

Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing Strategic Plan

2025 – 2028



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>NURSING AT WESTERN: TRANSFORMATIONAL PRACTICE</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>THE ARTHUR LABATT SCHOOL OF NURSING</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: WORLD CLASS RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND INNOVATION.....</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: EXCELLENCE IN LEARNER-FOCUSED EDUCATION</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: STABLE VIBRANT COMPLEMENT OF FACULTY/STAFF.....</u>	<u>10</u>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NURSING AT WESTERN: TRANSFORMATIONAL PRACTICE

Nursing at Western: Strategic Directions (2025-2028)

Today, as with all academic institutions, the School faces challenges that are both predictable (e.g., the recruitment of PhD prepared faculty) and unpredictable (e.g., the 2017-present tuition freeze which compounds fiscal pressures in the university). Unique pressures also arise given that the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing, as an academic entity in the post-secondary education sector, can influence and be influenced by issues within the healthcare sector, e.g., COVID-19. The School has been and continues to be responsive to external pressures (e.g., unprecedented health provider shortages – particularly the nursing shortage and other workload stressors in the health care sector). In addition to the direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on and within the academic sector, the School has had to respond to pressing demands to increase capacity to accept students and to institute government- and nursing- sector initiated programming changes (e.g., College of Nurses of Ontario and Ministry of Health [MOH]). For example, a request for proposals (RFP) to fund Schools interested in developing direct entry accelerated programs (3-3.5 years) as well as a RFP to fund the incorporation of RN prescribing curricula within nursing programs.

Despite the external pressures, the School is resolved to be bold and creative in meeting the needs of the School and University, while being a listening, responsive, and proactive partner to its communities of practice – it is a challenging time but also a time of opportunity.

Our Mission Statement

The Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing generates knowledge and prepares nurses to be transformative leaders and innovators through equity-promoting research, education, and practice, locally and globally.

Our Mandate

The Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing will advance leadership in health equity by seeking to transform practice, education, scholarship, and policy, locally and globally.

Our Priorities

#1: World Class Research Scholarship & Innovation

In keeping with needs within our communities of practice, the research areas of strength/priority across the lifespan continue to be digital health, mental health, violence, gender & health, women's health, and global and Indigenous health; these will be adapted/shifted to reflect the emerging research programs/agendas of faculty. In addition, the School also is building strength in the areas of educational research (e.g., experiential learning, including simulated education) and health systems and services research. The School continues to hold an excellent national and international reputation in the research domain. To continue to foster this we are concentrating our efforts in, i) supporting the research of our many new tenure-track faculty and the teaching scholarship interests of our limited term (teaching-intensive) faculty through internal faculty mentorship, ii) strengthening of our global partnerships and, iii) diversifying our knowledge mobilization activities. For example, we plan to create another faculty fellowship by 2027 to support the growth of faculty research programs,

create a second teaching scholar position (2027/28), and create a Clinician Scientist position (now in progress) in collaboration with the London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) (2025/26). We are working with funding development to support these plans.

#2: Excellence in Learner-Focused Education

Our goals in this domain are to: i) deliver a curriculum that is reflective of, and responsive to, the evolution of health care and the principles of EDID & equity-oriented approaches; ii) further cultivate quality innovative learner experiences, and iii) develop and implement a plan to become an accredited Centre of Excellence in Simulated Education (2028/2029).

In relation to the above, we will continue expand curricula to address the needs of the older adult and other populations marginalized by inequity, e.g., 2SLGBTQI+ and other equity-deserving groups/communities. Curricula will continued to be reviewed and refreshed through an EDID and a 'nurse as leader' lens. In addition, quality learner experiences will be enhanced through ongoing evaluation and strengthening of the 1:1 preceptor model and the new RPN "A" & "B" streams in the Compressed Time Frame Program (CTF), and the [further] development of a 3.5 year direct entry Western BScN program (a renewal and expansion of the previous AY4 stream) during the Western-Fanshawe 4 yr. BScN program dissolution process (1st intake, 2026/2027). The dissolution provides opportunities for site-specific visions of nursing and nursing education.

