainable way, ensuring high quality and globally competitive outcomes for students and Ontario's economy.

Algoma University Vision, Mission and Mandate

Vision Statement

Algoma University offers a transformative education through a student-centred approach to teaching and learning.

Mandate Statement

- We are an institution that has been granted a Charter in order to serve the needs of the Algoma region and of northern Ontario more broadly. We recognize that, in order to do so well, we must be an institution that welcomes students, staff and faculty from all parts of the province and all parts of the planet.
- Our Charter confers upon us a special mission to focus on teaching and learning and to be especially dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in undergraduate education.
- Because of our location on the site of a former Indian residential school, our Charter also confers upon us a special mission to engage in cross-cultural learning between Anishinaabe (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) communities and other communities and to be a valuable resource for Anishinaabe peoples.

In keeping with our special mission within the system, a significant proportion of our student body will be Anishinaabe and we will continue to work with other northern, postsecondary institutions to deliver programs critical to our region.

Aspirations

The Ministry recognizes the importance of supporting institutions to evolve and acknowledges the strategic aspirations of its postsecondary education institutions. The SMA is not intended to capture all decisions and issues in the postsecondary education system, as many will be addressed through the Ministry's policies and standard processes. The Ministry will not be approving any requests for capital funding or new program approvals, for example, through the SMA process.

Institutional Aspirations

The following five statements structure the Algoma University 2016-2021 Strategic Plan:

- Algoma University will be a dynamic hub for community and student life, with spaces and activities that support inspired and engaged learning and a sense of pride.
- Algoma University will offer an integrated suite of programming that is current, relevant, attractive and aligned with students' expectations.
- Algoma University will foster a culture of research and innovation that leverages existing strengths and produces an exceptional student experience, while contributing to the sustainability of the community and region.
- Algoma University will be a recognized leader in Anishinaabe¹ learning through partnerships, the incorporation of Anishinaabe language and culture throughout the institution and the fulfillment of our special mission.
- Algoma University will be a talented community of lifelong learners in which students, faculty, staff and administration work together to engage in planning, professional development, and the generation of revenue that supports fiscal stability and clear institutional identity.

In addition to these general aspirations:

- Algoma University looks forward to working solely within the Quality Assurance Framework with the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance; currently the university's legislation requires that approvals go through both the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance and the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board.
- Algoma University will continue to evolve and shift its undergraduate programming to respond to the future needs of our students, our northern university and college partners and our region.
- Algoma University, though focused primarily on excellence in undergraduate education, aspires to offer a small selection of Masters-level programs that are critical for the economic and social development of our region.

¹ Anishinaabe is the Ojibway term used at Algoma University (located in heart of traditional Ojibway territory) to denote First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

- Algoma University, through extension degree completion programming in Brampton, will raise our institutional profile inside and outside of the Algoma region, while helping to support enrolment goals and the development of experiential learning opportunities.
- Algoma University will collaborate with Northern College to see an expansion of undergraduate degree completion programs at the Timmins Campus that will create clear pathways from college diploma to undergraduate studies. This collaboration will extend to formalizing new shared infrastructure by Algoma University at Northern College.
- Algoma University will work with the Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium and in particular with our local Anishinaabe Institute, Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig (SKG), to introduce and strengthen programming of interest to Aboriginal learners.
- Algoma University, in partnership with Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig, will build on our nationally significant Aboriginal-related special collections, including helping to develop the National Chiefs Library at Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig.
- Algoma University will use new information technology innovatively to serve students in the north better and to work collaboratively with our northern university and college partners.

Shared Objectives and Priorities for Differentiation

1.0 Student Experience

This section captures institutional strengths in improving student experience, outcomes and success. This section recognizes institutions for measuring the broader learning environment, such as continuity of learning pathways; retention; student satisfaction; co-curricular activities and records; career preparedness; and student services and supports.

Institutional Approach to Improving Student Experience

In keeping with Algoma University's special mission to focus on the unique needs and corollary demographic challenges of Northern Ontario, the university will continue to provide students, who typically would not have access to university programs, with the opportunity to study at the post-secondary level. Over the next three years, our work around improving the student experience will focus on helping these students achieve success at university.

Currently, for many of our programs we offer admissions to students with an average between 65 per cent and 70 per cent. We also welcome mature students, some of whom have incomplete high school records, others of whom are returning to education after many years because they have lost employment, due to the downsizing or cessation of operations by major employers, such as Essar Steel.

Algoma University also welcomes Anishinaabe (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) students from a wide variety of educational and work experience backgrounds. Our student population has historically included a high proportion of Anishinaabe students. The percentage of the student body identified as Aboriginal on admission through band sponsorship stands at nearly nine per cent, on average, from 2012-2013 through 2016-2017.

We also seek to provide highly accessible pathways for college students to ease their transition from college to upper-year university courses. Extension programming in Timmins and Brampton was specifically established to support college pathway students, while raising awareness of Algoma University beyond the Algoma region.

Over the next three years, we will improve our suite of academic services designed to support these students. We are transforming our University Library using the Learning Commons Model on both of its floors to provide students with convenient and friendly access to a variety of academic learning supports, including purpose built spaces, specialized equipment, and collaborative service points. We plan to increase use of these supports, as

well as to encourage peer mentoring and group work, so that students are helping each other. Building a community around learning is one of the best ways to motivate and encourage students.

Most students will move directly into degree programs, but those needing extra support will follow a clear pathway to ensure that they enjoy a smooth transition with the help provided to ensure they are successful. Faculty, staff, and students will work together over the next three years to design transition assistance that meets the needs of our students. We aim to increase our retention of students from first to second year, particularly our retention of students who are not direct-from-high school or who are entering with marks lower than 70 per cent.

