



Initial Part of Strategic Plan 2015-2020

Presentation of Vanier College
Context and Challenges
Vision, Orientations and Objectives

For Community-wide distribution—starting with
Joint Coordinators meeting of Oct. 29, 2014

Notes for Joints Coordinators

This document will be the initial part of the Strategic Plan. Still to come are: the action priorities associated with each objective, the results aimed for, the monitoring and reporting processes.

We are not seeking formal approval yet. We are still looking for ideas and comments. The plan will continue to evolve throughout the planning process.

This consultation is twofold: 1) Your opinion about the *Initial Part of Strategic Plan 2015-2020* & 2) Your suggestions for action priorities.

A consultation tool has been prepared to guide you through the process. It includes a template that provides information and suggestions for the consultation. You will find this tool on the Strategic Plan web page: <http://www.vaniercollege.qc.ca/strategic-plan/>

Your input and commitment are essential! As Joint Coordinators, your role is key in this consultation process.

Please use the consultation tool and template to submit your ideas by the **deadline** Jan. 16, 2015 to strategicplan@vaniercollege.qc.ca Earlier submissions are most welcome!

Vanier College

(1:1)¹ Vanier College is a publicly funded English language CEGEP located in the borough of Ville St-Laurent on the Island of Montreal. Named in honour of General Georges P. Vanier, Canada's second native-born Governor General, Vanier College opened its doors on September 8, 1970, welcoming close to 1,400 students in its first cohort.

(1:2) The academic life and foundation of the College is built upon a commitment to academic excellence, a multitude of student services, resource centers, athletics, and a broad range of social and cultural activities. A hallmark of Vanier College has been its diverse student body, with students reporting 94 different countries of birth. It is the largest English-language CEGEP to offer the *Alliance Sport-Études* program for elite athletes.

(1:3) Vanier currently offers over twenty-five programs of study leading to a Diploma of College Studies (DCS) in two-year Pre-University and three-year Technical fields. In the Autumn of 2013, the full-time day student population rose to 6,579, with an additional 1,442 students in Continuing Education credit courses and close to 1,000 in non-credit courses.

OUR MISSION

To provide a life-enriching learning experience that enables all students to succeed academically, professionally and as engaged citizens.

OUR VALUES

As a college, we view education as a transformative process. As such, we believe in:

- Student success as achieving one's full potential
- Accessibility, inclusiveness and diversity
- Creativity, innovation and excellence
- Lifelong learning

We value collaborative and cooperative approaches. As such, we believe in:

- Respect, integrity and responsibility toward self, others and the environment
- Communication, transparency and accountability
- Fairness and equity

¹ Paragraphs are numbered in this working version of the document in order to facilitate and keep track of comments.

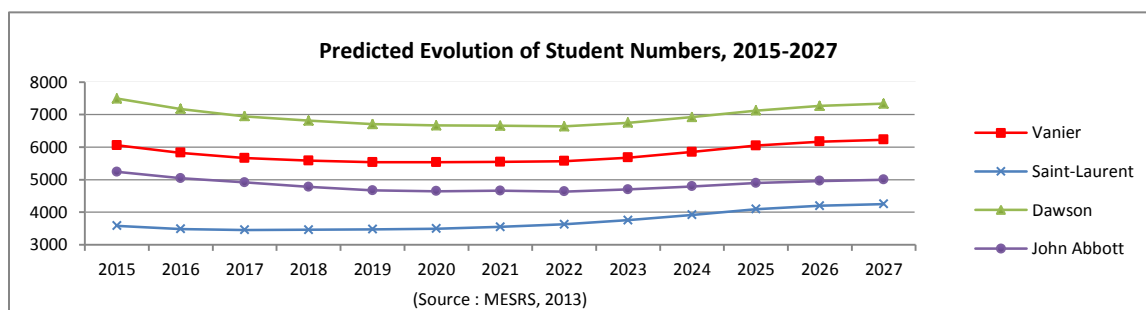
Context and Challenge

Student Population²

A Predicted Decline, Followed by a Global Increase

(2:1) During the previous strategic plan (2008-2013), the student population increased from 6,233 in Autumn 2008 to 6,629 in A2012, and dipped slightly to 6,579 in A2013. Also during this period, student registration in technology programs rose from 22% to 32% of the total full-time student population—one of the goals of that strategic plan.

