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Improving Work-Integrated Learning Experiences through the Implementation of a Quality Framework at a Multi-Campus College

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Abstract

Work-integrated learning, commonly referred to as WIL, is a growing curricular experiential education practice integrating academic studies with practical experiences within a workplace setting. WIL is a strategic priority within Canadian and international post-secondary institutions, including Waterville College (a pseudonym), a multi-campus Canadian community college. WIL activities at Waterville College, while an institutional priority, have been identified through an internal review as an area with significant operational weaknesses. This dissertation-in-practice addresses the leadership problem of practice at Waterville College focusing on the inconsistent and unsystematic implementation of WIL. Grounded in principles of distributed and transformational leadership, the dissertation-in-practice examines Waterville College's organizational context, identifies key change drivers, and poses guiding questions to align the change initiative. Through an analysis informed by the functionalist paradigm and structuralist perspective, a leadership framework for a change initiative is proposed. The change path model guides the planning process supported by an exploration of the rationale behind the proposed change, an assessment of the institution's readiness for change, and a thorough evaluation of potential solutions. The analysis culminates in a comprehensive change implementation plan emphasizing structured communication with monitoring and evaluation strategies. This dissertation-in-practice offers a systematic approach to align WIL practices with institutional goals, thereby enhancing student outcomes and contributing to graduate employability.

Keywords: work-integrated learning, change path model, quality framework, distributed leadership, transformational leadership, multi-campus college

Executive Summary

Work-integrated learning (WIL), a form of experiential learning, is emerging as a strategic priority for Canadian and international post-secondary institutions, including Waterville College (a pseudonym), aiming to enhance academic learning with real-world work experiences. WIL has become an important tool for governments and employers to address critical labour and skills shortages in Canada (Peters & Pizarro Milian, 2024). Despite Waterville College's commitment to enhancing applied experiential learning in its current strategic plan (WC, 2023c), an internal review (Author, 2022) revealed significant quality concerns with WIL implementation across campuses, academic schools, and programs. This dissertation-in-practice addresses the leadership problem of practice at Waterville College, focusing on the inconsistent and unsystematic approach to meaningful student WIL programming.

Chapter 1 establishes the organizational context, vision, and leadership agency for change, emphasizing the need to align WIL practices with the institution's excellence goals. Waterville College, with more than 15 campuses, has significant levels of WIL activities ongoing across academic schools with documented inconsistencies in operational practices. As the director of the office of strategic initiatives, the author has been assigned by the vice president of academics and applied research to address this area of significant academic concern. Through the lens of functionalist and structuralist perspectives, the author, as the change leader, identifies key organizational issues and poses guiding questions to drive the change initiative. These three guiding questions focus on WIL leaders at all levels of the organization, available and required resources, and the complexity of multi-campus structure. Utilizing Bolman and Deal's (2017) four frames (structural, human resources, political, and symbolic), an understanding is created of the different perspectives and organizational context in which the problem of practice exists. This includes developing a contextual definition of WIL, an overview of several existing institutional quality frameworks, and the results from a PEST (political, economic,

sociodemographic and technology) review. This analysis is balanced with internal institutional data and forms the basis for planning the change initiative.

Chapter 2 delves into the rationale behind the proposed change, exploring leadership approaches, potential solutions, change models, and Waterville College's readiness for change. A leadership framework blending transformational (Burns, 1978) and distributed leadership (Gronn, 2000, 2010) is proposed, alongside Deszca et al.'s (2020) change path model, laying the foundation for subsequent planning. The change path model consists of four steps including awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization. Each step is explored in the context of the problem of practice. Several limitations were identified including the lack of a clear institutional definition of WIL, the absence of WIL policies and procedures, and the general complexity of partner dependent WIL processes. Using the eight dimensions of the Organizational Capacity for Change construct developed by Judge and Douglas (2009), the author determines there is a high readiness for change at Waterville College. This is important to increase the likelihood of success of this change initiative.

Using Wood and Hilton's (2012) model of multiple paradigms for ethical decision making for community college leaders as a base, the author develops and considers three solutions to the leadership problem at Waterville College. The resulting preferred solution is a centralized institutional model with integrated campus-based implementation. This option ranked highest when considering its alignment to organizational strategic goals, estimated timeline to implement, positive impact on WIL services, and factoring in human, fiscal and technological resource requirements.

Chapter 3, the final chapter, outlines the implementation, monitoring, and communication strategies for the change initiative. Leveraging the change path model, a structured approach is devised, supported by a detailed communication plan, and integrated monitoring and evaluation processes. The detailed change implementation plan is developed in alignment with Waterville College's current strategic plan outlining existing institutional priorities. Necessary supports and resources are identified

along with mitigation strategies to address anticipated implementation challenges. A comprehensive four-phase communication plan to support the implementation is developed based on Klein's (1996) communication principles. Key communication messages, developed by the author, are then integrated into a Knowledge Transfer strategy (Lavis et al., 2003) to support knowledge sharing and decision making. To support the implementation success, an integrated monitoring and evaluation plan is developed based on Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016) framework. Institutional quality WIL standards developed by Campbell et al. (2019), incorporated and mapped by the author, are integrated into the change implementation plan and the monitoring and evaluation framework. The chapter concludes with next steps and future considerations for the planned change solution, emphasizing the importance of sustained effort and participant and partner engagement.

In summary, this dissertation-in-practice presents a systematic approach to address the inconsistency in WIL implementation at Waterville College, grounded in collaborative and transformational leadership principles and guided by an established change model. By aligning WIL practices with institutional goals and fostering a culture of experiential learning excellence, Waterville College can enhance student outcomes and contribute to graduate employability in the evolving workforce landscape.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Tables

xii

Acronyms

BOG Board of Governors

CEWIL Co-operative Education and Work Integrated Learning

CPM Change Path Model

DiP Dissertation-in-Practice

EDI Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

KM Knowledge Mobilization

LSS Lean Six Sigma

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

OCC Organizational Capacity for Change

OIR Office of Institutional Research

OSI Office of Strategic Initiatives

PEST Political Economic Sociodemographic and Technology

PoP Problem of Practice

QBH Quality Board Huddle

VPAAR Vice President of Academics and Applied Research

WC Waterville College

WIL Work-Integrated Learning

Definitions

Distributed Leadership: A leadership approach in higher education involving a collaborative approach where leadership responsibilities are shared among many individuals regardless of their formal roles (Gronn, 2002). It embraces informal, emergent, and collective influences (Bolden, 2011), leveraging both formal and informal leaders to achieve common goals (Gronn, 2000, 2010; Jones, 2014). This approach emphasizes trust, respect, and collaboration among members to effectively attain shared objectives (Harris, 2006; Jones et al., 2012).

Knowledge Mobilization: The utilization of research in policy and practice at both individual and organizational levels to enhance the integration of research findings by education collaborators, including policymakers, practitioners, and the general public (Malik, 2020).

Lean Six Sigma: A methodology for enhancing organizational efficiency and effectiveness (WC, 2019), striving to reduce inefficiencies, minimize process fluctuations, and enhance quality standards (Voehl et al., 2014).

Transformational Leadership: A leadership approach that changes and transforms people, focusing on the charismatic and affective aspects of leadership. It is concerned with and addresses emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term objectives. Originally developed in 1978 by James MacGregor Burns (Northhouse, 2019).

Work-Integrated Learning: A form of curricular experiential education integrating academic studies with practical experiences within a workplace or practice setting (CEWIL, 2021).

Chapter 1: Problem Posing

Work-integrated learning (WIL), defined by Zegwaard and Pretti (2023) as curricular-based, relevant, and authentic work experience, is on the rise as a strategic priority within Canadian and international post-secondary institutions (BHER, 2016). At Waterville College (WC), a pseudonym, one of the goals stated in the current strategic plan (WC, 2023c) is strengthening opportunities for applied experiential learning. WIL is a means to facilitate experiential learning in post-secondary education as it integrates academic learning and practical work application in a work-related environment (Sattler et al., 2011). WIL is viewed as a mechanism for post-secondary educational institutions to have a significant impact on graduate employability (Silva et al., 2018). As identified in an internal WC process review (Author, 2022), the roles, expectations, processes and experiences of students, institutional employees, and employers engaging in WIL activities differ at the campus, academic school, and program levels. These multiplicity of processes impact the quality of experiential learning integration with the core curriculum, and consequently, do not align with the desired outcome of institutional excellence (WC, 2022a; WC, 2023c). This dissertation-in-practice (DiP) aims to examine the leadership problem of practice (PoP) at WC, a multi-campus Canadian college with an inconsistent and unsystematic approach to meaningful student work-integrated learning.

This first chapter of the DiP provides details on my leadership lens and positionality with principles from transformational and distributed leadership guiding my leadership lens. An organizational overview follows, with an organizational analysis identifying key change drivers and exposing the existing problem area. Subsequently, guiding questions are explored and a detailed analysis reveals a leadership-focused vision for future change.

Positionality and Lens Statement

As a scholar-practitioner, my leadership position and lens have developed and evolved over 28 years of experience in higher education and public policy work. By informing and supporting my work

experience with knowledge from academic scholarship, I have engaged in continuous improvement beneficial to both myself and the organizations to which I was employed (Seefeld, 2015). I have developed an extensive personal and professional network from many years of service on campuses and within other departments at WC. I have a positive reputation for working collaboratively and effectively with internal and external partners on challenging initiatives and projects. In addition, I continuously strive to acknowledge and understand my own interconnecting identities and values (Kezar, 2000).

As a graduate of a program with multiple work terms, I understand first-hand the value of WIL experiences. Besides helping finance my education, these work opportunities and life experiences built skills, confidence, and a helpful network of industry contacts. While committed to exploring equitable access to quality WIL experiences for all students, I acknowledge my privilege as an educated white Canadian woman in public post-secondary education. I recognize my positionality influences my research connected to formulating this DiP. I acknowledge my perspective and positionality are not fixed and will continue to change with time and experience.

Role and Agency

At WC, I lead the Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI) and provide leadership in implementing change relating to identified academic priorities. My role is quite broad and includes: (a) providing guidance, consultation, and advice to senior management on mechanisms and processes to realize the college's priority strategic initiatives; (b) leading the institution's strategic initiative development process, including consulting, planning, proposal development, funding agency liaison and reporting; (c) working with college leaders to grow internal capacity to develop comprehensive proposals for funding agency programs reflecting WC priorities, and anticipating and recognizing needs, risks, and opportunities arising with initiative development; and (d) overall project management, including preparation of project plans detailing the steps, timeline and resources needed to accomplish specific initiatives and applying continuous improvement efforts and evidence-based decision making as a

critical part of project implementation. This leadership position was newly created less than two years ago and reports to the vice president of academics and applied research (VPAAR). It is currently titled as a director, however, is in the reclassification process to be renamed a dean position.

One of the strategic priorities assigned to the OSI is institutional WIL coordination and systems improvement. While there are currently many WIL activities ongoing at WC, there is no centralized institutional department with oversight, coordination responsibilities, or accountability. With ongoing recruitment for a new manager of WIL to support the OSI, my position has been given direct agency over improving how WIL operates in the institution through a centralized quality framework.

Leadership Lens

Reflecting on my many years working in higher education, I generally thrive when presented with challenging leadership opportunities requiring me to work collaboratively to address a complex problem. Building diverse cross-institutional teams to tackle the problem, growing enthusiasm for the opportunities solving the problem presents, and communicating the value for all involved are recognized personal leadership strengths. My leadership approach is ethically grounded in that I challenge practices violating ethical norms. It is important I adhere to my values while having a high regard for respecting others and respecting the core values of my institution. When addressing the problem of practice, my leadership lens will include both a transformational and distributed approach.

Due to WC's multi-campus delivery model and organizational structure, a collaborative approach engaging students, institutional employees, and employers will be important when addressing this complex problem (Jones et al., 2012). One form of collaborative leadership in higher education to be explored is distributed leadership (Gronn, 2000; Harris et al., 2022; Youngs, 2017). Distributed leadership considers leadership shared by many players in an organization with or without a formal leadership role (Gronn, 2002) and recognizes informal, emergent, and collective acts of influence (Bolden, 2011).

Transformational leaders engage followers to understand the importance of meeting organizational outcomes, and demonstrate openness and confidence in problem-solving situations (McCleskey, 2014). It is an approach concerned with "emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals" (Northouse, 2019, p. 163). To bring about the identified organizational goal of strengthening opportunities for applied experiential learning (WC, 2023c), engaging followers while simultaneously adhering to values and building trust is an essential factor identified by Chou et al. (2013) to positively impact group outcomes. Deszca et al. (2020) described a transformational leader as one having the capacity to create strong personal connections. My extensive years working in the institution in various roles have built a solid personal and professional network and demonstrated ability to enact transformational leadership practices. Caldwell et al. (2012) noted the necessity of demonstrating a commitment to the welfare of all those affected. I deeply feel this obligation as a leader.

Relationships are core to transformational and distributed leadership approaches (Jones et al., 2012), and I strive to be an inclusive and respectful leader by creating and valuing relationships with others. Through this lens, I recognize the importance of individuals' knowledge and experience and consider their existing forged relationships. A multi-campus institution presents unique challenges for organizational change. However, deploying a transformational leadership approach, with distributed leadership practices, will build and maintain necessary networks while inspiring and motivating a shared vision amongst players (Chai et al., 2017).

A functionalist lens is utilized throughout this DiP, as well as a structuralist perspective or point of view. The focus is on establishing a quality framework for the purpose of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in WIL practices and experiences. The framework considers all program areas and all campuses at the institution as each is affected to some degree by the other. Functionalist approaches "have the capacity to foster both incremental and transformational change, improve data for decision making, and bring important new knowledge into the organization" (Dee & Leišytė, 2016, p. 277).

Interpretivism was considered, as it could potentially be used to obtain a more holistic outlook focused on the lived experiences of faculty, students, and other key collaborators (Manning, 2017). However, it was deemed more appropriate to view WIL through a positivist lens, rooted in what can be measured and confirmed, to support decision making and resourcing of proposed solutions (Dee & Leišytė, 2016; Hatch, 1997).

Organizational Context

Inspiring your journey is the expressed vision of Waterville College (WC). It is a publicly funded Canadian post-secondary institution with a mission to respond to the province's labour force, industry, and training needs (WC, 2023c). WC enrolls approximately 7,500 students each academic year (WC, 2022a). Parchments offered include certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas, applied degree-level programs, non-credit micro-credentials, and graduate certificates. The provincial college was amalgamated in the late 1990's from five regional colleges, each with multiple campuses, to its current structure of one provincial college. WC, with more than 15 geographically dispersed campuses, is the only public college in the province. While there is a cluster of three campuses located in the capital city of the province, the remaining campuses are not physically close to each other with travel requiring hours of driving or a flight to visit. Each campus offers a unique program mix, and serves different geographic regions with varying economic and sociological profiles.

