2021

Institutional Learning Outcome Development for Academic Planning

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Walden University
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Abstract

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by

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MPA, Carleton University, 2009

BPAPM, Carleton University, 2005

Professional Administrative Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Public Administration

Walden University

November 2021

Abstract

This professional administrative study created Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for a publicly funded postsecondary institution located in the southern part of Ontario, Canada. The university was created in the early 2000s and was the first publicly funded university in Ontario to open in over 40 years. The university shares a campus location with a college and was created with a special mission to provide career-oriented university programs and to provide opportunities for college graduates to complete a university degree. The university has been on a trajectory of immense growth. The focus to this point has been building from the ground up. As a result, the university has just begun to think about ways to better integrate strategic planning as the university enters the next phase in its development. This study was conducted with a focus on post-new public management using a public value approach. It examined and defined the strategic focus of the university in the next phase of development through the creation of ILOs. The ILOs were developed through qualitative interviews conducted with staff and faculty. To develop the ILOs, the participants were asked their opinions on the skills, values, and attributes they would like the institution to be known for as they prepare graduates for success in today's world and the world of tomorrow. The data were analyzed using content analysis. This resulted in the creation of 4 ILOs delivered to the client organization in a governance report. The study's findings may be used by the university administration to drive positive social change for students and the community by adopting the ILOs.

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Dedication

To my family, Dennis, Leonardo, and Andre, for your unwavering support and love.

Acknowledgments

There are so many people I would like to thank for their assistance and support in making this journey to my doctorate possible. I am eternally grateful for those who have given so much of their time to complete this project. To those faculty and staff who agreed to provide their input as participants: thank you. I learned so much from you. You are truly an inspirational group that cares deeply for the students you interact with. To Dr. Campbell, who stepped in as the P.I. for this project. I cannot thank you enough. This would have not been possible without you. To my committee, members Dr. DiBari and Dr. Cole. The feedback you provided me throughout this process to strengthen my study has helped me to be a better researcher. I have learned so much. To Dr. Regier, who agreed to take on the role of chair for my study. I sincerely appreciate your counsel and how much you give to ensure that students succeed in this program. You are truly an inspiration, and I could have not asked for anyone better to assist me through this project. Thank you hardly seems enough. To Dr. Shah, who is always my go to on all things learning outcome related. Thank you for being a sounding board throughout this journey. To the students I have had the pleasure to meet in this program, thank you for everything I have learned from you. In particular, I would like to recognize the support of the cohort of students working with Dr. Regier as their chair. To my family, my parents, siblings, in-laws, nieces, and nephews, thank you for your love and support. It means the world to me to have such wonderful people around me.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: Introduction to the Problem

Introduction

Background of Client Organization

The client organization for this professional administrative study (PAS) is a publicly funded post-secondary institution located in the Southern Ontario region of Ontario, Canada. The university was created in the early 2000s with the creation of an act passed by the Ontario legislature. This act created the first new publicly funded university in Ontario in over 40 years. The University shares a campus location with a college in Ontario, and initially the two institutions shared the same president. The university's focus was to provide career-oriented university programs and opportunities for college graduates to complete a university degree. The university was thus closely intertwined with the college. More than 10 years later, the university has carved out its own identity and now offers over 80 programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and student enrolment has increased to over ten thousand students.

Section 1 introduces the overall study. It will outline the background of the problem, state the problem that is the focus of the study, and describe the need to address this problem for the organization. The section will then discuss the gap in knowledge that the study will address, including the overall question the study will answer. It concludes with a brief overview of the nature of the study and the contribution this study makes for stakeholders, the organization, and the field of public administration more broadly.

Background of the Problem

The university was created in a time of increasing postsecondary enrolment in Ontario. While there is always some competition among postsecondary institutions to

attract students to their campuses, when the university was created, enrollment in institutions across the province was high enough that the creation of the university had no discernable effect on enrolment numbers at other Ontario universities. Today the landscape is vastly different as the pool of potential students in Ontario is shrinking and government funding for universities is being cut. An announcement by the provincial government in 2019 to cut tuition at Ontario universities by 10% across the board resulted in many postsecondary institutions examining how they will make up the financial shortfall (Rushowy, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic has also resulted in significant strains on university resources.

In 2013, the Ontario government introduced a differentiation framework for postsecondary institutions. The government used the framework as a policy lever intended to increase quality at postsecondary institutions in a period of fiscal restraint, noting that "a differentiated postsecondary education system will support greater productivity and value-for-money through focused investments in areas of institutional strength and excellence" (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013, p.5). As part of this differentiation agenda, each postsecondary institution in Ontario was required to negotiate a strategic mandate agreement (SMA) with the province which outlines key institutional strengths. This presented unique challenges for all postsecondary institutions in Ontario. Given the relative youth of the university that is the client organization of this PAS, knowing how to position itself over the next decade vis a vis the other more established post-secondary institutions in the province is an important part of remaining viable. This PAS created a set of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) through engaging current faculty and staff in an exercise to determine what it means to be a

graduate of this university. The study contributes to enhancing the ability of the

university to carve out a unique niche in the competitive post-secondary landscape.

Problem Statement

The problem addressed in this study is that the institution does not have a set of

ILOs to outline what the focus and unique value of the university is for all stakeholders.

The university has been on a trajectory of immense growth since opening to the first 900

students in 2003. Born originally out of a college, it is still striving to garner the same

recognition of some of the older, and more established, top-tier universities in Ontario.

The current and newest phase of the university's development requires more than just

building. It will need to focus on fostering a unique identity and culture rather than

simply expanding the student body and program offerings.

Over the last 40 years, public administration approaches have focused on New

Public Management (NPM). NPM also influenced the university sector with an increased

focus on value for money and accountability for results. This resulted in the growth of a

corporate culture at universities in order to adapt to the changing landscape and the

increasing competition among universities for limited funds (Broucker et al., 2018). A

new trend in public administration is emerging, termed Post-New Public Management

(post-NPM). While the focus on performance still exists under this new paradigm, the

concept of public value (PV) has grown in importance. Post-NPM also includes the

involvement of more stakeholders to define priorities and what success looks like

(Broucker et al., 2018). This study was framed in the post-NPM paradigm of public

administration and more explicitly the concept of PV, a key concept of the strategic

triangle developed by Moore (1995). As post-NPM approaches continue to become more

predominant in public administration, this study provides insights for similar organizations as they look for ways to involve more stakeholders in value creation within their organizations.

The university has been focused on building a new institution with a very specific mandate to be career-oriented which was influenced by a focus on NPM principles at the time the university was created. As the university transitions from being centered on growth to establishing the strategic focus (PV) of the institution, it is an opportune time to gather advice on strategic directions from stakeholders through the creation of ILOs. The ILOs will enhance the ability of the institution to differentiate itself in the crowded post-secondary environment and increase its ability to strategically place funds in a time of fiscal restraint to support overall institutional planning. The ILOs help to create a greater sense of community around what the university strives to have all graduates achieve.

Purpose

The purpose of this PAS was to engage key stakeholders in an exercise to create ILOs to support academic planning across the university. A learning outcome is what an individual "knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, described in terms of knowledge, skills and competence" (Goncalves et al., 2013, p. 210). This study expands on this at the institutional level by not only being interested in what individual learners achieve but the overall PV of the university. The key to identifying an effective learning outcome is that the outcome is measurable. It is not enough to simply state what will be achieved. One must be able to measure achievement to accurately gauge success (Serge, 2018). The ILOs will help clarify where the institution is headed, provide a set of overarching outcomes, and build a greater sense of community through a

transparent and robust goal-setting process. With the study complete, the ILOs will assist the university in achieving the following four goals:

- They will define for external audiences what the institution expects to achieve;

- ILOs will ensure internal compatibility across planning and program development inside the institution;

- ILOs will inform students about what they are working towards achieving as graduates of the institution; and

- Because ILOs are measurable, they will allow for the ability to measure success.

This project will assist the university in transitioning from the process of building to defining a strategy to achieve success in Ontario and on the world stage.

Research Question

The central research question for this study was: What skills, values, and attributes should the university strive to instill in all graduates to prepare them for success as professionals and community members in today's world and the world of tomorrow? These skills, values, and attributes constitute the ILOs for the institution and will set the groundwork for academic planning across the University. They form the basis for resource investments, strategic planning exercises, and program development.

Nature of the Administrative Study

The nature of the study was a qualitative approach using responsive interviewing with a purposeful sample of faculty and staff at the university to create ILOs. As shown in Figure 1, the ILOs form the basis for program level outcomes which then inform

course level outcomes. The ILOs also influence other planning processes such as strategic plans, unit plans, and other agreements to ensure that all units at the institution are working towards the same goals. This study was conducted within the framework of a post-NPM paradigm and uses ILOs as a way to advance greater stakeholder involvement. While NPM has been the dominant influence on public administration approaches for over 40 years, the focus is beginning to shift to post-NPM and what it means to have greater involvement of stakeholders in defining PV.

Figure 1

Role of Institutional Learning Outcomes
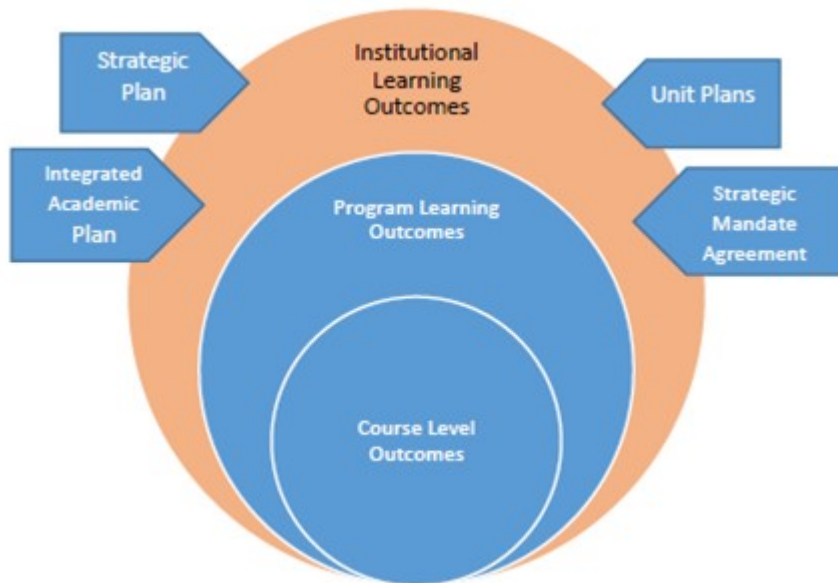
The study was conducted using responsive interviewing using a purposeful sample consisting of program directors and academic advisors at the university. To conduct the study, a list of all current program directors was collected from the Provost Office and a list of all academic advisors was collected from each of the seven Faculties at the university. An invitation to participate in the study was then sent out to the program

directors and academic advisors. All interviews were conducted virtually using Google Meets. The interviews were scheduled for 1 hour in length. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed to allow for the analysis of results.

The results were analyzed using a content analysis approach to analyze the data. The research used an inductive approach where the codes and categories were generated directly from the data. A coding manual was used and examples of how the codes and categories were generated is provided in the analysis section. In addition, to ensure the validity of the results, an external coder check was used. The resulting ILOs that are created will require formal approval through the institutional governance process. The overall purpose is to build a set of ILOs. The development process has the added benefit of also creating a sense of pride and ownership over what it means to work, study, research, and graduate from this university. The process is just as important as the results.