(2:2) In Continuing Education, the number of students in credit courses has varied from a low of 1,345 in Autumn 2009, to a high of 1,596 in A2012, then 1442 students in A2013. The dip in number of students in Attestation of College Studies (ACS) programs suggests that recruitment strategies will be important as we go forward. Continuing Education has also experienced fluctuation in the number of students in non-credit courses—from a high of 1,049 in Autumn 2008, to a low of 581 in A2012, and rising significantly to 992 students in A2013. The Language School continues to perform well, with steady increases in number of students: 209 in A2008 to 578 in A2013.



(2:3) The Québec government predicts a steady decline in student numbers during the next 10-15 years, with the lowest point reached between 2020 and 2022, followed by slight increases each year through to 2027. These demographic shifts will affect all CEGEPs on the Island of Montreal. Vanier is predicted to show a slight increase over the 2015-2027 period (+2.9%), compared to a predicted net loss for Dawson (-2.1%) and John Abbott (-4.6%). Interestingly, CEGEP Saint-Laurent should experience an 18.7% increase in student enrolment during that same period. Bearing in mind the fact that Vanier's current enrolment exceeds our *Devis pédagogique* (which is set by the Ministry at approximately 5,250 students), these numbers nevertheless raise two issues: probable competition for students and potential for recruitment in the Saint-Laurent borough, Laval and beyond.

Some Important Characteristics of Vanier Students

(2:4) While gender ratios vary significantly within specific programs, overall, female students outnumbered males by approximately 55% to 45% in the A2013 cohort. Incoming students from high school are in the 17-18 year old range, while those with previous college experience are slightly older by 2-4 years. Incoming ACS students are older still, with average age on admission at 34.2 years. As the most multicultural college in the system, Vanier boasts 94 different countries of origin among its students, with 75% of the total student population born in Québec.

(2:5) Eleven percent of Vanier students resided in Saint-Laurent in A2013, while the remaining 89% commuted from Laval (19%), the West Island (11%), the South Shore (7%), other Montreal areas (40%) and further off the island (11%). In A2012 it was noted that fewer incoming high school students had taken their secondary V courses in English than in the previous year (Pre-U: 53%, down from 60%; Technical: 46%, down from 57%), a trend which is expected to continue. These data suggest increasing and refining outreach strategies to local as well as Francophone schools and cultural communities. Also, needs of students travelling some distance to Vanier call for our attention. Finally, while 98% of regular day students are full-time, it bears mentioning that most students (for example, 71% Pre-U and 55% Technical in H2013) do not take a full course load and therefore take longer than the prescribed time to graduate.

Creating Opportunities

(2:6) How Vanier positions itself within this landscape will require taking stock of our strengths and using these to create opportunities in the challenging years ahead. Vanier benefits from its location, strong and varied communications to external communities, a welcoming and diverse environment, strong programs—both academic and extracurricular—and burgeoning partnerships at home and abroad.

(2:7) Some challenges within the Vanier community include recruitment and managing student enrolment. The rise in student numbers is a strength that has also brought with it a challenge: how to better utilize finite physical space to enhance student life and learning at Vanier. Strategies to better connect with the larger Ville Saint-Laurent community—cultural communities, business and industry—may provide new opportunities, as could the development of online programs and courses.

² Student population data was provided by the Registrar's Office or extracted from CLARA, MIA or SRAM.

