



Strategic Plan Environmental Scan

This environmental scan is meant to provide context to inform input to Mount Saint Vincent University's current strategic planning process.

The university's most recent strategic plan, [Mount 2017: Making A Difference](#), and the follow-up report [Summary of Strategic Plan Successes](#) provide a foundation to build upon. Our vision and mission remain constant and continue to guide our aspirations and sense of purpose as we develop our next strategic plan:

Vision

The Mount will be a model of creative teaching and research that nurtures socially responsible global citizens.

Mission

A commitment to academic excellence in a rich and rewarding university experience. The pursuit of knowledge and the accessibility of high quality learning opportunities. An enduring commitment to the advancement of women, gender equality, and social justice. Building a foundation of respect and accountability.

Demographics

The Mount has experienced relative enrolment stability since 2008 with full-time enrolment growing from 2,046 students in 2008 to 2,218 students in 2018. Part-time enrolment has declined from 1,839 students to 1,387 students over the same period. Details on our students, their origins, the programs they are enrolled in and how all of these have evolved over the last decade can be found in the [University Profile](#). International students have grown in importance to sustaining the Mount's full-time enrolment, representing 16% of students at all academic levels in 2018/19. We continue to have more female (76%) than male students (24%).

Canada

In 2016 there were an estimated 45,660 tenured and tenure-track faculty teaching approximately 1,096,278 full-time equivalent (FTE) students, a ratio of 24 FTE students per tenured and tenure-track faculty member. In its annual publication [The State of Post-Secondary Education in Canada](#) (2018), Higher Education Strategy Associates describes the Canadian system detailing trends in student and staff numbers and looks at how the system is financed, both from an institutional and a student perspective. A second report, [Education in Canada: Key results from the 2016 Census](#), presents source data on the status of post-secondary education in Canada. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) report [Trends in Higher Education-Volume 1- Enrolment](#) documents the growth in Canadian universities over the last 30 years and concludes that the demand for a highly-skilled and educated labour force has been a principal driver in the growth of university participation rates.

Nova Scotia

Demographic changes have followed the transition from the baby boom generation that drove university enrolments in the 1970s and 80s to the current generation, with public school registrations reflecting this process. In the 2009/10 school year there were 130,550 students in the Nova Scotia public school system. By the 2015-16 school year, this had declined to 118,152 students. In 2018/19 this number increased to 120,604 reflecting the growing numbers in the next generation. The [Nova Scotia Education and Early Development](#) site details these changes.

International Students

As local and national student recruiting efforts have become challenged by the current demographic shifts in Canada, universities have moved to expand their recruiting to global markets. The Canadian Bureau for International Education report of 2018, [International Students in Canada](#), discusses the results of this shift and provides a snapshot of international students in Canada in 2017, focusing on key trends with regard to level of study, province or territory of study and country of citizenship of international students in Canada. The 34% increase in international students at all levels of study since 2014 reflects the impact on Canadian education of these students with China (28%) and India (25%) dominating current recruiting efforts.

Challenges Facing Universities Today

Many reports discuss the challenges and opportunities facing post-secondary education in Canada. A good place to start is with the current challenges and issues review published by Universities Canada, [Back to school 2018 quick facts](#). Six important forces are identified in this review as driving post-secondary education:

- Preparing for a disrupted labour market
- Adopting to the reality of life-long learning
- Integrating hands-on experiences
- Encouraging Canadian students to seek global experiences
- Helping Indigenous youth achieve their potential
- Preparing business leaders

Trends

The future of work and how we will prepare today's youth for the disrupting impacts of technology has become a central focus for many businesses. RBC has created a discussion topic, [Humans Wanted: How Canadian Youth Can Thrive in the Age of Disruption](#) that speaks of this disruption as a quiet crisis as we face an era of radical change. This theme is elaborated in the RBC report, [Bridging the Gap](#), which identifies 10 core challenges facing the future workforce, including the assertion that more than 25% of Canadian jobs will be heavily disrupted by technology in the coming decade.

Another issue often discussed reflects a growing recognition that advanced education institutions make significant contributions to economic and social development, over and above their roles in supporting education and research. The J.W. McConnel Foundation report, [Maximizing the Capacities of Advanced Education Institutions to Build Social Infrastructure for Canadian Communities](#), discusses these trends, concluding with a call to action to achieve greater public good through advanced education and realize more benefits for society.