Organizational Structure and Leadership Approaches

A legislative act governs the college as a crown agency. The provincial government appoints the board of governors (BOG) through the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The BOG is responsible for establishing institutional priorities through a strategic plan, and the BOG released the current 2023-2026 plan in June 2023. This plan was developed by engaging the college community, including faculty, staff, students, government, and industry partners in a consultative process. The plan outlines three priority areas consisting of: (a) equity, diversity, and inclusion; (b) teaching and learning approaches; and (c)

sustainable development and growth (WC, 2023c). The teaching and learning strategic goal prioritizes experiential learning, and within that, work-integrated learning as a core activity. As a publicly funded college, the plan considers the strategic objectives put forth by the provincial government. Using the structuralist perspective, consideration is given to how WC is impacted by both internal and external environmental factors and players as it strives to achieve organizational strategies, goals, and objectives (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

The president of the college presides over all departments and campuses. While the president reports directly to the minister of education, the president also has a reporting requirement to the BOG. The BOG approves the annual program offering plan, however, the department of education has final approval on any program changes, including new programs or program cancellations. The department also has the final decision on the annual budget allotted to WC.

The senior executive team consists of two vice-presidents and five associate vice-presidents who all report directly to the president. I lead the office of strategic initiatives located in the academic division, led by the VPAAR. WC has six academic schools, each led by a dean. The deans have complete responsibility for all aspects of academic programming and academic planning. However, faculty are supervised by the local campus directors, who report to the AVP campus operations. This complex matrix-style structure (Austin & Jones, 2015; Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006) can be problematic when implementing systemwide initiatives with the challenge compounded by the geographical span of campuses. The truncated organizational chart in Appendix A depicts the senior academic leadership team.

Institutional responsibility for WIL is woven across all campuses and involves faculty, student services staff, program developers, deans, and campus administrators. There are five student development officers whose main work responsibilities include WIL. These staff positions are located at three campuses and mainly support work term placements for engineering and technology programs.

An internal study documented over one hundred points of interaction throughout the institution with employees and WIL processes (Author, 2022). Johnston and Sator (2017) attributed such a common lack of coordination to the reality that most WIL activities have arisen because of external accreditation or professional requirements, discipline-specific field opportunities and practices, and other independent program requirements.

WC, not unlike most post-secondary institutions, is structured in a hierarchical manner. There is a focus on "providing explanations of the status quo, social order, consensus, social integration, solidarity, need satisfaction and actuality" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 26). As a result of a strategic priority identified by the BOG in the 2020-2023 strategic plan, WC has implemented Lean Six Sigma (LSS) as a way of increasing organizational efficiency and effectiveness (WC, 2019). LSS aims to eliminate waste, reduce process variation, and make quality improvements (Voehl et al., 2014). WC employees at all levels of the organization are engaged in regular process review activities with time and resources allocated to quality improvement initiatives. This internal system supports the PoP being considered, as this DiP is viewed predominantly through a functionalist lens and a structuralist perspective. Since a functionalist paradigm generally focuses on finding practical solutions to problems (Burrell & Morgan, 1979), this approach supports the identification of solutions to the PoP.

Organizational Analysis

Comparing the organizational context at WC to the structural, human resource, political, and symbolic factors of Bolman and Deal's (2017) four frames provides an opportunity to understand different perspectives and the organizational contextual climate in which the problem of practice exists.

Structural

Bolman and Deal (2017) highlighted goals and objectives in the structural frame, and placing importance on ensuring people are in the right roles and relationships to achieve collective goals, while accommodating individual differences. They indicate structural deficits create problems which must be

addressed through restructuring and problem resolution. This is the situation at WC as it currently does not have a central organizational home with responsibility and oversight over all WIL. In the current fiscal budget, senior executive allotted resources for the creation of a new unit within OSI to support work-integrated learning, with the expectation of the development of policies and procedures resulting in improved experiences of students, institutional employees, and employers. In the process of creating these at WC, it will be essential to realign roles and responsibilities and ensure various players have clarity on the objectives, processes, and procedures. This centralized unit will improve experiences for students by also offering interdisciplinary WIL opportunities (Ferns et al., 2019) which currently do not exist at WC.

Human Resource

The human resource frame centers on the needs of people and what organizations and people do for one another. According to Bolman and Deal (2017), having a good fit between the organization and people benefits both, and likewise, both suffer when the fit is poor. The development process of creating a quality framework for WIL will begin to align the priorities of the organization towards high level WIL services and supports for students and employers. Creating opportunities for consultation with WIL practitioners and promoting participation in the framework development will be necessary. It will also be important to consistently practice open communication to keep WIL participants and partners committed to the overall centralization goal.

Political

In the political frame, Bolman and Deal (2017) stated various coalition members and partners will likely have differences in values, beliefs, information, interests, and perceptions of reality. Governments worldwide exert power over their higher education systems (Botas & Huisman, 2012) and WC, as a crown agency and public college, is no exception. BOG members are appointed by the provincial government through an independent appointment commission reflecting governmental

priorities. Hill et al. (2021) recommend the BOG be a genuinely representative body reflecting the interests of key participants, including local communities, academics, and students. In *The Big Reset* report (2021), the provincial government acknowledges the applicable legislation needs to be modernized as the BOG does not have sufficient powers granted to them in the legislation to effectively oversee the institution. It also acknowledges employers and industry groups have influence over decisions in government connected to economic priorities, and WC is expected to be responsive to those needs.

In addition to government politics, institutional politics exist. Decision making is primarily impacted by several groups at WC. These include the academic deans who control a program's curriculum, executive members who control the internal operating budgets, and campus directors who oversee program delivery and supervise faculty. Bolman and Deal (2017) described organizations as coalitions of different individuals and interest groups, and it will be essential to keep these individuals and interest groups in view when designing organizational change.

Symbolic

A fundamental assumption of the symbolic frame is that events and actions have multiple interpretations as people experience situations differently (Bolman & Deal, 2017). McRae et al. (2018) identified five primary parties engaged in WIL including students, host organizations/employers, educators, educational institutions, and governments. Each has a direct connection with WIL. However, the differing roles and expectations of those engaged are important to understand to support a successful organizational change. The symbolic frame also focuses on the ability of symbols to create shared behaviour and unify people with a joint mission and identity, which helps organizations accomplish desired goals (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Developing a WIL quality framework can create a common objective and align the academic programs and campuses with the institutional goal of improved experiential learning and service excellence.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Context

While there are ongoing conversations about the need for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) awareness and policies at WC, the institution is not unlike other Canadian higher education institutions where there are documented commitments to diversity and inclusion, but a gap between the rhetoric and the actual practice (Cukier et al., 2018, 2021; Dua & Bhanji, 2017). In a positive step forward, the 2023-2026 strategic plan has strengthened its EDI impact as one of the three organizational goals. Performance indicators include implementing EDI educational initiatives, enhancing programs with an EDI lens, and reviewing policies with an EDI lens (WC, 2023c).

Different experiences and barriers exist (Goldman et al., 2023; Hora et al., 2020) with not all students experiencing equal access to WIL. These include international students; employed students; students with caregiving responsibilities; first-generation students; students from low socio-economic backgrounds; students living with disabilities; LGBTQ2SIA+ students, black, Indigenous, and students of colour; and students from regional or remote areas (Goldman et al., 2023; Jackson et al., 2023; Mackaway et al., 2013). Since WIL directly connects and supports learning from the classroom to the workplace, it is important to consider both systemic and structural barriers and support the diverse needs of all involved (Goldman et al., 2023; Ng, 2021). Itano-Boase et al. (2021) advocated that since WIL programs are positively correlated with future employment, it is necessary to ensure equal opportunity for access is created. Access should be enabled while respecting individuality and life circumstances, preferences, capabilities, and expectations (Winchester-Seeto et al., 2016). As part of the organization's change plan, barriers to the process must be addressed.

Leadership Problem of Practice

The author's multi-campus institution, Waterville College (WC), has an inconsistent and unsystematic approach to meaningful student work-integrated learning (WIL). The experiences of students and employers engaging in WIL activities differ significantly at the campus, academic school,

and program levels. In spring 2022, a Lean Six Sigma (LSS) project investigated WIL processes at WC. *Lean thinking*, according to KPMG (2018), is about making work environments efficient and effective, and creating time for quality improvement to be normalized. The LSS review team, consisting of representatives from each of the academic schools, student services, and campuses, worked with the institutional research unit in gathering and analyzing data on WIL processes across WC. The review team concluded the current process is inconsistent in supporting student development and program outcomes, and there exists a lack of standardization across schools and programs. They stated this results in: (a) a lack of documentation and shared resources; (b) insufficient time to place and evaluate students; (c) unclear expectations and roles for participants, facilitators and employers (Author, 2022). The LSS exercise supported, with evidence-based information, what was commonly known to be true amongst internal WIL practioners and also expressed by employers and other outside partners.

The existing operational circumstance around WIL does not align with the desired outcome of institutional excellence and preparing students for their learning and working journey through strengthened opportunities for experiential learning (WC, 2023c). In the role of director of the office of strategic initiatives (OSI), with oversight for college-wide experiential learning, the author is addressing the PoP of the lack of a centralized institutional quality framework for WIL. The PoP is situated within the functionalist paradigm, as this paradigm's problem-solving capacity is suited to address concerns with accountability and organizational effectiveness, as well as promoting organizational improvement (Dee & Leišytė, 2016). As noted by Bolman and Deal (2017), it is essential for organizational performance to have "the right combination of goals, roles, relationships, and coordination" (p. 47).

Framing the Problem of Practice

This section examines the broader context in which the problem exists by providing: (a) a contextual definition of WIL; (b) overview of selected WIL institutional quality frameworks; (c) results

from a political, economic, sociodemographic and technology (PEST) analysis; and (d) internal data from

a LSS report.

Work-Integrated Learning

While there lacks one single definition of the term work-integrated learning (BHER, 2016), it is

generally described as an umbrella term (CEWIL, 2021) for experiential education connecting a program

of study to the workplace, providing students with the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in

practical situations (Patrick et al., 2008; Sattler et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2014; Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023).

As a basis, the definition draws on Kolb's theory of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). This theory

focuses on the central role experience plays in the learning process. The benefits to students include

reinforcing classroom learning, developing workplace skills, and furthering preparedness for future

careers (Kramer & Usher, 2011). WIL is multi-dimensional and complex (Campbell et al., 2021) and

operates "simultaneously at multiple levels of an institution as well as across both teaching and support

areas" (Jefferies & Milne, 2014, p. 565). Many types of WIL have been identified, and new models and

frameworks for implementation in higher education are emerging (Kay et al., 2019).   There is a need for

clarity of terminology (Elliott & Clarke, 2021) as having unclear definitions can result in

misunderstandings between WIL participants in institutions (Johnston & Sator, 2017) and be

problematic when implementing change. WC has adopted the category description of WIL put forth by

CEWIL (2021) which includes the following: apprenticeship; co-operative education; internships;

entrepreneurship; service learning; applied research projects; mandatory professional practicum; clinical

placement; field placement; and work experience.

Work experience, a common characteristic of WIL, is highly valued by employers as an indicator

of work-readiness (BHER, 2022). It has been widely adopted to enhance workforce capability and

improve graduate employability outcomes (Effeney, 2020; Ferns et al., 2019; Rowe, 2017). Providing for

work experiences involves a multitude of participants, including employers, government, higher

educational institutions, academic staff, students, and professional accreditation bodies (Campbell et al., 2021; Ferns et al., 2019; Rowe, 2017).

Kay et al. (2019) proposed the successful implementation of WIL models depends on input, advice, and perspectives from all participants and partners. Collaborative and committed partnerships are core to successful WIL activities (Ferns et al., 2019; Govender & Taylor, 2015), and Gillett-Swan and Grant-Smith (2018) suggested this includes supportive and understanding co-workers while on placement.

WIL Quality Frameworks

Much of the literature around WIL quality frameworks focuses on assessing the quality of the WIL experiences and does not address the full scope of institutional WIL requirements. This appears to be changing as Campbell et al. (2019) found, the quality lens is shifting to considerations of program and institutional levels of practice and support. Elliott and Clarke (2021) observed most literature on WIL in Canada focuses on the university context with limited amounts pertaining to the college sector.

This DiP identifies and examines two WIL quality frameworks with an institutional focus based in academic research. The first is developed by Campbell et al. (2019). The framework comprises four domains: student experience; curriculum design; institutional requirements; and partner engagement. A guiding principle is developed for each domain, and indicators for each are provided before, during, and after the WIL experience. The second framework, the AAA WIL Quality Framework, was developed by McRae, Pretti, and Church (2018), and is comprised of five sections including: concepts and terminology; aims of each participant group; actions required by each participant and partner to succeed; the achievements of each of the partner groups, and a continuous improvement process for WIL programs. McRae et al. (2018) also developed a set of shared attributes across quality WIL which they framed as P.E.A.R. for pedagogy, experience, assessment, and reflection.

These frameworks will be reviewed as part of the change management process at WC. College leadership, participants, and partners will need to be consulted to determine what quality WIL means for the college. As indicated by Steinhardt et al. (2017), the answer will depend on the context applied, the values and interpretations of the leaders, and the interests of the various groups.

Domains of WIL Leadership

The leadership lens for the PoP will include both a transformational and distributed approach. Due to the expansive network of diverse campuses and the complexity of WIL with many roles across an organization, Patrick et al. (2014) identified several benefits from shared and collaborative relationships offered by distributed leadership. They put forth five domains of capabilities required by WIL leaders, which are similar across tertiary institutions, disciplines, and industries. These include: "shaping vision and policy; communicating and influencing WIL; creating sustainable WIL relationships to strengthen WIL culture; fostering engagement, expertise and learning in WIL; and driving outcomes that serve the needs of WIL stakeholders" (Patrick et al., 2014, p. 5). The authors indicated this WIL leadership framework can act as a visioning tool, a promotional tool, or a leadership map. At the core is shaping the vision for WIL in the institution.

Successful partnerships involve the navigation of complex operational, theoretical, political, professional, legal, economic, and personal issues (Campbell et al., 2021; Effeney, 2020). Equally crucial to the development of solid partnerships is the clarification of individual participant expectations with regard to these complexities. This requires the development of clear processes and practices (Fleming et al., 2018; Rowe, 2017).