Learning Experience and Environment

Programs and Services: Good Variety and Outreach but Room for Improvement in Program Management

(3:1) Vanier offers a wide range of Technical and Pre-University programs, some of which include profiles that respond to expressed student interests. Four double-DEC programs, *Sessions d'accueil*, Honours programs, college-wide majors, and the largest *Alliance Sport-Études* Program in the Anglophone sector—round out Vanier's commitment to access and excellence.

(3:2) In its reach outward, Vanier is growing partnerships with other CEGEPS, currently offering two bilingual DCS programs with CEGEP Saint-Laurent, as well as a collaborative scholarship in Gaspé. Agreements are in place with two local school boards for a "*passerelle DEP-DEC*" in some programs. Student exchanges at the International level, particularly with France and in the Business Administration program, continue to grow.

(3:3) Various College services support academic success, community involvement, and a sense of belonging for regular day students. Resource Rooms, peer-tutoring, diverse student services, the Learning Centre, Library Services and computer labs are consistently lauded in student surveys. At the same time, areas needing improvements have been identified: internal communications about services for both students and employees are weak. Accessibility for persons with physical challenges continues to be a problem.

(3:4) Beyond the regular day programs, Continuing Education provides ACS programs, DCS courses, and non-credit personal and professional development courses. The Language School offers non-credit courses in several languages and at several levels. Initiatives to develop Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC) are underway and have been completed for some ACS programs; they have been identified as a promising endeavour. As well, Continuing Education has developed new ACS programs for career training in areas of potential employment growth. Continuing this initiative as well as providing professional development opportunities might best be accomplished through building partnerships with local business, industry and community groups.

(3:5) On-going program management is a challenge for the academic sector. Program committees (PCs) are meant to assess, plan and revise their programs on a continuous basis in the DCS sector. Many of these committees have not been functional, though there is now a concerted effort underway to remedy this. As part of this effort, Vanier College is developing strategies to implement ongoing program management processes.

Improving the Learning Environment

(3:6) Among the strengths of the learning environment are its physical location, the beauty of the campus and the concerted quest to go green. This environment nurtures a diverse population with a strong sense of community, promoted through an active Student Association, student clubs, student ambassadors, peer tutoring, a student newspaper, varsity teams, as well as program- and college-wide activities that are varied and numerous.

(3:7) Though the computer labs are cited as a strength in student surveys, they are also pinpointed as needing improvement. Of great import are the extensive renovations required for the Library, plans for which are now underway. Other weaknesses are the many physical facilities that are in poor state, and the aforementioned serious lack of space. Acute need for student space and for timely access to services often become particularly intense during predictable periods during the semester. Further, as many of our students come from sizeable distances, there is a great need for student space when they will be spending long periods of time on campus—to rest, study and socialize.

Room to Grow: Mobility, Sustainability, Technology and Pedagogy

(3:8) An ongoing Vanier initiative is student and staff mobility. Several international education projects are already underway (ex. Malawi nursing project, Genocide and Totalitarian student trip to Europe, student exchanges with France, teacher exchanges with Mexico, etc.). These provide a solid base of experience for further project development, partnership building and student recruitment abroad.

(3:9) Vanier's leadership in and commitment to a green campus is well established and continues to grow both inside and outside the classroom. Recently, a college-wide major in Sustainability has been added to DCS programs. Healthy lifestyle options, such as the Aquatics Program and the Sports Therapy Clinic, are open to the external community, provide some revenue, and are good models for more project development in this area.

(3:10) Vanier students are increasingly tech-savvy, and generally connected to social networking. This is both an opportunity and a challenge, as there is a serious need to update technology—especially in some technical programs—but also college-wide. Student surveys indicate satisfaction with Omnivox and the Vanier Web. Communication has and will continue to be enhanced through use of social media. While the integration of technology into teaching and learning is underway, its usage has yet to become an integral part of Vanier's pedagogical culture.

