

An aerial photograph of a university campus during sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The campus features several large, modern buildings with concrete and glass facades. In the background, there is a dense forest of trees. A large purple rectangular box is overlaid on the top half of the image, containing white text. A small yellow speech bubble icon is in the top left corner.

# CAS Review & Recommendations

[#ThrivingCampus](#)

# BACKGROUND

Over the past year, Student Experience (SE) engaged in a comprehensive review of three of the four units in the ***Academic Support & Engagement (ASE)*** department:

- 1) **Learning Development & Success**,
- 2) **The Writing Support Centre**, and
- 3) **Accessible Education**

This review is part of a recurring 6-year review cycle, instituted by Student Experience in 2019, to promote continuous improvement and excellence in program delivery.

# THE REVIEW PROCESS



**Compile documents.**

**Interview students.**

**Complete CAS self-study guides.**

**Share documents with reviewers.**

**Reviewers meet stakeholders on campus.**

# Meetings with External Reviewers

## Student Experience

- Team leads, Accessible Education, Writing Support Centre, Learning Development & Success
- Student Experience Leadership

## Campus Partners

- Academic Counsellors
- Associate Deans
- Registrar's Office
- Equity & Human Rights
- Legal Council
- SGPS
- Affiliate campus partners
- IPB
- HR
- Libraries
- Residence
- Office of Indigenous Initiatives
- Western International

## Students

- Students registered with Accessible Education
- Student Services fee committee
- Students using Learning Development & Success
- Students using the Writing Support Centre

# THE FINDINGS

**The findings conclude that Western is significantly behind other institutions in its approach to accessibility, and highlight the need to:**

- Develop a comprehensive approach to accessibility and improved support for students with disabilities.
- Identify students with disabilities as an equity-deserving group that is central to the University's EDI strategy.
- Move beyond accommodations for students with disabilities by investing in fully accessible learning and living environments on-campus, for example, orientation and transition programming.

# THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations urge Western to build upon build on existing transactional supports (i.e. accommodations) to adopt a **wholistic student affairs approach**, which is *transformational* in *practice (equitable thriving)*.

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The review recommendations fall into **four major themes**, with implications for each of the units that participated in this review.

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compelling recommendations that span Western's campus and highlight the future directions for ASE Department.



# THE FINDINGS

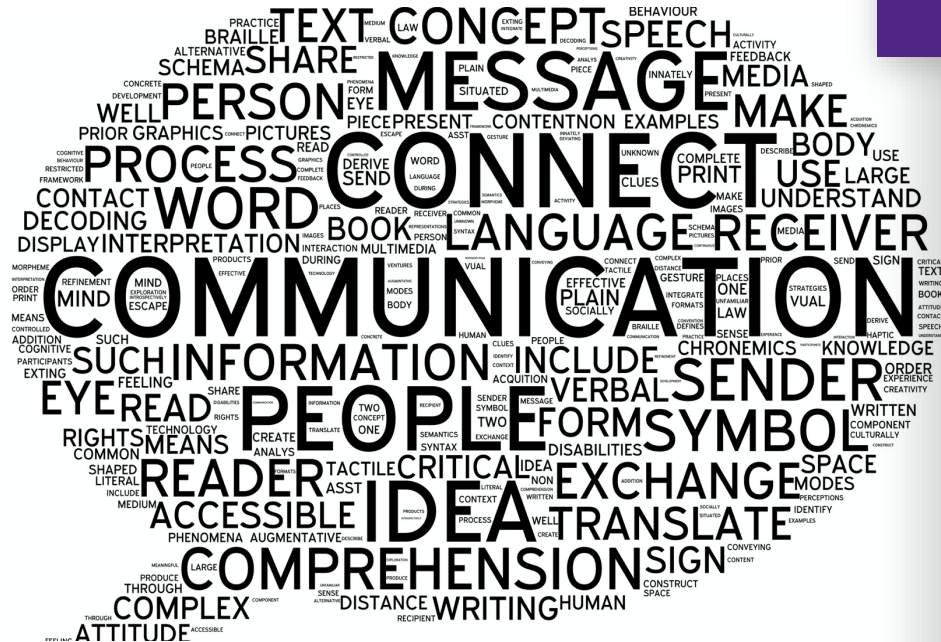
## Theme 1: Intersectional Programming

“Adopt an intersectional lens to enhance and assess the focus, design, delivery and use of campus resources, supports, and co-curricular experiences to inform continuous improvement based on the stated needs of our diverse student body.”