PEST Analysis

To outline various environmental aspects of the PoP, a PEST analysis, including political, economic, sociodemographic and technology considerations was conducted. WC falls under provincial legal jurisdiction and is closely aligned with the province as a public institution. Therefore, a PEST

analysis was selected instead of a PESTLE (Ejim, 2023), which includes legal and environment factors to

the analysis (Grundy, 2006; Vining, 2011; Warner, 2010). The results of the PEST analysis identify

additional factors, both internal and external, that shape the PoP.

Political

WC is at a pivotal point in its academic priorities and operations. As an economic driver in the

province, it is expected to be responsive and provide current and relevant programs to meet the needs

of the client groups it serves. It does, however, have to operate within government mandate and

controls. Following the release of two recent extensive provincial government reviews (Government of

[province], 2021; Kennedy et al., 2021), and while rebounding from impacts of the covid-19 pandemic,

WC just released a new strategic plan for 2023-2026. After many years of decline, WC is experiencing

increasing enrollment, both domestic and international (WC, 2023c), and is modernizing programming

with eleven new programs offered this academic year. As teaching and learning evolves to post-

pandemic operational mode, there is recognition this period brings new opportunities and challenges.

The new strategic plan was developed by engaging students, employees (staff, management,

faulty), employers and other partners in the community (WC, 2023c). The plan identifies improved

experiential learning as a key objective. WC has close oversight by the provincial government. The

strategic plan, even though approved by the BOG, must also be approved by the minister of education

before being publicly released. As noted in the government commissioned policy review document *The

Big Reset*, the college's BOGs "is effectively an advisory body with little authority" (Government of

[province], 2021, p. 159). The report also acknowledged the leadership team should be given autonomy

to respond to current and future labour market requirements, as well as its own operational needs. This

increase in autonomy requires a change in the current legislation which must be brought forward by

government. To date, government has not implemented this recommendation. The department of

education continues to closely oversee and approve the college's strategic priorities and programs to ensure they align with provincial economic and social directives.

Economic

Research findings show students with WIL experience generally encounter a range of post graduation benefits (Peters & Pizarro Milian, 2024). Student placements have an impact on their skills, work-readiness, and employability (Smith et al., 2014; Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023), although these benefits are not always evenly distributed amongst all students (Pizarro Milian et al., 2022). Graduate readiness to enter the workforce was linked by Hooley and Dodd (2015) to economic growth, increased employment, and having a knowledgeable, skilled, flexible workforce with both local and national financial benefits. On the provincial level, a government-mandated review of public post-secondary education identified government support of WIL as an avenue to increase graduate skills levels (Kennedy et al., 2021).

CEWIL Canada, a national organization of which WC is a member, promotes WIL as a "solution to complex economic issues across the country" (2023, para. 3). WIL investments by the government and post-secondary institutions (CEWIL, 2019) are in response to the current skill development gap (Ng, 2021). Recent attention on student employability outcomes has placed a focus on WIL (Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023). Since 2015, the Canadian government has committed over $1.1 billion towards WIL initiatives (Government of Canada, 2019) to assist with bridging the gap from post-secondary education to the workplace. Government's goal is to provide opportunities for any Canadian post-secondary student to avail of a WIL opportunity over the next ten years. This investment has trickled down to post-secondary institutions through grants and other funding. WC leadership is motivated to participate in these programs to benefit students, industry partners and the college. Having institutional resources and mechanisms available and able to respond to these opportunities is a driver for change.

Sociodemographic

The province in which WC operates has one of the most rapidly aging populations in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022). There exists high rates of youth out-migration, declining birth rates, and an increasing number of people moving from rural parts of the province to more urban centres. This trend has the potential to drastically impact the economy, governance, and overall quality of life for the people of the province (Simms & Ward, 2017). It plays a major role in government decisions about infrastructure and program investments in public services such as post-secondary education and training (Government of [province], 2021).

The profile and distribution of learners at WC is also shifting. As reported in recent enrollment briefings (WC, 2022b; WC, 2023a), while provincial enrollment of both domestic and international students is showing an increase overall, enrollment is shrinking at smaller rural campuses while expanding at the larger urban campuses. Online learning is still trending upwards, and fully off-campus students have increased to over 27% of overall student population. This requires consideration to processes inclusive of online students, and the consideration of utilizing virtual work placements (Irwin et al., 2012). Also being observed is a change in the overall diversity of the student population. Hromalik et al. (2021) described community college students as adult learners, often juggling family and work responsibilities. They can be full-time or part-time learners, rural or urban students, commuters, lower-income students, students with disabilities, and indigenous or international students. Indeed, individual students can have a multiplicity of these characteristics, and the student population as a whole features diversity of age, race, ethnicity, language, and culture. Consideration must therefore be given to the needs of our diverse student population. These shifting of student profiles need to be thoughtfully considered when designing a change management initiative to address the PoP.

Technology

The development and implementation of technology systems and tools create various technological factors to be considered (Cadle et al., 2010). The institutional systems for administration

and communication related to WIL activities and the WIL opportunities themselves (Schuster & Glavas, 2017) have been affected by technological changes. New opportunities for efficiencies and effectiveness have been created by technology, along with the emergence of new challenges for students, employer, and post-secondary institutions. Bowen and Pennaforte (2017) observed a shift from the more traditional relational forms of organizational support for work placements to more digital supports. By utilizing technology for WIL, educators and students can engage with community and businesses more effectively (Alexander et al., 2019).

WC deployed an industry standard experiential learning management system in 2020, just prior to the covid-19 pandemic. This system has the capacity to support students, institutional employees, and employers, however, it is currently not fully implemented and only used for engineering technology co-operative work terms. The system has the capability to support all college WIL activities and to enable data and documentation tracking, cataloguing of all experiential learning offerings, job search support, interview scheduling and management, student advising support, and overall, to be a one stop shop for both employers and students. The system can be integrated with existing registrational systems and be customized to reflect college branding by means of an online portal for WIL support students, WC employees, and employers.

Bayerlein et al. (2021) identified several emerging technology-based activities enabling WIL including: e-internships, digital service learning, and simulated work placements. At WC, approximately 27% of the overall student population is enrolled in a fully on-line program (WC, 2023a). Other students in campus-based programs are registered in one or more online courses, and all courses, regardless of delivery modality, are setup with a course shell in the learning management system. In general, and as it relates to WIL, it is vitally important for higher education leaders to remain aware of technological factors in this time of rapid technological change.

Internal Improvement Processes

The PEST analysis demonstrates there are several significant organizational and environmental factors directly or indirectly impacting WC's operations and strategic priorities. These are impactful on the problem of practice. In addition, the implementation of an internal improvement framework needs closer consideration.

Since 2018, WC has implemented a Lean Six Sigma (LSS) quality improvement framework. Due to antidotal concerns surfacing, WIL operations were examined by means of a LSS process review in 2022. The assigned team conducted a review of WIL processes based on a sample of 12 programs across different schools and campuses (Author, 2022). The results of the analysis presented an alarming picture of the state of WIL at WC, showing inconsistencies, a lack of procedures, differences in operations between different programs, and even different operations within the same program at different campuses. The review highlighted WC has no institutional policy on WIL. A former policy on 'off-campus learning experiences' was no longer active, and there was no evidence of readily available institution wide documentation on procedures. Some academic schools, like business and health sciences did have some program level documented procedures, mostly driven by accreditation requirements. The findings of the LSS review revealed the following: 50% of programs asked students for an end evaluation of the placement or self-reflection; 17% had a process for learning contracts; 33% provided students with a template for a daily activity log; 33% provided an employer handbook outlining roles and responsibilities; 58% required a confirmation letter; 17% requested company information; and 44% provided confirmation of insurance. Upon receipt of the report, the WC's executive team assigned WIL as a critical priority for the newly formed Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI) through the VPAAR.

As the director of strategic initiatives, I was asked to lead and further investigate the initial project findings and analyze our institutional situation relating to WIL. This analysis and investigation included one-on-one consultations with key senior leaders including deans, associate deans, directors, and discussions with faculty and staff directly engaged in WIL activities. I relied also on the knowledge

and experience I gained from my 12 years as dean of distributed learning, which included overseeing WIL activities for distance learning students.

Consultation was also held with the office of institutional research (OIR) regarding sourcing any available historical student data. OIR was able to provide data from student satisfaction surveys conducted at end of work-placement courses. Open-ended comments, 1325 in total, from Fall 2017 to Winter 2022 were extracted anonymously by OIR, and tagged with the following attributes: course strength, course improvement, lab strength, lab improvements, placement strength or placement improvements. A review of comments conducted by the author revealed a wide range of experiences which added to the cause for concern (WC, 2022c). While some students indicated a high level of satisfaction with their WIL experience, many others expressed confusion with the process, lack of support and disappointment with the quality of their experience.

Presentations were conducted by the author as director and the VPAAR with the full academic team in November 2022, and also with the quality subcommittee of the BOG in February 2023. Based on these activities, and a report prepared for the VPAAR to present to the executive team in May 2023, the president endorsed and allocated budget resources for the purpose of creating a central organizational unit for WIL activities. Recruitment for a management leadership position for the centre of WIL is currently underway.

Guiding Questions from the PoP

Several questions surface from the contextual and leadership components of the PoP being addressed at WC. When adopting the positivist position, functionalism, the guiding questions are influenced by the paradigm selected (O'Donoghue, 2018). These questions are intended to guide an understanding of the existing challenges and determine how to effectively work within the organizational structure to move towards the desired state of consistent quality WIL experiences.

The questions are:

1. Where are work-integrated learning leaders situated in the organizational structure? (Patrick et al., 2014)

2. Is there a combined realistic recognition of WIL and adequate resourcing in institutional systems and infrastructure? (Orrell, 2011)

3. What are the critical change considerations when implementing a centralized process at a higher education institution with multiple campuses?

As the DiP will be implemented using a distributed leadership approach within WC's hierarchical organizational structure, the first question focuses on identifying where the WIL leaders are situated in the organizational structure (Patrick et al., 2014). It is important to identify formal and informal leaders and acknowledge existing forged relationships in order for leadership practices to be successful and effective (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001).

The second question asks if there is a combined realistic recognition of WIL in the organization and adequate resourcing in institutional systems and infrastructure. It is important WIL be part of the strategic priorities of the institution and adequately resourced in terms of human resources, budget, and technology systems, for example, to ensure success. This needs to be supported with the creation of common definitions and terminology around WIL activities, and a common understanding of quality indicators needs to be understood and adopted (Orrell, 2011).

The third question focuses on the fact WC has more than 15 geographically dispersed campuses with different levels of student enrollment, staffing, and resources at each. This campus variation impacts the need for differences in WIL supports. It is important to identify critical change considerations when implementing a centralized process at a higher education institution with this multiple campus structure. Attention to these considerations will assist in creating and implementing a plan to effectively facilitate the change initiative. These three questions are important areas for

consideration throughout this DiP as they deepen the inquiry into how to best address the identified PoP.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

Consistently ensuring a quality experience for WIL participants, including students, institutional employees, and employers is the vision for change. This requires: (a) a college-wide understanding of the value in WIL, (b) clarity on WIL objectives and goals, (c) adequate resourcing, (d) appropriate policies and procedures, and (e) the full utilization of a WIL learning management system. This contrasts with the current state. An internal review of WIL practices at WC revealed inconsistent procedures, documentation, and employer engagement practices (Author, 2022). Sachs et al. (2016) described a desirable organizational state as one "well-governed, resourced and supervised; prioritised by the institution and has institutional/faculty/departmental buy-in/investment; has its institutional and industry-based champions; meaningful and accessible to all stakeholders; and intentionally linked to and supports learning outcomes, especially around employability" (p. 5). This vision for change complements WC's goal of enhanced experiential learning and overall service excellence (WC, 2023c).

The focus of all WIL activities is students. As an educational institution, there is an acknowledged responsibility to ensure an accessible and enriching work experience for all students. Gaining quality experience to improve their chances of employment after graduation is a student's strongest motivation for participating in WIL programs (Rowe, 2017). A review of comments from WC students surveyed post-work placement revealed a wide range of experiences which is concerning to the senior and academic leadership team. To attain optimal outcomes from the experience, Kay et al. (2019) concluded students need to be thoroughly prepared, actively engaged, and responsible for their learning. The diversity of college students needs to be considered by all partners to ensure positive WIL for all students (Gillett-Swan & Grant-Smith, 2018; Kay et al., 2019). Effeney (2020) found there were frequently occurring discourses around risk and WIL related to the themes of psychological distress and

anxiety underscoring the importance of an effective institutional model. A desirable future state will consider WIL and well-being, as put forth in a model proposed by Gillett-Swan and Grant-Smith (2018). The model emphasizes the importance of nurturing a combination of individual coping strategies, formal policy, and informal institutional support.

The core institutional issues connected to the PoP mapped to the guiding questions and the theoretical frameworks are summarized in Table 1. The key components of the vision and priorities for change for each issue are outlined. This organizational change will be supported with distributed and transformational leadership practices.

Table 1

Problem of Practice Mapping

PoP Issue	Guiding Question	Theoretical Framework	Vision & Priorities for Change
Unclear expectations and roles for particpants, facilitators and employer.	Where are work-integrated learning leaders situated in the organizational structure? (Patrick et al., 2014)	Transformational and Distributed Leadership frameworks	Identification and clarity on the aims/goals of each of the following WIL players: • Students • Host organizations/employers • Educators • Academic Institution • Government
Current processes are inconsistent in supporting student development and program outcomes. A lack of documentation and shared resources. Insufficient time to place and evaluate students.	Is there a combined realistic recognition of WIL and adequate resourcing in institutional systems and infrastructure? (Orrell, 2011)	Structural Perspective	Centralized organizational unit for work-integrated learning activities with dedicated staff resources, developed institutional policies and procedures, and a technological experiential learning tracking system. Agreement and confirmation on the activities required for each of the WIL participants and partners.
Processes unstandardized across schools, programs and campuses.	What are the critical change considerations when implementing a centralized process at a higher education institution with multiple campuses?	Functionalist Paradigm	Identification and clear understanding of the outcomes and measures at the program, campus and school level for each of the identified WIL participants and partners.

Leadership Levels

Leadership from many layers at the macro, meso, and micro levels will be required in order to advance the organizational change initiative being proposed in this DiP. "Change happens at multiple levels" (Kezar, 2018, p. 72), and leadership requires an appreciation and understanding of the supports needed at each. At the macro level, there are influences from provincial government policy directives and program reviews (Government of [province], 2021; Kennedy et al., 2021), and the federal government with its focus on increasing employability through its continuous funding support such as the Student Work Placement Program. The provincial and national support of WIL contributes to the priority placed on WIL strategies at WC. This is evidenced by the goals set in the recent strategic plan (WC, 2023c) developed by college executive and released by the BOG. Also, the quality subcommittee of the BOG has WIL processes as an area to monitor for improvements. This level of leadership supports the establishment of a strategic WIL vision and operational elements (Patrick et al., 2014). Clark (2017) and Orrell (2011) sounded the necessity to have this executive level of endorsement.