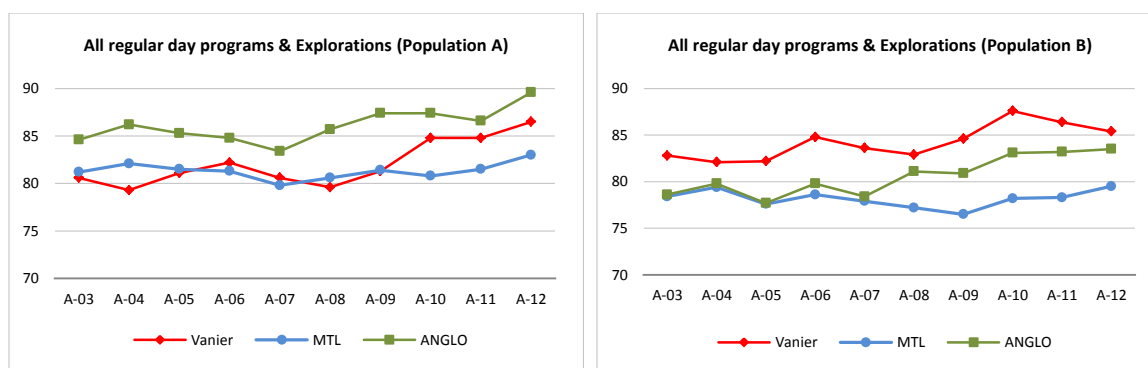
Student Success

Academic Success Indicators: A Positive Trend

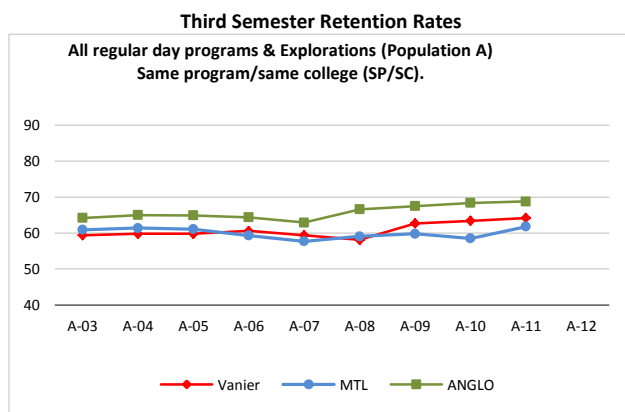
(4:1) Over time, Vanier has tracked academic success using four main indicators: first semester success rates, third semester retention rates, high school averages of incoming students and graduation rates for two categories of students—those who have never taken a course at CEGEP before entering their current program of study (Population A) and those who have taken at least one course at any CEGEP before entering their current program of study (Population B). Vanier results are compared to those of other Anglophone colleges as well as other colleges on the Island of Montreal. Overall, Vanier has seen improvement in all of these academic success indicators during the 2003-2012 period.

(4:2) Starting with the A2009 cohort, there has been a steady rise in first semester pass rates for Population A—higher than the rates for other Montreal Island colleges, but below the other Anglophone colleges. For Population B, Vanier's first semester success rates exceed all other colleges on the Island, including the Anglophone colleges.

First Semester Success Rates³



(4:3) Third semester retention rates for students who stay in the same program at the same college are a measure of perseverance in their initial program, as well as of program retention. From Autumn 2008 to Autumn 2012 the rates rose slightly and are similar to other colleges on the Island though below other Anglophone colleges. Third semester retention rates of Vanier students in any program/any college were about 20% higher than those in the same program/same college category. This would indicate that there is significant movement between programs, and possibly colleges, for many Vanier students.

