

INTERCULTURAL SUPPORT STRATEGY

2023 – 2028



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VISION AND MISSION

The Intercultural Support Strategy (ISS) is designed to ensure an equitable campus experience and inclusive learning environment for the growing international and newcomer student populations at SAIT. The ISS takes a multi-pronged approach to empower students, faculty, staff and campus infrastructure to collectively grow intercultural understanding and collaboratively form a global campus that is mutually beneficial for everyone.

Our vision is to foster a vibrant and inclusive campus community at SAIT, where intercultural competence is embraced and celebrated. We recognize the increasing likelihood of interacting with individuals from diverse cultures and countries, each shaped by unique values, beliefs, and experiences. Embracing intercultural competence is fundamental to fostering global citizenship, education for sustainable development, and global employability, ultimately preparing SAIT graduates to engage and thrive in a rapidly changing global landscape. We strive to create an environment that supports the success of international and newcomer students, enabling them to realize their full potential as students and future professionals.

Our mission is to strengthen the SAIT community's ability and commitment to achieving international and newcomer student success while delivering an enriched and cohesive intercultural student experience. We are committed to advancing SAIT's ongoing efforts in cultivating a culturally inclusive environment that prioritizes the needs of international and newcomer students. Through the implementation of the Intercultural Support Strategy (2023 – 2028), we aim to provide comprehensive institutional support to students, instructors, and academic chairs.

TERMINOLOGY

The language of equity, diversity and inclusion is constantly evolving and SAIT does its best to evolve with it. Terminology used in our strategy is intended with respect. Find more EDI-related terminology on our EDI Training and Education page on [sait.ca](https://www.sait.ca)

CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

A space based on mutual respect, effective relationships, clear communication, explicit understanding of expectations, and critical self-reflection wherein people of all cultural orientations can freely express who they are, their own opinions and points of view, fully participate in teaching, learning, work, and social activities, and feel safe from abuse, harassment, or unfair criticism. (i)

EQUITY-FOCUSED TEACHING

A tool which ensures equity-deserving student groups have equal access to learning, feel valued and supported in their learning, experience parity in achieving positive course outcomes and share responsibility for the equitable engagement and treatment of all in the learning community. It recognizes that systemic inequities shape all students' individual and group-based experiences of social identity and produce vastly different relationships of power in and outside of the classroom, which impact students' learning and success. (ii)

INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A space wherein instructors practice equity-focused teaching and in which students feel comfortable being their authentic selves openly and their unique contributions are valued.

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

Having adequate relevant knowledge about particular cultures, as well as general knowledge about the sorts of issues arising when members of different cultures interact, holding receptive attitudes that encourage establishing and maintaining contact with diverse others, as well as having the skills required to draw upon both knowledge and attitudes when interacting with others from different cultures. (iii)



EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- 1 Pathways to personal, academic and employment success for international and newcomer students
- 2 Increased intercultural understanding between students, faculty and staff inside and outside of the classroom
- 3 A global campus environment that is reflective of and responsive to the cultural diversity and intercultural needs of the SAIT community
- 4 Learning experiences reflect the diversity of the SAIT community



1 FOCUS AREA: STUDENTS

OBJECTIVE

International and newcomer students are set up for success inside and outside the classroom.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Pathways to personal, academic and employment success for international and newcomer students.

PRIORITY	ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE
1	1.1 Academic Integrity and Classroom Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise and revamp ETHI 110, CANADA 101 and PREP 100 Expand academic misconduct and integrity resources on sait.ca Pilot workshops on the cultural context of plagiarism 	International Centre
1	1.2 Student Tutor Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create student tutor positions and provide training to help them liaise with international and newcomer students. 	Student Services
1	1.3 Cultural Engagement Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a joint committee to plan, guide and promote existing and new cultural celebrations to engage students, faculty and staff on campus. 	Various
2	1.4 Employment Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer sessions on the basics the Canadian resume, recruitment and hiring process. (Part of IC Outbound Transitions Program) Offer sessions on rights and responsibilities of the Canadian worker Offer student-employer networking events and industry mentorship program Incorporate NOC codes into classroom presentations to enhance students' understanding of job titles and skill sets in chosen fields 	Career Advancement Services
2	1.5 Legal and Immigration Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and promote list of appropriate off campus legal and immigration services. 	International Centre
3	1.6 Orientation Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance pre-arrival information webpage on sait.ca and introduce iCent Incorporate online international module into SAIT Start Bring community services to Welcome Fair Offer walking tour of campus amenities Provide a room for family members during orientation 	International Centre
3	1.7 Cultural Student Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the formation of new student clubs for various ethnic groups to find mutual support Top up club budgets to encourage further activity and engagement. 	SAITSA
3	1.8 Peer Mentorship Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and operationalize a peer mentorship program that pairs up international students with SAIT domestic and veteran international students. 	International Centre
3	1.9 Sexual Violence Prevention Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Sexual Violence Prevention and Consent Education workshop to international and newcomer students. 	Safety and Community Services

FOCUS AREA: FACULTY

OBJECTIVE

Instructors feel more confident to foster inclusive learning environments based on intercultural understanding.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Increased intercultural understanding between students, faculty and staff inside and outside of the classroom.