One effective way of enhancing the student experience is to encourage student leadership in event organization, on and off campus. As we seek to maintain and increase a diverse range of non-academic university experiences (e.g., varsity and intramural sports, cultural activities such as our annual pow-wow, intercultural activities, outdoors activities, and others) we will emphasize active student participation in organizing and hosting, and we will place emphasis on co-curricular reporting to develop pride amongst the student body in these achievements.

Examples of Institutional Initiatives

Implementing the learning commons model in the university library.

Algoma University has chosen to develop a learning commons as an institutional initiative to improve student success in their courses. The university is emphasizing supporting first-year students and students who enter with non-traditional backgrounds or with lower academic scores. Historically, the university's student body has had a much higher percentage of students entering first year from non-traditional backgrounds than found at most other Ontario universities. The University's focus on these students is consonant with its special mission.

By implementing the learning commons model in the university library, Algoma University provides students with specialized and collaborative spaces and services purposefully designed to enable and facilitate student growth as learners through a cross-curricular perspective that recognizes literacy, numeracy, knowledge, thinking, communication, and application as foundations for learning how to learn. The initiative will empower students to learn in new and exciting ways not only through their own efforts, but assisted by the right mix of resources, both human and physical. The two floors of the library will include large, interactive spaces that can be easily reconfigured, as well as collaborative service points for specialized student assistance functions, including but not limited to ITS Help, the Writing lab, the Math lab, the Peer Mentoring Centre, and the library's research and reference services. Other specialized spaces will include gaming areas, collaboration rooms, integrated teaching spaces and maker spaces.

Planning for the Learning Commons requires comprehensive, iterative consultations with students, faculty, and staff to determine which services are needed and how our current services are responding to student need. The learning commons model is dynamic and requires regular feedback, evaluation and renewal. The Learning Commons' success will be ascertained by measuring student use of services and student satisfaction with the services.

Student leadership and participation in co-curricular activities

Active student involvement leads to better engagement and engagement is one of the factors that influences student success. Many of our successful campus initiatives are led or facilitated by students. We already track co-curricular activities through the University’s Co-Curricular Record (CCR) program.

Algoma developed the CCR program to officially recognize students for their involvement in campus life, committee work, experiential learning and volunteerism. Students are able to receive official CCR credit and a formal transcript that outlines their involvement on campus. These transcripts can then be included in an employment or post-graduate application where required. Each year, hundreds of students request CCR credit for their contributions and commitment to extracurricular activities. Students may easily access the CCR through the online student portal.

Using this tool, students can improve their dossier for future employment, and we will encourage students to use this tool actively during their university studies. In addition, the University will further develop its ability to track co-curricular activities, as well as to evaluate regularly new activities that should be included as co-curricular activities.

Metrics and Targets

System-Wide Metrics	2019-20 Target
Proportion of fourth year students with two or more High-Impact Practices (HIPs) (from the National Survey of Student Engagement)	Maintain at current Ontario average of 54%
Year 1 to Year 2 retention (from the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange)	69% or higher
Proportion of operating expenditures on student services, net of student assistance (as reported in the Council of University Finance Officers data)	8% or higher

Institution-Specific Metrics	2019-20 Target
Number of substantive interactions between the learning common’s services and students ²	2700
Percentage of students using co-curricular reporting (CCR).	20.91%
Quality of the co-curricular experience as expressed by the CCR Intensity Matrix.	10.87

² Substantive interaction means student use of the service to improve or to achieve an academic outcome.

2.0 Innovation in Teaching and Learning Excellence

This section focuses on innovative efforts including pedagogical approaches, program delivery and student services that contribute to a highly skilled workforce and ensure positive student outcomes.

This section captures institutional strengths in delivering high-quality learning experiences, such as experiential, entrepreneurial, personalized and digital learning, to prepare students for rewarding careers. It includes recognition of student competencies that improve employability.

It begins to identify indicators of quality that are currently available and within an institution's control.

Institutional Approach to Innovation in Teaching and Learning Excellence

Algoma University students identify hands-on learning opportunities and high levels of faculty-student interaction as positive aspects of their experience. Over the next three years, Algoma wants to maintain these characteristics of our university and to add opportunities for students to apply their learning in real-world situations.

A major advantage of the small size of our institution is that our class sizes are relatively small, which facilitates the transition from secondary to post-secondary education and allows for more meaningful faculty-student interactions and more opportunities for personalized, in-depth research projects at the undergraduate level. A recent survey of experiential learning at Algoma confirmed that many upper-year courses contain high impact practices in the form of project-based work, including activities such as undergraduate thesis research, exhibitions, case competitions and statistical analysis of real-world data. Experiential learning extends outside of the classroom setting in the form of community service learning, community-based learning, internships, field placements, laboratory work and applied research projects. Over the next three years, we will seek to expand these opportunities and to communicate consistently to students the importance of their participation in such opportunities.

Most of Algoma's four-year programs offer a senior thesis (e.g., Psychology, History, Environmental Science, Biology, Computer Science), research and analysis (e.g., Sociology, Community Economic and Social Development, Business Administration), or exhibition (e.g., Visual Arts) courses. These are often either reflective learning activities or project-based activities; some are both. Students conduct personal research and present their research projects publicly as a capstone experience. These capstone experiences have included: collaborating with a local museum to create a public exhibit (History); conducting research on groups of volunteers to answer behavioural questions (Psychology); organizing a professionally curated annual group exhibition and submitting one's own end-of-studies thesis to the exhibition (Visual Arts); and designing and presenting a poster to explain research conducted in a laboratory (Biology). We will maintain and grow these activities throughout our programs, and over the next three years, we will place emphasis on communicating internally and externally the success of our undergraduate students.

