

2025-2028  
Academic Plan

# Growing Careers



**OLDS COLLEGE**  
OF AGRICULTURE & TECHNOLOGY

## Identity

Olds College exists to educate and train learners to become the next generation of agricultural professionals, leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators.

## Vision

Advancing agriculture for a better world.

## Mission

Olds College creates the next generation of agriculture leaders by developing talent, advancing knowledge and championing stewardship and sustainability.

### *Olds College Academic Plan*

# Growing Careers

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Painting by Janice Gallant

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

### Oki, Tannishi, Tawâw

Olds College of Agriculture & Technology humbly acknowledges that it is located on Treaty 7 territory of the Niitsitapi, including Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations. We respectfully recognize the Nations of Tsuut'ina and Îyarhe Nakoda. This land is home to Otipemisiwak Metis Nation of Alberta, District 3.

We honour the deep histories, cultures and contributions of all peoples as we all walk together in the journey of truth and reconciliation.

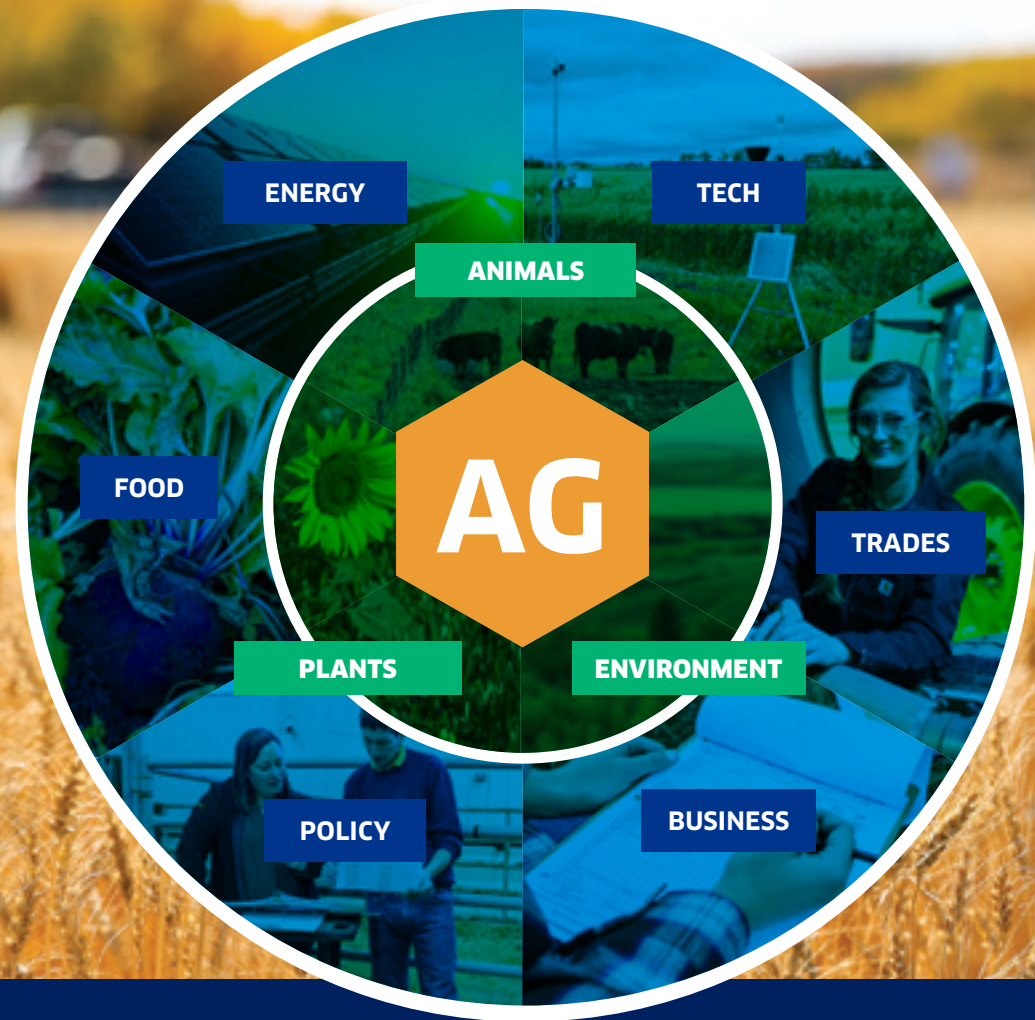
## WHAT DOES "AGRICULTURE" MEAN?