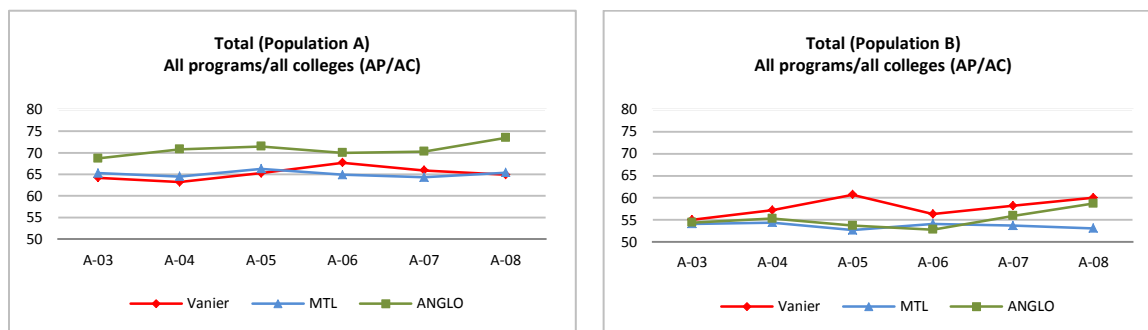


(4:4) The high school average (MGS—*Moyenne générale au secondaire*) of incoming students rose with the A2010 cohort to reach parity with other colleges on the Island of Montreal for all programs. It also reached parity with other Anglophone colleges for students in technical programs, and was about 2% below that of other public Anglophone colleges for pre-university students. There has been a decrease in the number of students admitted with an MGS lower than 70%: only 1% of pre-university students in the A2012 cohort had an MGS lower than 70%, while that percentage for technical students remained stable at 13%. These data are encouraging, as higher high school averages are strongly correlated to graduation rates: SRAM has found that a difference of 1% in MGS is correlated to a difference of 2 – 5% in the graduation rate.

³ Vanier College is excluded from the "Anglo" category in the data presented in these graphs.

(5:1) Graduation rates for Population A—in five years, from any program and any college—were similar for Vanier students and other CEGEP students on the Island, which were both below the Anglophone colleges. On the other hand, Population B Vanier student graduation rates increased over time, were higher than other colleges on the island and slightly higher than the other Anglophone colleges.

Graduation Rates in 5 years



Recognizing and Building on Our Strengths

(5:2) Vanier can take pride in the welcoming and supportive environment provided for students by faculty and staff through multiple, varied programs and services. Orientation activities organized by many sectors of the College—the VCSA, Student Services, Academic Advising, etc.—can be built upon and expanded to favour student engagement. Initiatives to nurture Vanier’s renowned multicultural campus and foster intercultural competency have shown the value and promise of inter-departmental cooperation. The rich diversity of students and staff, as well as the wide range of programs and activities, encourage openness and a strong sense of community.

(5:3) Concerted action to identify students at risk early in the semester through a systematic review of the Mid-Term Assessments and the consequent follow-up with phone calls to at-risk students to offer peer tutoring and other services has been ongoing and generally much appreciated by the students.

Matters of Concern

(5:4) There are, however, a number of issues to consider. There is a generalized concern about literacy and numeracy skill levels of college students. There is a steady increase in the number of college students with special needs, including varying disabilities and learning difficulties. Many Vanier students deal with heavy external responsibilities, including long hours at work, family responsibilities, money concerns, and financial need. Understanding and responding to the many aspects of diversity in the student population is an ongoing pursuit—both in and out of the classroom. Tracking how well Vanier students do at university and in the workforce is also of import.

(5:5) Meanwhile, Vanier students have delivered a tall order to the institution: a holistic definition of student success. Students want an education that is all-inclusive, that addresses the whole person. According to the 2012-2013 student surveys, the top five aspects of success are academic achievement, acquiring the essential skills for success (learning strategies), self-actualization, transferability and application of competencies, personal growth and life balance. Addressing these issues and meeting students’ expectations of a holistic college education will require careful allocation of resources and strategies to involve all sectors of the College.

(5:6) In terms of curriculum and pedagogy, ongoing efforts to promote a college-wide understanding and adoption of competency-based education and the program approach are needed. Efforts to get program management up and running will be important in developing and enhancing success strategies. Expanding efforts to improve proficiency in language of instruction in all courses and programs is crucial. Improving students’ French language skills as well as their information and communications technology profile also make the list.