<div align="center">**Significance**</div>

This study is significant in two ways. The first is that it outlines an approach for setting strategic directions for the university that is not just about adhering to external requirements that are set (usually by government) but rather creating directions based on what the university itself views as the unique PV that it brings. As will be discussed in greater detail in the theoretical framework section of this study, many public sector organizations have adhered to public accountability and performance metrics determined by funders and not usually stakeholders within the institution. This study created a way to examine the value and strategic direction of the institution according to internal stakeholders. This approach is more in line with the post-NPM paradigm. Therefore, this study demonstrates a way for organizations to move from a focus on NPM to post-NPM

ways of engaging stakeholders in setting priorities. As post-NPM principles garner influence more broadly in the field of public administration, this study's approach to greater stakeholder involvement could act as a case study for other institutions. Secondly, this study documented the lessons learned in creating the ILOs in order to share them with institutions who may wish to develop their own ILOs. While the results themselves will be specific to this university, part of the conclusion includes a reflection on what went well and what could be improved upon if the process was to be undertaken again. While this project will end with the creation of the draft outcomes, future research to assess whether the ILOs had a measurable effect on how planning at the university is done would be beneficial. This type of assessment would contribute to an overall discussion on whether others should pursue this type of exercise but is outside the scope of this study.

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

The client organization is one of the newest universities in Ontario. The university has undergone tremendous growth, and now offers over 80 programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The university was created with a special mission to provide career-oriented university programs and offer opportunities for students to seamlessly transfer from a college into the university. With increasing competition and government funding to universities being cut as well as an increased focus on differentiation among postsecondary institutions in Ontario, Canada, each institution is now required by the province to outline institutional strengths (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013). This administrative study created ILOs through interviews conducted with faculty and staff. This direct feedback from these important

stakeholders creates buy-in on what the priorities should be from those connected to the university and what all programs should strive towards having graduates of the university achieve. The ILOs will help to integrate the various planning activities of the institution while also creating a greater sense of community. The ILOs will also contribute to PV creation, as there is an increasing focus on transitioning from NPM paradigms in public administration to post-NPM. These concepts will be elaborated on in the next section as the conceptual approach is described in greater detail.

Section 2: Conceptual Approach and Background

Introduction

The problem addressed in this study is that the institution does not currently have a set of ILOs to outline what the focus and unique value of the university is for all stakeholders. This qualitative administrative study outlines the skills, values, and attributes that the institution should be known for to create ILOs and presents the findings to the client as a governance report. The study was conducted using an inductive approach to content analysis through the use of interviews with faculty and staff. This section presents the conceptual framework, the relevance of the study to public administration, and the role of the researcher.

Conceptual Framework

The study is situated within the paradigms associated with public administration. It acknowledges the NPM focus that has shaped the university environment in Ontario over the last 40 years. However, it also notes the limitations of this approach and therefore focuses on post-NPM approaches and more specifically the use of a PV framework to inform the basis of the research. Relevant to a discussion of PV is also the concept of value co-creation whereby participants who engage in the process are more willing to advance the mission and plans of the university and close the value perception gap as outlined by Bakutyte and Grundey (2012). I will first present the conceptual framework in terms of the deliverable product for the client, and then in terms of key concepts around public management that underlie the study.

Organization Deliverable Resulting From the Administrative Study

At the conclusion of this research study, the deliverable for the organization is a governance report on the draft ILOs. In Canada, most universities operate under a bicameral governance structure. Under this type of structure, there are two overarching legislative bodies, a corporate board and an academic senate. The senate has overall responsibility for academic standards at the university as outlined in the by-laws of the institution. This professional administrative study resulted in a draft of the ILOs, but they will not be official until approved through the formal academic governance body at the university.

The bicameral system of governance in Canadian universities is structured this way to balance public and academic interests. The Flavelle Commission in 1906 first set out the rationale and framework for bicameralism. This commission noted that the "process by which universities make decisions should be autonomous from the political whims of government" (Jones et al., 2001, p.136). By creating two separate legislative bodies to govern universities it was intended that decisions made in the public interest would be governed by a Board of Governors and academic matters would be decided through a senate. By the mid-1960s, nearly all Canadian universities had adopted a bicameral governance structure (Jones et al., 2001). Governance reform movements in the 1960s attempted to shift the balance of governance further to increase accountability to internal constituents. In 1966, a national review of university governance in Canada was undertaken known as the Duff-Berdahl Commission. This commission recommended further openness and transparency in university governance as well as increased faculty and student participation on corporate boards which were largely closed to internal

constituents to this point. Today, nearly all university boards have faculty, staff, and student representation on them, and board and senate meetings are increasingly open to the public (Jones et al., 2001). As the senate at the university is the highest academic governance body; adoption of the ILOs will require formal approval by this body. Therefore, a governance report was provided for the organization following the research. The governance report provides the rationale for creating the ILOs, a background of how the ILOs were created, as well as a formal motion for approval. This information will allow the governance committee to make an informed decision for the organization. The adoption of the ILOs through a formal motion, signals that the university as a whole adopts the ILOs.

The Use of Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, value, and/or be able to demonstrate at the end of a period of learning. Learning outcomes were chosen as the focus for this study due to the long history of using learning outcomes in higher education to define student achievements and overall organizational effectiveness. Historical approaches to learning outcomes in the sector have resulted in moving from a focus on inputs to more learner focused approaches and what the outcomes of learning would be after the completion of a course, module, or program (Prøitz, 2010). This focus began with the "objectives movement," which began in the early 20th century based on the work of John Dewey and others in the "pragmatist movement." In the 1950s, "mastery learning" theories were predominant and included the work of Benjamin Bloom and the creation of "Bloom's taxonomy" that is still used today as a tool to develop learning outcomes at the program and course level. The 1960s and early 1970s expanded

on these approaches. One of the best known of the behavioral objectives movement of the 1970s was Robert Mager. He proposed writing specific statements about observable outcomes which he termed "instructional objectives" to define the learning that occurs at the conclusion of a learning experience and how it would be assessed (Mager, 1975). These instructional objectives paved the way for the focus on learning outcomes in higher education today. The 1960s and 1970s also saw greater focus on "competency-based" programs in colleges and universities. This was followed by using learning outcomes to measure overall institutional effectiveness and a focus on greater accountability measures from governments and accrediting agencies to post-secondary institutions (Ewell, 2005). It is in this vein of "institutional effectiveness" that this PAS was based. The focus of this study however was to examine this not from the perspective of outside agencies but rather those connected to the university (faculty and staff).

Learning outcomes are typically defined "in terms of a mixture of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and understanding that an individual will attain as a result of his or her successful engagement in a particular set of higher education experiences" (Adams, 2004, p.2). In addition, learning outcome statements typically include an action verb making them observable and therefore measurable. The most widely recognized taxonomy in higher education for learning outcome development is Bloom's taxonomy. This taxonomy established categories of learning as well as levels of overall achievement of these categories. The original taxonomy developed by Bloom used areas like knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation known as the cognitive domain. The other two main domains are the affective domain (attitudes, feelings, values) and the psychomotor domain (physical skills; Kennedy, 2006). The

taxonomy is used as a classification system to "describe the cognitive processes by which thinkers encounter and work with knowledge" (Armstrong, 2020). These cognitive levels of complexity use types of knowledge (factual, conceptual, procedural, metacognitive) to various degrees (i.e., the higher on the taxonomy, the higher cognitive complexity). In 2001, a group comprised of cognitive psychologists, curriculum theorists, and testing and assessment specialists published a revision of Bloom's taxonomy with the title *A Taxonomy for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment* (Armstrong, 2020). This revised version is provided in Figure 2. Changes to the taxonomy occurred in terminology, structure, and emphasis (Forehand, 2005). The taxonomy now includes six cognitive processes and four types of knowledge (Armstrong, 2020). Bloom's is the most widely used taxonomy in education.

Figure 2

Bloom's Taxonomy Revised Version
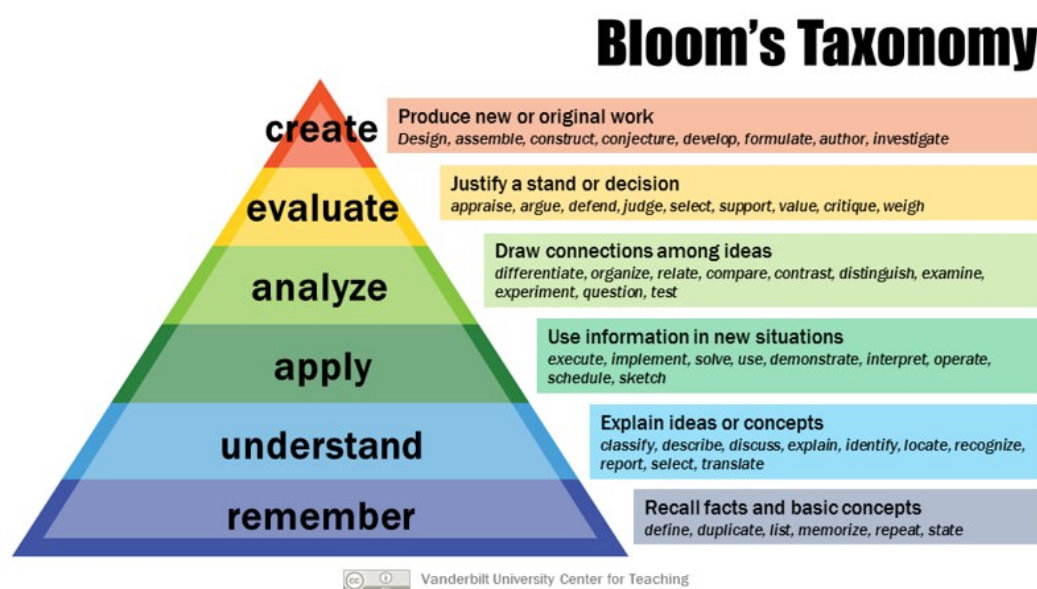
From "Bloom's Taxonomy," by Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching, 2010 (https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/). In the public domain.

While learning outcomes are used all over the world, there is no one common definition or approach. The approaches vary from using skills, knowledge, attributes, values, attitudes, competencies, and other variants of these when describing what the learner should know at the end of the learning process (Bingham, 1999; Fry et al., 2000; Jenkins & Unwin, 2001; Moon, 2003). The use of learning outcomes moves the assessment from inputs (i.e. hours taught, what instructors teach) to a focus on outputs (i.e. what the student is able to do; Adams, 2004). Learning outcomes at the course and program level typically focus on what a student is able to do at the end of the course or program in practice. Moon (2003) discussed another way to think about learning outcomes, with a focus on not just demonstrating mastery, but rather outcomes that are desirable or aspirational. For the purposes of learning outcomes at the institutional level, this study included both demonstrable as well as aspirational outcomes. The ILOs outline what a student is able to do and value as a result of the full experience of being a student at the university, both inside and outside of the classroom. It is due to this deep history of focusing on learning outcomes in the education sector that they were chosen as the focus for the approach to this study.

Key Concepts Framing the Study

Organizational identity is a concept that can be used to understand the dynamics within the higher education sector as it highlights the relationship between continuity and change (Stensaker, 2015). It is through the concept of organizational identity that one can also examine and explain how the changing policy environment impacts institutions. Identity can create a sense of order and stability within an organization and also help to classify the organization in relation to others for external audiences. Albert and Whetten

(1985) described identity as central, continuous, and distinct to each university.

Therefore, there is a need to understand how each institution has been framed by

historical characteristics and how those historical characteristics have changed over time.

To understand the dynamics in the university environment and the need for this study, it

is important to situate it within the various paradigms for public sector reform over the

last 40 years.

Public Management Paradigms

The main public management paradigms over the last 40 years are traditional

public management, NPM and post-NPM. Beginning in the 1980s, there was a concerted

effort to infuse public service delivery with reform mechanisms referred to as NPM.

NPM was created with a focus on performance improvement (Reiter & Klenk, 2019).