Agriculture is more than farming and ranching – it is a dynamic and interconnected system that sustains communities, fuels innovation and shapes the future of food, land and resource management.

It spans diverse fields, including soil science, animal health, food production, environmental sustainability, agribusiness, technology, trades and communications.

Whether working in a lab, on a farm or ranch, in a processing facility or in a boardroom, agriculture connects people and industries across the entire development cycle.

At Olds College, we embrace and celebrate this diversity, ensuring every aspect of agriculture is recognized, empowered and positioned to drive a more sustainable future.



## OUR PURPOSE

Olds College exists to educate and train learners to become the future of agriculture and technology. Our commitment is to provide transformative, career-centred learning through relevant, experiential education, strong research and industry integration, and academic excellence.



## SETTING THE COURSE

### Message from the Vice President, Academic

It is an honour to serve Olds College in the role of Vice President, Academic and I am extremely proud to present this revised Academic Plan. Led by the Academic Leadership Team, this plan was developed to align with Olds College's *2025-28 Strategic Plan: Deep Roots, Bold Futures*. Olds College has served the academic needs of our communities and industries since 1913. Over the years, we have responded to tremendous change in industry and our learning environments have continuously evolved to meet these changes and the unique needs of our learners.

As we look forward, we recognize the landscape of post-secondary is evolving at an unprecedented pace. New technologies, a growing population and increased global demand and access, coupled with the rapidly changing needs of our labour markets, are all contributors. With a focus on high performance and exceptional quality, this Academic Plan highlights Olds College's commitment to ensuring our learning environments, education and training opportunities remain relevant and responsive to the students and industries we serve.