In terms of the creation of an accredited Center of Excellence in Simulated Education, we have created a solid infrastructure by assembling a team of technical specialists and hiring a lab/sim co-ordinator (admin) to support the activities in the lab/sim areas. Building on this foundation, we will continue to grow, the limited term faculty positions with specialized interests and skills in simulated education. All faculty working in the simulated learning space will be certified in simulated education over the next two years (2025-2027), i.e., we are invested in the ongoing professional development of faculty and staff in this domain of practice. Simulated education and research are being supported by several faculty, including the new teaching scholar (tenure-track) position. Excellence in simulated education is required to grow the required technological expertise and skill sets of our learners.

#3: A Stable Vibrant Complement of Faculty & Staff

To nurture a culture of wellbeing and support for faculty and staff we are committed to the enhancement of lateral/progressive exposure to new roles/responsibilities and the support of the ongoing professional development of our faculty and staff. A wellness framework and equity-oriented processes (e.g., recruitment, workload balance etc.) will guide our plans in this domain.

Although just a brief glimpse into the strategic directions of the School (2025-2028), I hope you get a glimpse of what we will be up to in the next three years – understanding that priorities can shift dependent on the health care landscape/context.

Best Regards,

Victoria Smye, RN, PhD, FCAN

Director & Professor, Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing

THE ARTHUR LABATT SCHOOL OF NURSING

The Arthur Labatt School of Nursing is one of seven schools in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Western University, that works closely and collaboratively with other schools and faculties (e.g., the Western Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry and Fanshawe College), as well as with clinical partners in the Healthcare Sector.

The “Towards Western at 150” – Western University’s Strategic Plan was launched in 2020 and serves as a key guiding document for the School of Nursing as it establishes direction and expectations for all within its community. Western’s Strategic Plan identifies three overarching themes - Greater Impact; People, Community, and Culture; & Western’s Place in the World. Each of these themes is further defined with explicit goals, commitments, and milestones/metrics.

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) focuses on the following three priority areas: academics, research, and international. The academic priority is supported through researchers, students, and staff members who are highly qualified, emphasizing robust partnerships for knowledge mobilization and dissemination, interdisciplinary teams of researchers and stakeholders, and acquiring sufficient funding. For the research priority, the specific areas of foci are through leading research in mobility, health equity and social inclusion, within a digitalized world, and transforming health care. The international priority focuses on opportunities for international learning and studying abroad, international development, and the recruitment of international students.

The School of Nursing Strategic Plan, also launched in 2020, is resolute in the commitment to “Advancing Leadership in Health Equity.” The School takes pride in the fact that steps taken in recent years have not only contributed to success in advancing the School’s Vision and 5 Strategic Strength areas in the Plan but are uniquely aligned and positively contribute to the themes, goals and commitments set out in Western’s Strategic Plan and the FHS.

Today (2025), as with all academic institutions, the School faces challenges that are both predictable (e.g., the recruitment of PhD prepared faculty) and unpredictable (e.g., the 2017-present tuition freeze which compounds fiscal pressure). Unique pressures also arise given that the School of Nursing, as an academic entity in the post-secondary education sector can influence and be influenced by issues within the healthcare sector. The School has been and continues to be responsive to external pressures (e.g., unprecedented health provider shortages – particularly the nursing shortage and other workload stressors in the health care sector). In addition to the direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on and within the academic sector, the School has had to respond to pressing demands to increase capacity to accept students and to institute government- and nursing sector (e.g., CNO-) initiated programming (e.g., clinical externship) options. The School of Nursing is resolved to be bold and creative in meeting the needs of the School and University, while being a listening, responsive and proactive partner to the broader communities reliant on their Mission.

Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing

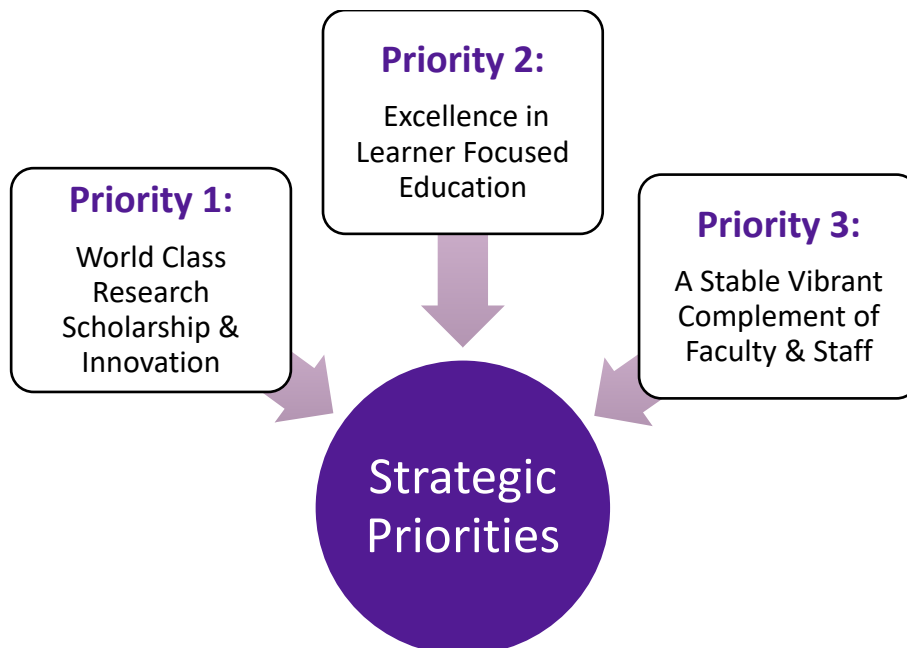
Advancing Leadership in Health Equity

Our Mission

- The Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing generates knowledge and prepares nurses to be transformative leaders and innovators through equity-promoting research, education, and practice, locally and globally.

Our Vision

- The Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing will advance leadership in health equity by seeking to transform practice, education, scholarship and policy, locally and globally.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: WORLD CLASS RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND INNOVATION

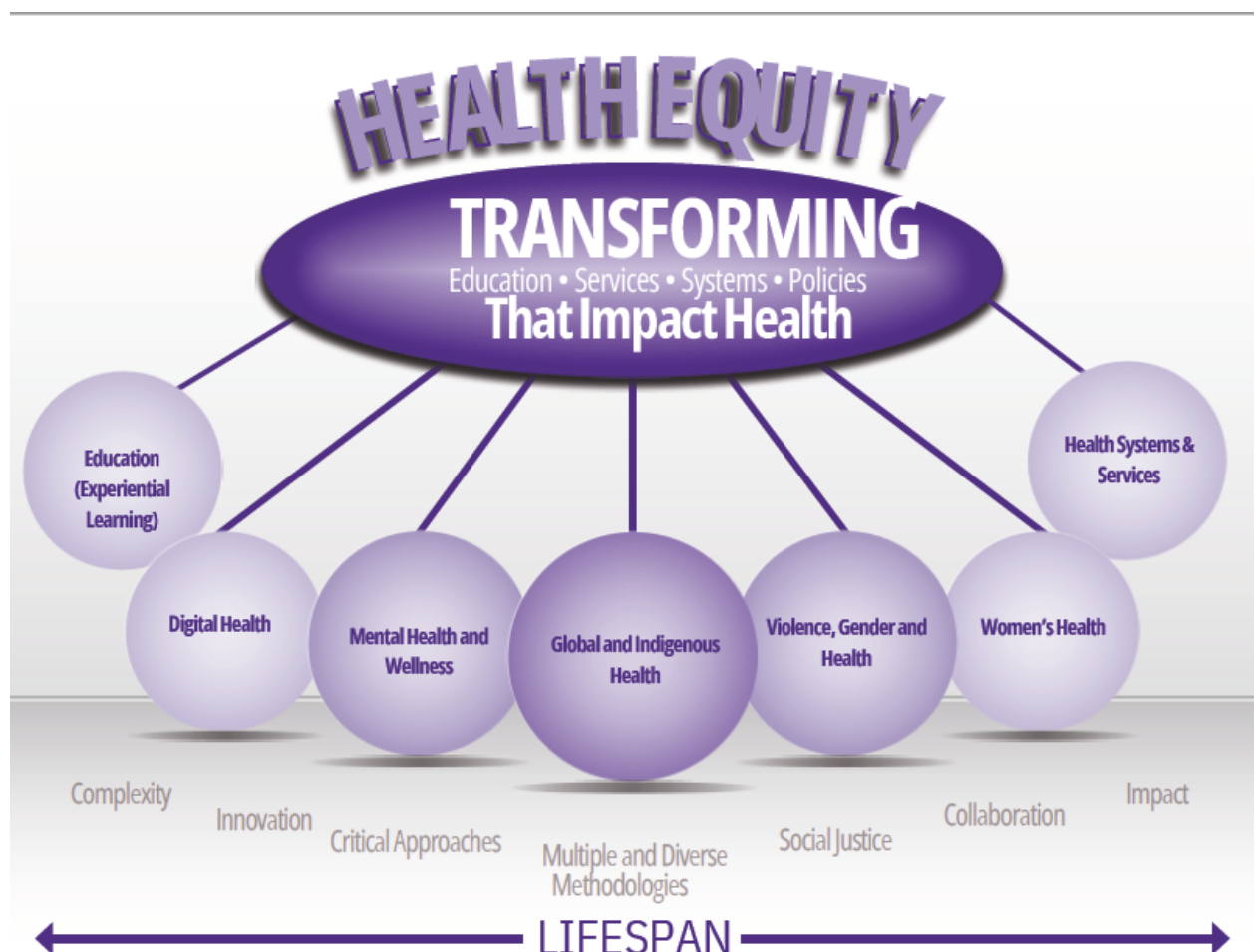
1.1 DIRECTION: Foster a culture of research excellence

