Western

2025-2026 Annual Report



Supporting Innovations in Education

Office of the Vice-Provost
(Academic Programs)



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee and the Lūnaapéewak, on lands connected with the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum between the Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee and the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796.

With this, we respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.

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Supporting Innovations in Education

SUSAN LEWIS

Vice-Provost (Academic Programs)



Innovation doesn't happen in isolation. It happens when faculty, students, instructors, staff, academic leaders, and community partners work together to strengthen the systems that support teaching excellence, meaningful learning, academic integrity, student success, and program quality.

Over the past year, our portfolio has helped lead and coordinate academic transformation across campus. We supported students through academic integrity training, academic coaching, English-language learning, pathway programs, and transition supports. We helped faculty and programs respond to the opportunities and challenges of generative AI, redesign and rethink assessment practices, implement principles of inclusion and belonging into their teaching, and advance digital learning. We supported and strengthened quality assurance so that program review goes beyond a compliance process to become a vehicle for student voice, curriculum renewal, evidence-informed planning, and continuous improvement.

The stories and metrics in this report show the scale of that work: program-level engagement with Faculties, expanded student participation in quality assurance and strategic planning, and broad campus involvement in Western's Future of Teaching and Learning. The increased numbers of students, faculty, and staff engaged with our portfolio point to a university building the capacity to respond collectively to the major questions facing higher education: how to preserve academic integrity in an AI-enabled world, how to support student success across diverse pathways, how to ensure programs remain rigorous and relevant, and how to support and recognize teaching excellence across campus.

This year, we launched **Western's Future of Teaching and Learning: Strategic Action Areas**, a campus-wide framework developed through broad engagement with students, faculty, staff, and academic leaders. The plan connects many of the initiatives highlighted in this report: preparing students for success, transforming programs for relevance and impact, reimagining assessment, advancing teaching excellence, and supporting graduate student success. It gives us a shared language and a practical agenda for shaping the future of a Western education.

I am proud of the role our portfolio plays in creating an environment where innovation can flourish. The Centre for Teaching and Learning supports teaching innovation and excellence at scale. The Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement advances a culture of evidence-informed program renewal. Our Academic Programs team supports the policies, pathways, and planning structures that help students and programs thrive. Taken together, these initiatives are not isolated projects. They are part of a broader effort to build Western's institutional capacity for academic quality, teaching excellence, student success, and future-focused academic innovation.

Thank you to the colleagues, students, faculty, academic leaders, and partners whose work is reflected in this report. Together, we are building a Western education that is rigorous, inclusive, responsive, future-focused, and deeply committed to student learning.

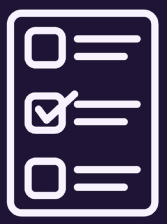
2025-26 Highlights

8,635 INCOMING STUDENTS COMPLETING MANDATORY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY TRAINING

New training was introduced to ensure that students receive the necessary knowledge and skills to support their professionalism and development at Western.

3,528 STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FACULTY ENGAGED IN THE FUTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

We developed the Future of Teaching and Learning: Strategic Action Areas in collaboration with students, staff, and faculty all invested in our mission to prepare Western for the unique challenges facing higher education.



3,107
Survey Responses



78
Action Planning Group Members



343
Town Hall Participants

74 STUDENTS MATRICULATED TO WESTERN AFTER SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING WELC BOOST

The Western English Language English Boost Program provides intensive support in academic skills and English language development, preparing students to meet Western's language standards and succeed in the classroom.



ACADEMIC COACHING

One of our standout supports is Academic Coaching, a proactive and personalized approach designed to help undergraduate and graduate students navigate the challenges of university life and academics.

Academic Coaching is built to reach at-risk students, whether through self-referral, recommendations from academic faculties, or early identification methods. Coaches work side-by-side with students, helping them set realistic goals, develop achievable timelines, and connect with vital resources and mentorship opportunities.