While focused on government and government service delivery, universities as entities

that rely on government funding were not immune to the concepts and practices that

NPM extolled. At the center of NPM is the adoption of private sector management

principles and practices into public service delivery. Proponents of NPM redefined

citizens as consumers, and along with this came an increased focus on value for money

and accountability for results (Broucker & De Wit, 2015). Over the last 15 years, there

has been increasing criticism of the NPM approach, creating a new trend of public

management reform termed post-NPM (Reiter & Klenk, 2018). Within the post-NPM

approach there is still a focus on performance in the public sector and the organizations

they support; however, the focus has expanded to include a larger set of socio-economic

objectives and not just ones centered on performance (Broucker et al., 2018). These

changing focuses of the paradigms in public administration are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Public Administration Paradigms

Paradigm	Focus
Traditional public administration	Efficiency
New public management (NPM)	Efficiency & effectiveness
Post-NPM	Public value

As part of the broader public service, publicly funded universities adapted to NPM principles, creating more of a corporate culture, and positioned students as consumers. There has been increased competition among universities and performance metrics have intensified as part of the NPM approach. This has forced universities to expand their scope, raise tuition fees, diversify their funding structures, increase public-private partnerships, and increase commercial applications for research and knowledge (Broucker et al., 2018). Giroux (2010), a critic of NPM in the post-secondary sector, has pointed to the problems of NPM creating "a corporate-based ideology that embraces standardizing the curriculum, supporting top-down management, and reducing all levels of education to job-training sites" (p.185). The challenge with a focus on NPM is that success criteria is defined through a very narrow scope and minimizes the input of university stakeholders. There are many relevant stakeholders when it comes to postsecondary education including students, faculty, staff, employers, and society at large. This research study involved stakeholders to better define the focus of the university.

In addition, the focus of NPM has been on performance as set out by government priorities. In contrast, post-NPM expands to involve more stakeholders to define the priorities of an institution and what success looks like. This is done via another central concept that is important to this study, which is PV.

Public Value

Broucker et al. (2018) examined the concept of PV in the context of NPM and higher education reform. They used the concept of PV as a way of expanding the NPM framework to continue to focus on performance but also to ensure that the performance outcomes are linked to what stakeholders believe higher education (HE) institutions should achieve, noting that "context determines what the role of performance measurement is and what objectives it can or cannot reach" (p.236). There is also a connection between PV and the strategic triangle created by Mark Moore (1995). Under the strategic triangle outlined in Figure 3, strategy should be:

(1) aimed at achieving something that is substantially valuable (i.e., must constitute PV),

(2) legitimate and politically sustainable, and

(3) operationally and administratively feasible (as cited in Bryson et al., 2014)

Figure 3

The Strategic Triangle
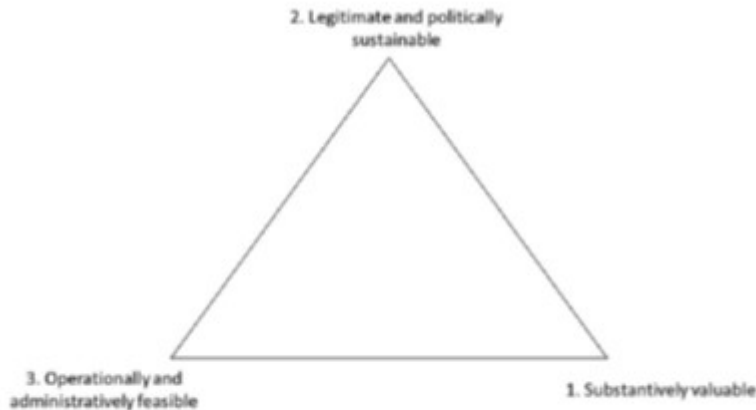
The Strategic Triangle (Moore, 1995)

To understand PV, involvement of stakeholders is important, not just for defining the PV but also for creating legitimacy and feasibility of the approach in order to achieve success. According to Broucker et al. (2018), PV "questions the meaning of performance and links that meaning to what it believed HE should do" (p. 236). In addition, PV is measurable as it is a plan for future direction. This makes it an effective lens with which to examine the strategic directions of the university. One lens that can be used to define PV at the university is through the creation of ILOs as conceived by the various stakeholders who impact or are impacted by the university. ILOs serve as a means to expand beyond government priorities to define the PV of the institution and therefore the strategic directions.

Value Co-creation Behaviour

Connected to the PV approach is the concept of value co-creation behaviour. This concept exists mostly in the literature associated to consumer behaviour and how

businesses can use value co-creation to understand customer needs to increase

competitiveness. This involvement in value creation also has an impact on the perception

of how the consumer views the value of the service provided. This results in "value for

consumers as well as providers" (Ida, 2017, p.51). I argue that this business concept

bridges the gap in NPM with that of PV and can be valuable when applied to the

university context. NPM shifted the focus to viewing the student as consumer, but the

concept of value co-creation behaviour is a method to get closer to creating an increased

focus on PV. ILOs in the university context are a method for achieving this.

PV and value co-creation can serve the added benefit of moving stakeholders as

'co-producers' to 'promoter of services' as they engage in the process, whereby the "co-

created experience becomes an important basis of value" (Ida, 2017, p.54). Value co-

creation is two-fold. It involves participation behaviour as well as citizenship behaviour.

Engaging as participants influences citizenship behaviour, by influencing the perceived

value of the services used. In this PAS, perceived value was defined by faculty and staff

at the university. By utilizing this approach (through the creation of ILOs) it has the

added benefit of having participants who are engaged in the process, and therefore more

willing to advance the mission and plans of the university. The ILOs help to close the

value perception gap as defined by Bakutyte and Grundey (2012). This gap exists where

the value the organization provides does not match the value created as subjectively

viewed by the consumer. By moving from seeing the various stakeholders as consumers

to now partners, the creation of ILOs act as a mechanism to increase the value of the

institution as well as creating a strategic focus. Bakutyte and Grundey (2012) noted that

an "organization cannot simply create and transfer value to the consumer, as value is

created at the interaction time together with the consumer" (p.100). Nowhere is this more apparent than in the role that post-secondary institutions play in educating students. While value co-creation has mostly been used in business, the concept also has a role to play in the university setting as well, particularly in a post-NPM paradigm.

As outlined above, value co-creation has largely been focused in business literature, however Foroudi, et al. (2018) examined the concept of customer value co-creation in the university sector. Their study focused on student value co-creation behaviour and the role that the university website plays in it. This PAS adapted the conceptual framework used in their research to apply it to the creation of ILOs. The adapted framework is provided in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Conceptual Framework

Source: Adapted from Foroudi, et al. (2018)
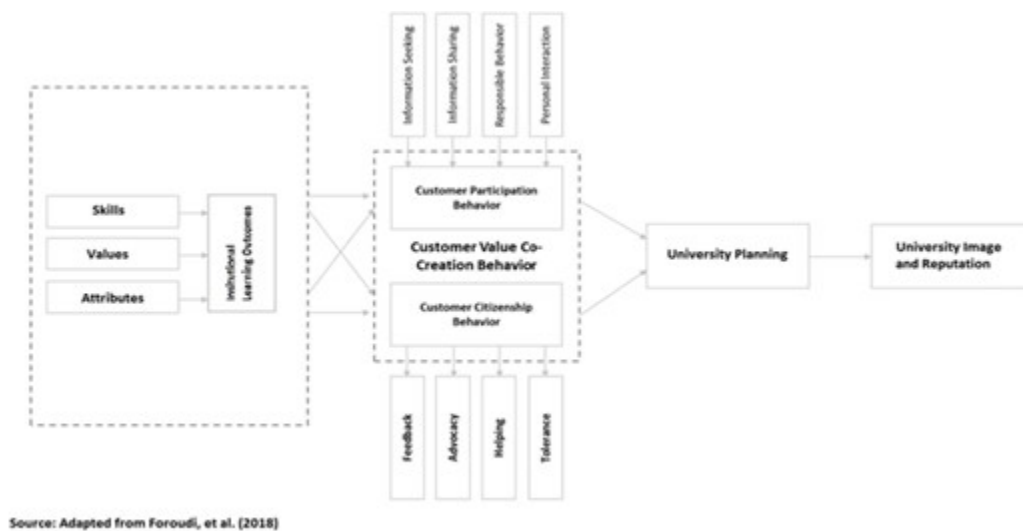
While their research studied the role that websites played in value co-creation, the PAS will build on their research outcomes which demonstrated that the involvement of the various stakeholders will lead to the benefits associated with value co-creation. The

PAS focused on the input of ILOs which were used to form the basis of the participation in the value co-creation by the stakeholders. Value co-creation bridges the gap in NPM with that of PV and can be valuable when applied to the university context. The relevance of the outcome of this study to public organizations will be discussed in the next section.

Relevance to Public Organizations

Organizational identity is important to any entity. Organizational identity can be defined as that "which is most central, enduring, and distinctive about an organization" (Albert & Whetten, 1985). There is a strong connection between organizational identity, reputation and legitimacy (McKenzie & King, 2016). The literature contains a number of schools of thought on how organizational identity is defined. The strategy school views organizational identity as part of the strategic process. The cultural school focuses on values and norms to understand organizational identity (Steiner et al., 2013). The strategic focus of organizational identity as described by Steiner et al., (2013) focuses on what the organization wants to represent and how this relates to long-term plans. In the current environment of reduced funding and increased accountability, organizational identity becomes even more important as organizations need to focus limited funds on what makes the most difference for each organization. Knowing what these strategic directions are allows for investments in these areas to further the goals of the organization now and into the future. Building a shared identity through the creation of ILOs based on the ideas of the relevant stakeholders helps to build an identity that is not just about the organization but the people that are part of it. It is through the creation of the ILOs that the identity of this organization is formalized and is able to make long-term plans based on what the people who are part of it have determined as priorities. Public organizations

can set priorities in a myriad or ways, some that are transparent and others that are not. By involving stakeholders in the creation of the ILOs and formally approving them through a transparent governance process the university is able to demonstrate commitment to both the internal and external community.

Learning outcome development has been a focus in the education sector, however the focus has been at the course or program level. Most of the available literature outlines approaches to developing learning outcomes for courses and programs. Some postsecondary institutions in Canada have created ILOs, however the approach to creating learning outcomes at the institutional level has not been clearly defined. This PAS attempted to fill the void in the literature around learning outcome development at the institutional level to begin a discussion in higher education on a common framework for developing ILOs. At their core, learning outcomes are about the skills, abilities, knowledge, values, and attributes that students are expected to achieve at the end of either a course, program (or in this case at the institutional level). At the institutional level it is the culmination of all experiences as a student studying at this institution. This PAS provides to public sector organizations and the university sector specifically a method for creating learning outcomes at the institutional level that can be applied more broadly by other similar organizations attempting to involve stakeholders in creating strategic directions in their organizations. It provides a way to demonstrate the overall public value from the perspective of those inside the organization.

Organization Background and Context

Most universities in Ontario Canada are public institutions that are funding by the provincial government. Each university was created under an individual Act of

Parliament. Therefore, while there are commonalities among institutions there are also

unique aspects to them since each one required an individual legislative act. In the case

of this university, the Act states the following special mission and objectives:

> **Special mission**
> It is the special mission of the university to provide career-oriented
> university programs and to design and offer programs with a view to
> creating opportunities for college graduates to complete a university degree.
> 2002, c. 8, Sched. O, s. 3.
>
> **Objects**
> The objects of the university are,
> (a) to provide undergraduate and postgraduate university programs with a
>   primary focus on those programs that are innovative and responsive to
>   the individual needs of students and to the market-driven needs of
>   employers;
>
> (b) to advance the highest quality of learning, teaching, research and
>   professional practice;
>
> (c) to contribute to the advancement of Ontario in the Canadian and global
>   contexts with particular focus on the Durham region and
>   Northumberland County; and
>
> (d) to facilitate student transition between college-level programs and
>   university-level programs. (2002, c. 8, Sched. O, s. 4).