The meso level consists of the senior executive team and the leadership members within the academic division consisting of deans, academic and departmental directors, and campus managers. This level contains leaders who influence and oversee a range of daily operations and strategic academic priorities. Necessary leadership support at this level includes: (a) policy staff, (b) internal legal counsel, (c) program development and academic quality teams, and (d) others who work closely in a collaborative manner on program implementation. Campus managers are closely engaged with WIL activities since staff responsible for WIL activities are direct reports. Faculty are also directly supervised by campus managers, and faculty play an integral role in engaging students and employers in sourcing and supporting WIL. As WC has more than 15 campuses, a distributed leadership approach enables broader access to WIL leaders across the institution (Dean et al., 2021). Support at this level is required for successful communication and monitoring of results.

The micro level consists of individuals who are directly and regularly engaged in WIL activities. Dean et al. (2021) stated "success is largely determined and energized by those operationalising WIL and those working within the WIL space" (p. 211). It consists of individuals deployed at a campus, in a student services department, faculty, and others at the program level. An internal review of WIL processes identified over 100 employee WIL touchpoints (Author, 2022). Kezar (2018) highlighted the importance of taking into consideration what it takes to change individuals as we aim to scale change at the institutional level. There may be changes needing campus level support in order to create a wider organizational change. Moving forward, strategies for change need to be developed to match the appropriate level of change necessary.

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

This chapter focuses on problem posing. It demonstrates the need to address the inconsistent and unsystematic approach to WIL at WC. There is a disconnect between the organization's strategic goal of excellence and the current state of how WIL operates. Viewing the PoP's organizational context through the lens of the functionalist paradigm and structuralist perspective allows for a clearer focus on the organizational issues at the root of the problem, as well as the development and consideration of three guiding questions. Going forward, employing the functionalist paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979) as a theoretical framework will support the development of effective strategies to achieve the desired change initiative. This is the basis for planning the change initiative, which is explored more deeply in Chapter 2 of this dissertation-in-practice.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

Chapter 1 focuses on 'the what' and describes the organizational context, vision and leadership agency for organizational change related to the problem of practice (PoP). This chapter builds on this and focuses on examining and understanding 'the why', which is critical when planning and developing a change plan. The author identifies a leadership approach, develops a leadership framework for understanding change, and analyzes organizational change by selecting an informed change path. The leadership approach described includes a blend of transformational (Burns, 1978) and distributed leadership (Jones et al., 2012), and the proposed framework guiding this dissertation-in-practice (DiP) will be Deszca et al.'s (2020) change path model (CPM). Also presented are three potential solutions to address the PoP with the rationale for the preferred solution outlined.

Leadership Approach to Change

The future state envisioned by addressing this PoP is a consistent quality experience for pre, during, and post work-integrated learning (WIL) activities at Waterville College (WC), for students, employers, and employees inclusive of management, faculty, and support staff. A Lean Six Sigma (LSS) project identified current inconsistent and unstructured organizational WIL practices leave a lot of room for improvement (Author, 2022). This is the leadership PoP at the core of this DiP. The author contends improvements in WIL at WC will have a positive impact on student learning experiences and graduate employability, enrich employer relationships, and support faculty and college staff with specific duties relating to implementing quality experiential learning (Jackson & Dean, 2023; Patrick et al., 2008; Pizarro Milian et al., 2022). This vision is in line with WC's organizational goal of implementing leading-edge teaching and learning approaches identified in the newly released 2023-26 strategic plan (WC, 2023c).

Transformational Leadership

Inspiring your journey is the organizational vision of WC (WC, 2023c). Springing from this organizational vision statement, it is necessary to develop a new vision specifically for WIL effectiveness

at WC challenging the current processes and exploring changes to create impact. Transformational

leadership, originally developed by James MacGregor Burns in 1978, includes motivating employees to

actively engage in improvement efforts by leaders commonly beginning with creating a vision and by

developing wider goals for the community or organization (Northhouse, 2019). Transformational

leaders focus on outcomes related to organizational qualities and effectiveness while having equality

and social justice at their core (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). It is important the preferred solution to the

PoP reflects WC's equity, diversity and inclusion principles and adheres to WC values. These

organizational values are: excellence; integrity; respect; diversity; and transparency (WC, 2023c).

The proposed WIL quality framework must be inclusive and inspirational to support the journey

of all students. To accomplish this, as a transformational leader, it will be necessary to gain commitment

and change attitudes and beliefs to bring positive change (Chou et al., 2013; Landrum et al., 2000). An

improved WIL framework will build on campus-based resources and respect relationships developed

over the years, especially between employees and local employers who support WIL by providing

opportunities for students to experience practical learning. Transformational leaders are often

considered to be charismatic (Northhouse, 2019). This personality trait limitation can be balanced with

the benefits of maximizing personal relationships in the organization when widely implementing a

change improvement process. The author's twelve years as dean of the provincial distance learning unit

will prove to be an asset when implementing the change required to move WIL forward. The dean

position required working closely and forging beneficial work relationships with many faculty at all

campuses, all academic school deans, and campus directors.

Distributed Leadership

Successful WIL is dependent on the three-way partnership of institution, students, and

employers. A distributed leadership approach is effective as it does not restrict leadership to one

individual within an organization but uses a variety of informal and formal leaders (Gronn, 2000, 2010;

Harris, 2006; Jones et al., 2012). This aligns with WC's existing collegial organizational practices

demonstrated through opportunities for participation in academic committees, policy committees and

LSS projects. Stefani (2015) pointed out post-secondary institutions typically function as distributed

leadership organizations since leadership tasks are widely dispersed across the institutions. Multiple

levels of the organization can be empowered through a distributed leadership framework to take

ownership of the change. The new WIL framework will support campus-level engagement with

employers and other community sponsors. Jones et al. (2012) noted distributed leadership is likely to

be more successful if senior leaders support the change and provide resources, infrastructure, and

professional development opportunities. At WC, the executive leadership team is firmly behind the

improvement of WIL as a strategic priority and has allocated budget resources to address the identified

PoP.

Blended Leadership Approach

The chosen leadership-focused solutions to address the problem include a blend of

transformational leadership and collaborative leadership approaches, specifically distributed leadership.

It is important to acknowledge WC's existing collaborative leadership approaches, and multi-campus

matrix-based organizational structure. As discussed in Chapter 1, WC has more than 15 campuses

geographically dispersed, each with a different program mix, and each managed by a campus

administrator. There are six academic school deans who oversee all aspects of programs, however

faculty report to their local campus administrator on all matters program delivery related. Groenwald

(2018) highlighted the unique challenge faced by multi-campus institutions of maintaining consistent

administrative practices and uniform educational outcomes across varied contexts. However, since WC

was merged about twenty years ago into one provincial college from five regional colleges, much work

has been done by college leadership to develop a common mission and vision, and standardize practices

in most operational and program areas.   This is supported by the implementation of an LSS framework

beginning in 2019, which includes weekly quality board huddles (QBH). These are mechanisms for all employees, at every level of the organization, to put forth suggestions and address areas for improvement (KPMG, 2017). The quality board huddle methodology involves employees identifying issues, engaging in problem-solving, creating action plans, and actively working towards implementation. These are brief 15-minute online meetings scheduled during a designated common time integrated into employee schedules. The LSS framework adds to an existing collegial and collaborative working environment. Jones (2014), however, cautions distributing responsibilities amongst individuals does not guarantee collaboration occurs. As this DiP utilizes a functionalist lens and structuralist perspective, it is important all administrative staff, faculty, and managers at campuses understand their respective roles, responsibilities, and levels of influence throughout the change process. The absence of an institutional WIL policy and detailed procedures need to be addressed.

Recognizing WIL opportunities are spread out across all campuses and various departmental teams, any proposed change initiative will have to span the organization. The selected leadership approaches need to acknowledge the role of individuals engaged in WIL at all levels and engage them in the change process to ensure effectiveness. There is a long history of WIL at WC, and this existing support for experiential learning will encourage engagement in the change process across the many campuses and academic schools. It is important for the selected leadership approaches to be aspirational, support collaboration, encourage interaction, and facilitate knowledge sharing.

Fleming et al. (2018) developed a framework for critical success factors for sustainable WIL relationships. While all of the nine factors proposed in the framework (trust, expectations, reciprocity, coordination, vision, learning, resources, reputation, and recognition) were considered important, the factors of trust, clear expectations and reciprocity were consistently rated highly across different contexts and organizational demographics. This high rating aligns with transformational leadership described by Chou et al. (2013) as being focused on building trust, an important factor positively

affecting group outcomes. Jones et al. (2014) characterized distributed leadership as an approach to leadership wherein individuals, trusting and respecting each other's contributions, work together in collaboration to achieve identified goals.

Transformational leadership, combined with the distributed leadership approach, acknowledges the organizational complexities of WC. This approach will inspire the innovative changes required in all pockets of the organization to resolve the PoP of inadequate WIL systems and service quality. Both transformational, and distributed leadership value strong relationships and connections built on trust at all levels. Collaboration is critical to distributed leadership (Harris, 2006; Jones et al., 2012). Both transformation and distributed leadership contribute to achieving diversity, equity and inclusion within the organization as different voices are valued and included in making organizational improvement decisions. This blend of a distributed and transformational leadership approach will be implemented through the CPM (Deszca et al., 2020) framework to be described in the upcoming section.

<div align="center">**Framework for Leading the Change Process**</div>

Leaders must decide on what to change and the process for change in an organization (Deszca et al., 2020). Choosing and utilizing frameworks and models in the various stages of change can substantially support the change initiative and increase its success, particularly, within complex organizations (Brisson-Banks, 2010). Deszca et al. (2020) described "Managing change while operating the organization is like changing the tire on a moving car" (p. 53). It is important to consider this reality as WC is a complex multi-campus institution with a significant number of change initiatives and projects underway.

Selection of Change Framework

A review of several models, including Kotter's (2012) eight-step model, and Lewin's (1951) three-stage model resulted in the selection of the organizational-level change path model (CPM) developed by Deszca, Cawsey, and Ingols (2020). Kotter's eight-step model, developed by John Kotter in

1996, is detailed and straightforward and one of the best known and often applied frameworks in large

organizations (Kang et al., 2022; LeStage, 2015; Wentworth et al., 2020). This model is aimed at the

strategic level of the change management process. Each step of the model can last a considerable

amount of time, and "critical mistakes in any of the phases can have a devastating impact on the

momentum of the change process" (Mento et al., 2002, p. 45). This structured approach may be a

challenge for a publicly funded post-secondary institution often influenced by provincial government

directives causing "significant uncertainty and instability to the functioning of the college" (Kennedy et

al., 2021, p. 29). Kirk Lewin's model of change is simpler, consisting of three-stages: unfreeze, change,

and refreeze. The situation, systems, and component parts of the model need to be wholly understood

(Lewin, 1951). This is both a benefit and a concern as it can oversimplify the change process, and Lewin

is often criticized for framing the change process as linear, inflexible, and unyielding (Deszca et al.,

2020).

Chosen Framework

All three models reviewed in the previous section have similarities in that they all have an

identifiable beginning, middle, and end process. They also have varying strengths and weaknesses which

were weighed. After careful consideration, the CPM (Deszca et al., 2020) was selected as it is believed

this model provides the higher probability of success. Deszca, Cawsey, and Ingol's CPM consists of four

steps and provides structure to thoroughly implement organizational change. It provides a combination

of both process and detailed instructions, and it has been developed based on other more established

change models with consideration given to addressing their limitations. The CPM, while much newer,

has less instruction than Kotter's eight-step model, and more detail and direction than Lewin's three-

stage model. It combines both process and prescription (Deszca et al., 2020). This combination is a

noteworthy benefit when selecting a model for WC since flexibility is required to adapt to forces of

change. "The complexity of higher education settings may warrant a more adaptable approach" (Quan

et al., 2019). WC currently has multiple change projects underway due to its lean management system implementation. A change leader needs to be cognizant of these, and the CPM's underlying principles acknowledge organizations undertake multiple change projects simultaneously (Deszca et al., 2020). The adaptable approach provided by the CPM is best suited for the overall organizational environment at WC. The change path model consists of four steps: awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization.

Awakening – Why Change?

Awakening begins with a scan of external and internal environments to: (a) fully diagnose the problems, (b) develop an understanding of what is going on inside the organization at multiple levels, (c) accumulate and analyse significant data, and (d) focus on clarifying why an organization requires the change (Deszca et al., 2020). In this stage, the need for change is determined and the vision for desired change is created upon realization the status quo is not satisfactory. At WC, the drivers for organizational change originate from many sources including government policies and student feedback. Trends confirm work experience is more highly valued by employers as evidence of work-readiness than a degree (Ferns et al., 2019).

LSS, implemented at WC as a strategy for enhancing organizational efficiency and effectiveness (WC, 2019), strives to eradicate waste, minimize process variability, and boost quality enhancements (Voehl et al., 2014). The review focused on WIL operations, and the resulting LLS report on WIL (Author, 2022) served as a wake-up call regarding the overall state of WIL operations. As part of the awakening step, the vision for change needs to be communicated through multiple channels to all WIL participants and partners in the early stages of the desired change to help support the change vision. This has begun as WC just released its 2023-2026 strategic plan, and the development process included multiple consultation opportunities with employees, students, and external partners, including government and industry (WC, 2023c). The plan contains three main strategic initiatives as a result of input obtained

through the consultation process. One goal is improved experiential learning excellence, of which WIL is

a form. The strategic plan consultation process contributed to WC's employees obtaining an important

understanding of the change initiative and the institutional priority on WIL. This alignment of vision and

goals is important (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010) as it communicates how participants can affect

the success of the change initiative (Kezar, 2018) and potentially increase employees' commitment to

the change (Burnes et al., 2018).

Mobilization – Where Are the Gaps?

Mobilization is identifying the distance between the current operating state in the organization

and the desired future state. Formal systems and structures can be leveraged to make sense of the

desired change, the scope, and the scale of a WIL institutional implementation. The desired future state

of quality WIL delivery is important "to maximize students' learning experiences and host organizations'

benefits, and to ensure a focus on the safe and equitable operation of WIL programs" (Zegwaard &

Pretti, 2023, p.7). Decision-making regarding the types of WIL to implement can be supported using

Dollinger and Brown's (2019) framework. This framework rests on the consideration of five factors: ease

of implementation, barriers, scalability, authenticity, and proximity. In addition to the more traditional

type of work placements, innovative WIL design and implementation models identified by Kay et al.