PATHWAYS TO WESTERN

Our team supports diverse pathways to university education by creating opportunities for secondary students to experience university life, while helping international students at Western successfully transition to the Canadian classroom through English language training.

SWAU
School Within a University

Supporting TVDSB secondary students facing significant challenges to complete their high school diploma while earning university credits

WISE
Western's Initiative for Scholarly Excellence

Connecting high achieving students in grades 11 or 12 with Western's leading programs and inclusive student experience.

WELC
Western English Language Centre

Providing English language training for international students with conditional admission to Western and its Affiliates.

Awarding Teaching Excellence

VICE-PROVOST (ACADEMIC PROGRAMS) AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN COLLABORATIVE TEACHING

David Sandomierski's Law and Architecture course, offered jointly with professor John McMinn at the University of Waterloo, brought together students from Western Law and the University of Waterloo's School of Architecture to explore how legal spaces communicate messages about law and, more importantly, the study of law.

This interdisciplinary dialogue culminated in a student-led capstone project in which student teams designed a hypothetical new law building at Western. Students presented their designs to more than 100 attendees at a public showcase at Western and before guest architectural judges at "crits" at the University of Waterloo. Supported in part through Sandomierski's teaching fellowship from Western's Centre for Teaching and Learning, the goal of the course was to foster interdisciplinary habits among students. (*Western News*)



David Sandomierski (Submitted - Western News)

THE WESTERN AWARD FOR INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED TEACHING

Joshua Foster is the creator of Sidekick, a custom-built AI tutoring companion trained on Foster's own syllabus, cases and readings in microeconomics. Rather than simply providing answers, Sidekick guides students through material using Socratic dialogue. In fall 2025, Sidekick saw an 80 per cent voluntary adoption rate among MBA students, logging more than 14,500 interactions across 244 sessions with an average duration of more than 20 minutes. Roughly half of the usage occurred between 6 p.m. and 2 a.m., a clear sign students were relying on it during late-night study sessions when faculty support is not available.

Foster has also integrated MobLab live simulations, Miro collaboration boards and a real-time contribution tracking tool into his courses, "creating one of the most intentionally technology-rich classrooms at Western." (*Western News*)



Joshua Foster (Christopher Kindratsky/Western Communications)



AISHA HAQUE

Director,
Centre for Teaching
and Learning

Centre for Teaching and Learning

My team and I at the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) are pleased to share highlights from the 2025-26 fiscal year.

At a time of significant change in higher education, the CTL has continued to support educators in navigating emerging opportunities and challenges. Our priorities this past year included convening campus-wide conversations about the role of generative AI in teaching and learning, with particular attention to reimagining assessment practices. At the same time, our community demonstrated a strong commitment to EDIDA, with 25% of faculty participants engaging in programming on this theme over the past year.

Our work at the CTL is guided by three core values:

- **Evidence-based**. We draw on both scholarly research and the lived, embodied experiences of instructors.
- **Responsive**. We adapt to the evolving needs of educators at Western, align with institutional priorities, and engage with the rapidly changing landscape of higher education.
- **Relational**. We collaborate with faculty, staff, librarians and archivists, and students to ensure our programming reflects and respects a diversity of perspectives, disciplines, and contexts.

As Western's hub for teaching and learning, the CTL is strengthened by the engagement, expertise, and generosity of our campus community. I continue to be inspired by the dedication and passion of faculty members and instructional staff, and I am grateful for the many ways you partner with us on exciting projects. I am pleased to share we also expanded our students-as-partners initiatives, creating new opportunities for meaningful collaboration and shared learning.

Finally, this work would not be possible without the exceptional team of educational developers and program coordinators at the CTL. Together, they design and facilitate hundreds of face-to-face, blended, and online learning opportunities each year. Their creativity, thoughtfulness, and commitment help cultivate a vibrant community of educators across campus and enable the CTL to support excellence in teaching and learning across the university.