In the Ontario postsecondary system there are largely two types of institutions, colleges

and universities and education is provincially mandated. Colleges in Ontario were

principally focused on having students develop skills and trades required for specific jobs

while universities were concerned with research. When this university was created it

appeared to blur the lines of what is typical for universities and to have some

characteristics that normally fall within the realm of colleges. Having the campus co-

located with an existing college further added to the confusion of the niche this new

university was expected to fill. There were questions around whether it was like other

Ontario universities focused on research or a college specializing in giving students skills for specific jobs and trades? The focus of this university on professional programs, its mandate as a market-oriented university, and its association with an existing college influenced the identity of the institution both internally and externally from the beginning.

The university was created at the height of NPM approaches by the government in Ontario. This is most apparent in the focus of the mission and Act of the university to be career oriented. The Premier of Ontario was Mike Harris whose Conservative government ushered in his "Common Sense Revolution." Harris campaigned on running the province as if it was a corporation or business. The focus was on efficiency and value for money while also cutting government expenditures (Martin, 2009). These cuts were made at the same time that enrolment at universities was increasing. In 1997 the government announced that secondary school education in Ontario would be reduced to a 4-year program from previously being 5-years. As a result, when the university opened its doors to students in 2003, two cohorts of graduates from high school were looking for spots in postsecondary institutions in the province. At the same time, accountability measures for postsecondary education (PSE) were continuing to expand. In line with NPM principles, the Conservative government in Ontario introduced performance measurement and performance funding for postsecondary institutions. Universities now had to report on key performance indicators (KPIs). These indicators were output based and included employment rates and graduation rates. Funding envelopes were also focused on technological and market-oriented programs in the province as well as shared

services to increase efficiency in administrative practices. These policy directions are ones that influenced the Act that created the university as well as its initial identity.

The year the university opened its doors, a newly elected Premier and Liberal government took office in Ontario. Premier Dalton McGuinty was committed to new investments in education in the province. With the new investments however came increased accountability measures. There was a shift "from viewing PSE as a social good to an economic good where it had an economic value and had to show return on investment" (Ramlal, 2009, pg. 56). The Liberal government also set up the "Rae review," in which former Premier Bob Rae was tasked to review postsecondary institutions with a focus on redesigning the postsecondary system in Ontario and a new funding model to "consider accessibility, affordability, quality, appropriate cost-sharing, student assistance and accountability in PSE" (Ramlal, 2009, p. 57). The Rae review saw a number of changes to postsecondary education funding and accountability in Ontario. One major change was the creation of Multi-Year Accountability Agreements (MYAA). Another important change that took place during this time period is that universities were required to align to the policy objectives of the government around access, quality and accountability regardless of their individual missions and mandates. The MYAA reports of each institution were posted online for the public to access.

Accountability requirements have continued to increase. In 2013 the Ontario government introduced Ontario's Differentiation Policy Framework. The goal still remained to align the mandates of colleges and universities in Ontario with the priorities of the government, however the approach was different. This time the focus was on the

uniqueness of each institution in the province. The goals of the differentiated system

were:

> 1. Support student success and access to a high-quality Ontario
>
> postsecondary education
>
> 2. Improve the global competitiveness of Ontario's postsecondary
>
> education system
>
> 3. Build on and help focus the well-established strengths of Ontario
>
> colleges and universities while avoiding unnecessary duplication
>
> 4. Maintain an efficient and financially sustainable postsecondary
>
> education system (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013,
>
> p.9).

Under this framework, institutional metrics would be identified by each institution. These

were intended to be linked to internal planning processes. There were also system-wide

metrics that would be in place sector wide. The implementation of the differentiation

framework was through Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) signed between each

postsecondary institution in the province and the government. Each SMA was publicly

available, outlined the unique strengths of each institution and formed the basis for

decisions around funding mechanisms in the future (Ministry of Training, Colleges and

Universities, 2013). Having a clear direction and understanding of the strategic priorities

of the university became even more important. While the relative youth of the university

has meant that much of the focus has been on strategic directions as outlined in the Act

that created the institution, it became now an opportune time to examine the future

strategic focus of the university. Relevant stakeholders in faculty, and staff can help to set

the strategic direction. Personal experiences of the stakeholders and their connection to the university influences the perceived value and as a result produces a deeper connection to the institution. The creation of the ILOs will assist in this process.

Role of the DPA Student/Researcher

At the start of this study and during the interview phase of the project I was a full-time employee at the university, employed by the university for over ten years. During the analysis stage of the project, I left this role for a position at a college in Ontario. In my role at the client university, I managed the office responsible for facilitating curricular changes to programs and ensuring that they meet external standards and follow internal processes. I was also responsible for coordinating all program reviews at the institution as well as the new program process. The office also began to coordinate integrated planning at the university. Locke, et al., (2014) note that it is important to be upfront in the research about relationships and how any bias will be mitigated. It is important to be cognizant during the interview process of the role that I held as a staff member at the institution. Having been with the institution for ten years I benefitted from a broad understanding of the organizational culture as well as knowledge of learning outcome development and academic programs. To mitigate potential bias in the results, a second person, independent of the office, also examined how the data was coded in order to increase the validity of the results as well as for transparency.

Summary

This study was situated within the changing paradigms around public administration. The university was created in a time where NPM principles were at the forefront. There was an increased focus on performance and operations more closely

linked to business practices than public service delivery. An era of post-NPM is being

ushered in where there is still a focus on accountability and performance, but the

indicators have moved slightly to be less about the priorities being set by a select few to

now being more about examining what the PV of the institution is according to the

stakeholders most impacted by it. This value co-creation behavior moves stakeholders

from being merely consumers to now being active participants in defining the outcomes.

For the purposes of this study, the approach focused on the use of ILOs as a mechanism

for co-creation. The value co-creation behavior of the stakeholders has the added benefit

of having participants who are actively involved and therefore are more likely to promote

the organizational identity as they feel a stronger connection to the organization and what

it stands for. Having ILOs fulfills the requirements of accountability but with the backing

of engaged stakeholders to increase legitimacy.

Section 3: Data Collection Process and Analysis

Introduction

Since the founding of the university in the early 2000s, the university sector has undergone significant changes. The adoption of NPM principles by administrators changed how the postsecondary sector operated including reductions in overall funding, a movement to view university operations closer to business models as well as increased accountability requirements. The effect of this is a need for all universities to look closer at their strategic directions and priorities. Once very insular organizations, there was increased pressure to demonstrate what PV the university could bring to society. While this PV can be generic across all universities, the differentiation framework in Ontario means that each university is intended to fulfill a unique niche. This uniqueness can be defined by government; however, it is in the best interest of universities to find a mechanism to be able to define this for themselves and advance the organizational identity. To further advance the organizational identity, bringing the stakeholders in to help define these directions also has benefits. This results in the stakeholders becoming more connected to the organization and increased pride and ownership over its success. To assist in the creation of strategic directions, this project created ILOs.

This section describes the process through which the ILOs were developed to fill this gap in current organizational knowledge. It provides information on the method that was used for conducting the research as well as an outline of the reasons this method was chosen in relation to the research question. It also describes the stages of the research, including the selection of participants, the data collection process, and the process used

for analysis of the data. It concludes with an examination of the role of the researcher in this qualitative study and a discussion of validity and reliability of the research.

Practice-Focused Question

The problem addressed in this study is that the institution does not currently have a set of ILOs to outline what the focus and unique value of the university is for all stakeholders. The gap in knowledge that this study filled is a clear articulation of the unique PV of this university from the perspective of faculty and staff to assist in overall academic planning. Learning outcomes are defined as the skills, values, and attributes the institution intends to be known for and instill in its graduates.

The central research question for this study was: What skills, values, and attributes should the university strive to instill in all graduates to prepare them for success as professionals and community members in today's world and the world of tomorrow? For the purpose of this research, skills were defined as technical knowledge that can be learned through education and training. Attributes were defined as soft skills or personal and interpersonal talents. Values denoted the principles, standards, and ideals shared by the community. These definitions are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Definitions Used in the Study

Terms	Definitions
Skills	Technical knowledge that can be learned through education and training
Values	Principles, standards, and ideals shared by the community

Attributes	Soft skills or personal and interpersonal talents

Sources of Evidence

This project was a qualitative study. Qualitative research involves an interpretation of the world to understand the significance for the individuals who are part of the study. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The study was initiated through a literature review and collected data through responsive interviewing. A literature review was first conducted to create a theoretical basis for the approach to the research question. The gap in knowledge was that the university had no ILOs; however, understanding the connection between the ILOs and the identified problem required delving into the relevant literature. This study was undertaken using a qualitative approach, as the literature revealed the importance of value co-creation. To be able to move from a top-down approach to one in which the stakeholders had more of a voice, in depth interviews were used to answer the research question. To understand what skills, values, and attributes were most relevant, a "conversational partnership" between the researcher and participants was required to have buy-in and also a fulsome response (Hunter Revell, 2013). How the literature review was conducted, and evidence generated for the study was obtained is discussed in detail below.

Literature Review

A literature review was used to situate the approach to this study in the context of theoretical approaches in the field. The literature review was conducted using Thoreau through the Walden University library. The literature review included an examination of

the academic literature on organizational identity as it relates to strategic planning with a focus on the higher education sector. An analysis was also conducted on the historical basis of the postsecondary landscape in Ontario, Canada and the connection to strategic planning efforts. Particular focus was placed on the role of government policy directions through a search of Ministry documents available online. In alignment with this approach, I also examined how NPM and post-NPM paradigms fit into government approaches to policy directions as well as responses from the post-secondary sector to these approaches in the literature. Through the examination of the current focus on post-NPM principles, the role of PV was deemed central as it increases the role for stakeholders to play in defining the PV. These themes and frameworks were pivotal to the creation of the research approach for this study. In addition, I also conducted a search of peer-reviewed publications on the topic of content analysis for qualitative studies. Leading authors on this method of analysis were also examined based on those most cited in the online articles that were located.

Evidence Generated for the Administrative Study

The PAS determined the ILOs through a responsive interviewing approach (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The interview questions used for this study are outlined in Appendix A. ILOs outline the skills, values, and attributes that the university will strive to instill in graduates, as outlined in Figure 5. Interviewees were not explicitly asked to outline these skills, values, and attributes; instead, the interview protocol was developed to ask broad, expansive questions to avoid influencing and limiting what interviewees had to say on the topic (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Rubin and Rubin (2005) outlined that, researchers as part of their qualitative study should not pose the research question directly, but rather

create questions to answer the research question that are easier for interviewees to translate into their own experience. Castillo-Montoya (2016) further enhanced this point by noting that, "your research questions formulate what you want to understand; your interview questions are what you ask people to gain that understanding" (p.813). For the interview protocol, the questions were created in four categories. These categories were: (1) introductory questions used to build rapport with the interviewees; (2) transition questions; (3) key questions; and (4) closing questions (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). The focus was on expansive questions to allow the interviewees to take the interview in different directions and avoid influencing the overall results.

Figure 5

Research Focus
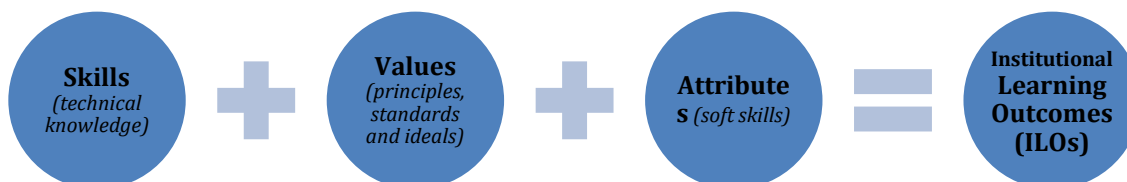
Participants

The interviews were conducted using a purposeful sample. All participation was voluntary, and participants retained the right to withdraw their consent to participate as well as the option to not answer all the questions. All participants were over the age of 18. Participants were chosen for their experience and knowledge in the topic of research (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). An invitation to participate was sent to all program directors (n=40) and academic advisors (n=23) in each of the seven faculties at the university.