(2019) can be considered as they support student and employer diversity. These include micro-

placements, online projects or placements, hackathons, competitions and events, incubators/start-ups

and consulting. Utilizing the work experience model proposed by Rowe (2017), which includes individual

and contextual factors, can assist an institution with understanding the role of work experience in WIL.

This model can be valuable when communicating the change vision throughout the organization, which

is critical in this change mobilization phase. Mobilization includes several significant actions including

determining what specifically needs to change, creating a vision for the change with additional analysis

of the organizational structure, power, and cultural dynamics. A gap analysis needs to be developed to

create an understanding of where an organization currently is, and where it needs to be (Deszca et al., 2020). There are several quality frameworks developed and can be considered for implementation as part of the change process (Campbell et al., 2019; McRae et al., 2018; Winchester-Seeto, 2019). Change leaders also need to focus on engaging others through a variety of communication channels to motivate others to champion the change.

Acceleration – How Does One Get There from Here?

Acceleration includes action planning and implementation by deploying appropriate tools to manage the plan, building momentum, and accomplishing the transition. People are engaged and empowered to create the change, and small wins along the way are regularly celebrated (Deszca et al., 2020). To develop an understanding of the current level of WIL activities at the course, program, and institutional level, the work-integrated learning curriculum classification framework (WILCC) developed by Dean et al. (2020) can be utilized. This framework, comprised of five classifications grouping WIL activities according to similar student learning practices, supports the development, mapping, and reporting of WIL activities. It would be a valuable exercise for WC to map WIL activities to determine current and viable types of WIL and devise a mechanism to report the level of ongoing WIL activity on a regular basis. This framework can promote the visibility of WIL across the institution and offers a common language for WIL across disciplines. Delivery of WIL is complex and requires multiple departments within the institution to operate collaboratively for successful external engagement and facilitation of student learning experiences (Green et al., 2023).

Institutionalization – What Has Been Accomplished?

Institutionalization includes the monitoring of progress, assessing when changes are fully incorporated into the organization, and understanding the overall impact of the change, including the adoption of any new strategies, knowledge, and systems (Deszca et al., 2020). A sustained change process is one that becomes part of the normal workings of the campus and is incorporated into general

operating procedures (Kezar, 2018). The precise details regarding institutionalizing the change initiative will vary based on the selected solution and the outcomes achieved during the change initiative. Several institutional quality frameworks have been developed and could potentially be implemented to assist with ongoing benchmarking, evaluation, and improvements of WIL practices (Campbell et al., 2021; McRae et al., 2018).

Limitations, Challenges and Constraints

WIL is a multi-component process due to its engagement of multiple participants, students learning on and off campus, and the expectations and investments of many players in the process. This process will add to the intricacies of the organizational change plan. Implementation will be initially constrained as the OSI, which the author oversees, is in its first year of operation, and the reassignment and recruitment of staff to support the office is in progress. This process is also an opportunity as the new office will be able to focus on WIL as its first strategic priority. The absence of a WIL institutional policy is a limitation, however, the consultation and development of a policy and associated procedures can be an opportunity to get a wide range of feedback from various organizational levels. WC does not currently have a solid handle on the extent of WIL happening across the institution, which will also need to be addressed. Johnston and Sator (2021) found many post-secondary institutions are also facing the same daunting task of determining the full scope of WIL activities.

Achieving institutionalization in the CPM may be a challenge. Most multi-campus educational institutions struggle with maintaining consistency across campuses (Hlengwa, 2014) as there exists reliance on local campus managers to effectively implement college wide directives (Briggs, 2001). Therefore, it will be important to identify campus champions and leaders at all levels. A climate of competition instead of collaboration might currently exist as dispersed employees may not feel part of one team. There may be conflict between campuses and the central office resulting in inconsistent outcomes (Groenwald, 2018). It needs to be determined if some level of competition for WIL

opportunities, such as work placements, already exists between campuses with the same programs.

Resistance can be expected when individuals are forced into a new state of being or acting (Burke,

2018), and this may vary at the campus and department levels.

<div align="center">**Organizational Change Readiness**</div>

Before implementing a change plan, it is essential to assess the preparedness of the

organization for change (Deszca et al., 2020). Using various change readiness factors, a more informed

decision can be made. Armenakis et al. (1993) defined readiness as the "*cognitive* precursor the

behaviors of either resistance to, or support for, a change effort" (p. 681). Building on this definition, the

author considered several tools and measures available (Deszca et al., 2020; Holt et al., 2007) to

complete a change readiness assessment for WC. The Organizational Capacity for Change (OCC)

construct developed by Judge and Douglas (2009) was selected.

Organizational Capacity for Change (OCC)

OCC has eight comprehensive dimensions related to readiness and includes a combination of

issues relating to human, managerial, and organization capabilities. The tool offers a chance to

contemplate various factors possibly supporting or hindering WC's preparedness to embrace change.

The following outlines the eight themes of organizational change deemed significant by Judge and

Douglas (2009) when evaluating organizations' change readiness. The themes include trustworthy

leadership, trusting followers, capable champions, involved mid-management, innovative culture,

accountable culture, effective communication, and systems thinking. The OCC construct breaks down

each of these eight themes of organizational change into four categories, resulting in a 32-item

assessment. Using these detailed assessment items as a guide, the author conducted a general

assessment of each of these eight themes as they relate to WC. It should be noted, the following

analysis is based on the author's personal experience and interpretation.

Trustworthy Leadership

The trustworthiness of the change leader and the capacity of top leadership to articulate a distinct vision and behave in a credible manner which cultivates trust among others, is an important factor impacting organizational change readiness (Judge & Douglas, 2009; Kezar, 2018; Kotter, 2012). Resistance and failure to implement the change may occur if change recipients do not trust, or have confidence in, the change leaders' abilities, even if an organization as a whole may appear ready for change (Kezar, 2018). Haque et al. (2020) discovered associations between employees trusting their leaders and experiencing elevated levels of organizational change readiness, organizational commitment, and feelings of empowerment.

The author has a long history as a senior leader in various roles at WC, and has developed positive relationships at various institutional levels. The previous role as dean of distance learning over 12 years required working collaboratively with campus staff and faculty at all the 15 plus campus locations, as well as the other various student services departments. As well, the author has been involved on various teams implementing other impactive change initiatives. These experiences will enhance the author's credibility as a trustworthy change leader, capable of addressing the problem and spearheading the planned change initiative.

Trusting Followers

Trusting followers refers to the probability of employees' capacity to be guided by senior leadership or constructively disagree with them through respectful dialogue all aimed at achieving collective goals (Judge & Douglas, 2009). Improving WIL processes at WC will involve individuals spanning multiple campuses, academic schools, and service departments. This is not unlike most organizational improvement processes (Judge, 2012). The author recognizes individual readiness can be impacted by various situational aspects such as their degree of commitment to the organization, their ability to participate in the change implementation, and their individual degree of trust (Vakola, 2013).

It is important for individuals to feel the planned change is necessary and will have a positively impact their role in the organization (Rafferty et al., 2013).

WC established a LSS Center of Excellence tasked with supervising initiatives dedicated to enhancing organizational efficiency (WC, 2019). This involves creating opportunities for problem-solving and improvement within the organization by actively engaging employees to achieve excellence (Sunder & Anthony, 2018). A lean maturity survey is distributed to all WC managers each year and includes questions scored across the following five dimensions: culture, lean infrastructure, improvement initiatives, capacity building and centre of excellence, as well as additional targeted questions on LSS initiatives. One of the higher scoring items was "A learning climate is promoted throughout the extended organization by the sharing of capabilities, knowledge, skills, and best practice" (WC, 2023b, p. 5). The author feels this capacity for change, combined with their experience as a transformational leader in the organization, will be beneficial when implementing the change plan to address the targeted organizational PoP.

Capable Champions

Judge (2012) described capable champions as middle managers without formal authority to act on proposed changes. WC, in the author's view, has an ample supply of skilled leaders at all levels who facilitate the growth and development of others in the organization. There is a collegial work environment, and in general, the experience has been that employees are goal oriented and interested in moving forward changes, particularly those beneficial to students. This employee attitude is found at both the school and campus level. The PoP, which is an organizational initiative, will result in improved service to students if implemented successfully. The LSS maturity survey ranked the item "employees are able to accurately describe the organization's objectives and how their job contributes to the achievements of those objectives" (WC, 2023b, p. 5) as a high scoring item. The VPAAR, the author's supervisor, has consistently demonstrated support of significant change initiatives and has

communicated WIL improvements as a high priority item. This crucial aspect of change readiness is in line with the author's transformational and distributed leadership approaches and may aid in identifying change facilitators to enhance the organizational change process at various levels.

Involved Mid-Management

The ability of mid-level leadership to convey the organization's vision to both lower-level leadership and employees is an important measure of organizational change readiness (Judge & Douglas, 2009). At WC, the author has observed involved middle managers can actively promote the benefits of change and support the process amongst colleagues. Middle managers can also equally present barriers to change, particularly, as it relates to change required at the campus level. As the many campuses are geographically distanced from each other and from headquarters, the campus directors act with a high degree of daily autonomy. Rafferty et al. (2013) found having a future-orientated and positive orientation to organizational change is an indicator of change readiness. This is one area the author will need to be attentive to when developing and implementing the organizational change plan at WC. The author recently presented to this group of campus managers on the topic of WIL challenges and received a high level of interest and support. Since they supervise faculty and campus staff, and oversee campus level student services, campus managers have valuable perspectives on the problem.

Innovative Culture

An innovative culture is one that encourages innovative practices within the organization, with leaders and employees demonstrating innovation in their work (Judge & Douglas, 2009). This is strong at WC at the institutional level and within the academic division. Innovation is part of the college's mission statement which states WC has a "mission of enriching the learning experience through empowerment and innovation" (WC, 2023c, p. 2). Innovation also presents itself throughout the strategic plan, particularly, relating to teaching and learning. It is defined as "seeking opportunities for work-integrated

learning, applied research, alternative credentials, global possibilities, and leading-edge strategies" (WC, 2023c, p. 7). The LSS maturity survey resulted in a high ranking for "Innovative ideas to maximize efficiency, streamline processes, and improve quality of work is continuously encouraged and sought after within the organization" (WC, 2023b, p. 5). This innovative culture at WC will increase organizational readiness for change relating to the PoP of improving WIL processes and services.

Accountable Culture

Judge and Douglas (2009) described accountable culture as "the ability of the organization to carefully steward resources and successfully meet pre-determined deadlines" (p. 638) which demonstrates integrity while successfully achieving objectives. As a publicly funded college, there is a focus on accountability regarding various areas of college operations. The BOG through its accountability committee focuses on various areas of organizational improvement. The committee is focused on improvements relating to WIL as many deficiencies were exposed in a LSS report (Author, 2022). WC must annually report to the BOG and ultimately to the provincial government on the performance indicators from the strategic plan. This report is also released to the public once it is accepted by the provincial government. Since one of the strategic plan's three-year indicators is "strengthened opportunities for applied experiential learning" (WC, 2023c, p. 8), the requirement to monitor this progress will be an important organizational motivator for change.

Effective Communication

A measure of an organization's readiness for change is the capability to communicate effectively both vertically and horizontally within its structure, as well as with its clients. Rafferty et al. (2013) and Vakola (2013) stressed the importance of there being a sense of trust and collective commitment encouraged through open, truthful communication, and open exchange of feedback, thoughts and ideas. As a complex organization with more than 15 geographically dispersed campuses, communication can be challenging. WC has invested heavily in robust information communication

systems with strong connectivity to support usage of products such as MS Teams and VOIP telephones. There is effective use of online software tools to supplement in-person meetings and email. In the past few years, the academic team has retained an academic communication specialist which is improving academic communication overall. The LSS maturity survey ranked communication high (WC, 2023b). Creating opportunities for individuals to speak opening and truthfully will contribute to the success of the organizational change initiative.

Systems Thinking

The organization's capacity to concentrate on underlying causes and acknowledge interdependencies within and beyond its boundaries is described as systems thinking (Judge & Douglas, 2009). The more known about how a system functions, the higher the chances the change initiative will succeed and result in improvements (Langley et al., 2009). WC employs LSS as a tool to improve efficiency and effectiveness throughout the organization with a focus on eliminating waste, reducing process variation, and making quality improvements (Antony et al., 2012, 2018; Voehl et al., 2014). Staff are encouraged to participate and are provided regular training opportunities on various LSS tools and strategies. LSS is dependent on continued buy-in and a commitment from leadership to ensure integrated process thinking across the organization with transparency and consultation on decisions (Antony et al., 2012). WC is poised to be receptive of the author's change initiative, as it has benefited from the LSS implementation.

Change Readiness Summary

Using the OCC construct, the author has determined there is a high readiness for change at WC. The only caution to be considered is whether there exists any change fatigue from the various change initiatives in progress as a result of the LSS implementation. WC is a dynamic and complex organization, however this review with the assistance of the OCC construct provided evidence WC is ready for a change initiative focus on work-integrated learning. While research indicates approximately 70% of

organizational change plans fail (Judge & Douglas, 2009), examining the organization's readiness for change should help improve the odds of success.

<div align="center">**Leadership Ethics in Organizational Change**</div>

When deliberating on the selected approach for advancing organizational change at Waterville College, the author contemplated the ethical implications and challenges. Kezar (2018) stressed change agents should consider the ethics of any change as a primary change factor, and highlighted the importance of being vigilant in identifying ethical situations when making decisions. The author, as a change agent and ethical leader, will utilize Wood and Hilton's (2012) model of multiple paradigms for ethical decision making for community college leaders. These include ethics of justice, critique, care, and ethics of the profession and local community. The author is aware of how decisions made affect others (Lawton & Páez, 2015) and takes ethical considerations seriously. The input and contributions of others is considered, and the blend of both transformational leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) and distributed leadership approaches influence the author's ethics as a leader. The following section describes how the author will utilize these frameworks as an aid for ethical decision making when considering and analyzing solutions proposed for WIL at WC.

Ethic of Justice

The challenge for an institutional leader is one of governance, and the ethic of justice highlights unethical practices in governing and managing organizations. Rules, codes, and procedures that should be followed when making decisions are the core of this framework (Enomoto, 1997). The change process, utilizing the CPM (Deszca et al., 2020), will have increased likelihood of success if WC employees perceive the processes, procedures and outcomes are fair, concerns are listened to, and there are adequate explanations provided for decisions (Kezar, 2018). This can be accomplished through transparency, multi-level consultations, frequent and clear communication, and creating opportunities for collaboration. As WC has an existing LSS process for change, the author will consider if

the proposed solutions allow for opportunities to integrate with existing quality board huddles (QBH's). QBH's provide an opportunity for all employees to participate in decision making which can facilitate fairness, equality, and individual rights and voices being heard (Ciulla & Forsyth, 2011). These sessions are important since WC has multiple campuses, of varying sizes, not located geographically near each other. Wood and Hilton (2012) described an organization acting within an ethic of justice as one that ensures all employees have reasonable equal access to advantage.