In addition to its experiential learning opportunities, Algoma University has a mature, formal co-operative education program that dates back to the 1980s. This is a more intensive and challenging type of experiential learning opportunity that Algoma believes is important to offer. Various agencies in Sault Ste. Marie are interested in working with Algoma University to improve and grow the co-op program. Algoma will work over the next three years with the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation, the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre and other partners on approaches to local and regional businesses to increase the number of co-op placements for students. The university will also be more active in other centres where it has a presence (e.g., Brampton and Timmins) to identify co-op and other experiential learning opportunities. The continued development of relationships with organizations such as the Brampton Board of Trade will help facilitate the development of opportunities for all Algoma University students, creating an important north-south link to further support experiential learning activity, research opportunities and partnership development.

Three of Algoma's newest programs — Social Work, Community Economic and Social Development and Environmental Science — have practicums, work-integrated internships or placements (mandatory or optional) that are curricular-based and course-specific. As other programs introduce course modifications or additions, we will develop more work-integrated internships, where appropriate.

Co-op, work-integrated internships, practicums and placements give students practical work competencies, skills and meaningful experiences to prepare them to enter the job market. They also introduce students to networking in their chosen field with peers and potential employers. Students bring back to the classroom an enhanced understanding of the links between theoretical learning and practical applications, which results in more powerful classroom experiences for students and faculty. Employers take a more active interest in the shape of our institution and its programs when they interact with our students and the community is reminded that post-secondary institutions contribute in diverse ways to the economic growth and health of our city and region.

Examples of Institutional Initiatives

Expanding experiential learning opportunities for Algoma students

In keeping with its approach to innovation in teaching and learning excellence, Algoma University will place more emphasis on capturing data on the substantial experiential opportunities — including co-op and practicums — in which students are already engaged. In addition, the university will expand the number of these opportunities in throughout its programming and will communicate them effectively to students, with special attention to educating students about the importance of participation to their future employment.

To support this initiative, the university will expand its capacity to reach out and work with community employers. Staff assistance will be provided to programs with practicums. An experiential learning coordinator will facilitate work-integrated learning and experiential learning of all kinds across programs and the student body. The coordinator will assist faculty with innovative techniques, resource discovery and academic planning.

Metrics and Targets

System-Wide Metrics	2019-20 Target
Composite score on National Survey of Student Engagement questions related to students' perceived gains in higher order learning outcomes	Maintain at Ontario average scores
Proportion of programs with explicit curriculum maps and articulation of learning outcomes	60%
Graduation rate (from the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange)	51% or higher

Institution-Specific Metrics	2019-20 Target
Percentage of fourth-year, graduating students who have completed group case studies, undergraduate research projects, capstone thesis projects.	65% or higher
Number of co-op work terms completed by students each year	42

3.0 Access and Equity

This section recognizes institutions for their efforts in improving postsecondary education equity and access. Institutions play an important role in providing equitable and inclusive environments that make it possible for students from diverse communities to thrive and succeed.

Institutions will also be recognized for creating equitable access opportunities that can include multiple entrance pathways and flexible policies and programming, with the focus on students who, without interventions and support, would not otherwise participate in postsecondary education. Examples include outreach to marginalized youth, transition, bridging and access programs for adults with atypical education histories and who do not meet admission requirements.

Institutional Approach to Improving Access and Equity

For over 50 years, Algoma University and its predecessor, Algoma University College, have played a unique role providing equitable access to high-quality postsecondary education for Northern Ontarians, many of whom would not have had the opportunity otherwise to attend university.

Algoma welcomes First Generation students and has active and successful programming to support them. We have a full suite of services to support students with disabilities. Our support services also take into account

special needs of mature students and both the administration and Students' Councils are active in promoting acceptance and equity for the LGBTQ community. Although Algoma offers a grouping of courses in French language and literature, we see serving the francophone population as the particular mandate for Laurentian University. Algoma has paid attention to providing international students with a full program of English as a Second Language, specialized transitional (Foundation) courses as needed, and extra social support services. In addition to our activities in the north, our degree-completion programming in Brampton provides opportunities not otherwise available within the community, providing access for a large number of first-generation learners and newcomers to Canada. We have expanded our medical and psychological assistance for all students. Our scholarship and bursary programs aim both to attract and to retain students.

Our special area of focus for the next three years will be attracting and retaining Anishinaabe (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) students. This group demonstrates lower levels of secondary and post-secondary attainment compared to non-Aboriginal identified Northern Ontarians and to Ontarians generally.³ The Aboriginal population is one of the few youthful, growing demographics; with 40 per cent of Aboriginal people in Ontario being under the age of 25, compared to 30 per cent for non-Aboriginals. As a percentage of Northern Ontario's population, this demographic has grown from 7.9 per cent to 12.6 per cent of the total population between 1996 and 2006. Additionally, it is a wish of this demographic to stay, work in, and develop northern communities.⁴ Algoma University has an important role and opportunity to sustain Northern Ontario by ensuring equitable access to postsecondary education for Aboriginal people.

The proportion of Anishinaabe students attending Algoma University reflects Northern Ontario's demographics. Anishinaabe students are often First Generation, many are mature students and many have family obligations. They may have lower secondary school achievement, and many take advantage of pathways to come from college to university.

Student recruitment from Northern Ontario First Nations is not always an easy matter. Distances are vast, communications are difficult, communities are small and outreach needs to be consistent. Establishing relationships with First Nations communities is an essential part of building trust and confidence. Federal funding caps for postsecondary studies limit the number of students First Nations send to college and to university. Students may arrive at university lacking academic preparation in certain areas, particularly in the sciences. Students often have significant family responsibilities and may choose part-time over full-time studies. These students tend to be more mobile and may not complete all their studies at the same university. Algoma University works closely with many Aboriginal organizations and communities to overcome these challenges.