PLAN

- **Strengthen Nursing Research Unit (NRU) infrastructure**
 - Create a sustainability plan in relation to the Research Officer position in the Nursing Research Unit (NRU)
 - Seek funding opportunities through the FHS and/or Funding Development to bring stability to this position
 - Establish a more formalized connection with knowledge mobilization role and communication manager of the Faculty of Health Sciences that supports the collection and dissemination publications, presentations, policy impact etc.
- **Dedicate supports for knowledge mobilization:**
 - Re-establish a communication committee in the School of Nursing in 2025/2026
 - Create a vision profile related to our faculty research portfolios
 - Re-visit our vision for profiling Western Nursing Research
- **Create infrastructure to support research engagement:**
 - Further support buy-out time associated with Faculty Fellowship opportunities
 - Create an additional Faculty Fellowship (2027/2028) in partnership with Funding Development
 - Increase access to funding opportunities
 - Strengthen linkages with FHS research group
 - Increase the Teaching Scholar positions (1) (2027/2028)
 - Increase dedicated workspace for postdoctoral fellows and research staff
- **Proactively foster research interests & engagement:**
 - Increase collaboration between research & teaching intensive faculty
 - Dedicated workshops for teaching intensive faculty interested in research
 - Enhanced involvement of LT faculty in the Nursing Research Unit (NRU)
 - Strengthen and establish new forums for research support and dissemination (e.g., CRHESI, Iota Omicron Chapter and Western co-conferencing, Practice Partner research workshops)
 - Create opportunities for, and integrate research more fully into, the undergraduate program through the formalization of the Student Research Committee (e.g., capstone projects, thesis opportunities)
 - Create opportunities to work more closely with existing partners
 - Work with existing practice sites to create closer links with graduate students, e.g., across thematic areas to develop coalitions across multiple levels and by tapping into the projects of faculty and graduate students

- **Grow quality partnerships to support research, scholarship, and innovation (national and international) and funding opportunities to support them:**
 - Increase attention to international opportunities in priority areas:
 - Liaise with funding development and the international office to support funding opportunities related to these initiatives:
 - Brazil (e.g., University of Girona)
 - Rwanda (University of Kigali)
 - Uganda (e.g., Makerere University, Kampala)
 - Ukraine
 - Spain (e.g., University of Vic, Catalonia)
- **Establish Chairs/Professorships in partnership with academic/clinical partners through:**
 - Development of a clinician scientist position by 2025/2026

Areas of Strength: Research



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: EXCELLENCE IN LEARNER-FOCUSED EDUCATION

2.1 DIRECTION: Deliver curricula that is reflective of, and responsive to, the evolution of health care and the principles of EDID & Equity-Oriented Approaches