Ethic of Critique

An ethic of critique is described by Wood and Hilton (2012) as a "morally based paradigm" (p. 202) and Starratt (1991) stated it "forces administrators to confront the moral issues involved when schools disproportionally benefit some groups in society and fail others" (p. 190). Utilizing an ethic of critique approach will ensure solutions considered for the PoP acknowledge WIL practices may be disadvantaging already marginalized students and impacting their success with work practicums. Starratt (1991) highlighted the importance of creating opportunities to ensure participation by all in "ethical learning activities" (p. 193). When contemplating alterations to organizational structures, reporting hierarchies, and policies, institutional leaders should engage in a thoughtful examination of existing policies and practices, as emphasized by Liu (2017). The emphasis should be on striving to establish a more equitable and balanced structure as an integral aspect of the change plan initiative. It is crucial to assess the accessibility of WIL activities for all students and proactively tackle any existing or perceived barriers, as well as, reflect on any unchallenged assumptions about WIL currently prevalent within the organization.

Ethic of Care

The ethic of care framework puts emphasis on placing individuals first and being empathetic (Botes, 2000) with a focus on compassion, responsibility, and relationships rather than rights and rules (Enomoto, 1997). When examining PoP solutions, it will be important not to ignore any potential

negative impacts of WIL on the well-being of students and others engaged in the process. McBeath et al. (2017) found participation in WIL can impact a student's academic and social support networks, and highlighted how WIL can both protect and hinder students' mental health and well-being. Gillett-Swan and Grant-Smith's (2018) model provided a WIL well-being lens that will be considered by the author. The model recognizes the impact of WIL on participants' overall quality of life within and beyond the learning context, and the importance of developing institutional support mechanisms to provide for formal and informal individual coping strategies. Whether in an informal or formal role, a change leader embracing an ethic of care prioritizes the cultivation of a mutually respectful relationship through transparent communication, honesty, and trust, as emphasized by Starratt (1991). The author recognizes integrating an ethic of care into the campus and departmental networks associated with the chosen distributed-transformational leadership approach can enhance the engagement of identified change drivers at multiple organizational levels.

Ethic of Local Community

The ethic of local community is based on the idea that community colleges, when making decisions, must prioritize serving the needs, interests, and public good of the local community, delineated as the institution's service region (Wood & Hilton, 2012). WC is a provincial publicly funded institution. Consideration must be given to the provincial college community, and each campus regional community when examining solutions to the PoP. Challenges related to geography, campus resources, and other contextual factors can pose difficulties in ensuring an equitable allocation of educational resources across multiple campus institutions (Wu & Wu, 2013). The ethical framework of the local community is a crucial lens to apply at WC for navigating challenges in ethical decision-making. The author must consider and address any disparities or advantages certain campuses may have over others and the resulting effect on the organization.

Ethic of Profession

The ethic of profession recognizes the presence of guiding values (such as principles, codes, assumptions, and expected behaviors) inherent in each profession. Leadership is obligated to adhere to these values (Smith & Fox, 2019; Wood & Hilton, 2012). WC aligns its strategic directions with core values of excellence in service and performance, integrity in all operations, respectful relationships, inclusion of all individuals, and open and truthful communications (WC, 2023c). The author acknowledges the duty to ensure these guiding values are reflected on when reviewing solutions to the PoP and developing the organizational change plan to ensure achievement of the institutional goal of improved WIL experiences.

Engaging in ethical and collaborative decision-making is in alignment with the distributive-transformational leadership approaches selected for this DiP. Kezar stated "leadership and ethics are inseparable" (2018, p. 40). This approach increases the likelihood of acceptance, adaption, and successful implementation, as emphasized by Bowen et al. (2006). Examining the three proposed solutions for the PoP, together with Wood and Hilton's (2012) five ethical decision-making framework aids the author in determining the most viable solution for implementation at WC. These ethical considerations heavily influence the solutions to the PoP described in the next section.

<div align="center">

Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

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In the preceding sections, the author outlined their distributed-transformational leadership approach, introduced the change management framework, considered ethical decision-making factors, and conducted an initial readiness assessment for the DiP change initiative at WC. In this section, three potential solutions to address the PoP are examined with a preferred solution selected for implementation.

What Needs to Change

WC is a post-secondary college striving for excellence. Fostering "a culture of superior performance and service" (WC, 2023c, p. 5) is explicitly stated as an organizational value. As described previously, an internal review of WIL processes, conducted as part of a LSS project, provided evidence to support significant concerns with the quality of WIL services. The review found operational inconsistencies, and a lack of institutional policies and procedures. Roles, expectations, and experiences of employees, students, and employers engaging in WIL activities differ at the campus, academic school, and program levels (Author, 2022). This change initiative will require a shift in attitudes and mindsets around the importance of WIL, adjustments to current operational practices, and potential modifications of existing organizational structures and resources. Therefore, it could be described as transformational or a second-order change (Kezar, 2018). Most second-order changes begin with a perceived crisis (Bartunek & Moch, 1987), and the revelations of the current state of WIL created an urgency to address WIL at WC, particularly, at the executive and BOG level.

The three possible solutions focus on the institution as a system, and not on the direct experiences of WIL participants including students, faculty, and employers. While addressing the institutional problem of practice will directly affect these groups, the impact on WIL participants was deemed as a medium consideration for all solutions. Utilizing Wood and Hilton's (2012) ethical decision-making framework ensures those impacted by the change are considered at all levels.

Three Possible Solutions

This DiP provides an opportunity for WC to improve the quality of its current WIL services. Examining each potential solution will determine whether it can effectively address the PoP, identify the level of resources required, and understand the direct impact on key WIL participants (students, employees, and employers), while considering ethical implications.

Three solutions for implementation of a quality WIL framework based on best practice quality frameworks developed by Campbell et al. (2019) and McRae et al. (2018) will be considered. These are:

(a) a fully centralized institutional model, (b) a decentralized academic school-based model, or (c) a centralized institutional model with integrated campus-based implementation. Maintaining the status quo with a fully decentralized model was considered, however, it was deemed not viable due to the current level of dissatisfaction with WIL service quality levels.

Solution 1: Fully Centralized Institutional Model

This solution recommends WC, through the newly created office of strategic initiatives, create a fully centralized WIL institutional services model. The author has agency to implement this change once approved by senior executive. With this solution, all existing support staff who support WIL activities at the campus and program level will be reassigned to report to the director in the centralized WIL unit. This unit will be led by a new director of WIL who is currently being recruited. This new leadership position is funded within the existing academic divisional budget. An institutional WIL policy will need to be developed, and all existing procedures reviewed and revised. It will require academic school and program-based WIL activities to be migrated over to the central unit. The current WIL management information only captures engineering work term placements, therefore, the information system will need to be resourced and expanded to track all WIL activities. This centralized model will ensure common procedures for all programs, support increased institutional data gathering and analysis, and create a one-stop shop for all things WIL for students as well as employers. The model will, however, potentially remove significant current connections between WIL activities and local employers, as WIL would no longer be managed at the campus level. Moving employees to a centralized unit will likely create dissatisfaction due to the upheaval, and potentially result in employee loss. WIL is highly dependent on partnerships, and campus level strategic relationships forged over decades. Thus, WIL partnerships could be jeopardized with a fully centralized model.

With this model implementing a WIL quality framework, which would include pre, during and post-WIL activities and performance indicators, could be more easily tracked and evaluated for

continuous improvement. Training on the new processes and software system will need to be

implemented. WIL related budgets, and individual employees from campuses would need to be moved

to the centralized unit, likely creating a sense of loss at the campus level. The author would lead this

implementation, and it is anticipated it would take 18 - 24 months.

Solution 2: Decentralized Academic School-based Model

WC has six academic schools, each lead by a dean. While faculty report to their local campus

director, the dean has oversight on program level initiatives, curriculum, faculty hiring standards,

accreditation, and other program level matters. WIL is part of a program requirement, and schools

determine the WIL requirement for each program. Each school has specific WIL requirements often

determined by external accrediting bodies. A solution involving the implementation of school-based

decentralized model will enable each school to design and implement its own processes, consolidate

school-based WIL resources, and work with campuses directly to implement WIL services. The author

has agency to implement this change once approved by senior executive, with the support of the deans.

With this solution, both the author and the new director of WIL would need to work with the deans and

school-based WIL staff resources in a matrix type arrangement. While building on existing school

strengths, it would likely prove to be challenging.

Variations between schools in terms of priorities, processes and resources would need to be

accounted for. Currently several schools have strong WIL models operating for specific programs,

however, it is not always consistent across all programs in a school. While this model will provide a level

of autonomy and customization to the schools, it will not support increased institutional WIL

efficiencies. This model will likely result in duplication of services in schools and campuses and lack

mechanisms to share information on best practices. Individual staff, or budgeted staff positions,

currently within the institution with WIL responsibilities will need to be reallocated to individual schools.

New positions may need to be budgeted for and recruited.

Students in programs are generally clear on their program requirements, but employers wishing to host students for WIL activities from multiple programs have indicated the lack of a single contact point to be confusing and frustrating. The collection of data relating to WIL activities will be more challenging, and therefore, lacking opportunities for continuous improvement. The author has agency to work with the school deans to implement this model, and it would take approximately 18 - 20 months.

Solution 3: Centralized Institutional Model Integrated with Campuses

The third solution involves the creation of a centralized institutional model under the OSI, with an integrated campus-based implementation. In addition to overall WIL coordination, centralized components will include a single institutional information management system, a centralized website for all WIL activities, and an institutional policy with associated procedures. Some existing WIL support staff will be reassigned to report to the new director of WIL. Policies and technologies exist for staff to work from any campus, allowing for campus connections for WIL activities to be maintained. This model will support students at the campus and program level and maintain local relationships with employers. Since WC operates with a distributed leadership model, maintaining strong relationships and engagement with campus staff and managers is consistent with existing operational and management practices. The author has agency to lead this implementation, and it is anticipated it will take approximately 18 - 20 months.

Analysis and Discussion

All solutions proposed are intended to improve the overall quality of WIL services at WC. Each of the identified solutions were analysed using a ranking criterion of 1 (low) to 3 (high) presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Solution Ranking

Factors for consideration	Solution 1: Fully centralized WIL Institutional Model	Solution 2: Decentralized school-based model	Solution 3: Centralized institutional model integrated with campuses
Alignment with WC strategic goal of improved experiential learning (WIL)	High impact [3]	Medium Impact [2]	High Impact [3]
Alignment to PoP	Yes [3]	Partially [2]	Yes [3]
Approximate Timeline	18 – 24 months [2]	18 – 20 months [3]	18 – 20 months [3]
Impact on WIL Participants	Medium impact, simplify access point for WIL participants [2]	Medium impact, different access points depending on program/school [2]	Medium impact, some centralized services but also local contacts points [2]
Human Resources Impact	Significant impact, reassignment of all WIL employees, recruitment of new WIL Director [1]	Medium impact, reassignment of some WIL employees, recruitment of new WIL Director [2]	Low/Medium impact, reassignment of some WIL employees, recruitment of new WIL Director [3]
Fiscal Resources	One budget unit for all WIL activities, will pull from existing WIL resources at schools and campuses, plus additional of approved budget for OSI. [2]	Five budget units – one in each school for all school WIL activities, pull from campus budgets into school budgets. [1]	One budget unit for all institutional WIL activities, would require additional campus-based budget for implementation. [3]
Technological Resources	Requires expansion of current WIL information management system on institutional level; easier to maintain and manage [3]	With 6 schools, will be challenging to have a centralized WIL information management system; may require separate school instances [1]	Requires expansion of current WIL information management system on institutional level; easier to maintain and manage [3]
Score - scale of 1 (low) to 3 (high)	16	13	20
Ranking	Second	Third	First

Guiding Questions

The guiding questions presented in Chapter 1 were considered when reflecting on each possible

solution. The first guiding question is: where are WIL leaders situated in the organizational structure?

(Patrick et al., 2014). At WC, WIL leaders are located at all levels of the organization. This includes front-

line staff, faculty, campus directors, deans, and other student services staff. Solution one does not allow

for the full engagement of these WIL champions since moving to a fully centralized system would

dramatically change how WC operates as a distributed network of campuses. Solution two and solution

three allow for more involvement of WIL leaders at various campus and organizational levels.

Guiding question two asks if there is a realistic recognition of WIL and adequate resourcing in

institutional systems and infrastructure (Orrell, 2011). Solutions one and three require approximately

the same amount of organizational human resources, albeit option one requires relocation of staff to a

centralized unit and option three provides for a distributed workforce with the reassignment of

reporting relationships. Option two will require additional resources, and the reassignment of

distributed staff positions. The WC executive team have committed funds in the current budget for

financial and human resources to address the problem of practice. Solution one, a fully centralized

model would require the most significant financial resource reallocation, and this may present a barrier

to success. Solutions two and three involve a less dramatic reallocation of financial resources and would

be perceived as being less threatening to campus operations and employees.

The third guiding question asks what are the critical change considerations when implementing

a centralized process at a higher education institution with multiple campuses? Since WC has over 15

campuses and operates with a distributed leadership approach, considering the how the POP will

directly impact on campuses is important. As students connect to the campuses they attend, and

employers often have developed relationships at the regional campus level, it is important to maintain

this level of engagement. Solution one, as a fully centralized model, will be the only solution proposed to

negatively impact on the current campus operational model. Solutions two and three build on the value of maintaining these local partner relationships.

Preferred Solution

After careful consideration, solution three, a centralized institutional model with integrated campus-based implementation was selected to be the best model to successfully address the PoP at WC. This solution ranked highest when considering its alignment to organizational strategic goals, estimated timeline to implement, positive impact on WIL services, and factoring in human, fiscal and technological resources. The author has agency and leadership support to fully implement this solution to improve WIL through the implementation of a quality framework at WC. This solution is in alignment with the author's distributed-transformational leadership style. Respecting and valuing the role of WIL leaders at all levels of the organization, and ensuring employees understand and are excited about the vision for change in a timely and effective manner, are known leadership traits.

