

2021 Thompson Rivers University Annual Report

Financial Dashboard

Will be available [March 2022](#)

Section 1: Institutional information

Name of Institution: [Thompson Rivers University](#)

Section 2: Higher Education Act Eligibility

Does your institution use its accreditation or pre-accreditation (candidacy) with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities to establish eligibility to participate in Higher Education Act (HEA) programs, including Title IV funding?

- Yes
 No

Section 3: Articles of Incorporation

Have changes been made in your institution's Articles of Incorporation and/or Bylaws since the 2020 Annual Report was filed?

- Yes
 No

Section 4: Institutional Finances

Educational and General Expenditures plus Auxiliaries

Please provide *E&G plus Auxiliaries* amount for FY 2020.

\$ [211,856,000](#)

E&G plus Auxiliaries: Total educational and general expenditures (E&G) including auxiliaries and mandatory transfers (exclusive of medical school and hospital budgets, and capital construction expenditures) for the previous academic year. [NWCCU Definition](#)

Finance Report

For U.S. institutions, please upload a complete copy of the most recent **Audited Financials**. For Canadian institutions, please upload a copy of the **Consolidated Financial Reports** for 2020.

[See Appendix A](#)

Additional Financial Information

Do your Institution's uploaded financial documents include a hospital?

- Yes
 No

Contracts for Education-Related Services

Does your institution have one or more contracts with outside companies for education-related services such as: (1) *Online Program Management* to develop online education, or (2) *Study Abroad* to support students while overseas? [Policy](#)

- Yes
 No

Section 5: Student Rates

Cohort Default Rate

Please upload your institution's Cohort Default Rate history list from the USDE's National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) website. **Please Note:**

- This requires the use of your institution's FSA ID to access this data.
- Canadian and Tribal Institutions are not required to provide this data.

N/A

Section 6: Significant Enrollment Changes

Has your institution experienced overall enrollment *growth* of 50% or more over the last two years?

- Yes
 No

Has your institution experienced overall enrollment *decline* of 20% or more since 2017?

- Yes
 No

Section 7: Institutional Reflection

There are a number of sources of information about your institution:

- IPEDS
- NWCCU Institutional Portal, Institutional Profile, Financial Data
- Information on this form

The information we have is a start at describing your institution's goals, challenges, and accomplishments. Please provide any information that would help us better interpret the information listed above as it applies to your institution. [Optional]

As a publicly funded institution, Thompson Rivers University (TRU) is accountable to the British Columbia (BC) Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, which communicates expectations and priorities for the university. These priorities are outlined in TRU's 2021/22 Mandate Letter (see Appendix B). Public post-secondary institutions in BC are required to uphold annual balanced budgets and meet or exceed their financial targets. TRU's Budget Letter (see Appendix C) identifies its full-time-equivalent targets, which are consistently met or exceeded.

TRU was established for the purposes of serving the educational and training needs of the region, which includes the traditional lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (Kamloops campus) and the T'exelc (Williams Lake campus) within Secwépemc'ulucw, the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc. The region TRU serves also extends into the territories of the St'át'imc, Nlaka'pamux, Nuxalk, Tsilhqot'in, Dakelh, and Syilx peoples. TRU honours its First House, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, and respects its Second House, T'exelc, and commits to honouring truth, reconciliation, and rights of Indigenous peoples. Sadly, this commitment was further underscored as we found ourselves with so many others mourning with our First House, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc. In May 2021, the discovery of the remains of 215 children whose lives were lost at the Kamloops Indian Residential School cast a fresh light on Canada's treatment of Indigenous peoples. It also cast a fresh light on why we need to continue with the important work of truth and reconciliation. TRU's commitment to this important work is strengthened through a partnership agreement between TRU and Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (see Appendix D).

The university also serves BC's open learning needs and has a long-standing commitment to keep post-secondary education accessible to those who seek it, including remote, rural, and Indigenous learners. As a result, TRU has a diverse student demographic: over 10% of students are Indigenous from a variety of nations, 38% join us from more than 100 countries around the globe, and 32% are mature learners (over 25 years of age). Our students' and communities' needs are as diverse as the comprehensive programming we offer.