Dalin Bullock, Vice President, Academic

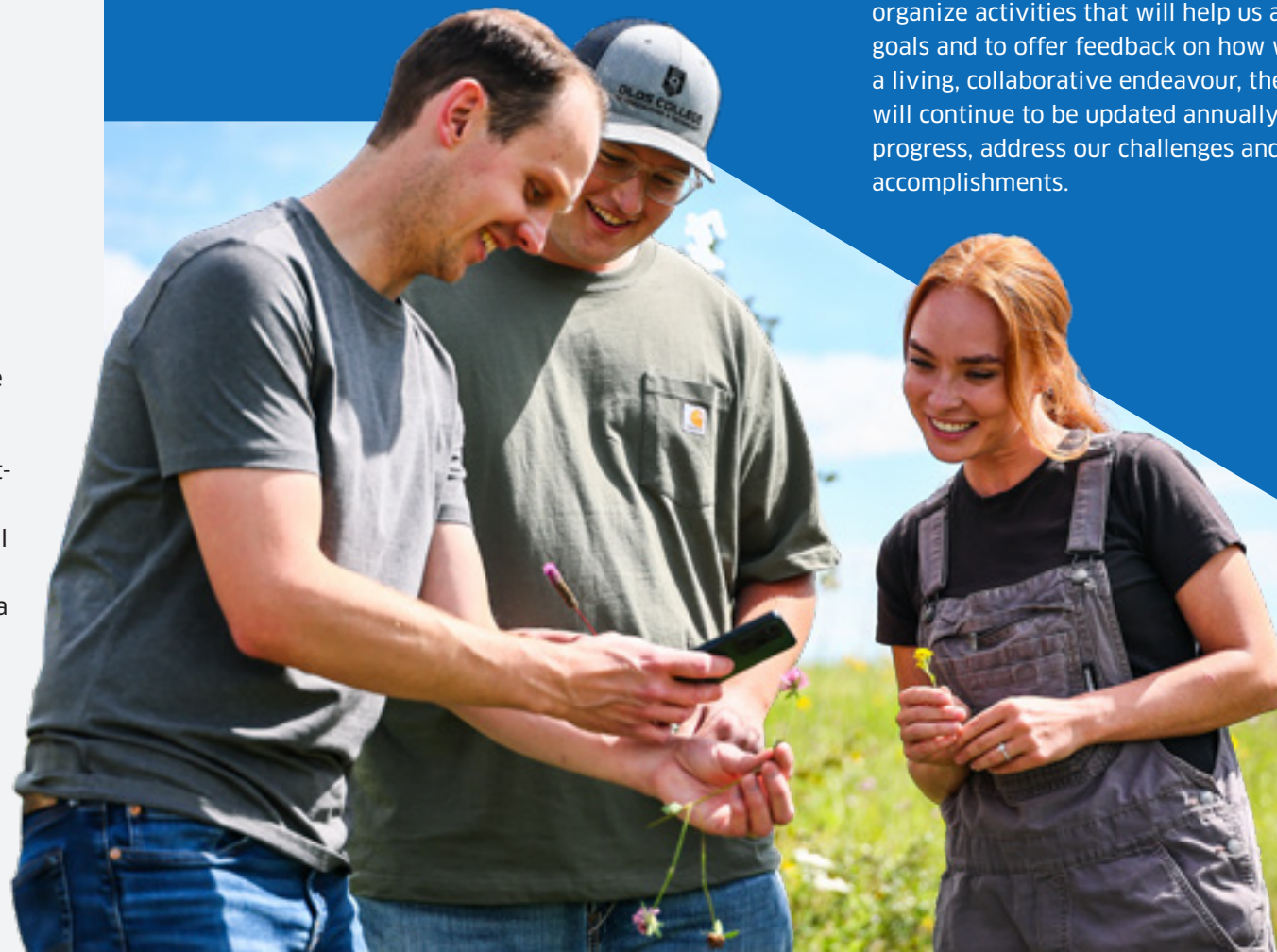
## OUR PROCESS

The Olds College Academic Plan is a dynamic framework for ideas and action that will be reviewed, adjusted and reaffirmed annually. Developed during the 2021-22 academic year, and subsequently refreshed in 2025, the Academic Plan Advisory Group reviewed the Olds College Growing 2025 Strategic Plan, the Olds College Strategic Enrolment Management Plan, Olds College Board of Governors Ends Statements, the 2020 Alberta Skills for Jobs Task Force report, the Olds College Work-Integrated Learning Framework and Alberta 2030. Additionally, the Olds College Academic Plan will help meet the goals outlined in Alberta's Recovery Plan (2020) and Alberta's Fiscal Plan - Protecting Lives and Livelihoods (2021).

The Academic Plan Advisory Group engaged with the Olds College campus community through multiple engagement sessions to ensure the plan represents the interests of all students, faculty and staff.

With a focus on high quality teaching and learning, the Academic Plan reflects our commitment to the academic excellence required to foster a highly skilled and educated workforce. Olds College provides a supportive, accessible environment in which students are able to learn and apply highly relevant knowledge and skills. Experiential learning is a hallmark of Olds College programming and is supported through the Olds College Work-Integrated Learning Framework. The alignment of the Academic Plan with the Olds College 2025 Strategic Plan will ensure success in meeting the organization's academic goals, while also laying a foundation for the next strategic plan.

This Academic Plan weaves together existing work at the College while ensuring new ideas and goals continue to move the institution toward the 2025-28 Strategic Plan: *Deep Roots, Bold Futures*. Its ultimate success will be based on an ongoing, thoughtful, collaborative and engaging process for the entire Olds College community. There will be many opportunities to further shape these priorities, to suggest and organize activities that will help us advance our goals and to offer feedback on how we are doing. As a living, collaborative endeavour, the Academic Plan will continue to be updated annually to monitor our progress, address our challenges and celebrate our accomplishments.



# CONTEXT SETTING

Founded in 1913, Olds College has been offering high quality, hands-on education for over a century. Through our core programming and continuing education, including online and blended programming, we provide accessible educational opportunities within Alberta and beyond. We are passionate about the agriculture industry. Through our applied research and integrated learning, we are proud to be Canada's Smart Agriculture College, specializing in agriculture, agrifood, horticulture, land and environmental stewardship, and related programming. We work closely with industry to advance and adapt our programming to ensure our graduates have the skills to succeed.

Olds College organizes its programs into three academic schools: the School of Life Science & Business, the School of Trades & Skills and the Werklund School of Agriculture Technology. In addition to the academic schools, Olds College serves training needs through its Industry Training & Continuing Education department.