Academic advising is a non-academic centralized staff position at the university, and therefore the number of academic advisors is lower than the number of program directors. The purpose of the study was clearly communicated to the participants as part of the invitation to participate. Anyone from the study population who responded to the interview request and agreed to be interviewed was included in the study. No one who wanted to participate was be excluded. At minimum, the study strived to have 2 individuals from each of the 7 Faculties be interviewed to ensure broad representation.

Program directors were purposefully chosen to be included as participants because their perspective provided experience as faculty members both in teaching programs and a broader administrative understanding of the function of universities. They have also been in a university environment for a significant period of time to have been promoted to program director, so they have historical knowledge.

Academic advisors were purposefully chosen because they provide a staff perspective as they work daily with students and have an in depth understanding of the composition of programs. The advisors also have knowledge of where students are succeeding and where they are experiencing challenges and historical knowledge to be able to speak to the changes in students enrolling in the university and any evolving needs.

Procedures

An interview protocol was developed to outline the main questions of the study to allow participants the ability to provide details on their experiences that were used to translate into ILOs for the university. Responsive interviewing was conducted with the

participants, and therefore participants were asked to expand on responses made within the questions posed. I kept notes on all aspects of the study as it progressed.

The initial interview questions were reviewed by a small group of tenured or tenure-track faculty members as well as a team of staff that are knowledgeable in learning outcome development. This review was conducted with these groups instead of using a pilot test, as a pilot test would have required prior IRB approval since it would involve the collection of data. These types of field tests are a common alternative and used in qualitative studies. The purpose of a qualitative field test is "to identify problems that could be experienced by respondents during the actual study" (University of Phoenix, n.d., para. 4). The field test uses those who have expert knowledge on the topic and population being interviewed to provide feedback. They are not answering the questions, and therefore no data is being collected.

I sent an invitation to participate in the interviews to program directors and academic advisors in all seven Faculties at the university to allow for broad representation of responses. Interviews were scheduled for 1 hour in length to allow for fulsome conversations. The interviews were conducted virtually through Google Meets due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Participants were also asked for their consent to audio record the interview. All interviews were transcribed to allow for coding of the results. I also took notes on each interview on what occurred from my perspective and any gaps or required follow ups. The process of analysis is described in the analysis and synthesis section below.

Protections

Ethics approval was obtained by the IRB board at both Walden University and the client university before the research was conducted. All participants were informed of the purpose of the study as part of the invitation to participate and all participants were over the age of 18. Consent to record the interviews was also obtained. Completing the interview was not mandatory, and participants could withdraw their consent at any time prior to analysis when the identifying information was removed. All data will be retained for a period of 5 years in compliance with Walden University data retention policies and then will be destroyed. The interview recordings, transcripts, and notes are stored on a password protected Google Drive account. All analyzed data are also stored in this account.

Analysis and Synthesis

The analytical approach to interpreting the data was content analysis. The objective of content analysis is to "systematically transform a large amount of text into a highly organized and concise summary of key results" (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017, p. 94). The approach to coding and analysis as well as a discussion on reliability and validity of the data is provided in the sections below.

Coding Process

All interviews were transcribed for coding and analysis. An inductive approach was used to code the data. A coding manual was created to outline how the text was interpreted. The development of the definitions of codes and categories (exclusion and inclusion criteria) outlined in the coding manual helped to ensure that the coding was applied reliably throughout the data. A lean coding approach was taken to the analysis of

the results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The analysis began with a short list of codes and expand only as necessary. This was to keep the number of ILOs created manageable and in line with best practices on the number of learning outcomes.

Content Analysis of the Data

All analysis was conducted manually by using content analysis. The analysis and synthesis was conducted using the following steps outlined by Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017):

1. Read and reread all survey responses to get a sense of the whole. Note initial reactions which can be used in subsequent parts of the analysis to see if the "parts" analysis matches up with the "whole."

2. Keep the research question in focus while dividing the responses into meaning units.

3. Develop codes that are descriptive labels for condensed meaning units. This is done by keeping close to the data with very little interpretation. Notes will be kept during this process to outline inclusion and exclusion criteria.

4. Codes will then be sorted into categories (codes that seem to outline the same issue).

The overall process of analysis used in the study is outlined in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6

Process of Analysis

```
┌──────────┐    ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────────┐    ┌────────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
│ Raw Data │ ⇒  │ Meaning Units│ ⇒  │  Codes   │ ⇒  │  Categories  │ ⇒  │ Interpretation/│ ⇒  │ Conclusions  │
│          │    │              │    │          │    │              │    │     Themes     │    │              │
└──────────┘    └──────────────┘    └──────────┘    └──────────────┘    └────────────────┘    └──────────────┘
```

In the analysis, no data were excluded due to not having a suitable category. In addition, attention was paid to ensuring that no data fell between two categories or fit more than one category (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). When a code seems to fit more than one category, it is likely that during the analysis, the jump from code to category was too big (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). Where this occurred, I conducted a backwards analysis to return to the meaning unit to see if it fit with the category or if the preliminary coding needed to be reconsidered.

Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research the validity and reliability of the research is most often determined through what Lincoln and Guba (1985) termed as "dependability" and "confirmability." Dependability and confirmability is most often "established through an auditing of the research process" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.256). An audit trail was created by ensuring that I logged all processes followed with detailed notes. These notes were made available to a second reader. The overall process as well as the analysis and interpretation of the coding from raw data into the categories and themes was reviewed by this second reader. The second reader has a doctorate in the field of social sciences and has an extensive publication record involving content analysis and interpretation.

To further ensure dependability and confirmability in the coding of the results, a consistent unit of coding was used ranging from 1-3 words. A coding list was also developed and included an explanation of the codes to "minimize cognitive change during the process of analysis" (Bergtsson, 2016, p.12). The findings section also includes a table with examples of the mapping used to generate the codes, categories and interpretation of themes from the raw data. This was intended to increase reliability of the data as the research findings should be replicable (Krippendorff, 2004).

The number of ILOs was determined based on the outcomes of the coding and categorization of the responses and themes. Draft ILOs were written based on the overall themes. The ILOs were also submitted to the university's formal governance process in order to receive institutional approval of the results. Once approved, they will form the basis for planning across units at the institution.

Summary

The purpose of this PAS was to engage key stakeholders in an exercise to create ILOs to support academic planning across the university. ILOs were chosen due to a long history of learning outcome development in the post-secondary sector. These outcomes are the result of interviews conducted virtually and analyzed through a content analysis approach. A purposeful sample of program directors and academic advisors was used for the study. These groups were chosen for their experience and knowledge in the subject matter. To ensure validity of the results an external code checker was conducted by a second reader and a log of all processes followed was created. To ensure reliability the result section includes a table with how the coding was conducted and themes were

determined in the data. Section 4 outlines the results of the research and provide an

overall interpretation of the findings.

Section 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to create ILOs for a university in Ontario, Canada. The ILOs outline the focus and unique value of the university for all stakeholders, both internally and externally. Further, the ILOs help to support academic planning as they allow for limited resources to be directed to areas in which the university would like to focus and advance. The ILOs also help to define the unique PV of this university to differentiate it in a competitive postsecondary field. The research question was what skills, values, and attributes the university should strive to instill in all graduates to prepare them for success as professionals and community members in today's world and the world of tomorrow?

This section will outline the data collection and instrument used as well as the demographics of the participants. It will provide an analysis of the data from meaning units to codes and categories within three themes that were derived during the analysis. It will provide the findings, include an interpretation of the data, and conclude with the implications and recommendations resulting from the research.

The data collection and analysis for this study was conducted over the spring and summer of 2021 during the global COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, all interviews were conducted over video and not in person. There were also many competing demands on time, and this may have impacted the number of participants who engaged in the study.

Demographics

To conduct this study, nine program directors agreed to participate from a list of 40 and four academic advisors from a list of 15. A list of all current program directors

was collected from the Provost Office, and a list of all academic advisors was collected

from each of the 7 Faculties at the university. There was at least one representative from

each of the 7 Faculties at the university interviewed for this study. The study had

originally set out to have a minimum participation of 2 representatives from each Faculty,

but there was only 1 from two of the smaller Faculties. Following the 3 calls for

participants, only 1 from these 2 Faculties agreed to participate. Respondents were asked

about how long they had worked in education for. The range was 5 to 35 years with a

mean of 19 years and a median of 18 years. Of the 13 individuals who were interviewed,

7 were female and 6 were male.

Evidence

Interviews were conducted virtually with participants during May and June of

2021 using the Google Meet platform. I sent an initial invite to all program directors and

academic advisors during the first week of April with 2 subsequent requests for further

participants sent out every 2 weeks. Thirteen participants were interviewed once

participants had read and signed the consent form. At the start of the interview, all

participants were asked permission to record the interview for transcription purposes and

all agreed. The interviews were transcribed with personal information removed. A copy

of the interview transcript was sent to each participant at the end of May to perform a

member check of the transcripts. The member check was conducted by sending an email

to the participants with their interview transcripts attached. Participants were provided a

2-week window to respond with any updates and to note further areas in the transcripts to

be removed that could potentially identify them. Minor revisions were made to 3 of the

transcripts based on feedback received through the member check. At the end of the 2-week period, the recordings were destroyed, and analysis began on the transcripts.

Analytical Strategies Employed

Once all the interviews were transcribed and member checked, I read through all the transcripts to get an overall idea of the information gathered. The analysis of the data followed a four-step process as outlined in Figure 7. After the initial read through of the transcripts, the information was analyzed by first looking for meaning units. These meaning units were highlighted directly from the text and then broken down into condensed meaning units, still relying heavily on the text from participants without interpretation. From these condensed meaning units, codes were created to group the meaning units according to labels of what the meaning units were about. This resulted in 78 codes.

