



Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network

STATEMENT OF ADOPTION

for

Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities & Colleges

A Transformative Vision

Health and well-being promoting post-secondary campuses transform the health and sustainability of our current and future societies, strengthen communities and contribute to the well-being of people, places and the planet.

Statement of Adoption

Post-secondary leaders recognize that promoting health and well-being is essential to achieving our full potential in teaching and learning, research, and engagement.

Evidence demonstrates that people who are well are more productive, are more able to engage in deeper learning, are more likely to be retained, and have a stronger sense of community.

By adopting the Okanagan Charter, we commit to sharing in the Vision, implementing the two Calls to Action for Higher Education institutions, and following the Guiding Principles as the means for translating the Charter into action.

We further agree to participate in National and International campus networks to activate the Charter to inform and support each other's efforts.

Okanagan Charter Signatory

Signature from Institutional Leader

Rhonda McEwen

Name

President

Title

Victoria University in the University of Toronto

Institution

October 26, 2023

Date

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VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Victoria University in the University of Toronto

Commitments to the Okanagan Charter – June, 2025

Victoria University and its two colleges – Victoria College (undergraduate) and Emmanuel College (graduate) – commit to cultivating a campus that nurtures the health and well-being of our students, faculty, librarians and staff in a holistic way that includes attention to the mental, physical, social, spiritual and other aspects of their lives.

In adopting the Okanagan Charter, Victoria University commits to **students, staff, faculty and librarians** to:

1. **Weave wellness into the fabric of the university** at the level of programs, services, supports, and physical spaces, and also into all work related to planning, policy, protocol and procedures.
2. **Integrate commitments to a healthy campus into our strategic** plan, recognizing that wellness includes both supports for those experiencing mental and physical illness and proactive and creative work to provide a supportive and inclusive community with a holistic approach to wellness.
3. **Provide annual forums for discussion with each group of community members** to assess, share ideas and collaborate on wellness impediments and successes at the university.
4. **Integrate culturally and spiritually sensitive considerations into space, program and event planning**, recognizing that a healthy campus cannot have a homogeneous community approach.
5. **Support all community members individually and in groups** by providing access to, and information about individually tailored and context-specific supports and services. This includes identifying and responding to, e.g., commuter student needs, neurodiverse members of the community, and identity-based communities (e.g., affinity groups).
6. **Work collaboratively with our partners at the University of Toronto, TST, and with stakeholders in the wider community** to share our experiences and best practices, identify gaps in services and supports and set new priorities regarding health and well-being in higher education.

7. **Provide professional development opportunities** that intentionally advance the commitment to student wellness and benefit staff, faculty, librarians and students alike.
8. **Create inclusive and diverse civil discourse opportunities for staff, faculty, librarians, and students** in which members of the university can have free and open discussion and explore, express, and hear different views on challenging topics.
9. **Develop and sustain signature learning experiences on issues in higher education with mental health as a central theme** (including but not limited to hosting biannual conferences and other collaborative projects).
10. **Offer Identify, Assist, Refer training and supports that expand awareness and fortify inclusive practices** for and between staff, such as mental health first aid training, racial equity training, neurodiversity awareness, and anti-bias training. (*staff, students, librarians, and faculty*)

In adopting the Okanagan Charter, Victoria University commits to **students** to:

11. **Ensure that wellness support is incorporated into all 1:1 staff-student interactions** (including but not limited to co-curricular programs, registrarial advising, residence application and intake, career advising, and transition services)
12. **Cultivate co-curricular academic learning opportunities** (free of grading, assessments, and assignments) that allow students to explore academic issues in a broad sense and without stressors of competition and evaluation.
13. **Provide academic, personal, writing, and learning supports** that recognize the interconnection between wellness and academic progress.
14. **Cultivate staff positions, internships, and duties** that support student wellness and health promotion.
15. **Provide variety in the types of counselling and support available to students** (including, but not limited to: psychological counselling, BIPOC supports, LGBTQ2S+ supports, spiritual counselling, medical services, psychotherapeutic supports, accessibility services, learning strategists, etc.)
16. **Ensure that wellness commitments and supports are integrated by faculty** into the student academic experience for courses provided by Victoria College and Emmanuel College including reference to our commitment to the values of a healthy campus and the Okanagan Charter.

In adopting the Okanagan Charter, Victoria University commits to **staff** to:

17. **Consider wellness in the allocation, modalities, and management of work**, including but not limited to approval of time off, provision of flex-work programs, supportive return-to-work programs, robust accommodation planning, and provision of comprehensive supports for on-boarding new staff.
18. **Foster community between departments and divisions** through training and community events within the university, such as staff-peer learning and interest-based

lessons (gardening, art, dance, etc.), spiritual life gatherings, “Vic Connects” communications, and university-wide holiday and intercultural meal gatherings.

In adopting the Okanagan Charter, Victoria University commits to **faculty and librarians** to:

19. **Provide information packages about personal and teaching supports** within and beyond the university community on an annual basis. (This will be provided at the first meetings of the College Councils for Victoria College and Emmanuel College.)
(librarians and faculty)

With transparency and accountability, Victoria University will display our commitments to the Okanagan Charter on our website and assess and track our implementation of those commitments as outlined above.