Reporting on the number and proportion of Anishinaabe students poses data collection challenges for the system generally and Algoma specifically. For example, self-identification is voluntary and requires universities to cultivate a constant awareness of its importance to the institution. Algoma's best current estimate of its Anishinaabe student body is based on band sponsorship on admission (about nine per cent) and we are working at creating more consistent and reliable data sets for overall Anishinaabe enrolment.

³ Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2006.

⁴ C. Southcott, *The Aboriginal Population and the Economy of Northern Ontario: Census Research Paper Series Report #12*, Thunder Bay: Local Boards of Northern Ontario, April 2009, 25 pp.

Examples of Institutional Initiatives

Develop and deliver new courses in response to community requests

Algoma University plans to attract more Aboriginal students from communities north of Sault Ste. Marie. We plan to build family housing on campus for these students.

We are designing a ten-course certificate in Community Development to be offered partially by distance to Aboriginal students in Ontario; those courses not offered by distance will be offered in a compressed format on campus. Over the next three years, as we develop partnerships and opportunities arise, we will expand our delivery of certain programs of interest to Aboriginal students throughout Northern Ontario.

Create and add new pathways to a broader range of university degrees in collaboration with colleges

An increasing number of Algoma students come from the college system through articulation agreements or pathways. Over the next three years, Algoma will work on initiatives to increase awareness of these agreements with college students. As well, we will continue to develop pathways for college students to enter university successfully with reliable and clear credit recognition.

To enhance our northern outreach, we are offering two degree-completion programs at Northern College, the Bachelor of Social Work and the Bachelor of Community Development. Working with Northern College, we plan to expand this approach to reach more students and, in particular, more Anishinaabe learners. We are also in discussion with some of the Aboriginal Institute Consortium members about degree completion opportunities.

We will also continue to develop articulation agreements and pathways with our local college partner, Sault College, such as our pathway into Social Work.

Metrics and Targets

System-Wide Metrics	2019-20 Expected Value
<i>Number and proportion of the following groups at an institution:</i>	
Indigenous students	20% or 180 students
First generation students	320 students
Students with disabilities	145 students
Francophone students	12 students
Share of OSAP recipients at an institution relative to its total number of eligible students	Between 50-60%
Number of transfer applicants and registrations, as captured by the	350 per year

Ontario University Application Centre	
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Institution-Specific Metrics	2019-20 Target
Number of three-credit courses offered at a distance (online, online hybrid, video-conferenced, at extension sites, at partner institutions.	146
Number of students (FTEs) enrolled in courses offered at a distance.	160

4.0 Research Excellence and Impact

This section captures institutional strengths in producing high-quality research on the continuum of fundamental and applied research through activity that further raises Ontario's profile as a globally recognized research and innovation hub. It also acknowledges that research capacity is strongly linked with graduate education.

Institutional Approach to Research Excellence and Impact

Algoma University's mandate within the system is to be a teaching-oriented university that provides programs in liberal arts and sciences and professional programs, primarily at the undergraduate level. Although we do not have graduate programming at present, several of our faculty regularly supervise graduate students from other universities. Our Research Chairs have engaged several Canadian and international postdoctoral fellows to complement their research programs.

Algoma's areas of research strength are summarized in the University's [Strategic Plan for Research](#) (2015). They are grouped in four clusters:

Anishinaabe and Indigenous communities

The University possesses research strength related to the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools. Algoma University's campus is located on the site of the former Shingwauk and Wawanosh Indian Residential Schools, which it shares with the Shingwauk Education Trust (SET), SET's postsecondary Anishnaabe Institute Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig (SKG) and the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association (CSAA), former students of the Shingwauk Indian Residential School and other Residential Schools from across Eastern Canada. The campus property is part of the original Shingwauk Trust, a piece of land legally set aside in 1874 specifically for Aboriginal education.

This research cluster collaborates with the CSAA and has worked extensively with the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. The Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre at Algoma is now the repository for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation's research and project archives. This makes the University a national destination for research on community-based healing initiatives. This cluster is currently advertising to fill a Canada Research Council Tier 2 Research Chair in Anishinaabe Healing and Reconciliation.

Funding sources in this area have included Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, the Legacy of Hope Foundation, the Northern Ontario Heritage

Fund, Indian Residential Schools Resolutions Canada, OXFAM, Heritage Canada, Garden River First Nations, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and private donations.

Life and the Environment

Algoma possesses research strengths in plant biology, ecosystems, soil, avian biology, invasive species, and aquatic biology. Algoma University is in an environmentally significant area. Situated at the confluence of the upper three Great Lakes, it is less than an hour from the boreal forest biome, and offers immediate access to vast aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

Faculty working within this cluster have brought in external funding from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, FedNor, Esri Canada, and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund among others. Faculty have published over 60 manuscripts and scholarly works in the last five years.

This cluster currently has one Canada Research Council Tier 2 Research Chair in Terrestrial Invasive Species Biology and is preparing to submit a candidate for a Canada Research Council Tier 2 Research Chair in Life and the Environment.

This research cluster has partnerships locally with the Great Lakes Forestry Centre (part of the Canadian Forest Service, a science-based policy organization within Natural Resources Canada) and the Ontario Forest Research Institute (a research unit of the Ministry of Natural Resources).

Socio-economic issues of northern, rural, and remote areas

The university possesses research strengths in community-based research, often in partnership with Aboriginal communities. Algoma University is situated in a northern community, which shares the structural impediments to growth and development often found in rural and remote areas.