PRIORITY	ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE
1	2.1 Inclusive Teaching Tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a faculty self-reflection tool for assessing classroom learning experience for diversity and inclusion. 	CADI
1	2.2 Culturally Responsive Classroom Faculty Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phase 1: Meet the urgent needs of faculty by providing asynchronous and/or synchronous learning experiences focused on culturally responsive teaching, best practices in group work, and responding to student language proficiency challenges. ▪ Phase 2: Provide long-term support to increase faculty proficiency with inclusive classrooms including EAL and international students. 	CADI
1	2.3 Hire Educational Developer for CADI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hire an additional Educational Developer on a 2-year temporary contract who specializes in EDI to support faculty with integrating EDI principles into their pedagogy. The ideal candidate will bring international and/or newcomer experience to the role. 	CADI
1	2.4 Intercultural Competence Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer PERS 148, PERS 149 and onboarding module to establish intercultural knowledge foundation. 	EDI
2	2.5 Intercultural Resource Repository Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a repository to further intercultural competencies and create a supportive environment/practice. 	EDI/IC

3 FOCUS AREA: STAFF

OBJECTIVE

Employees demonstrate the practices, attitudes and behaviours necessary to support intercultural student success.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Increased intercultural understanding between students, faculty and staff inside and outside of the classroom.

PRIORITY	ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE
1	3.1 Intercultural Competence Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer PERS 148, PERS 149 and onboarding module to establish intercultural knowledge foundation. 	EDI
2	3.2 Multilingual Employee Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create, promote, and track use of a list of multilingual employees who are available to assist international students and other departments with communications support. 	International Centre
2	3.3 Culturally Responsive Practice for Counsellors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure counselors have the knowledge and skill set to work for international and newcomer students. 	Student Development and Counselling

FOCUS AREA:

INFRASTRUCTURE

OBJECTIVE

SAIT infrastructure and practices (physical, digital, systems, policies) support intercultural student success efforts.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

A global campus environment that is reflective of and responsive to the cultural diversity and intercultural needs of the SAIT community.

PRIORITY	ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE
1	4.1 Promotional Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch a campaign to raise awareness of and encourage buy-in for the changing campus demographics and the intercultural support available to students, faculty and staff on campus. 	Communications EDI/IC
1	4.2 Increase English Language Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create 0.5 FTE position on a 2-year temporary contract in Student Services as a SAFA instructor to support students who are struggling with English in the classroom. 	English Language Foundations Student Services
1	4.3 Revise Policy/ Procedure using EDI lens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply the Equity Framework to academic policy and procedure. Explore training options for review committee members. 	EDI
1	4.4 Revise Employment Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine employment process pipeline to ensure that EDI is supported, and bias is minimized. Increase the diversity representation of SAIT Employees to reflect the diversity on campus. 	Employee Services
2	4.5 Community Building and Student Hangout Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options for space to host in-person intercultural activities on campus. 	Facilities Management
3	4.6 Campus Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make campus signage more accessible (e.g., pictographs). 	Facilities Management

FOCUS AREA:

COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

OBJECTIVE

Promote EDI principles in all learning experiences from program concept to delivery.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Learning experiences reflect the diversity of the SAIT community.

PRIORITY	ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE
1	5.1 Professional Development Opportunities for CAEI/CADI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide time for professional development to curate EDI resources (podcasts, videos, articles, books), participate in courses and workshops and knowledge sharing activities within and across CAEI and CADI.	CAEI CADI
1	5.2 Hire Additional Instructional Designer Position for CAEI/CADI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hire an additional Instructional Designer on a 2-year temporary contract who specializes in EDI to more efficiently integrate and build capacity for intercultural competency in all learning experiences from concept to delivery.	CAEI CADI

REFERENCES

TERMINOLOGY

- Culturally Inclusive Environment
- Equity-focused Teaching
- Inclusive Learning Environment
- Intercultural Competence

i *Culturally Inclusive Environment (2021). The University of Sunshine Coast Australia.* www.usc.edu.au/about/work-at-unisc/staff/cultural-diversity/cultural-diversity-and-inclusive-practice-toolkit/culturally-inclusive-environment

ii *Equity-focused Teaching (2021). University of Michigan.* www.crlt.umich.edu/equity-focused-teaching

iii *Intercultural Competences Conceptual and Operational Framework (2013). United Nations.* www.unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000219768

How are you going to embrace our global campus? Let us know at intercultural@sait.ca.

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