# THE FINDINGS

## Theme 2: Intentional Communication

“Increase communication to students on the supports, resources, and enrichment opportunities available using diverse and accessible channels and ensure messaging is customized to student needs and designed specifically to build trust between SE and the student body.”







## THE FINDINGS

### Theme 3: Campus-wide Partnerships

“Implement a campus-wide strategy that situates SE as partners with academic units in student learning and engagement and the primary interface with student groups on matters pertaining to the broader learning environment.”



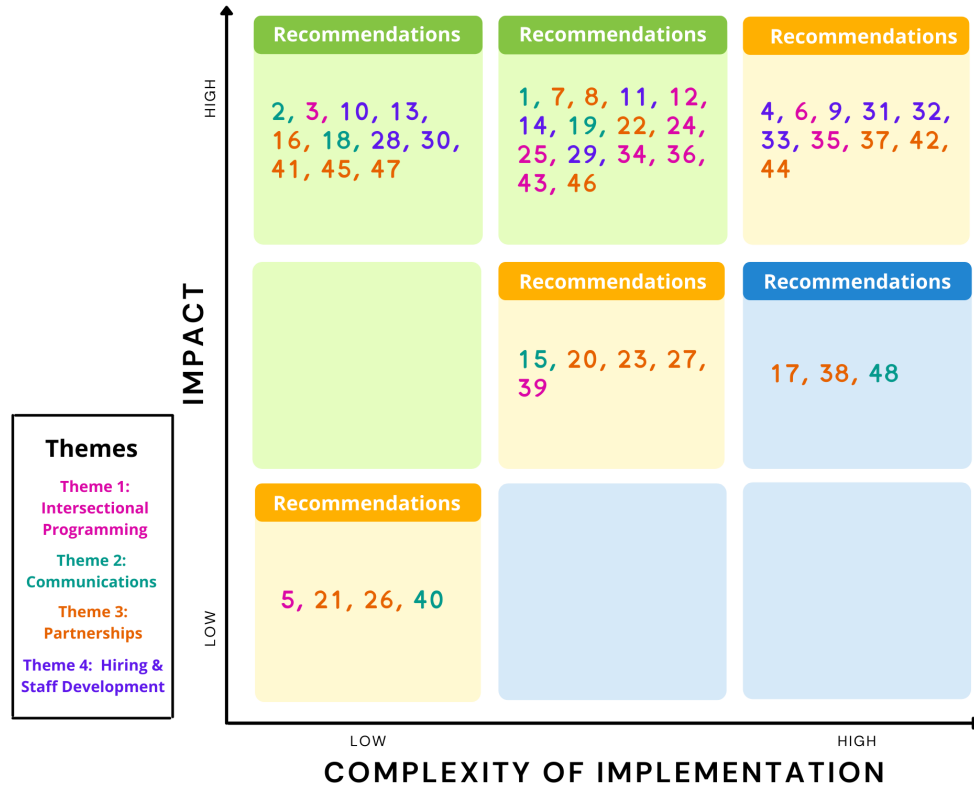
# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## THE FINDINGS

### Theme 4: Hiring & Staff Development

“Ensure comprehensive training and professional development for SE staff to ensure our team works from a place that aligns with principles of EDI, and that also keeps them on the cutting edge of advances in their respective field to inform how they support students.”

# IMPACT/IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX



# IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

## Three initiatives are currently underway:

- Dr. Kim Miller, Director of Academic Support & Engagement, will lead the establishment of a Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee to help inform the implementation of the recommendations.
- AVP-SE Office will work with the Director, Academic Support & Engagement to introduce comprehensive training and professional development for all staff in Student Experience.
- Expansion of Western EDI framework to recognize students with disabilities as an equity-deserving group.

# PROPOSED INVESTMENTS

Western needs to integrate government grants and University operating funds to meet our legal obligations for accommodations and redirect ancillary fees to wholistic programming.

## Short-term needs:

- Temporary role to develop programming for students with disabilities (built into the SE 2021-22 budget plan).
- Temporary role to provide career support for students with disabilities.
- Establish a budget allocation to support the forthcoming work of the implementation committee.



*All students are able to fully participate and engage in all aspects of campus life*