Figure 7

Steps in the Analysis of the Data

Condensed Meaning Unit	Code	Category	Theme
Shortening text while preserving meaning	Creating a Label of what the condensed meaning unit is about	Answers who, what, when, or where? (codes that belong together)	Answers why, how, in what way or by what means? (expresses an underlying meaning)
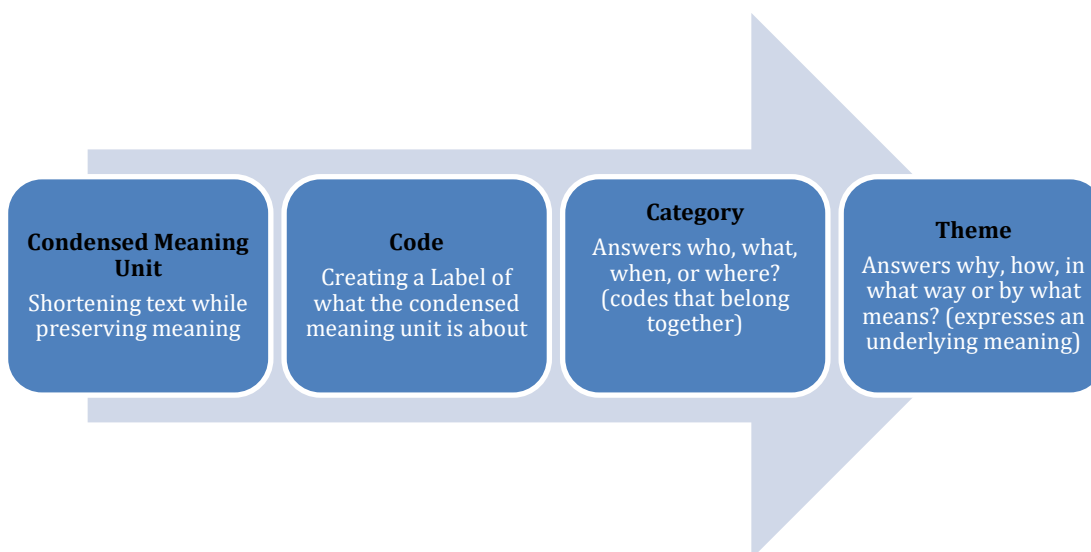
From the codes, categories were created where codes belonged together. These categories

were created using a phenomenological process which "consists of extracting verbatim

significant statements from the data, formulating meanings about them through the

researcher's interpretation" (Saldana, 2021 p. 268). To do this, I employed the technique

of using 'IS' statements to group the codes together into categories that make sense

(Saldana, 2021). Examples are provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Examples of Moving From Codes to Categories

Category	IS	Code	Condensed meaning unit
Problem solving	IS	Problem-based learning	Provide students with opportunities to solve ill-defined problems and ensure that they are using all the resources to solve those problems
Research	IS	Data	Accurately assess ideas using data to make sound decisions/judgements
Applied learning	IS	Experiential	Experiential learning that is service or community learning – connection to community

The coding resulted in 12 categories. The 12 categories and how they were defined are

outlined in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Definitions of Categories Used in the Analysis

Categories	Definitions
Self-awareness	Attributes related to being a human, building confidence, and pushing limits
Communication	Oral, written, and presentation skills
Lifelong learning	Adaptability, flexibility, and ability to learn
Personal attributes	Uniqueness of personal profile
Problem solving	Critical thinking skills, thinking outside the box, learning to find 'truth' and apply information
Research	Data analysis and research leading to new knowledge
Social	Networking, collaborating, meeting new people
Applied learning	Experiential, hands-on learning to drive innovation. This category also includes information on types of programs/program mix.
EDI	Equity, diversity, and inclusiveness to build awareness
Job ready	Skills required for career success
Student centered	Attributes of the university that place the success of students at the forefront
Technology	Coding, programming, and other technology focused approaches

The final step was to create themes. These themes provided the underlying meaning

expressed in the 'why and how' of the research that led to the ILOs that were created.

There were three themes generated from the data. The definitions for these themes used in the analysis are provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Definitions of Themes Used in the Analysis

Themes	Definition
Values	Principles, standards, and ideals associated with a university education
Skills	Technical knowledge that can be learned through education and training
Attributes	Soft skills or personal and interpersonal talents

The themes were created keeping the overall research question at the center of the analysis. The three themes were: values, skills, and attributes. The outcomes resulting from this analysis are provided in the findings section below.

Findings and Implications

To provide context for the study, respondents were asked to discuss the biggest changes they have seen in higher education as well as what they have noticed about how prepared students are for university. Respondents were then asked to delve more into detail on the specific aspects of what should constitute the ILOs, examining their views on the value of a university education, the uniqueness of this university, and the attributes and skills of ideal graduates that will prepare them for immediate and future success in their professional and civic lives. This section outlines the findings that provide a background or context to the analysis as well as data that informed the ILOs that were

created organized by the three themes resulting from the data. The findings section uses quotations from participants to substantiate the analysis. The quotations are not attributed as the data was reported in the aggregate. This section also outlines in further detail the step-by-step process that was followed to arrive at the ILOs.

Analysis of Data

The first section below outlines the responses from the interviewees that helped to shape the context for the study. This section outlines from the perspective of participants the biggest changes they have seen in their time in higher education as well as the biggest gaps associated with how prepared students are for university today. These responses were not intended to form the core of the ILOs but rather to provide some perspective on the culture and areas that may need further improvements to set students up for success. The second section outlines the analysis of the data that formed the creation of the ILOs as a result of the key themes generated from the data.

Context for the Study

Biggest Changes Observed in Higher Education

During the interviews, the respondents noted that the biggest changes they have noticed involved the focus of a university education and the resulting impacts on resource decisions, as well as the student profile and supports available to students. Interviewees noted that there has been an increase in the number of individuals pursuing a university education with a smaller financial envelope available to universities to support this increase. Whereas universities in the past were seen as elite institutions available to a select few, to demonstrate the need for increased funding they are increasingly required to demonstrate the direct connection between a university education and the job market to

rationalize their economic existence. Universities are now in the business of training workers to be 'job ready.' Public universities are being increasingly leveraged by governments that fund them to "solve economic problems." While respondents recognized this new reality and that "students and their parents are looking for assurances in a volatile world," interviewees were also concerned about the potential loss of "higher order thinking skills" and that the sole focus not be on "preparing for a career." Interviewees were concerned that this sole focus was shortsighted and could lead to students who can enter directly into a career but would not have the skills to adapt and succeed throughout their careers.

Respondents also commented that the profile of students has changed, with students in the past more likely to be able to focus on their education full time. Students today have many commitments with more anxiety and less "excitement about learning." Due to being over stretched, students are no longer able to engage in as much deep learning and overall are looking for ways to get the "highest impact in their academic success with the lowest amount of commitment." More students now see university as a means for them to upskill to prepare for the intense competition there is in the job market for jobs. Alongside this is an increased need for student supports and faculty providing more flexibility in their courses while trying to balance the need to maintain academic standards. Students are looking for more "streamlined" access to services and supports, and faculty are noticing students are looking for expectations to be defined more clearly as a result of students needing to balance the many competing demands on their time.

Gaps in Student Preparedness

Respondents also commented on how prepared they think students are for university today and gaps they notice in their preparedness. Only one respondent felt that students are fully prepared for university, and they felt that this was due to the fact that students had achieved the entrance requirements that had been set for their program. Other respondents noted that there was a wide range in terms of student preparedness and the gap is growing larger. Students are good at multitasking and have a good grasp of technology; however, they are too distracted with life, and this impacts their ability to focus. Study habits and time management skills were also identified as gaps. Respondents felt that students were also more passive observers in the learning process, looking for ways to "shortcut the learning process" likely due to competing demands on their time. Knowledge of the expectations of being a university student were also identified as gaps and students need more supports in how to navigate the university system and "ask for help." Group work, communication skills problem solving, critical thinking, and analysis skills were also noted as gaps.

Analysis Leading to the Key Themes

The first step in the analysis to arrive at the key themes that informed the ILOs was to read through the transcripts and coding of the responses. This was done manually by the researcher. Once completed the text was transposed into an excel spreadsheet creating a list of condensed meaning units, adhering as closely to the original text as possible. Some condensed meaning units repeated as the responses were taken directly from the transcripts and could have been noted by more than 1 respondent. This first step in the analysis led to 194 meaning units.

From the meaning units, 78 codes were created. From the codes, categories of alignment where the codes fit logically together were created, resulting in twelve categories. This was an iterative process spanning over two months as the codes were read through numerous times by both the researcher and the second reader to ensure accuracy. Three examples to demonstrate how the analysis progressed from condensed meaning unit to code and category are provided in Table 6.

Table 6

Example of Analysis From Condensed Meaning Unit to Category

Condensed meaning unit	Code	Category
Ability to work as a valuable member of a team	Teamwork	Job ready
Ability to be flexible, deal with uncertainty and ambiguity	Adaptability	Personal attributes
Community feeling even though a lot of our students are commuters	Community	Student centered

After moving to categories, the data was further analyzed using content analysis, keeping the research question for the study in focus. This resulted in the creation of three themes. These three themes with their definition and the categories that fit under them are provided in Table 7.

Table 7

Alignment of Categories with Themes

Skills	Values	Attributes
Technical knowledge that can be learned through education and training	Principles, standards, and ideals associated with a university education	Soft skills or personal and interpersonal talents
• Communication	• Applied learning	• Personal attributes
• Job ready	• Equity, diversity, inclusion (EDI)	• Self-awareness
• Problem solving		• Social
• Research	• Lifelong learning	
• Technology	• Student centered	

The next section breaks down the data within each of the 3 key themes that emerged and form the basis of the creation of the Institutional Learning Outcomes.

Skills Theme

Within the theme of skills, the focus was on communication skills, skills to make graduates 'job ready,' problem-solving, research and use of technology. Interviewees highlighted these areas as most needed for students to succeed in today's world and the world of tomorrow. This section provides an overall analysis of the data within the "skills" theme. A table outlining the condensed meaning units under each category within this theme is provided in Appendix B.

Respondents noted that all students should have the ability to communicate effectively orally and in written form to "express themselves and express an idea." To be effective, students should also have the ability to communicate in a variety of media

forms. No longer is it adequate for students to just know how to write a paper. They should also have the skills to communicate in social media, video and a variety of other emerging technology platforms. Students should also graduate with the skills to be 'job ready.' While respondents noted that this was not the only value of a university education, they noted that the most salient of the skills transferrable to a variety of career situations were to be able to engage in the social and professional dynamics of a work environment and critical to this was the ability to work as part of a team. They should also possess an "entrepreneurial mindset" and have strong leadership skills.

The most discussed skill by respondents was to be able to problem solve. This skill from their perspective involves critical thinking which was defined by one respondent as the ability to "understand and ask questions" and another as thinking outside the box and applying concepts beyond the immediate problem or question. Another respondent noted the need to expand beyond just solving problems as solving problems implies that there is always an issue. To problem solve is to provide solutions to "problems" as well as "questions" that are posed. Another key component to this is exposure to breadth in their education and to multiple ideas. To be able to problem solve, students need adequate scope to be able to build their ideas and see the many possibilities for solving problems and answering questions. Respondents also noted the need to ensure that students are able to adequately assess information for what is valid and credible. They will encounter problems that are ill-defined and need to be able to assess the wide range of resources available to solve them. In today's world graduates will need the skills to "not be intimidated by complexity" and this comes as a result of being able to assess what is important and what is not in any given situation. Further to this, respondents

noted the need to be able to engage in research and a key component of this is the ability to analyze data through analytics, visualizations and basic programming and coding.

Graduates of today will also be required to be "quick learners" with technology as it changes rapidly. They will need to be able to assess information flow and engage in knowledge translation all while "critically examining the consequences" of technological advances on society. One respondent summarized it as students will need to know "how to survive and thrive in the age of A.I. and this will require teamwork, communication skills, problem solving, and creative and critical thinking" to allow students to "use tech tools to better society, enhance democracy and support economic development."

Values Theme

The values theme relates to the ideals respondents associated with a university education either broadly or specific to this university. This section provides an overall analysis of the data within the "values" theme. A chart outlining the condensed meaning units under each category within this theme is provided in Appendix C.

Respondents noted the importance of applied learning opportunities to practice hands-on with connections to the community in which the university is situated. These experiential learning opportunities provide students the ability to apply what is learned in the classroom to a real-world setting. In addition, ideals associated with equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) also came out as important components within this theme. Respondents associated this with providing students with a broader understanding of social and global issues and for students to graduate as a "driving force for social change." They noted that this requires not just depth but also breadth of knowledge within their academic programs for students to "engage with the world and realize their

sense of place within it." They further noted that this comes from celebrating the uniqueness of students. As an access university respondents noted this as a particular strength and the acceptance of students who have had varying degrees of prior success and allowing them to meet their full potential. It was further noted the importance of responding to the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, with the need to assess the greatest impacts within the strengths of the university and surrounding community.

Another aspect that came out strongly within this theme was continuous learning. The university should teach students to be flexible, collaborative, adaptable and able to deal with ambiguity. Within this was a call to focus on "learning how to learn" and allowing students to "explore with a purpose." Universities provide an opportunity to build networks to enhance future learning opportunities and while one goal can be to have students who are 'job ready' there is also a need to build skills that will allow students to continue to adapt and grow throughout their careers.