The action-oriented research common to this cluster, often done in consultation with community partners, stakeholders and Anishinaabe and Aboriginal peoples, examines local policy and planning while considering global trends and transformations.

Algoma University's NORDIK (Northern Ontario Research, Development, Ideas and Knowledge) Research Institute, incorporated in 2007, has been charged with solving practical issues that are important to municipalities, First Nations and community organizations in Northern Ontario. Recent research undertaken by faculty has looked at pollution, single-industry communities, public transportation, tourism, health, food security and the role of health informatics in public health.

NORDIK has secured external funding from FedNor, the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, the Sault Ste. Marie Community Development Corporation, the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the United Way's Community Endowment Fund, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, crowd funding and other sources.

Cultures and creativity

Algoma possesses research strength in: literature and the histories of peoples and ideas; Indigenous and Anishinaabe ways of knowing and language; studio art production and exhibition; music composition, recording and performance; and advancing business processes through organizational culture and workforce diversity.

Situated in the District of Algoma, a place of inspiration for the Group of Seven, such artists as Glenn Gould and a traditional meeting place for Anishinaabe and Indigenous peoples, faculty in this cluster are committed to exploring new and innovative methods of inquiry that extend the traditional foundations of their disciplines and draw from the strengths of cognate disciplines.

Research in this cluster includes collaboration and partnerships across disciplines and within the regional community. In Digital Humanities, researchers create online archives and develop information management systems. Faculty partner with the Algoma Conservatory of Music and the Art Gallery of Algoma to present innovative performances and exhibitions. Faculty also work with local museums to advance research in public history. This research brings creative and innovative ideas to the students in the classroom, illuminating their studies in new and dynamic ways. Students enjoy access to archival documents and undertake field visits to significant sites in the regional landscape.

Research in this cluster has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Editing Modernism in Canada, the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, the Ontario Arts Council and other sources.

Examples of Institutional Initiatives

Establish a research and innovation hub

We are centralizing and strengthening our research support services and our innovation support activities. As part of the hub, the university is creating its first research office and is securing a Research Lead, a position filled by an experienced, tenured faculty researcher, who will assist other faculty identifying and making grant applications. In addition, a senior administrator has taken on the responsibility of leading private-sector presence and engagement in innovation at Algoma.

For more than a decade, the university has enjoyed the presence of the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC) and its business, information technology and science incubators on its campus. They have recently moved to downtown locations, but Algoma University will maintain its partnership with the Innovation Centre. Algoma will re-purpose part of SSMIC's former space in the Essar Convergence Centre to develop our own Innovation Hub, co-locating our new Research Office, some of our university-based research, and a few, select private-sector partners. We will also provide support services for students interested in entrepreneurial and research activities, for those students engaged in co-op and practicum activities and for students participating in community-based learning.

Sault Ste. Marie is home to three Information Technology, Science, and Business incubators, which provide opportunities for Algoma faculty and students to explore business, entrepreneurial and innovative projects and ideas. Over the next three years, we will develop partnerships and pathways for our faculty and students to link into community and regional resources. Our co-op program is being revamped in part to encourage opportunities related to entrepreneurship. Our Research and Innovation Hub will be home to partners who can assist with these linkages.

As another example of this kind of partnership work to support innovation, research and community engagement, Algoma University will work with the medical community to develop supports and supporting activities for students preparing to enter a profession related to the medical field. The University and the Sault Ste. Marie Academic Medical Association (SSMAMA) have signed an agreement to establish a local research program based out of the AU campus. The Research Coordinator for SSMAMA is housed in our Research and Innovation Hub, and we will work with the academic faculty members of the Northern Ontario School of

Medicine located here in Sault Ste. Marie to develop opportunities for students to engage with them and to contribute to their research work.

Over the next three years, we will increase faculty and student engagement in research and innovation through a series of activities and opportunities presented by the Research and Innovation Hub. Algoma’s Research Chairs and the anticipated hire of a Project Director for the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (with a focus on our superlative Aboriginal Residential Schools archives) will be expected to be leaders in forging these connections. The university will create a secure born-digital repository for research data management; develop supportive capacity (structures, policies and institutional knowledge around issues like commercialization, intellectual property, copyright, etc.); and establish supports to facilitate research grant applications for faculty. Additionally, the university will renovate space for the Hub and collocate relevant activities to the Hub.

Grow student involvement with faculty and partnership research

Algoma’s upper-year courses are characterized by a deliberate emphasis on student research and independent projects. This will be maintained as a high institutional priority. Algoma University will plan and develop the Hub concept, with a focus on linking the Hub activities to the faculty, students and community. Space for student research will be incorporated into the Hub and alumni connections will be used to facilitate building community-based research networks.

Metrics and Targets

System-Wide Metrics	2019-20 Target
Tri-council funding (total and share by council)	NSERC: 3 year average \$130,567 or higher (0.05%) CIHR: 3 year average of \$89,857 or higher (0.03%) SSHRC: 3 year average of \$68,843 or higher (0.11%)
Number of papers (total and per full-time faculty)	29 or .5 per faculty
Number of citations (total and per paper)	30 or 1.03 per paper

Institution-Specific Metrics	2019-20 Target
Number of research-related projects or grants with internal or external funding	77
Number of students employed in research positions remunerated by Algoma	98

Number of research chairs	3
Number of public- and private-sector partners located on campus and-or actively involved in campus projects	8

5.0 Innovation, Economic Development and Community Engagement

This section recognizes the unique role institutions play in contributing to their communities and to economic development, as well as to building dynamic partnerships with business, industry, community members and other colleges and universities. It focuses on regional clusters, customized training, entrepreneurial activities, jobs, community revitalization efforts, international collaborations, students, partnerships with Aboriginal Institutes and a program mix that meets needs locally, regionally and beyond.