PLAN

- **Enhance capacity of learners to be ‘nurse leaders’:**
 - Link student projects with leadership competencies
 - Building of the capstone project opportunities
- **Enhance infrastructure with accountabilities:**
 - Increase linkages with the Office of Education Scholarship
 - Collect curricula materials within the School (all programs)
 - E.g., course material repository activities delegated to staff roles (undergraduate and graduate)
 - Create a 2nd *Teaching Scholar* position in the School (2026/2027) with associated leadership responsibilities in the Scholarship of Teaching domain
 - Continue to allocate funding for a curriculum specialist (contract position)
- **Establish & implement yearly formal curriculum review/refresh:**
 - Employ evidence-informed principles and equity-oriented approaches in curriculum review/refresh/revision
 - Evidence-informed pedagogy guides curricula development
 - Learning outcomes informed by an EDID lens and the work of the Decolonization, Anti-racism, Anti-Oppression [DARAO] Committee
 - Curricula development informed by the Sustainable Development Goals
 - Partner with practice sites to facilitate programs curricula fit with need of the populations/community served
 - Integrate a program evaluation framework across all programs
 - Schedule annual debriefs to oversee curricula
 - Address redundancies and course slippage
 - Address evaluation strategies across courses to address student workload
- **Enhance teaching innovation and creativity:**
 - Increase best practices re: on-line and in-person teaching technologies
 - Create ‘Communities of Practice’ approach to sharing best practices
 - Employ data analytic tools for monitoring of learning and outcomes
 - Increase faculty & staff engagement with professional development opportunities

2.2 DIRECTION: Cultivate quality innovative learner experiences

PLAN

- **Explore/expand options for global/urban/rural/remote reciprocal learning:**
 - Explore new clinical, education, research, community, administrative, governmental options
 - Grow opportunities in Rwanda, Uganda, Brazil, Ukraine, and Indigenous communities and rural and remote communities
 - Develop satellite sites for the Ontario Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner program (Western site) (name change, 2025/2026 due to pan Canadian NP education mandate by the Canadian regulatory bodies – will require Senate approval)
- **Purposefully strategize engagement with agency partners/organizations:**
 - Liaise with Indigenous and rural and remote communities
 - Workload faculty/staff connections with ‘communities of practice’ – Indigenous and rural and remote
 - Explore new opportunities for placements (e.g., summer camps)
 - Collaborate re: preceptor recruitment, development and support, mentorship, including the provision of professional development opportunities
 - Continue and build the evaluation of placement experiences
- **Innovative curricula & approaches are responsive to the needs of our communities**
 - Create a flexible participation policy for students (e.g., increase hybrid/hyflex teaching & learning opportunities through course offerings in year 4 and summer [CTF])
 - Increase opportunities for practice partner adjuncts to inform curricula development
- **Integrate an increased number of research opportunities in undergraduate education (for example a “Scholar’s Elective”/ thesis/research project work):**
 - Increase interdisciplinary opportunities
 - Implement Best Practice Spotlight Organization project activities
 - Create personalized and unique learner opportunities
 - E.g., practice placement experiences in keeping with student strengths
 - Pair undergraduate students with a graduate student and/or faculty member
 - Link outstanding undergraduate students with ‘RA’ opportunities
- **Target scholarship/bursaries/financial supports to assure equitable placement opportunities:**
 - Engage with Funding Development to provide increased student funding support (e.g., travel fund, scholarships, and bursaries)
- **Increase International Educational Opportunities:**
 - Allocate workload (e.g., create Associate Director, International) to support attention to international opportunities in priority areas in the School:
 - Brazil (e.g., University of Girona)

- Rwanda
- Uganda (e.g., Makerere University, Kampala)
- Ukraine
- Spain (e.g., University of Vic, Catalonia)

2.3 DIRECTION: Development of a plan for an Accredited Centre of Excellence in Simulation

- PLAN

- **Enhance infrastructure within the Lab/Sim Environment**
 - Continue to increase the number of dedicated limited term faculty positions in the simulated education area (2+ by 2026)
 - Allocate funding for professional development, including but not limited to, simulated education certification of all faculty and staff working in the simulation area
 - Connect with simulated education accreditation agency
 - Support the academic/research goals of the Center through leadership provided by the Teaching Scholar position (create position: Simulated Education Faculty Lead) and other faculty focussed in this domain of research.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: STABLE VIBRANT COMPLEMENT OF FACULTY/STAFF