Section 8: Progress on Outstanding Recommendations

Please provide a brief statement on progress on each outstanding Recommendation that is being addressed by your institution.

On July 3, 2019, TRU received a formal notification and official record of action taken by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) at its meeting on June 19 – 21, 2019 concerning the Spring 2019 Interim Candidacy Review Evaluation of TRU. The letter detailed four recommendations: one recommendation *out of compliance* and three recommendations *substantially in compliance but in need of improvement*. The following paragraphs detail TRU's progress on each outstanding recommendation.

Recommendations Out of Compliance

Recommendation 2: Finalize the development of a general education program, including the approval of its proposed general education model, of courses for the model, and of an assessment plan for the model.

TRU's general education model was unanimously approved by Senate on April 29, 2019. A Notice of Motion was served at the same Senate meeting regarding revisions to policy *ED 16-0 Types of Undergraduate and Graduate Credentials* to incorporate the general education model and eight Institutional Learning Outcomes. This policy was unanimously approved at the May 27, 2019 meeting of Senate.

In 2020, the General Education Taskforce, following broad consultation with Faculties and Schools, developed criteria and an approval process for determining general education courses. The criteria were approved by Senate on June 8, 2020. The approval process for designating general education courses was approved by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee on May 14, 2020. In May and June 2020, over 2400 courses were vetted for alignment with the criteria for general education and approximately 300 courses were approved.

In Fall 2020, TRU submitted an Ad Hoc Report on Recommendation 2 to the NWCCU. On February 12, 2021, TRU received notification that the NWCCU, at its meeting on January 13 - 15, 2021, reviewed the Ad Hoc Report and determined that the status of Recommendation 2 had been fulfilled.

Beginning in Fall 2021, all students entering their first year of a baccalaureate degree program at TRU will be entering programs with the general education requirements, including Institutional Learning Outcomes, capstone, and high-impact practice courses, seamlessly embedded throughout their program. As part of implementation of the general education requirements, all baccalaureate degree programs reviewed their program requirements and updated program curriculum maps to align with the general education requirements.

To ensure that TRU's general education model and Institutional Learning Outcomes align with the vision, values, and goals of the university and that the requirements continue to meet the evolving needs of students, the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee revised its terms of reference to include the mandate to "Review TRU's general education model and Institutional Learning Outcomes at least once every seven years and advise Senate on actions resulting from the review (*Initial Review Date: Fall 2028*)". In addition, an assessment plan for the model, including student achievement of the eight Institutional Learning Outcomes, is under development. Please see the discussion under Recommendation 3 for more details.

Recommendations Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement

Recommendation 1: Continue improvement of indicators and thresholds to better align assessment of those parameters with Core Themes and the mission of TRU.

TRU has made significant progress towards aligning indicators and thresholds with the mission of the institution. In Spring 2020, TRU's governing bodies approved a Vision Statement that includes a vision, values, and strategic change goals. During the 2020/21 reporting cycle, TRU's four standing committees of Senate responsible for mission fulfilment, planning and evaluation reflected upon the mission fulfilment outcomes and indicators. The committees applied a holistic lens to ensure that the indicators align with TRU's 10-year vision, with a focus on equity, closure of achievement gaps, and student success.

From now until February 2022, TRU will develop an Integrated Strategic Plan (ISP), building on the spirit of interconnectedness (Kw'seltknéws) as articulated in our vision statement. Led by the Provost and Vice-President Academic and Research, the ISP process involves a project team, steering committee, and working groups that will meet over the next several months. The process will be guided by research-informed practices, advice from the Society for College and University Planning, and will require the participation of TRU's stakeholders for our vision statement to take root.

Recommendation 3: Establish learning outcomes for all courses and programs, and establish a regular process whereby program faculty collect, reflect on and act as appropriate on meaningful data regarding student learning, including general education.