(5:7) Other challenges concern the slow response to adapting programs to meet changing environment and student needs as well as a slow response to developing academic programs that reflect changing professions and needs in society.

Community and Labour Market

(6:1) Part of the mission of all CEGEPs includes reaching out to community to provide training and lifelong learning services for individuals, organizations and the workforce. In this regard, Ville Saint-Laurent is a vibrant community presenting a variety of needs and opportunities; Laval and the greater Montreal area are also within reach and could greatly benefit from Vanier's expertise.

A Young and Diverse Population

(6:2) Vanier College is situated in Ville Saint-Laurent, a borough whose steadily increasing population has now exceeded 100,000. The 2011 census indicates that it is a relatively young population, with 31% of the residents under 25 years of age. Saint-Laurent residents are largely bilingual, with 59% speaking both French and English; the multicultural essence of the borough is evident with 38% of residents for whom the single language at home is neither French nor English.

A Dynamic Labour Market to Better Serve

(6:3) Of note, Ville Saint-Laurent residents constitute 5.7% of the total population of the Montreal Agglomeration, while 9.8% of the jobs in the Agglomeration are situated in the borough. Though the greatest number of jobs continues to be in manufacturing, there has been a shift

Saint-Laurent population (2011)	31% under 25 years of age
Saint-Laurent vs Montreal Agglomeration	5.7% of the total population
	9.8% of the jobs
% of jobs requiring a college diploma or a university degree Montréal	80% of new jobs by 2016
	40% in 2011

toward employment growth in both wholesale and retail commerce. Other growth areas include professional, scientific and technical services, finance and insurance, health and social services, teaching and related professions, and public administration. The share of jobs requiring a college diploma or university degree is increasing: by 2016, about 80% of new jobs will require these skill levels, compared to 40% in 2011 (Emploi Québec, Montreal, 2013).

(6:4) Vanier has an established commitment to lifelong learning and to the development of competencies, both of great strategic importance in today's competitive world. Combining an understanding of the Ville Saint-Laurent population with the local job market may yield ideas for new opportunities, particularly for Continuing Education, which is essential to Vanier's strategic importance in the Saint-Laurent community and beyond. The development of new courses and programs to better serve individuals, organizations and enterprises is vital. This could include expanding, improving and promoting Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC) services. It is also important to continue establishing mutually beneficial projects and share resources and ideas with the community and to extend our reach to Laval and the greater Montreal area.

The Promising Development of Applied Research

(6:5) Research at the college level is receiving increasing recognition. Provincial and federal governments have established programs and financial measures to support the development of applied research and technological transfer in Québec's colleges. Responding to this favorable environment, Vanier has set objectives for basic and applied research initiatives in the coming years, and has established a solid base upon which to build. Several grant applications, externally funded research projects and projects with potential for external funding are in progress. Student roles have been identified in several of the current grant applications, and partnerships have been established or are in the process of development with industrial and university partners.

(6:6) Future initiatives will include establishing new research partners, directions, and funding sources. For instance, the Québec government's *Politique nationale de la recherche et de l'innovation (PNRI)* and the United Nations project, *Future Earth*, for which Montreal has recently been selected as one of five international "hubs", may provide opportunities to further develop Vanier's involvement in applied research.

Issues and Challenges for Colleges, and for Vanier in Particular

(6:7) What is significant for colleges in general, and for Vanier in particular, is that this information points us in the direction of expanding our understanding of the employment sector and strengthening our relationships with employers for those programs that lead to the job market. Stronger ties with institutions in which students in our pre-university sector may enroll are also important. As we define our future objectives, we need to be aware that a high percentage of the jobs to be filled in the next decade are either completely new jobs or are jobs that will have gone through an extensive transformation. This has major implications for the basic learning needs of all of our students, for our commitment to lifelong learning and competency development and for the role of Continuing Education in responding to socio-economic needs in the community.