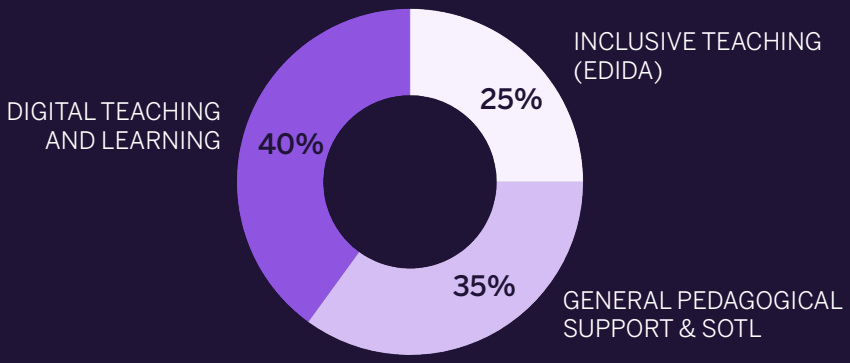
2025-26 Highlights

266 EVENTS FACILITATED

Covering crucial topics in Generative AI, Assessment, TA Training, Inclusive Teaching (EDIDA), and more.

4,010 EVENT ATTENDEES

ATTENDANCE OF FACULTY EVENTS BY THEME



29,165 ENGAGED WITH ASYNCHRONOUS RESOURCES

Including videos, online modules and OERs.

49 PROGRAM-LEVEL EVENTS FOR FACULTIES

ATTENDANCE OF PROGRAM-LEVEL EVENTS BY THEME

EDIDA	GEN AI	IQAP
28%	**57%**	**14%**





THE GEN AI CHALLENGE

Western's Generative AI Challenge is a weekly series of articles designed to explore different facets of Generative AI and encourage readers to consider other perspectives and reconcile our discomfort with the ambiguities, contradictions, complexity, and frictions of the AI conversation.

The series ran in the Summer, Fall, and Winter terms across the 2025-2026 fiscal year. There were 8-10 posts per term, with a total number of 28 articles. Each week featured a different guest challenger, ensuring that the series offers diverse perspectives across roles, disciplines, and beliefs about Generative AI.

This series is designed for anyone interested in exploring Generative AI technologies in more depth, to improve their own AI literacy and inform their decisions on if/how to engage with Generative AI in their own studies, work, and lives. Contributors ("Challengers") represented a variety of roles on campus (e.g. faculty, staff, and students) which celebrate distributed and emerging expertise in this area.

GEN AI CHALLENGE HIGHLIGHTS

16,373
Page Views

On articles covering topics, including:

- AI and the Pedagogical Relationship
- The Unsettling Environmental Footprint of Artificial Intelligence
- Assessment and AI

Subscribers from
10
Countries



VISIT THE GEN AI CHALLENGE WEBSITE

TA Programs

FUTURE PROF WORKSHOP SERIES



The 2025–2026 Future Prof Series welcomed more than 1,000 graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to explore teaching in higher education through practical strategies and critical reflection.

A key focus this year was the integration of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization, and Accessibility (EDIDA) themes, aligned with Western University's EDIDA Strategic Plan and commitment to systemic change. Through foundational and advanced workshops such as Storytelling Pedagogy, Introduction to UDL, and Rapport and Relationality, participants engaged in reflective and case-based discussions that positioned EDIDA as an ongoing component of pedagogical development.

Complementing this work were sessions on digital pedagogies and Generative AI, which encouraged educators to critically examine issues of bias, authorship, and transparency while designing meaningful learning experiences.

2025 OWN YOUR FUTURE CONFERENCE ON TEACHING

The 2025 Own Your Future Conference on Teaching welcomed 45 graduate students from across Western University to engage in timely conversations on GenAI, to share graduate teaching innovations that translate across professions, and consider the value of transnational teaching partnerships.