TRU's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and the Teaching and Learning Committee of Senate have been tasked with identifying an assessment plan for TRU's institutional and program learning outcomes. TRU is engaging in a variety of activities that enhance the capability of its faculty and staff to successfully develop and implement a general education assessment plan. CELT collaborates with faculties and schools across the university to support the development of engaging pedagogies through innovative professional development, personalized consulting, and supportive educational leadership.

CELT programs are designed to facilitate a teaching culture that improves student learning, successful transitions and learner retention. Below are examples of such programs:

- One-on-one consultations and/or presentations to faculty councils and department meetings to discuss program learning outcomes and facilitate curriculum mapping.
- A three-part learning outcomes and mapping series exploring the benefits of TRU's general education model, aligning institutional and program learning outcomes, and curriculum mapping.

- An eight-week assessment and evaluation course, totalling 24 hours, where faculty members examine the ethical, practical, and research foundations for the assessment and evaluation of student tasks for learning in courses and educational programs.
- A five-day course (re)design institute workshop for faculty members to map course concepts, compose learning outcomes, plan instruction, and select activities and assessment strategies for their students using the process outlined in *Rethinking Teaching in Higher Education* by Saroyan and Amundsen (2004).

On June 7, 2019 the Teaching and Learning Committee of Senate approved the establishment of a Learning Outcomes and Assessment Taskforce (LOATF) with the purpose of creating a principles and procedures document along with associated resources that will establish an approach to the development, monitoring, and regular review of program and course learning outcomes and assessment. Note, while LOATF continued to meet regularly in 2020 and 2021, its efforts were impeded by the global pandemic as attention was diverted to pivoting to remote delivery, learning new technologies, adapting pedagogies, and supporting students where they were at.

Six guiding principles emerged from a collaborative review and synthesis of external and internal sources between Fall 2019 and Winter 2021:

- Growth and learning oriented
- Purposeful and holistic design
- Equitable and learner centred
- Rigorous, ongoing cyclical improvement
- Faculty driven
- Reflexive approach to learning

Foregrounding this review was a strong desire to establish principles that are relevant and meaningful to faculty and students; as such, LOATF will bring forward the draft principles to TRU's nine faculty councils and the TRU Students' Union student caucus for consultation in Fall 2021. The draft principles reflect research-informed practices and foundational TRU policies relating to collegial governance and student success and include consideration of academic freedom and faculty autonomy.

In addition, between January and June 2021, LOATF undertook the Strategic Assessment of Institutional Learning (SAIL) pilot project, the purpose of which was to pilot a model for assessing student achievement of institutional learning outcomes in general education courses. The six draft principles underpinned the research design of the SAIL pilot project, and the project was approved by the Research Ethics Board in order to collect and disseminate the information collected. Faculty members were then invited to be part of a community of practice of co-investigators planning, discussing, and learning about the assessment of institutional learning outcomes. Using faculty-developed institutional rubrics, faculty members collected data to evaluate the extent to which students are achieving the institutional learning outcomes in courses participating in the pilot project.

Findings from the pilot will inform recommendations for a regular process whereby program faculty collect, reflect on, and act as appropriate on meaningful data regarding student learning and the achievement of institutional learning outcomes. Following the consultation period, which will occur in conjunction with the principles and procedures, the

recommendations will go forward to the Teaching and Learning Committee of Senate and Academic Planning and Priorities Committee for approval.

Recommendation 4: Continue to evaluate, update, and finalize internal financial controls.

The financial internal controls review process is an ongoing project and each year Financial Services and Internal Audit review and implement improvements to select processes and internal controls. In 2020, TRU completed reviews of the revenue and student accounts processes for open learning tuition collection as well as the application, award, and payment processes for student awards. These reviews and resulting changes strengthened the internal controls in both areas. Follow-ups are planned for late 2021 to review the effectiveness and adherence to these processes. TRU continues to review our processes and internal controls for all financial processes.