Respondents also commented on the program mix for this university within the applied learning category. Key throughout the themes was a need to balance both depth and breadth of knowledge in programs. They also noted that programs at this university should have students examining environmental impacts, have a basis in or focus on technology, demonstrate a direct line to industry and have a hybrid approach to delivery. Further, they noted that the unique features of the university that should be preserved include the small community feel, the focus on "high tech, high touch" with hands-on learning as well as the responsiveness of faculty and staff to ensure that the university continues to be student centered.

Attributes Theme

Within the attributes theme respondents cited the need for personal attributes related to growth, respect, adaptability, empathy, ethical conduct and striving for personal excellence. This section provides an overall analysis of the data within the "attributes" theme. A table outlining the condensed meaning units under each category within this theme is provided in Appendix D.

The goal of students in their studies according to respondents should be to engage, practice curiosity and to be self-reflective. Respondents noted that these attributes contribute to graduates who are flexible, adaptable, and resilient. Being self-aware was also noted as an important indicator of desirable attributes for graduates. University provides a space for broadening knowledge and maturing that allows for "independent self-growth." University life should also contribute socially through "building a sense of community and belonging both virtually and in person." Networking was viewed as an important social activity. Overall, a university was seen to provide "a community in which to learn" and this community was viewed as providing for both immediate needs but also future success.

This section summarized the process of analysis as well as the key findings associated with the three themes derived from the central research question. The next section examines the implications of the analysis and provides an interpretation of the findings that led to the creation of the ILOs for the university.

Interpretation of Findings

The purpose of this research study was to develop ILOs for a university in Ontario, Canada by involving key stakeholders. The ILOs are intended to inform the

organizational identity to classify what is unique about an education at this institution in relation to others. The creation of ILOs assist in clearly articulating the unique public value of this university from the perspective of faculty and staff. To do this the research involved an inductive methodology to content analysis through a value co-creation approach by interviewing program directors and academic advisors at the institution. By involving these key groups instead of focusing on external pressures the process helped to close the value perception gap identified by Bakutyte and Grundey (2012). The learning outcomes at the institutional level outline not just what individual learners achieve but the overall public value of the university.

Synthesizing the data from meaning units to codes, categories and themes helped to ensure that the research question was answered through the voices of participants. This analysis arrived at 4 broad outcomes that outline the skills, values and attributes discussed by participants. These four draft ILOs are as follows:

1. Preparing job ready, lifelong learners who are flexible, adaptable, and resilient to navigate a turbulent world.

2. Developing technological leadership using real-world examples that critically examine the role and impact of new and emerging technologies in society.

3. Promoting awareness and social change through research and collaboration with our diverse community in a variety of media and forms.

4. Building meaningful social connections focused on the student experience and student success.

These ILOs are derived directly from the analysis and include the key categories from each of the three themes. Within the skills theme, job ready, technology, research,

and communication through collaboration. They also include the values of lifelong

learning, EDI through awareness and social change, applied learning through real world

examples, as well as a focus on the student experience. The attributes noted include

flexibility, adaptability and resilience, problem solving through critical thinking as well

as social connections. The wording of the outcomes was put together through

interpretation of the themes by the researcher based on the analysis. For greater buy-in

and to ensure that they resonate with the entire university community the deliverable of

this project is a governance report that outlines these draft outcomes to allow for

continued consultation through established governance mechanisms. Further refinement

and changes to the ILOs may result from this consultation process. The outcomes of this

PAS provide a starting point for that consultation based on the findings.

Unanticipated Limitations or Outcomes

As the interviews progressed it became apparent that there was a clear divide

between interviewees that saw the creation of ILOs as important for the university and

those that saw their creation as potentially limiting. This was unanticipated given the long

history of learning outcome use in higher education at both the course and program

levels. Most of the respondents who saw the use of ILOs as problematic were concerned

about how they would be operationalized and the impact this could potentially have on

the way they deliver the content of their programs. For those who saw them as beneficial

they were able to articulate how they saw the ILOs being operationalized and how they

had been used at other institutions. The most common route noted was using university-

wide required courses that would cover relevant material to ensure that all graduates are

exposed to the skills, values and attributes as outlined in the ILOs. The question of

implementation was not considered as part of this study, but it will need to be explored prior to adoption of the ILOs. Having a clear articulation of this will be important to bringing those on board who may be skeptical of their use.

Implications Resulting from the Findings

The goal of this study was to create a set of ILOs that were derived from the voices of those inside the university that would outline the overall public value. These ILOs are intended to define for external and internal audiences what it means to be a member of the university community and what graduates of the institution can expect to achieve not just from their programs, but also to build community around what it means to be a graduate of the university regardless of what program they choose to study. The qualitative analysis began from meaning units taken directly from the transcripts in the participants own words to then arrive at the codes, categories and themes that ultimately resulted in the draft ILOs. The process was intended to focus on value co-creation, as having participants who are engaged are more likely to advance the mission and plans of the university and close the 'value perception gap.' There are many competing stakeholders and priorities for universities. The focus could just as easily be defined by external pressures. While these external pressures and priorities will never go away the creation of ILOs from internal stakeholders help to reposition how to approach external pressures and planning exercises while also looking to alignment with the overall goals and priorities of the institution.

While there is significant literature on learning outcomes, most of it focusses on the course and program level. The literature does not examine how to approach learning outcome development at the institutional level. While higher education institutions have

created ILOs the process by which they have gone about doing so has not been formally outlined in the literature. Therefore, this research also provides a case study for approaching the creation of ILOs at other postsecondary institutions. It provides a framework for questions to pose to participants to garner responses that could form the core of ILOs as well as a method of analysis that could be replicated by others. This study also set out to change the dynamics between priorities for institutions that are created internally and externally. By setting out a case as well as a method for involving internal stakeholders in this process the study contributes to positive social change by providing a way to demonstrate the overall public value from the perspective of those inside the organization. Concretely, the results will also assist the university to contribute to positive social change as one of the resulting ILOs is 'promoting awareness and social change through research and collaboration with our diverse community in a variety of media and forms'. By implementing this ILO as a strategic priority, it will help to advance a focus on social change for graduates of the university.

Recommendations

This study resulted in a draft of ILOs for the institution based on qualitative research conducted and analyzed through content analysis. In depth interviews were conducted with program directors and academic advisors to gather data for the draft ILOs. The university community is larger than these two groups and therefore while the ILOs as drafted provide a basis for adopting ILOs at the institution, further consultation is required with other groups at the university prior to full adoption of the ILOs.

As a result, the deliverable of this PAS is a governance report that outlines the steps taken to create the ILOs and the initial recommendations include the draft ILOs for

adoption (see deliverable report at Appendix E). In order to adopt the ILOs this report should follow the established governance channels which includes consultation with relevant bodies at the university before approval by senate as the highest academic decision-making body. Throughout the process as the consultation takes place revisions and enhancements to the ILOs may occur as feedback is generated. The draft ILOs are the interpretation of the analysis by the researcher, however following the full governance consultation and approval process will act as another measure to validate the research but is outside the scope of this study.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

This study resulted in the creation of four ILOs based on the interviews with academic advisors and program directors in each of the Faculties at the institution. As the research was completed virtually during the global COVID-19 pandemic the overall number of participants was lower than anticipated. This lower participation rate from two of the smaller Faculties may have resulted in skewing the results in favour of respondents from the larger Faculties. The deliverable of the project is a governance report that outlines the ILOs. It will be important that these ILOs are adopted through the full governance consultation and approval path to ensure that the ILOs reflect feedback from across the institution which will further enhance the reliability of the outcome but is outside the scope of this PAS.

Dependability and confirmability of the results have been established through an audit trail. All processes that were followed were logged with detailed notes and these notes were made available to the second reader. This second reader also reviewed the analysis process from coding of the raw data to interpretation of the categories and

themes. Definitions were also created for the categories and themes to ensure that there was consistency in application of the categories and themes across the analysis.

The main limitation of this study is that the outcome while replicable, only applies to this university. The survey instrument and process of analysis can be used as methods to create ILOs at other institutions, but the overall results of this study are not applicable outside of this client university.

While the use of learning outcomes at the course and program level is well documented in the literature there has not yet been a common method for addressing learning outcomes at the institutional level in higher education. This PAS created a set of questions and methodology that can be used by others. To further validate the use of the questions and methodology by other organizations it would be beneficial to use these approaches outside of this one university to move this approach forward. The use of in person interviews may have increased the number of participants. An analysis of the use of this instrument at other higher education institutions to create ILOs would benefit from examining this further. In addition, this study interviewed program directors and academic advisors. Further studies may benefit from expanding beyond these populations and reporting on successes and limitations of involving other participant groups.

Summary

This section outlined the collection and interpretation of the data from meaning units to codes and categories within three themes derived from the analysis, resulting in the creation of four ILOs. Approaches to creating learning outcomes at the institutional level do not exist in the literature. This study provides a unique contribution to the learning outcome literature in this respect and can be used as a case study for others who

may want to create ILOs at their institution. Section 5 will outline the dissemination plan

and include information on the governance report that is the deliverable resulting from

this research.

Section 5: Dissemination Plan

These ILOs were developed for a University in Ontario, Canada. The research was conducted with academic advisors and program directors to create the draft outcomes. These outcomes will be shared with the provost of the university as the most senior administrator responsible for the academy. As draft outcomes, the ILOs would then require formal approval through the established governance process at the university which includes further consultation with key stakeholders that may result in edits to the ILOs before being formally adopted. Therefore, a governance report was created as the deliverable of this project.

PAS Deliverable Described

The deliverable was a governance report and is provided in Appendix E. This governance report included a summary of the mandate of the committee that will examine the motion for consideration. It also included a formal motion that notes that the committee recommended formal adoption of the ILOs by the governance committee with final approval which in this case was the senate. The report also provided a background and rationale for the approval as well as an outline of any resources required and a summary of the consultation and approval path. This will allow the senate to make an informed decision on whether to adopt the ILOs as presented as well as noting revisions made through consultation at the various committees. In addition, as this study is the first attempt in the literature to create a method for generating ILOs for higher education institutions, presenting the methodology and findings in relevant academic journals and conferences to contribute to advancing the practice at other institutions and making further improvements to the methodology would be beneficial.

Summary and Conclusions

This administrative study was conducted with a focus on post-NPM using a PV approach. It defined for the client organization the strategic focus of the university in the next phase of development through the creation of ILOs. The ILOs were developed through qualitative interviews conducted with faculty and staff. To develop the ILOs, the participants were asked their opinions on the skills, values, and attributes they would like the institution to be known for as they prepare graduates for success in today's world and the world of tomorrow. The data were analyzed using content analysis. The results of this study will help to define for internal and external audiences the overall PV of the organization and allow for greater alignment of planning processes and focusing of resource decisions. The focus of existing learning outcome literature is on the course and program level. There is a gap in how to approach learning outcomes at the institutional level. This study fills that gap by providing a framework for other organizations interested in creating ILOs.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Conversational Guide

Introductory Questions

1. What is your role at the university?

2. How long have you worked in education?

3. What made you pursue a career in higher education?

Transition Questions

4. In your time in higher education, what have been the biggest changes you have noticed?

5. What have you observed about how prepared student are for university today?

Key Questions

6. What do you think is the value of a university education?

7. What should be unique about receiving an education at this university?

8. From your perspective, what would be the attributes of an ideal graduate?

9. What should every student know or be able to do when they graduate from this university to prepare them for future success?