Ethical Considerations

Previously in this chapter, an overview of Wood and Hilton's (2012) five ethical paradigm framework was presented. These include ethics of justice, critique, care, ethics of the profession, and ethics of local community. It was important for the author to review all solutions through these lenses to identify any concerns and reflect on additional perspectives to ensure all solutions were suitable. Solution three reflected the best option considering these ethical paradigms. In particular, it rated highly on both the ethics of care and ethics of local community. WC is a public community college, and the relationships at the local level need to be respected and maintained for a successful change initiative.

Participant Perspectives

To successfully address the PoP, the solution selected must be a good overall fit for the organization. It is important to consider various factors, internal and external, that may be competing forces against the desired change. Insights as to why these forces may or may not be supportive will be

revealed (Deszca et al., 2020). One of the defining elements of WIL is the involvement of students,

educational institutions, and external partners, where each contributes reciprocally to the benefit of the

other participants (Fleming et al., 2018). Specifically, the players need to be engaged in the process, and

their current experiences and responsibilities relating to WIL activities need to be heard and

acknowledged. Why the problem is relevant from their perspectives is important to consider going

forward as Ferns et al. (2019) suggest, effective partnerships need to be built on collaboration,

collegiality, and shared experiences. Change facilitators are at many levels and need to be engaged at

various stages (Kezar, 2018). The selected solution aligns with the author's distributed and

transformational leadership approaches.

Student Considerations. Students participating in WIL activities are provided with an

advantage over non-participating students (Wyonch, 2019). Gaining experience to improve chances of

graduate employment is a student's strongest motivation for participating in WIL programs (Rowe,

2017). This is important as it impacts on an applicant's decision to enroll in a program of study, and

contributes to overall student enrollment targets. For students, transitioning from the structured

known world of academia to an entirely different world of work, can be fraught with many unknowns

(Twomey & Pretti, 2023). To attain optimal outcomes from the WIL experience, Kay et al. (2019) found

students need to be thoroughly prepared, actively engaged, and responsible for their learning. It is also

important to consider the overall well-being of students (Effeney, 2020). This student consideration can

be best managed through solution three, which maintains supports and connections at the local campus

level where the student is enrolled.

Institutional Considerations. WIL is a deliberate pedagogy by institutions for bringing

together classroom learning and practical workplace experiences (Campbell et al., 2021; Dollinger &

Brown, 2019; Effeney, 2020). Johnston and Sator (2017) found experience-based offerings are often

decentralized in their development and delivery at institutions. Some models, such as cooperative

education and apprenticeships, which have existed for a long time, are likely to be more organized and

centralized than others (Johnston & Sator, 2021). Faculty are also key institutional players that need to

be included in the WIL quality framework dialogue. Faculty directly interact with students on

experiential learning components in the curriculum and often have industry partnerships and

relationships. Sporn (2006) advised a structure in which administration and faculty can work as partners

is desirable. Solution three supports this institutional perspective and is the best option for overall

success.

Employer and Community Partner Considerations. The Business/Higher Education Roundtable

(2022) in the 2022 Skills Survey Report states, "WIL is at the heart of business and post-secondary

collaboration" (p. 14). WIL connects upcoming graduates with employers looking to identify and recruit

skilled talent into their organizations. Work experience, a common characteristic of WIL, is highly valued

by employers as an indicator of work readiness, and has been widely adopted to enhance workforce

capability and improve graduate employability outcomes (Effeney, 2020; Ferns et al., 2019; Rowe,

2017). Collaborative and committed partnerships are core to successful WIL activities (Govender &

Taylor, 2015). Solution three will allow for the experiences of employers interacting with the institution

and students to be listened to and improved upon. Hearing from this partner group, clarifying

expectations, and integrating their needs will be an important component of this change initiative.

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

Embarking on organizational change demands a thoughtful and strategic approach and the

active involvement of all participants. Chapter 2 focuses on the planning and development phase of the

DiP. The CPM proposed by Deszca et al. (2020) was selected by the author after consideration of several

other well established change models. A distributed-transformational leadership approach will be

integrated into overall planning. The organizational readiness of WC was analyzed, and it was

determined WC has high readiness for change. This is a critical indicator of success, as it is important to expose and understand potential challenges and roadblocks.

Three possible solutions to address the PoP were evaluated with resource needs identified. The third solution, a modified centralized WIL framework, was selected based on its overall suitability for implementation at WC. Ethical consideration and participant perspectives need to be further revisited throughout the various change stages. Building on this, a comprehensive change implementation plan is presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Communication, and Evaluation

Waterville College's (WC) strategic plan indicates experiential learning, more specifically work-integrated learning (WIL), is an institutional priority. However, the college is currently challenged with an inconsistent and unsystematic approach to WIL which needs to be addressed if quality WIL experiences are to be achieved. This problem of practice (PoP) is the focus of this dissertation-in-practice (DiP). Chapter 1 focuses on 'the what', with emphasis on defining and understanding the problem of practice (PoP) within the institutional context. Chapter 2 focuses on 'the why', and examines leadership approaches, change models, WC's change readiness status, ethical decision-making considerations, and potential solutions relevant to addressing the PoP. The author demonstrates how embracing a distributed-transformational leadership approach to change aligns with WC's preferred organizational leadership methods, and how this aids with change planning.

This final chapter focuses on 'the how', and presents a plan developed for implementing, monitoring, and communicating the organizational change process. Using the change path model (CPM) (Deszca et al., 2020), the process to guide the implementation is outlined. A comprehensive communication plan aligned with the initiative is presented, along with an integrated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process assessing the implementation of the overall change initiative. The chapter concludes with the next steps and future considerations for the planned change solution.

Change Implementation Plan

This section delves into the compatibility of the change implementation plan with the organization's broader context and institutional priorities, while considering the management of the transition and change process.

Alignment

WC's strategic plan (WC, 2023c) outlines the institution's vision towards 2026. One of the three main goals is "By March 31, 2026, WC will have implemented leading-edge teaching and learning

approaches" (WC, 2023c, p. 7). One of the corresponding three-year indicators is "strengthened

opportunities for applied experiential learning" (WC, 2023c, p. 8), and this is inclusive of WIL. The PoP

being addressed in this DiP connects directly to the institution's strategic plan.

For the successful implementation of any organizational change, it is crucial to develop a detailed

implementation plan (Deszca et al., 2020). To achieve the desired future state described in Chapter 2

four priorities for the change implementation plan are developed. These are: (a) increase institutional

awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning; (b) build capacity to support and expand

work-integrated learning; (c) develop and implement a college-wide WIL quality framework; and (d)

maintain continuous improvement by establishing monitoring and evaluation practices. These priorities

are developed with goals and objectives outlined according to the four phases of the CPM (Deszca et al.,

2020). Timelines for implementation, and the roles and responsibilities of key participants are identified

at each stage. Having the ability to consult on the change implementation plan at any point during the

process will significantly contribute to the inclusion of all affected, ensure key voices are heard, and

guarantee essential steps are organized and subsequently carried out.

Strategic Priorities and Goals

The solution proposed in Chapter 2 to address the PoP involves the creation of a centralized

institutional WIL unit operating with an integrated campus-based model. It will be located under the

office of strategic initiatives (OSI). This model will support students at both the campus and program

levels while also nurturing local relationships with employers. Given WC's use of a distributed leadership

model, sustaining partner relationships and active engagement with campus staff and managers align

with the current operational and management practices. The author, with oversight of the OSI, will lead

this implementation over a period of 18 – 20 months. Reflecting the identified priorities, the author

presents the following goals in Table 3 outlined by objective.

Table 3

Change Plan Strategic Priorities, Objectives, and Goals

Strategic Priority 1: Increase institutional awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning.

Objective: Inspire an institution-wide commitment and develop processes to support growth, expansion, and innovation in work-integrated learning.

Goals: 1.1 Increase institutional awareness and focus on WIL by establishing a cross-institutional WIL Advisory Committee to collaborate with the Director, OSI.

1.2 Increase WIL Advisory Committee's understanding of the problem.
1.3 Identify types of WIL at WC.
1.4 Determine the extent of WIL Activity at WC.
1.5 Develop & disseminate vision for WIL at WC.
1.6 Develop WIL institutional policy and procedures for approval.
1.7 Implement institutional WIL policy and procedures.

Strategic Priority 2: Build capacity to support and expand work-integrated learning.

Objective: Build capacity and develop new strategies to increase course, program, and alternative WIL opportunities extending access to and support for learners in campuses throughout the province.

Goals: 2.1 Formalize organizational structure to support institutional level WIL activities.

2.2 Develop a fulsome understanding of the roles of all WIL participants in organization; support them through change process.

2.3 Engage Campus Directors in WIL change implementation process.

2.4 Launch WIL Central Office as an entity within OSI, and recruit Director of WIL

2.5 Formalize and increase support for WIL professional development of faculty, staff and administrators.

2.6 Communicate the need for change institution wide.

2.7 Expand deployment of WIL information system (Orbis) for all WIL activities across institution.

Strategic Priority 3: Develop and implement a college-wide WIL quality framework.

Objective: Develop a quality WIL framework for pre, during-, and post-WIL activities in collaboration with schools and campuses.

Goals: 3.1 Develop a student success framework in collaboration with academic division, schools, and campus administrators.

3.2 Test WIL Quality Framework by reaching out to WIL participants at various campuses and various schools and engage them in providing feedback.

3.3 Increase the knowledge and skills of those involved in WIL activities to understand the quality framework.

3.4 Increase knowledge and awareness of barriers through professional development workshops relating to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and WIL.

3.5 Share and celebrate smalls wins and milestones relating to WIL improvements.

3.6 Develop a WIL quarterly communique to continue to share benefits of WIL and new knowledge learned in process.

Strategic Priority 4: Maintain WIL continuous improvement by establishing monitoring & evaluation practices.

Objective: Utilize tools for monitoring and evaluation of the organizational change initiative to determine if activities are an effective solution to the PoP. Act on findings that show what is working well and what still needs to be improved upon.

Goals: 4.1 Determine and develop a monitoring plan to assess the overall institutional change initiative.

4.2 Evaluate outcomes of change initiative with periodic checks to gauge progress.

Essential to the implementation of this change is the setting of goals (Deszca et al., 2020). This is also necessary for successful program monitoring and evaluation (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Goals function as a comprehensive checklist ensuring process details are retained, and facilitating the coordination and clarity of change phases, participants, necessary actions, and successful outcomes for all involved. The future state envisioned is one of a consistent quality experience for pre, during, and post-WIL activities at WC for students, employers, and institutional employees, including management, faculty, and support staff.

Managing Change

In Chapter 2, the CPM (Deszca et al., 2020) is described with each of its four phases outlined in detail. These phases move the change process along from planning, building momentum, implementation, evaluation, and institutionalizing the change. Table 4 presents the CPM phases aligned to the identified strategic priority, with associated timelines.

Table 4

Change Path Alignment

Phase (CPM)	**Strategic Priority**	**Timeline**
(1) Awakening: Create awareness of the need and vision for change; further refine implementation plan.	Increase institutional awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning.	Sept 2024 – Dec 2024
(2) Mobilization: Secure the resources required to implement change vision.	Build capacity to support and expand work-integrated learning.	Dec 2024 – April 2025
(3) Acceleration: Collaborate with participants to develop and implement program.	Develop and implement a college-wide WIL quality framework.	April 2025 – Dec 2025
(4) Institutionalization: Collaborate, develop, and implement a monitoring plan to assess the change process through multiple mechanisms.	Maintain WIL continuous improvement by establishing monitoring and evaluation practices.	Dec 2025 – April 2026

Note. Phase (CPM) column content adapted from Deszca, G., Ingols, C., & Cawsey, T. F. (2020).

O*rganizational change: An action-oriented toolkit* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd, pp. 51-57.

A detailed implementation plan is provided in Appendix B. It identifies detailed actions, lead position responsible for implementation, required resources, and the targeted outcome for each goal. This plan will be further refined with the support of the WIL advisory committee in the first few months of the initiative.

Supports and Resources

The success of the change initiative is strongly connected to the availability of supports and resources required to implement the change plan (Deszca et al., 2020). The strategy chosen to address the PoP relies on both the utilization of existing resources distributed throughout the institution and the addition of new resources. A new position, director of work-integrated learning, has received funding in the current fiscal budget. The funds required for the purchase of additional modules of software used to manage WIL activities has also been secured. Any additional amounts required for training or travel related to communication activities is not unattainable within existing resources.

The solution to the PoP is also tied closely to the current strategic plan and the implemented LSS management practices. Time will be required by WIL advisory committee members, academic team members, and other staff resources throughout the college for planning and implementation. This initiative will be implemented over an 18 – 20 month period to reduce any overextension on resources needed from other departments of WC. The detailed implementation plan presented in Appendix B outlines resources and institutional supports needed at each phase to accomplish the identified goals.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Throughout the various phases of the change plan implementation, potential issues may arise. These possible issues raised in Chapter 2 will require consultation and discussion to address any potential impacts. As the office of strategic initiatives (OSI) is in its first full year of operation, it is still building resources and determining its scope. For example, hiring a director of WIL, who will report to the author responsible for leading the OSI, is currently in the recruitment phase. The successful

candidate will require time to adjust to the organization and get up to speed with their new role. This will be mitigated by the author being available to offer support and mentoring.

The scope of this change initiative project is large, impacting all academic schools, campuses, and student services departments. However, the author is confident there is significant institutional support and readiness for this change. The author's extensive experience in leadership positions at WC with successful engagement in other change initiatives will prove advantageous. As the change agent and lead implementer, it is fundamentally important the author exhibits characteristics of transformational leadership. Articulating a well-defined vision of an enhanced future state, presenting supporting research for the proposed change, and inspiring champions at various levels in the organization to focus on the benefits to students will be essential (Deszca et al., 2020). Being open and willing to adjust course as necessary, and engaging key participants to develop, communicate, and implement the desired change, through the WIL advisory committee, will aid overall success.

The current absence of a WIL policy and procedure will be a challenge. There is an extensive development, vetting and approval process for new policy development. The office of policy and planning, however, is eager to start on the development, and, after initial conversations with the author, has already begun background research on best practices and policies developed at other educational institutions. The lack of WIL policy has been noted by the director of policy and planning in their own institutional policy reviews. WC does not have a solid handle on the extent of WIL happening across the institution. Both the office of institutional research and the lean centre for excellence (LCE), after preliminary meetings, are committed to assisting with this component. These offices are also in need of WIL activity data for reports such as the performance indicators for the strategic plan and annual LSS performance documents.

The implementation of the organizational change plan will rely on champions and supporters at all campuses and academic schools. This can be challenging for an institution with more than 15

campuses. The WIL advisory committee, with representation from the campuses along with various other action subcommittees, will be a mechanism to engage local champions. An abundance of communications about the change, webinars on the new processes, and employee training will support the initiative. As WIL is a service largely supporting and enhancing the overall student academic experience, focusing on its value and the intention behind the change will help mobilize support at all levels.