As a key professional development opportunity offered by the Centre for Teaching and Learning in collaboration with School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the conference provided participants with scholarly and pedagogical development opportunities.

Participants were awarded Future Prof credits toward the requirements for the Western Certificate in University Teaching and Learning.

TEACHING ASSISTANT TRAINING PROGRAM

The CTL recognizes and values the teaching contributions and expertise of graduate students from across campus through its Teaching Assistant Training Program (TATP) instructor program. This year, 13 experienced graduate student instructors taught and mentored peers across key CTL microteaching programs, including TATP, the Advanced Teaching Program, and Teaching in the Canadian Classroom.



Meet Our Teaching Fellows

WESTERN'S INAUGURAL **GENERATIVE AI TEACHING FELLOWS**



GUNEET NAGPAL

Project: *GenAI for In-Class Simulated Decision-Making: Enhancing Experiential Learning Through AI-Driven Scenarios*

Goal: Develop students' AI literacy and decision-making skills with a proactive AI agent that simulates marketing strategy environments based on real-time data.



WILLIAM TURKEL

Project: *Teaching Hybrid Human-AI Teamwork Using Qualitative Case Studies*

Goal: Develop teaching techniques and modules that leverage the complementarity of human-AI teamwork, focusing on qualitative reasoning under ambiguous conditions.



ANDREWS TAWIAH

Project: *Generative AI Adaptive Learning Platform for Health Professions Education*

Goal: Design, build, and evaluate the impact of a GenAI learning platform on enhancing clinical reasoning through a case-based pedagogy in healthcare programs.

FACULTY-LEVEL TEACHING FELLOWS



ASHLEY MCKEOWN

Project: *Transformative Pedagogies: Nurturing Cultural Humility through Epistemic Justice Education for Culturally Safe Healthcare Practice*

Impact: One of the first large-scale, interdisciplinary implementations of epistemic justice education in health professions education in Canada.



PAM MCKENZIE

Project: *Implementing Universal Design for Learning for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility in Blended Learning for the MLIS*

Impact: 227 MLIS students in Research Methods and Management, 12 MLIS student partners engaged, and collaborations with LIS faculty at the UofA



DAVID SANDOMEIRSKI

Project: *Co-Teaching in Law Schools* - redesigning three Law courses to embed a collaborative learning approach.

Impact: 53 Western students across three co-taught courses, including Law & Architecture where architecture and law students created a collaborative public showcase project.

What's Next

GEN AI PROGRAM-LEVEL RETREATS

The *Generative AI and Assessment Design Retreat* is a structured retreat model designed to help academic programs engage in collaborative, values-driven conversations about how generative AI is impacting assessment practices.

The goal of these retreats is to foster program-level decisions around assessment design that reflect the program's values and goals for student learning in ways that respect disciplinary context and instructor autonomy.

This year, the CTL facilitated 10 retreats across seven Faculties and one Affiliated University College, engaging 198 unique faculty participants. If you are interested in a retreat for your program, please contact ctl@uwo.ca.

"The workshop gave us a common language to talk as a department about AI and assessment, and of course also gave us some concrete examples and ideas that many instructors in our department have already begun to put into practice in their courses. "

Andrew Nelson (Department Chair, Anthropology) & Greg Beckett (Associate Professor, Anthropology)

WESTERN CERTIFICATE IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

The *Western Certificate in University Teaching and Learning* (WCUTL) is designed for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars who want to develop the knowledges, skills, reflective practices, and mindsets that support teaching excellence in higher education and beyond.

Through engagement in Microteaching Programs, Future Prof workshops, the Teaching Mentor Program, Written Capstone Projects, and mentorship from the TA Team at CTL, participants enhance their teaching effectiveness, strengthen their teaching portfolios, and build communities of practice. Upon completion, participants receive a certificate and a letter of accomplishment that can be used for hiring and awards processes, as well as personal professional growth.