(6:8) The forging of partnerships with other colleges, universities, organizations and industry are key to a successful future. Continuing to create opportunities on the international front through student, staff and faculty mobility projects, as well as in the recruitment of foreign students will ensure Vanier's global citizenship.

Resources and Organization

Human Resources, a Strategic Lever

(7:1) Vanier has experienced a significant turnover in senior management positions during the last five years. More retirements are expected in all employment categories in the next few years. Succession planning and developing recruitment strategies to replace knowledgeable, experienced and skilled employees have come to the forefront of challenges. In Human Resources, some updates have been made and some are still needed in the form of revised and streamlined policies and procedures.

(7:2) Beyond policies, the relationship Human Resources has with Vanier employees, including improving communications, access to information and services to staff, holds major importance. Orientation, integration, and development of initiatives to increase retention and foster loyalty of new employees will be important moving forward. Developing means to improve the working environment for all employees will enhance work-place stability and attractiveness.

(7:3) Moving forward, it will also be essential to establish a college-wide professional development plan to ensure training, re-training and upgrading of essential skills for all employees in a rapidly changing environment, in support of the College's Mission and Strategic Plan.

A Strong Base on which to Improve Collaboration, Communications and Morale

(7:4) Many Vanier employees and departments have expressed a strong desire to build inter-departmental cooperation and collaboration and to change what has sometimes been called "silo" practices and mentality. Of note, teamwork and team building are deemed strong in many sectors. There has also been a renewed focus on promoting a sense of pride in Vanier through various communication initiatives. Most importantly, the new leadership in the College is firmly committed to transparency, accountability, consultation and improving organizational structures and processes.

(7:5) There are, however, several challenges to face. Fostering college-wide participation in order to kindle the strong sense of belonging that is a hallmark of Vanier will be a priority. Efforts are currently underway to implement collaborative practices and structures as well as to improve fragmented internal communications. On a similar note, there is a need to streamline administrative processes. The recent restructuring initiatives present an opportunity to review, revise, and refine administrative systems, and will require a systematic review and updating of administrative policies and procedures, including establishing a college-wide professional development plan as referred to above. The creation of a consultative master space plan has been recommended, as has the advancement of health, safety and security protocols. Overall, the College needs to develop more of a service oriented approach for all of its employees.

Necessity is the Mother of Innovation

(7:6) The uncertain future regarding government funding will necessitate innovation and the ongoing development of new sources of revenue. Budget compressions, combined with the loss of experienced personnel through retirement and under-staffing, make it challenging to achieve some objectives. At the same time, increased reporting for different areas of government and new regulations have added to the workload in some sectors of the College, particularly in Finance. Time has taken its toll in the form of deteriorating and aging facilities. Some areas are in need of immediate renovation. Keeping up with the rapid pace of technological change continues to be a challenge for Vanier.

(7:7) Nevertheless, Vanier has numerous strengths and opportunities on which to build. As we head into the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, the College is in a healthy financial situation, and is therefore able to develop more efficient administrative and financial systems or consider using new technologies to improve their efficiency. Vanier also has many self-financing and revenue producing projects, such as The Language School, Continuing Education, and International Education, though these need to be further developed and more sources of revenue created. Establishing relations with alumni as well as pursuing the development of Vanier's Foundation will also be of importance.

Vision and Orientations

OUR VISION

To be a choice college, characterized by accessibility and inclusivity, where excellence in education is achieved through innovative practices, student engagement, and a creative, committed college community.

ORIENTATION 1

Put the student learning experience first

Objective 1.1 Improve student success

Objective 1.2 Support excellence and innovation in all aspects of learning

ORIENTATION 2

Build and assume leadership

Objective 2.1 Enhance Vanier's attractiveness and distinctive position as a learning institution

Objective 2.2 Strengthen community outreach and partnerships

ORIENTATION 3

Maintain a strong, compelling and coherent organization

Objective 3.1 Foster commitment, achievement and development for all personnel

Objective 3.2 Ensure innovative and efficient management