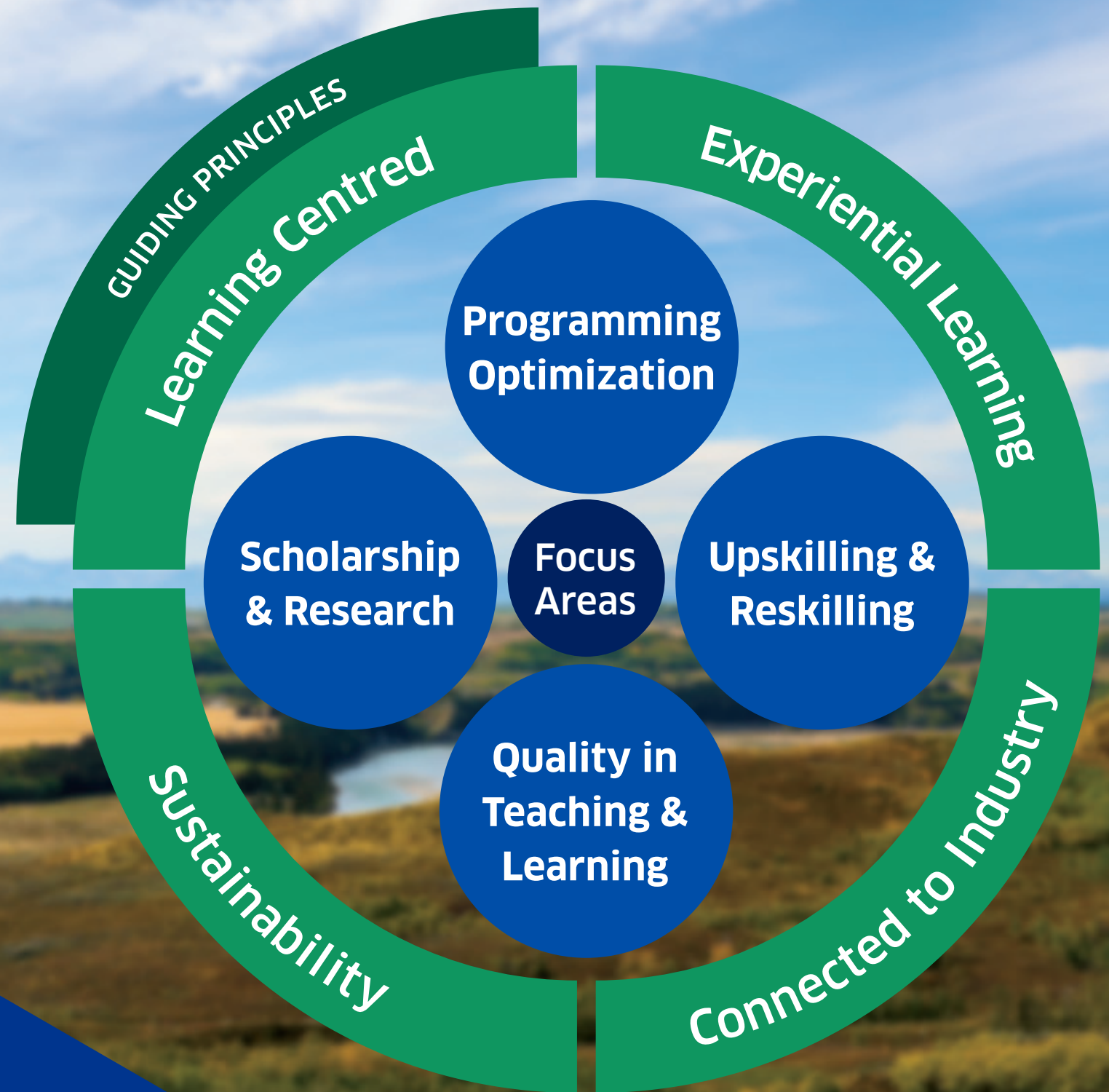
The Office of Research Services coordinates the administration of applied research activities and the integration of research within academics.

Olds College programs require learners to acquire and demonstrate competencies defined and updated through collaboration with representative industry partners and advisory groups. The quality of Olds College programs is continuously improved through a policy-based cyclical review process that seeks input from learners, graduates, employers, industry advisors, faculty and staff.



## OVERVIEW

# At A Glance



## OVERVIEW

# Guiding Principles

## Learning-Centred

We will support all students with leading-edge knowledge, skills and experience to be successful. Our actions will ensure an accessible and inclusive experience to foster student success. As a learning community, we prioritize a culture of belonging and develop personal connections between students, faculty and staff.

## Experiential Learning

We intentionally engage all learners across all programming and honour diverse ways of knowing and learning. We develop competence by providing opportunities to practice tangible skills that will apply in industry and future careers.

## Connected to Industry

We share knowledge, emerging practices and technology through reciprocal industry and educational partnerships while intentionally developing career pathways that expand access and opportunity, and support our global community.

## Sustainability

We cultivate a sustainable academic environment through thoughtful resource management and the continuous enhancement of our program offerings to meet evolving student and community needs.