"The modules were excellent. I learned so much from each session that I can't imagine finding such informative and beneficial programming anywhere outside of Western. I especially appreciated how class discussions were facilitated using different interactive techniques, which allowed students with different communication styles and cultural backgrounds to participate comfortably."

WCUTL Participant





JOVAN GROEN

Director,
Office of Academic
Quality and
Enhancement

Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement

At the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement (OAQE), we are guided by a central question: How can quality assurance help Western's academic programs thrive, evolve, and support exceptional learning experiences?

Our work is grounded in three commitments. We are enhancement-oriented, approaching quality assurance as an opportunity for programs to reflect, vision, and plan. We are evidence-informed, drawing on program data, student perspectives, disciplinary developments, and external expertise. And we are collaborative, working alongside faculty, academic leaders, students, and institutional partners throughout program review and development.

This year, the OAQE and the SGPS supported a record number of cyclical program reviews while advancing new programs and a suite of major modifications to programs. We also continued to strengthen our practices following a provincial quality assurance audit, building on its recognition of Western's commitment to continuous improvement and collaborative program supports.

Student engagement remained central. Through the QA Academy, student reviewers contributed to review teams, while student-led focus groups helped programs understand the strengths of the student experience and identify opportunities for enhancement.

I am grateful to the faculty, program leaders, students, staff, external reviewers, and campus partners who bring expertise, openness, and care to this work. Program excellence is a collective achievement, and your contributions continue to strengthen Western's programs and culture of quality.

Western is also shaping quality assurance nationally. Through OAQE's collaborative leadership in a Canadian Postsecondary Quality Assurance Network, we recently convened leaders, practitioners, and scholars from colleges, polytechnics, and universities across Canada. Together, we advance research, exchange practice, and address emerging challenges, positioning Western at the forefront of collaborative, evidence-informed, and enhancement-focused quality assurance.

2025-26 Highlights

3 NEW PROGRAMS

Public Health B.Sc. - Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
Interdisciplinary Health Sciences D.H.Sc. - Health Sciences
Physician Assistant Studies M.P.A.S. - Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry

68 MAJOR MODIFICATIONS TO PROGRAMS

48 undergraduate and 20 graduate programs

33 CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEWS

16 undergraduate, 3 undergraduate at Affiliate University Colleges,
14 graduate

25 STUDENTS ENGAGED IN THE QUALITY REVIEW PROCESS

STUDENT ATTENDEES AT QA ACADEMY



STUDENT LEADERS AND ATTENDEES IN FOCUS GROUPS





STUDENT REVIEWERS

Student engagement continues to be central to Western's approach to quality assurance and continuous enhancement. Through the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement, student reviewers provide a unique student perspective on lived experience, bring student feedback forward, and help programs enhance student learning in meaningful ways. Their role includes providing feedback to programs, evaluating whether programs help students achieve their goals, discussing indicators of program effectiveness, and offering suggestions about how programs and courses can be more valuable, accessible, current, and responsive to a range of students.

To support this work, the OAQE hosts the QA Academy, an annual initiative that recruits, trains, and mentors student leaders to serve as reviewers during cyclical program review site visits. Student reviewers also support student focus groups, an initiative piloted last year and now taken up by nearly all programs under review, helping programs collect rich feedback to inform their self-study.

By bringing lived experience, peer dialogue, and practical student concerns into the review process, student reviewers help ensure that program quality review is not only a compliance exercise, but also a meaningful opportunity to strengthen student learning, accessibility, and program enhancement across Western.

> "My recent experience as a student reviewer was an incredibly positive and enriching learning opportunity. It allowed me to collaborate with a diverse range of people—from faculty and administration to fellow students—and take on a leadership role in the review process. This role sharpened my leadership, problem-solving, and communication skills, and reaffirmed how valuable student voices can be in shaping the future of education."
>
> *2024/25 Student Reviewer*

What's Next

LABOUR MARKET ANALYSIS

OAQE uses Lightcast data to produce tailored Labour Market Analysis reports that support programs in assessing labour market demand, identifying career pathways, highlighting in demand skills, and informing evidence based discussions of employment outcomes for new and recent graduates.