Closing Question

10. How can we better prepare students for the world of the future?

Appendix B: Category and Condensed Meaning Units for "Skills"

Communication

Communication – oral and written

Communicate well both oral and written

Communication ability, presentation skills, ability to interact with people

Writing ability

Transactional skills

Writing and communication skills

Presentation skills

Communication – oral presentations

Writing

Read and write a report

Strong and effective communication (in every media form available)

Write properly

Express themselves and express an idea

Communicate and present themselves

Writing and communication skills

Public speaking

Job Ready

Human relationships – social and professional dynamics

Professionalism – what it means to be a professional

Teamwork

Ability to work as a valuable member of a team

Production line and production skill set

Leadership

Project management

Working in teams/community

Group work, ability to work in a group and how groups function

Prepare students for a job

Production of workers that possess knowledge and skills relevant to an ever-changing capitalist economy

Market oriented

Create a university for the 21st century – market driven

Entrepreneurial mindset

Everyone should have a well written resume

Problem Solving

Project based learning in a real world setting for assessment – to create a product

Critical thinking

Accurately assess ideas using data to make sound decisions/judgements

Critical thinker – think through scenarios, control variables

Assess what is valid information

Ability to acquire knowledge, build understandings/meanings

Creative thinking and problem solving

Not being intimidated by complexity – knowing what is important and what isn't

More problem-based learning, less definition of context for students to make decisions

Problem based learning – provide a sandbox of changing roles

Opportunity to use their background experience

Need to have people who can actually find problems as well as be able to solve them

Create flexibility in the curriculum, allow for breadth and opportunity to explore

Provide students with opportunities to solve ill-defined problems and ensure that they are using all the resources to solve those problems

Computational and algorithmic thinking

Reinforce the concept of what kind of information you can trust

Problem solving

Critical thinkers

Solve problems effectively within constraints (constraints are the mother of invention)

Problem solving and critical thinking

Assess the credibility of different types of evidence

Ability to articulate what they know using the best tools to present it

Critical thinking

Problem solving behaviors, slowing down to get it right

Critical thinking

How to verify information

Critical skills: critical analysis and critical thinking

Critical thinking is number 1

Assess the quality and accuracy of information

Problem solving

Be able to go through information and sort out what is important and what is not

Critical thinking in university, college has content experts

Think outside the box, apply concepts beyond the immediate

Critical thinkers

Ability to think critically – understand and ask questions

Problem solving skills

"learning to find the truth"

To practice, take risks before going out to the real world

Provide adequate scope to build ideas/see possibilities

Opportunity to learn critical thinking

Learning theory to apply to real world problem (or question – problem implies there is an issue)

Research

Be able to undertake research

Data – how to analyse it

Have to understand if you are successful in the thing you are trying to solve and that requires data

Data analysis and programming languages

Data science, data analytics, data visualization

Data analysis – representing things through data

Analysis and working with data

Excel

Basic research

Interpret basic descriptive statistics and standard deviation

Learning how to research

The production of research that leads to new knowledge or new kinds of innovations that support democratic and capitalist ends (knowledge to help governments and policy makers for good governance; produce innovations that support the growth of new economic sectors that feed economic growth to grow GDP and create new jobs)

Technology

Quick learners when it comes to tech

Being IT literate

Understanding information flow and knowledge translation (IT literate)

Be resourceful in the use of technology (how to find resources and how to use and connect those resources and then how to create something new from the resources – programming does this)

How to survive and thrive in the age of A.I. (this requires teamwork, communication skills, problem solving, creative and critical thinking)

Coding

Use of different technologies

Computer programming

Use of technology

Small level of programming

Know how to use technology – this comes through frequency and confidence of use

Tech with a conscience – real world examples to critically examine the consequences

Explore technology

Unique opportunity to equip our students with a range of knowledge, competencies and skills related to understanding the role and impact of new and emerging technologies in society

That students can use tech tools to better society, enhance democracy and support economic development

Use of technology to drive innovation (two sides – cause major issues and also solutions)

Appendix C: Category and Condensed Meaning Units for "Values"

Applied Learning

Apply learning to real world settings

Hands on education – what is learned in the classroom is then applied

Experiential learning

Experiential learning that is service or community learning – connection to community

Have a depth and breadth of knowledge

Knowledge of environmental impacts

Programs should be technology based or technology focussed

Direct line to industry

Hybrid approach to academics

EDI

Broader understanding of social issues (discrimination, racism)

Awareness of global issues

Holistic thinking, interpersonal skills, intercultural skills, communication skills

Driving force for social change

Knowledge gained, awareness about the world

Global awareness

Breadth of knowledge to engage with the world

Exposure to the world and realize a sense of your place in it

Being the conscience of society

Give students a chance to flourish – celebrate their uniqueness, not cookie cutter

Equity and social justice, critically examine systems of oppression

Diversity

Diversity and inclusivity

Responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action – within our strengths/through reflection of our strengths

Lifelong Learning

Continuous learning

Provide a gateway to more education/skills in the future

Lifelong learning

Create institutionally a support network

Flexibility

Have to be lifelong learners – build a community of learning

Be collaborative and adaptable

Flexibility, dealing with ambiguity

Being able to learn, teach yourself how to use the skills you have learned

Prepare for change and that requires continuous learning

Learning how to learn

Learning how to be a life long learner (to do that you need to engage students in different ways of how to learn – breadth is important)

Encourage students to study something they are passionate about

Be ready for the changing world – need to be able to evolve, teach beyond the

competencies for students to evolve into lifelong learners

To "explore with a purpose"

Learn to learn, not just be 'job ready'

It's a training ground

Developing learning

Learn beyond what learning right now – "learning how to learn"

Learn how to think – exposes people to other ideas, ways of thinking

Student Centered

Smaller class sizes

Small, student centered

High tech and high touch

Provide a personal experience

Hands on, small classes

A lot of staff are first gen themselves

Responsiveness of the faculty and staff

Smaller campus

Small class sizes

Support for students

Community feeling even though a lot of our students are commuters

Provide students opportunities for research

Focus on the student experience, student knowledge and student success

Appendix D: Category and Condensed Meaning Units for "Attributes"

Personal Attributes

Ethical behaviour

Advocate for themselves

Preparation of leaders, therefore exposure to a lot of ideas is important (analyze them, critically evaluate them, how they fit for themselves and where they can be applied for the betterment of society)

Ability to be flexible, deal with uncertainty and ambiguity

Be adaptable – adapt and embrace change

Respectful of others

Being adaptable

To be able to build more autonomy into the types of occupations you have "uniqueness in your profile"

Confidence to try something new

Learn what they are passionate about

Empathy is essential – it is something you build by knowing who you are as a human being

Provides possibility and opportunity from experiences

Engaged and curious about the world, open minded

Self reflection

Self reflective

Strive for excellence – aim to be the best they can be professionally (more attitude than skills)

The more unique in your combinations, more the ability to build a profile that is unique/distinguished from others

Flexible, adaptable, resilient to navigate a turbulent world

Welcome disagreements and counter arguments

Independence

Learn to grow as humans/mature

Self Awareness

Broadening experience, a maturing process

Self awareness

Learn their own limits and push those limits

Build confidence as people

Students that can market themselves

Cultivate citizens, free thinking, rational individuals that can look at the world and identify problems,

find solutions to those problems and live a good life to support the betterment of society

Independent self growth

Social

Sense of community and belonging

Networking

Collaboration

Collaboration/connection

Networking – learning is a social activity

Gives you a community to learn in

Social side – meet new people

How to build community – online and in person

How to connect with others

Appendix E: Governance Report

SENATE REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation	☐
Decision	☒
Discussion/Direction	☒
Information	☐

DATE: TBD

FROM: Joint Report of USC and GSC

SUBJECT: Institutional Learning Outcomes for the University

COMMITTEE MANDATE:
- Under the Policy Framework, Policy Owners must consult with deliberative bodies before presenting draft policy instruments to the approval authority for approval
- Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) and Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) have a mandate of maintaining the academic standards set by Senate and to serve as deliberative bodies for academic policy instruments
- USC and GSC are seeking approval of the proposed Institutional Learning Outcomes following consultation at these committees.

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION:
That, pursuant to the recommendation of the Graduate and Undergraduate Studies Committees, Senate hereby approve the Institutional Learning Outcomes as presented.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:
Faculty and staff were engaged in an exercise to create Institutional Learning Outcomes for the university. During the Spring and Summer of 2021 program directors and academic advisors were interviewed to garner their thoughts on the skills, values, and attributes the university should strive to instill in all graduates to prepare them for success as professionals and community members in today's world and the world of tomorrow. Following the interviews, the data was analyzed using content analysis to arrive at four overall learning outcomes for the institution.

The ILOs are intended to enhance the ability of the institution to differentiate itself in the crowded post-secondary environment and to support overall institutional planning. Through the interviews with faculty and staff and also the consultation process on the resulting ILOs the intention is to help to create a greater sense of community around what the university strives to have all graduates achieve. Once approved the ILOs will help clarify where the institution is headed, provide a set of overarching outcomes and help to ensure internal compatibility across planning and program development.

Role of ILOs:
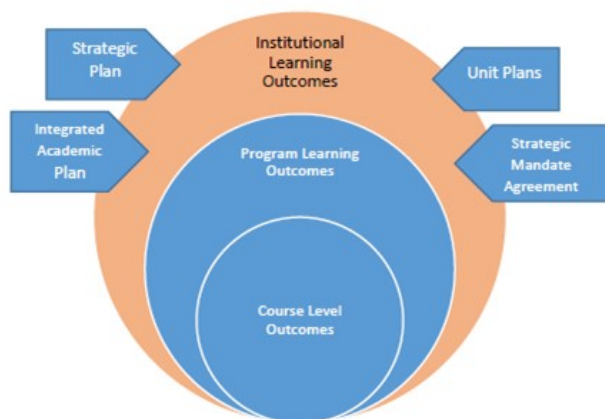
Organizational identity is important to any entity. In the current environment of reduced funding and increased accountability, organizational identity becomes even more important as organizations need to focus limited funds on what makes the most difference for each organization. Knowing what these strategic directions are allows for investments in these areas to further the goals of the organization now and into the future. Building a shared identity through the creation of ILOs based on the ideas of the relevant stakeholders helps to build an identity that is not just about the organization but the people that are part of it. It is through the creation of the ILOs that the identity of this organization is formalized and is able to make long-term plans based on what the people who are part of it have determined as priorities.

Using content analysis, the interview data was synthesized from meaning units to codes, categories and themes helped to ensure that the research question was answered through the voices of participants. This analysis arrived at four broad outcomes that outline the skills, values and attributes discussed by participants. These four draft outcomes are as follows:

1. Preparing job ready, lifelong learners who are flexible, adaptable and resilient to navigate a turbulent world.
2. Developing technological leadership using real-world examples that critically examine the role and impact of new and emerging technologies in society.

3. Promoting awareness and social change through research and collaboration with our diverse community in a variety of media and forms.
4. Building meaningful social connections focused on the student experience and student success.

These ILOs were derived directly from the analysis and include the key categories from each of the three themes of skills, values, and attributes. Within the skills theme, job ready, technology, research, and communication through collaboration. The ILOs also include the values of lifelong learning, EDI through awareness and social change, applied learning through real world examples, as well as a focus on the student experience. The attributes noted include flexibility, adaptability and resilience, problem solving through critical thinking as well as social connections.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:
There are no further resource investments required in the creation of the ILOs. The ILOs will assist in making resource decisions based on alignment with the strategic priorities as outlined in the ILOs.

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:
- Consultation has been in compliance with the requirements outlined in the policy framework.
- Revisions to earlier versions of these ILOs as a result of these consultations include the following: [TBC based on consultations].

NEXT STEPS:
Following the approval of the ILOs further work is required on how to implement them for programs. Possible avenues discussed during the interviews included having common breadth courses for all students at the university to ensure that they are achieving the ILOs as set out. This is a common practice at other institutions.