## OVERVIEW

# Focus Areas

With the foundation of the College's identity, vision and mission, and the academic guiding principles, we will prioritize the following four focus areas during the next three years.

**THE FOUR FOCUS AREAS WILL GUIDE ACADEMIC DIRECTION AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION, AND WILL INFLUENCE THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN.**

### 1 Programming Optimization

### 2 Upskilling & Reskilling

### 3 Quality in Teaching & Learning

### 4 Scholarship & Research

Each focus area has specific goals, and we will develop and implement comprehensive action plans for each goal. The action plans will be developed by the academic leadership team and build upon the work already being done in each focus area.

As part of the Quality in Teaching & Learning focus area, a framework is being developed to foster excellence by identifying best practices as they relate to the unique learning environments at Olds College. This will be developed with faculty and other stakeholders and integrated into existing curricular processes.



Ongoing collaborations will keep our plan dynamic, encourage innovation, and enable further collaboration between academic disciplines and support areas.

The academic plan will be evaluated and updated each year to monitor our progress and celebrate our accomplishments. The engagement and dialogue that helped form this academic plan must continue as the plan is implemented.

**FOCUS AREA 1**

## Programming Optimization

This is a continuous and strategic process of aligning academic programming to meet the evolving needs of students and industry. It includes opportunities for career-centred experiences, learner pathways and institutional sustainability together with addressing labour market needs and supporting a positive student, faculty and staff environment.

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|--|---|
| <p><b>GOAL #1</b></p> <p>Establish a sustainable programming portfolio aligned with student demand and industry need to prepare graduates for success.</p>   | <p><b>GOAL #2</b></p> <p>Optimize student pathways by creating an accessible programming structure to support diverse student populations in achieving their learning and career goals.</p> |
| <p><b>GOAL #3</b></p> <p>Develop a partner engagement strategy in collaboration with the the College's external relations support areas in Advancement to better leverage industry advisory committees and industry training partners.</p> | <p><b>GOAL #4</b></p> <p>Optimize existing programming and curriculum coordination processes to enhance efficiency.</p>   |

**FOCUS AREA 2**

## Upskilling & Reskilling

Supported through strong collaboration with industry, we will meet the continuous learning goals of individual learners and partners through flexible, responsive and accessible learning opportunities.

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| <p><b>GOAL #1</b></p> <p>Position Olds College as a leader for training and capacity building through strong industry connections, community partnerships and international reach.</p> | <p><b>GOAL #2</b></p> <p>Offer accessible, diverse, and in-demand upskilling and reskilling opportunities with a strong focus on workforce development, delivering flexible, high-quality courses and programs that meet industry needs.</p> |
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**FOCUS AREA 3**

## Quality Teaching & Learning

High quality teaching and learning is the core of our work. The academic division works collaboratively with students and in partnership with industry to create exceptional learning experiences through a culture of continuous improvement. We leverage effective pedagogical approaches and extensive student services to meet the needs of all learners and foster student success.

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| <p><b>GOAL #1</b></p> <p>Develop and implement the Quality Teaching and Learning Framework to foster excellence in teaching and curriculum design.</p> | <p><b>GOAL #2</b></p> <p>Support the continual development of the instructional team throughout all stages of their careers.</p> | <p><b>GOAL #3</b></p> <p>In collaboration with the student experience support areas, develop a plan to optimize support to ensure all students have the resources they need for academic and career success.</p> |
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**FOCUS AREA 4**

## Scholarship & Research

Olds College supports the creation and dissemination of knowledge by fostering scholarly activities in an environment of open inquiry, academic freedom, creativity and innovation. We leverage critical engagement with information and complex problem-solving.

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|--|---|
| <p><b>GOAL #1</b></p> <p>The Office of Research Services and the academic division will implement a scholarship and research plan to purposefully connect the research activities in the Olds College Centre for Innovation (OCCI) with academic programs, faculty and students.</p> | <p><b>GOAL #2</b></p> <p>Continue to build capacity for faculty, staff and students to initiate and participate in research activities.</p> |
|--|---|

# This Academic Plan provides the broad focus areas and goals for the academic division at Olds College for the next three years.

Every member of the Olds College academic community will find opportunities for growth in this plan. Through ongoing engagement with the campus community, this living document will also help to provide direction for the next strategic plan.





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Olds College  
4500 - 50th Street  
Olds, Alberta, Canada  
T4H 1R6

[oldscollege.ca](http://oldscollege.ca)  
403.556.8281  
[info@oldscollege.ca](mailto:info@oldscollege.ca)