LIGHTCAST DATA: JOB POSTING ANALYTICS
Evaluates job postings to provide a detailed overview of employer demand, including:

- Number and intensity of job postings
- Top job titles and occupations
- Companies and industries hiring
- Specialized skills in demand
- Regional demand (within Canada)

REQUESTING A REPORT
Request as part of the IQAP process, new program development, program modification, or internal planning meetings. Please note, this reporting is fully optional and by request only.

Submit your request to: oaqe@uwo.ca

NEW STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

Student focus groups are a new and important part of Western's cyclical program review process, helping undergraduate and graduate programs collect rich student feedback to inform their self-study.

Facilitated by student leaders trained and by the OAQE, these sessions provide an opportunity for senior program students to share their perceptions of program strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities through structured peer dialogue.

Student focus groups have expanded the ways students contribute to quality assurance by bringing lived experience, practical concerns, and ideas for program enhancement directly into the review process.

PARTICIPATING IN A STUDENT FOCUS GROUP
If you are interested in becoming a student leader, or setting up a focus group session for your program, please contact: oaqe@uwo.ca



Western's Future of Teaching and Learning: Strategic Action Areas

Western's Future of Teaching and Learning: Strategic Action Areas is a comprehensive, campus-wide action plan launched by the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic Programs to strengthen teaching and learning across Western. Building on the exceptional student learning experiences and innovative teaching practices already underway, the plan provides a shared framework to align priorities, coordinate action, and advance teaching and learning through five strategic areas. It also serves as a bridge across existing institutional initiatives, including the Global Engagement Plan, the EDIDA Strategic Plan, Faculty-specific plans, and *Towards Western at 150*.

The initiative responds to a pivotal moment in higher education. Technological advances, shifting public perception, and questions about the relationship between degree outcomes and workforce skills require universities to assess their values and priorities and to return to central questions: **Why go to university? What is the added value of learning at a research-intensive university?**

At Western, teaching and learning goals appear across a range of plans and portfolios. Western's Future of Teaching and Learning plan provides overarching strategic actions commensurate with the importance of teaching and learning at the institution, helping to align priorities, focus efforts, and support meaningful change across Faculties and units.

Community engagement was foundational to the development and implementation of the plan. The work is overseen by a Steering Committee with representation from the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and academic and administrative leaders from across campus. Through multiple consultations and a campus-wide survey, more than **3,500 students, faculty, and staff** provided critical feedback that helped shape the plan.

Western's Future of Teaching and Learning: Strategic Action Areas

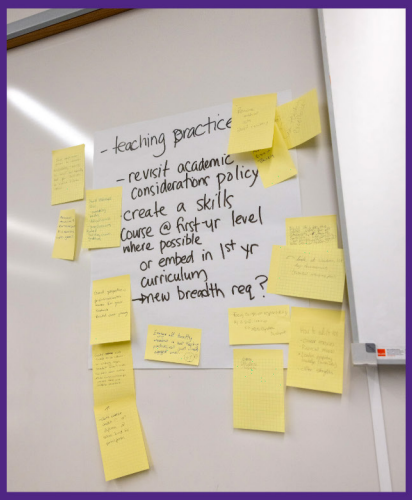
1. **Prepare Students for Success at Western and Beyond**
2. **Transform Programs Relevant to Students, Society, and Industry**
3. **Reimagine Assessment**
4. **Teaching Excellence**
5. **Advancing Graduate Student Success: Support, Development, Innovation**

View the full plan at vpacademic.uwo.ca








- teaching practice
- revisit academic considerations policy
create a skills course @ first-yr level where possible or embed in 1st yr curriculum
→ new breadth req?








Western







Western

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OFFICE OF THE VICE-PROVOST (ACADEMIC PROGRAMS)

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