3.1 DIRECTION: Nurture a culture of faculty & staff wellbeing

PLAN

- **Support professional development & growth:**
 - Enhance collegial governance & shared responsibility for leadership
 - Provide opportunities for lateral/progressive exposure to new roles/responsibilities in the School
 - Enhance intentional collaboration & mentorship in the School and beyond (e.g., leadership opportunities in the FHS and university)
- **Review & enhance infrastructure supports for a Healthy Work Environment:**
 - Align administrative and other supports with program needs (e.g., placement staff roles, lab/sim technicians to support simulated education)
 - Enhance the Teaching Assistant orientation
 - Create guidelines re: expectations
 - Create a 'Communities of Practice' support network for TAs
 - Adopt a 'Wellness Framework' to guide recruitment and retention efforts
- **Cultivate cohesive teams:**
 - Assess/balance workloads across faculty and staff (e.g., through Workload Committee)
 - Create mindful best practices related to work boundaries (e.g., timing of emails)
 - Further clarify roles and staff coverage (e.g., increase opportunities for hybrid model)
 - Celebrate/recognize achievements of Faculty/Staff (e.g., attention to award opportunities through creation of an Ad hoc Awards Committee - internal)
- **Refine Performance Evaluation/Development Program:**
 - Consistent expectations (e.g., through PE processes and workload meetings with the director each year)
 - Peer evaluation (e.g., faculty-sought evaluations of their teaching performance by their peers)

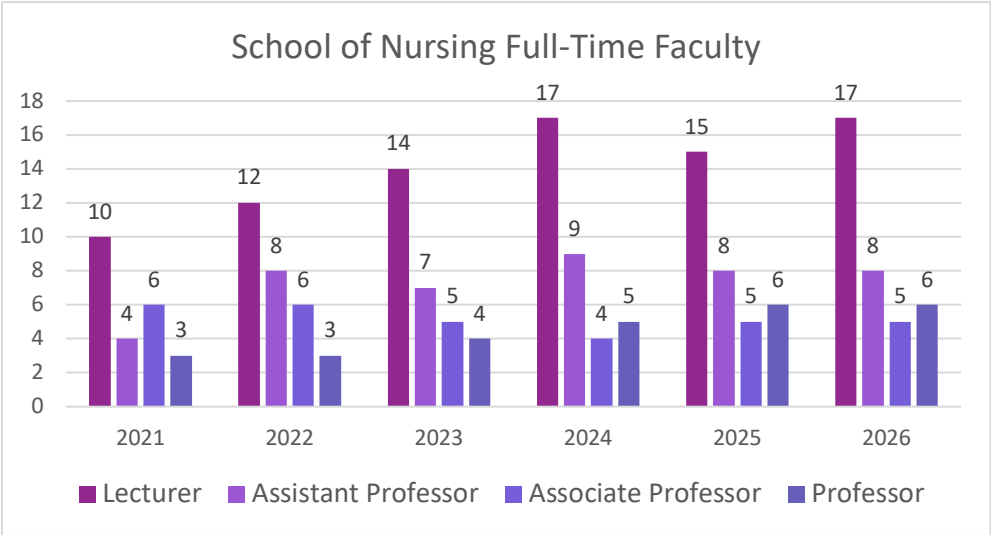
3.2 DIRECTION: Stabilize a skilled, adaptable, inclusive, and agile faculty/staff workforce

PLAN

- **Refresh approach to Succession Planning:**
 - Director position posted externally (2025/2026)

- Re-fresh organizational chart with roles, responsibilities, and coverage
- Provide clear communication regarding pending faculty and staff changes
- Provide opportunities for attendance at evidence-based leadership programs
- Provide leadership coaching opportunities
- **Enhance Faculty and Staff Recruitment Strategies:**
 - Forecast workload to potential new faculty and staff
 - Continue to provide formal mentorship support for new faculty and staff
 - Support recruitment through a communication plan
- **Optimize Retention Strategies:**
 - Engage with talent development/management programs
 - Continue to align staff complements with program growth
 - Provide pro-active management of anticipated position changes/transitions
 - Expand career & professional development opportunities
 - Re-visit mentoring structure
 - Continue to foster a leadership mindset
- **Enhance alumni and adjunct faculty recruitment and engagement:**
 - Align recruitment and engagement accountabilities with staff roles
 - Increase the presence of alumni opportunities

Faculty Growth and Projections



Staff Growth and Projections