Institutional Approach to Innovation, Economic Development and Community Engagement

Algoma University has a significant economic impact on the City of Sault Ste. Marie's economy. Algoma's budget for 2016-2017 shows a total of slightly over \$29 million in operating expenses, and like all post-secondary institutions, it contributes to the local economy by the tuition and grant dollars brought into the region, by the employment generated on campus, and also by the dollars spent by students on services in the community.

Algoma University plays a significant role in the economic health of our region, contributing actively to the education of the next generation of employees, entrepreneurs, and leaders. We will continue to support the economic development activities of the municipality's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and of the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC).

Through the work of the NORDIK Research Institute, Algoma University is a leader in the movement to develop social enterprise for youth throughout Northern Ontario (i.e., initiatives aimed to address social problems by utilizing business strategies). Northern Ontario's resource-based economy is undergoing significant changes due to global restructuring, resulting in social and economic destabilization. Currently, 16 per cent of young people in the region are unemployed. Youth out-migration continues to be an issue for smaller remote communities and the demographics have shifted to a higher Aboriginal youth population. We will work over the next three years to involve more of our own students in the social enterprise movement, as a co-curricular activity and as a pathway into possible employment following graduation.

As is the case with many communities across Northern Ontario, Sault Ste. Marie is facing a population decline. Shortages are predicted in the labour market and the city is actively seeking ways to increase immigration. At present, the Algoma University student body has approximately 250 full-time equivalent international students.

Each year, several international graduates decide to make Sault Ste. Marie their home. Over the next three years, we will seek to maintain this positive contribution to our region.

Algoma University's location and history have enabled us to build significant partnerships to help us better serve the Anishinaabe population. Algoma University has a sacred Covenant agreement with Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig (SKG), an Aboriginal-run postsecondary institution located adjacent to Algoma's main buildings on the Shingwauk Trust property. It is one of Ontario's nine recognized Aboriginal Institutes; it offers culture-based programming and a three-year Bachelor of Arts in Anishinaabemowin (i.e., Ojibway language) under Algoma's accreditation. Over the next three years, we will be working in partnership with SKG to increase its capacity to deliver academic programs and non-academic support services. SKG's mandate is to increase access for Anishinaabe students (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) from our region and beyond to culture-based education and, through partnership with Algoma University, to university-level education in general. Algoma University is also assisting SKG to establish the National Chiefs Library in a new, purpose-built Anishinabek Discovery Centre facility on land adjacent to our campus. The rich collections of material that the new library will attract will form the basis for new courses and new research opportunities designed to enhance the educational experience of Aboriginal students.

Additionally, Algoma University, in partnership and co-ownership with the CSAA, maintains and operates the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC). The SRSC is an integration and consolidation of two major initiatives of the University and its partners, the CSAA and the National Residential Schools Survivors Society (NRSSS). These initiatives are the Shingwauk Project, founded in 1979, and the Residential School Research, Archive and Visitors' Centre, founded in 2005.

The SRSC is a cross-cultural research and educational development project of Algoma, CSAA and NRSSS. The founders of these decades-long efforts recognized the profound importance of the commitment to the Shingwauk Trust and the relationship with Canada's Aboriginal Peoples that the University assumed upon its relocation in 1971, in partnership with the Keewatinung Anishnabek Institute, to the site of the former Shingwauk and Wawanosh Indian Residential Schools.

For over four decades the SRSC and its predecessors have partnered with many organizations nationally, including the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, the Anglican Church of Canada, and others to:

- Research, collect, preserve and display the history of Residential Schools across Canada
- Develop and deliver projects of sharing, healing and learning in relation to the impacts of the Schools, and of individual and community restoration
- Accomplish the true realization of Chief Shingwauk's Vision

Chief Shingwauk in the early nineteenth century worked for true cross-cultural education in this region. His vision was that his people would learn from the settlers, and the settlers from the First Nations. The work of the SRSC, and many at Algoma University, has been inspired and informed by Shingwauk's Vision as represented by the Shingwauk Alumni and Elders. Initiatives undertaken by the SRSC have been numerous and varied: research, many reunions, healing circles, publications, videos, displays, curriculum development, historical tours, archive, library, document and photo collections, student and staff directories, a website and visitors' centre, among others. The SRSC's collections, among the best in North America concerning the legacy of the Residential

Schools, also house the archives of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation's funded healing projects and research initiatives. The Foundation's work stemmed from the [Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples \(1996\)](#) and its archives represent tens of millions of dollars' worth of funded research and healing projects.

Examples of Institutional Initiatives

Maintain international and out-of-region recruitment

The University will develop a plan to diversify international recruitment, based on the recommendations from a recent, expert review of Algoma's international recruitment efforts. Our international recruitment strategy over the next three years aims to diversify the geographic origins of our students. We have been relying heavily on students from Saudi Arabia. As the Saudi program that sent so many youth abroad winds up, Algoma is intensifying our recruitment outreach in countries such as Ghana, Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Mexico. We are also working diligently at diversifying the type of student coming to Algoma. At present, most international students chose to study Business, Economics, and Computer Science. We are now highlighting, for example, the quality opportunities available to study music and visual art on campus, hoping to attract talent from countries like China, where the creative arts are very popular university options.

It is important that we invite students from well beyond the Algoma District to study with us. We will maintain active recruitment in southern Ontario over the next three years from our Brampton extension site, building north-south linkages not only through recruitment, but also through co-op and other partnered activities.

Support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action

Working with our partners, Shingwauk Kinooamaage Gamig and the Children of Shingwauk Alumni, the University will work to support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

- During 2017-18, in collaboration with the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association, we will install a museum exhibition throughout the main floor of Shingwauk Hall to commemorate the history of Shingwauk Indian Residential School and the Survivors, as well as the stories of its current Aboriginal students (Call to Action: Museums and Archives). This will bolster our capacity to provide public education on the history of the Shingwauk site and the larger national Residential Schools and colonial contexts (Calls to Action: Commemoration).
- Algoma University will continue to develop programming using advisory committees with significant Anishinaabe membership and including significant Anishinaabe content, such as our Community Economic and Social Development degree and our Bachelor of Social Work. In 1986, a community committee, the Aboriginal Education Committee, started the development on campus of what is today a full range of support services for Anishinaabe students. We will seek continual improvement of these services, including supports for transition into the workplace. As well, we will bolster our capacity to engage in research and education that supports healing and reconciliation. We will build on our significant archival and library collections and we will hire a Canada Research Council Tier 2 Research Chair in Anishinaabe Healing and Reconciliation (Calls to Action: Education).

- We will use our influence to support local, regional, and national efforts across different sectors, and especially the provincial university system, to realize true reconciliation. We have both the grassroots and scholarly expertise and experience to assist many others in their efforts to address the Calls to Action and beyond (Calls to Action: Education for Reconciliation).

Through the work of the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, we pledge to support all parties interested in honouring the children who never returned home and in supporting their families. Our ongoing efforts to commemorate and memorialize can also inform others’ work toward those ends (Calls to Action: Commemoration).

Metrics and Targets

System-Wide Metrics	2019-20 Target
Graduate employment rates	90% (2 Year Employment Rate)
Number of graduates employed full time in a related job	80% or higher

Institution-Specific Metrics	2019-20 Target
Number of international and out-of-region students studying at Algoma in degree programs (excluding KASP)*	648
Number of participants in workshops, presentations and historical tours based on the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre’s research expertise concerning the legacies and impacts of the Residential Schools system.	1,335

6.0 Enrolment Strategy and Program Direction

Enrolment Plan and Corridor Midpoints

This section also establishes the agreed-upon corridor midpoint that will form the basis of enrolment-related funding over the course of the SMA period.

Corridor Midpoint

For funding purposes **1,525** Weighted Grant Units (WGU) will be the corridor midpoint value for Algoma University. This value represents a planned decline from the institution’s actual enrolment of 1699.90 WGUs in the 2016-17 academic year. The funded enrolment value of 174.9 students will be transferred to the university’s differentiation funding. Algoma University will receive funding consistent with this level of enrolment, and enhanced differentiation, and subject to the policies contained within the *Ontario University Funding Model Technical Manual*, May 2017, Version 1.0, regarding enrolment and differentiation funding.

Projected Funding-Eligible Undergraduate Enrolments

Below is the institutions projected enrolment of funding-eligible undergraduate enrolments for Algoma University.

	Projected 2017-18	Projected 2018-19	Projected 2019-20
Undergraduate Full-time Headcounts	683	666	656

Note – for this table, Full-time Headcount should be reported for Fall term only.

Projected International Enrolment

Below is the institutions projected enrolment of funding-eligible undergraduate enrolments for Algoma University.

	Projected 2017-18	Projected 2018-19	Projected 2019-20
Undergraduate Full-time Headcounts	213	195	196
Masters	N/A	N/A	N/A

Full-time Headcounts			
Doctoral Full-time Headcounts	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Enrolment Full-time Headcounts	213	195	196

Note: International enrolments include all funding ineligible international students.

International Enrolment Strategy and Collaboration

International students bring a wealth of perspectives to our university and to our community, and they add vitality and interest to all our initiatives. Algoma University currently has about 250 international, full-time equivalent undergraduate students, and we aim to maintain international enrolment at a similar absolute size for the period of the SMA.

There are several risk factors associated with managing international enrolment. We have learned the dangers of recruiting heavily from one country or region. Government policies change, which can lead to sharp decreases in enrolment as we have experienced recently with recruitment from Saudi Arabia. As well, an over-reliance on one source of students can lead to an imbalance, with one linguistic group or one cultural group preponderant on campus.

We will strive over the next three years to have balanced geographic representation to mitigate these risks. We will focus some of our international recruitment on attracting students to a wider variety of Algoma programs, including our Fine Arts and Music programs, both to avoid having too high a percentage of international students in popular programs like Business, Economics and Computer Science and to enrich the experience of all our students.

Welcoming a significant number of international students to our campus and to our community is an important part of our university's purpose. Sault Ste. Marie is isolated geographically, and does not have the wide mix of population found in many southern Ontario cities. International students open our campus to the wider world, to new perspectives, and to global issues. Several of our graduates choose to make their life here in Northern Ontario, and this provides welcome immigration to a region suffering declining population.

It is incumbent upon the University to welcome these students, to ensure that they are prepared for the course work and to integrate them into the life of our campus and our community. Over the next three years, we are restructuring our international services to develop an integrated International Office. International strategy will be approved through the President's Office.

Over the next three years we will also develop a "study-abroad" culture for our own students. At present, we have exchange arrangements with a wide variety of international universities, and it is important that we continue to encourage our own students to study abroad for a term or a year.

Strategic Areas of Program Strength and Expansion

Program Areas of Strength

1. Biology
2. Business Administration
3. Computer Science
4. Social Work
5. Psychology

The proposed areas of program strength are intended to inform program approval processes.

Program Areas of Expansion

1. Anishinaabe Studies
2. Community Economic and Social Development
3. Environmental Science

Financial Sustainability

The Ministry and the University recognize that financial sustainability and accountability are critical to achieving institutional mandates and realizing Ontario’s vision for the postsecondary education system. To this end, it is agreed that:

It is the responsibility of the governing board and senior administrators of the University to identify, track, and address financial pressures and sustainability issues. At the same time, the Ministry has a financial stewardship role. The Ministry and the University agree to work collaboratively to achieve the common goal of financial sustainability and to ensure that Ontarians have access to a full range of affordable, high-quality postsecondary education options, now and in the future.

The University remains accountable to the Ministry with respect to effective and efficient use of provincial government resources and student resources covered by policy directives of the Ministry, or decisions impacting upon these, to maximize the value and impact of investments made in the postsecondary education system.

System-wide Metrics	2015-16 Actuals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Income / (Loss) Ratio 	3.75%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Operating Revenues Ratio 	4.10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Reserve Ratio 	8 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest Burden Ratio 	1.58%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viability Ratio 	0.05

7.0 Institutional Collaborations and Partnerships

Algoma University is working with a consortium of universities and colleges across the province to create pathways and form partnerships that meet the needs of Indigenous learners. This Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT)-funded project focuses on identifying and creating pathways across institutions and Algoma will be working on several of these in the upcoming years.

Algoma University and Northern College continue to build on their strong partnership to support northern pathways and mobility. In the fall of 2018, the partners will begin offering an online Computer Science bridging program to ladder Computer Engineering Technician diploma graduates into a Bachelor of Computer Science degree program. This project is innovative in its focus on non-traditional student needs, while at the same time building capacity in the northern institutions for online learning.

In a Northern Ontario focused project, Algoma University is collaborating with the nine other northern institutions (six colleges and three universities) in an ONCAT funded project to increase mobility of students accessing university and colleges across Northern Ontario. Through the Northern Ontario Steering Committee, Algoma is working within the ten northern institutions consortium to identify specific areas to enhance student access building on existing linkages and expanding into new areas.

Algoma University and Northern College will expand their co-location partnership in Timmins over the next three years, including new programming areas. Algoma University is working with Northern College and Durham College on the design and development of an online bridging program from Computer Engineering Technology to a Bachelor of Computer Science program. The estimated growth in this area is significant, given the need for computer science graduates in a digital world.

Algoma University is engaged in conversations with Oshki-Bimadziwin and NALMA (National Aboriginal Land Managers Association) about new partnerships to better serve the needs of Aboriginal learners.

Since the signing of the Covenant with the Shingwauk Education Trust in 2006, Algoma University has been working with Shingwauk Kinooaage Gamig (SKG), a sister institution on the Shingwauk site, to further Anishinaabe control of Anishinaabe Education. Algoma offers the first and only full university degree in an Aboriginal language in Canada, the Anishinaabemowin degree. With SKG, Algoma is working toward an Anishinaabe Studies degree and other specialized programming around Anishinaabe issues. Algoma pledges to continue to work closely with SKG towards the true realization of Chief Shingwauk's Teaching Wigwam Vision.

8.0 Ministry/Government Commitments

- The SMA2 process has focused on implementing the first stages of the new funding model and demonstrating the ongoing commitment by all colleges and universities to student success. Future growth will only be funded through negotiated changes to an institution's funded enrolment corridor . Through the SMA2 cycle, the ministry will continue to work closely with institutions to ensure all dimensions of the funding model are implemented.
- In a memo to colleges and universities dated March 7, 2017, the ministry committed to using the SMA2 (2017-20) process as a transitional phase to commence the collaborative and joint development of performance metrics and targets, tied to funding, for SMA3 (2020-23). The ministry reiterates this commitment and reaffirms that metrics and targets included in SMA2 are not tied to funding at this time and are a beginning point for further discussions with the sector prior to their application in SMA3. Colleges and universities will have the opportunity to reset and realign metrics prior to the application of metrics in SMA3. The ministry will also engage other stakeholders as part of discussions on a broad metrics strategy.
 - The ministry commits to establishing a joint working group with each of the sectors and to begin detailed discussions in fall 2017 on metrics/targets and to seek input on the performance measurement methodology for SMA3.
- Colleges, universities and the ministry all benefit from processes that are transparent and non-duplicative. The ministry commits to work with colleges and universities to continue to streamline processes and seek opportunities to further reduce red tape (in part through increased access to other tools) , including reducing or eliminating duplicated reporting requirements.
- Through SMA2 discussions, the ministry has heard concerns about the challenges of delivering breadth in programming for Francophone and Francophile students, including the cost and funding of such delivery. Starting in fall 2017, the ministry commits to consulting institutions who have a formal mandate for bilingual and/or French-language delivery to review the delivery of French-Language programming and consider these concerns.
- In 2016, an extension of the existing tuition policy framework was announced to support a major reform in OSAP. The ministry will engage with both the college and university sectors around the next tuition policy framework, including examining the issue of tuition anomalies in certain professional programs as a result of past changes to tuition policy, and, for colleges, examining tuition levels relative to competitive college tuition frameworks in Canada.
- In recent years and during the SMA process, there has been an increased interest in the creation of a new polytechnic designation in the Ontario postsecondary education system. Starting in fall 2017, the ministry commits to undertake a review that examines whether improved benefits for students and employers are sufficient to make such a change. The ministry commits to working collaboratively with institutions across the sectors on this review.
- The ministry commits to continue to work collaboratively with universities to assess the anticipated need for additional graduate spaces related to programs that are currently under development.

- Starting in fall 2017, the ministry commits to undertake a review of the university Northern Grant working collaboratively with universities to examine whether the criteria for access and allocations of the Northern Grant represent an equitable approach.