As Chapter 1 identifies, according to Bolman and Deal (2017), barriers to change can be structural, political, symbolic, or related to human resources.   The change implementation plan developed includes many strategies suggested by Bolman and Deal, however, additional unforeseen challenges can be anticipated. While careful planning and communication can offset some of these roadblocks, the authors' years of experience at WC has prepared them to expect sudden changes in direction, position and institutional priorities. The transformational and distributed leadership approaches described in the previous chapters will be critical to building capacity for successful change. Along with the existing LSS processes, the communication plan discussed in the next section will support overcoming challenges and accomplishing successful change at WC.

Communications

The change outlined in this DiP necessitates comprehension and enthusiasm across various levels of WC. This may prove challenging as WC is a multi-campus institution with varying degrees of centralization and decentralization. To obtain backing and sustain a commitment to the common vision of quality WIL services, a strong communication plan is essential for the successful implementation of organizational change (Deszca et al., 2020; Lewis, 1999). Change initiatives frequently struggle to succeed due to differing levels of understanding influencing responses to the proposed change and not because of inadequate solutions (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Deszca et al., 2020). This section provides

an overview of a change plan aligned with the stages of the CPM, and an overview of the DiP's

knowledge mobilization plan (KMP; Lavis et al., 2003).

Strategies for Planned Communication

Klein (1996) outlined seven "empirically founded communication principles" (p. 34) considered

by the author when building the communications strategy for this change initiative. These principles

are:

1. Repetition of a message correlates with its retention, and in this instance, key change messages

   will be repeated during all four phases of the change implementation.

2. Employing multiple media channels proves more effective than relying on one, therefore, the

   change agent will utilize different mediums such as in-person and online presentations, digital

   messages, and individual discussions.

3. In-person communication is a favored means of interaction, therefore, the author has planned

   multiple opportunities at each phase to meet with key institutional champions, faculty, senior

   leadership, and others connected to the change initiative. The WIL advisory committee, once

   established, will be utilized to engage in face-to-face communication to support the change.

4. The hierarchical chain of command represents an efficient communication channel endorsed by

   the organization and will be utilized appropriately in this change initiative without impinging on

   employee engagement. Messaging by senior executive, particularly the VPAAR, will enhance the

   distribution of messages and will be impactful, particularly, at the middle management level.

5. The most expected and effective source of organizationally endorsed information is from one's

   direct supervisor. Therefore, it will be important to ensure managers, particularly campus

   administrators and deans, are well informed along all stages of the change initiative.

   Supervisors need to be accurate sharers of information and often do so through regular

   personal contact.

6. Opinion leaders wield significant influence in shaping attitudes and opinions. It will be important to ensure they are identified early in the change process with specific steps added to the communication plan to ensure the influencers receive sufficient attention. As a transformational leader with many years of experience at WC, the change agent will utilize well established relationships to build support and provide valuable feedback.

7. Since personally relevant information tends to be retained better than abstract, unfamiliar, or general information, the author will pull on the program data obtained through the LSS project to ensure the change plan initiative hits the mark with those engaged in the change.

In addition to these principles, to ensure communications around the WIL framework change plan considers the full diversity of those involved or affected by the change, WC's equity, diversity, and inclusion committee will be engaged in creating messaging, as Goldman et al. (2023) recommended.

These principles were scaffolded with five core messages developed by the author. These messages will be integrated into a Knowledge Transfer (KT) strategy (Lavis et al., 2003) utilized to awaken, mobilize, and accelerate change as described in an upcoming section.

 These key messages are as follows:

1. WC's strategic plan has strategic priority reflecting "strengthened opportunities for applied experiential learning" (WC, 2023c, p. 8), inclusive of WIL. The problem being addressed in this DiP connects directly to the institution's strategic plan.

2. WC does not have an institutional WIL policy or procedure. Not having either puts the organization at risk, creating a lack of clarity on processes and definitions.

3. The LSS project report produced data showing significant variations in WIL processes and standards for different campuses, programs, and academic schools. This finding is not in alignment with WC's value of institutional excellence.

4. A 'home' for WIL in the institution, with an accompanying website and information system, will increase awareness of WIL and streamline efficiencies to benefit all employees engaged with WIL in any way.

5. WIL has a positive impact on student experience and graduate employment (Peters & Pizarro Milian, 2024) which is important to everyone at WC.

One of the challenges impacting the communication plan is the lack of common institutional terminology for activities included or excluded under the WC WIL umbrella. Johnston and Sator (2021) suggest all WIL offerings at an institution should first be mapped using a model to facilitate the development of more integrated communications. The development of a common institutional WIL definition as part of the policy creation will mitigate this challenge.

In the change process, active involvement, widespread sharing, and effective communication each hold significant importance (Lewis et al., 2006). This is important because as Bolman and Deal (2017) found, change can be accompanied by anxiety, lack of clarity, loss of direction, and the desire to hold on to things the way they currently are. For the author as change leader, it will be necessary to keep WC's values of excellence, respect, diversity, integrity, and transparency at the forefront of all communications.

Klein's (1996) communication principles, alongside the phased approach to communication needs outlined in the CPM by Deszca et al. (2020), serve as the cornerstones for developing the communication plan for the change initiative at WC. A detailed communications plan is provided in Appendix C. It is designed along Deszca et al.'s (2020) phases with the intended audience, target, and corresponding communication mechanism. The author will utilize a Jones et al. (2014) distributed leadership approach to successfully communicate along each step of the change initiative to ensure participation and engagement.

Deszca et al. (2020) presented four phases of a communication plan: (a) the "pre-change phase" in which the change leader persuades others of the necessity for change; (b) "the need for change phase" in which the rationale is provided, employees are reassured, change process steps are outlined, and urgency is generated; (c) the "midstream change phase" which will inform the internal college community of progress made, obtain feedback, identify challenges and issues, and clarify new structure and associated role changes; and (d) the "confirming and celebrating phase" in which successes are communicated, lessons learned are reflected on, and next steps are considered (p. 350).

Alignment between the CPM stages and these communication plan phases (Deszca et al., 2020) is important as each step has different communication needs. Table 5 portrays this alignment and identifies the key communication requirement at each phase.

Table 5

Phases of Communication Strategy Aligned with CPM

Change Path Model Stage	Phase	Communication Requirement
Awakening	Pre-change	Convince the executive leadership team and VPAAR, with approval authority, that change is necessary. Also convince influential deans & academic directors.
Mobilization	Developing Need for Change	Generate enthusiasm at multiple organizational levels and throughout the campus network around the change potential and the need to act expeditiously. Use LSS data to communicate current state of institutional WIL and outline next steps.
Acceleration	Midstream Change and Milestone Communication	Transparent communication on progress and setbacks to various groups. Design opportunities to obtain frequent and relevant feedback on new processes, as well as clarify any misconceptions.
Institutionalization	Confirming and Celebrating	Identify and celebrate both small wins and major gains. Strive for continuous improvement and explore opportunities for next level changes with the WIL quality framework implementation.

Note: Adapted from Deszca, G., Ingols, C., & Cawsey, T. F. (2020). O*rganizational change: An action-oriented toolkit* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Four Communication Phases

> With communication continuing throughout the implementation of the entire DiP, taking deliberate, planned measures to comprehensively address each phase will enhance the overall success of the change initiative. This section provides an overview of the four phases of the communication plan and examines alignment with the CPM.

Phase 1: Pre-change Phase

> This first phase focuses on recognizing a problem exists and gaining necessary support from those in positions of power to address it. By using available data from a LSS project (Author, 2022) and student satisfaction survey results (WC, 2022d), the author will communicate the problem using an evidence-based approach. This will be supported by relevant external research of emerging trends in WIL nationally and internationally (Peters & Pizarro Milian, 2024). In addition, the fact the change initiative supports the objectives in the current WC strategic plan will be reinforced.

> Support from WC's executive team, the VPAAR and the academic deans will be important to move the change forward. Relying on transformational leadership characteristics, methods used to communicate will include a briefing document and a presentation delivered in person and on-line with opportunities available for discussion. Lewis (2018) recommended individual meetings and informal conversations will also be arranged as necessary based on strategic considerations.

Phase 2: Developing the Need for Change Phase

> Communications in this phase will be expanded to a larger audience including deans and directors, campus administrators, faculty, and student services employees. The phase will concentrate on addressing the why, what, and how queries concerning the change and its ramifications for the institution (Beatty, 2015; Deszca et al., 2020). Consultation and inspirational appeals, communication strategies found most effective by Falbe and Yukl (1992), will be deployed. By utilizing in-person sessions and the MS Teams online communication platform, credible influencers, and champions within

participant groups in various departments and campuses will be empowered to assist with change messaging (Deszca et al., 2020). Interactive webinars will be created and delivered on the importance of WIL to the college and WIL's value to students and employers. Opportunities for input into the design of the WIL quality framework and its supporting components will be facilitated.

Consultation with change recipients will be planned at various points throughout this phase and future phases, with the intent to obtain feedback on implementation experiences to ensure modifications and improvements will be made as necessary. Similar to the pre-change phase, the author, as the change agent, will heavily depend on the attributes of transformational leadership to engage participants and partners in the change process (Beatty, 2015; Deszca et al., 2020). The CPM serves as a reminder for change leaders, such as the author, to carefully consider the human aspect of change, emphasizing the attitudes and beliefs of those involved in the change process, as well as anticipating potential reactions from participants (Deszca et al., 2020). Reassuring those potentially impacted by the changes to WIL services and the organizational structure will be important in order to combat any misinformation or lack of clarity (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Deszca et al., 2020). A WIL advisory committee comprised of participants from various levels of the organization will be established to assist the author and the new director of WIL. Methods used to communicate will include an overview report, webinar presentations featuring report highlights, campus in-person visits, individual meetings with the campus administrators, and the engagement of the LSS centre of excellence to integrate systems and practices.

Phase 3: Midstream Change Phase

As activities ramp up in this phase, the change agent will need to focus on keeping participants and partners updated on progress, sharing achievements, monitoring any issues or barriers surfacing, and maintaining the change momentum (Deszca et al., 2020). As in the previous phase, this will be inclusive of faculty and student services employees. Sharing messages will be accomplished by

empowering the director of WIL, the WIL advisory committee, and other identified champions through a series of focus groups and individual meetings. Anonymous feedback will be captured through an online survey implemented by the office of institutional research (OIR). The in-person and online sessions will be designed to ensure all participants, regardless of role, will have the opportunity to provide input (Klein, 1996) and contribute to the change vision. Developing and releasing a webpage to serve as a central point for all things WIL, will support communication and knowledge sharing. The author will also ensure short articles with updates on the project are presented at regular academic team meetings and included in regularly scheduled academic e-newsletters. A progress report will also need to be developed and delivered to the VPAAR and the executive team. Knowledge mobilizational activities in this phase will focus on the research supporting WIL quality frameworks and institutional best practices.

Phase 4: Confirming & Celebrating Phase

In the concluding phase of a change initiative, it is essential to effectively communicate and celebrate achievements and accomplishments. Deszca et al. (2020) caution, "Celebrations are an undervalued activity" (p. 352), however, the author, as a transformational leader never misses an opportunity to celebrate! Communications will include the wider internal and external college communities, employers, senior leadership, and students. The new WIL webpage and WC's social media channels will serve as an online location to share success stories and profile students who benefitted from WIL services. It will also be important to celebrate employees and managers who championed the change by profiling them in college newsletters and email updates. The WC executive will require communication in the form of an evidence-based project summary report. The WIL advisory committee will be thanked with a personal letter from the author and invited to reflect on their experiences and lessons learned as part of a celebration of the successful implementation. Initiating planning for the required next steps to continuously improve work-integrated learning at WC will be the next priority item.

Knowledge Sharing

The success of the change initiative will be impacted by how information is relayed and utilized for decision-making. To support this success, intentional knowledge mobilization strategies will be deployed throughout the change stages. These strategies are an attempt to bridge the gaps between research findings and what is happening in practice (Cooper, 2014). A knowledge transfer (KT) strategy based on Lavis et al.'s (2003) framework is provided in Appendix D. This KT plan provides an overview of strategies to be used to move knowledge forward aligned with each of the CPM phases. The plan includes the messages needing to be shared or knowledge generated, the target audience, the messenger who will generate the knowledge, the method used for knowledge transfer, and the overall impact of the knowledge transfer.

WC places a high level of importance on gathering, interpreting, and utilizing data with support through the LSS centre of excellence. The knowledge mobilization plan will be reinforced by existing infrastructure. As the change agent, the author will maintain a focus on these elements of the change progress and ensure the KT is aligned with the change stages. Opportunities to share knowledge, produce knowledge, and understand knowledge will be created (Malik, 2020). In addition, the communication plan will support efforts to maintain knowledge mobilization as a priority (Lavis et al., 2003) and provide channels for input and feedback from participants and partners (Malik, 2020).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are essential aspects of a change process (Deszca et al., 2020). This DiP will incorporate Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. This will serve to increase the likelihood of success by regularly measuring progress and assessing potential implementation barriers (Neumann et al., 2018). The M&E framework will also ensure the change implementation plan continues to be reviewed throughout the project lifecycle using data gathered to inform decisions (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). This section outlines the plan for M&E,

alignment of the framework to the CPM stages (Deszca et al., 2020), and alignment to Campbell et al.'s (2019) framework for institutional quality assurance of WIL.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

While they are intrinsically linked, it is important to highlight the differences between monitoring and evaluation, particularly, in terms of their role and function. Monitoring involves observing and tracking the ongoing progress as it is happening, whereas evaluation generally entails a more in-depth analysis assessing if the objectives have been achieved. Monitoring, described by Neumann et al. (2018) as an ongoing intervention tool, provides a means to allow for any required corrective action by utilizing predetermined performance indicators and targets (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Deszca et al. (2020) stressed the importance of using monitoring in recognizing early wins and celebrating them to encourage participants in the change process. Evaluation builds on the information obtained through monitoring, making a judgement on whether the objectives have been achieved, and if there have been any longer-term impacts. Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) defined evaluation as "the planned, periodic, and systematic determination of the quality and value of a program, with summative judgement as to the achievement of a program's goals and objectives" (p. 150).

An integrated M&E plan was developed for this DiP. The plan template is based on a format provided by Markiewicz and Patrick (2016), and the full detailed plan is available in Appendix E. This plan will be reviewed, revised, and adopted by the WIL steering committee in the first stage of the project. As change agent, the author will be relying on this M&E framework to assess the overall value of the change initiative. Connecting both monitoring and evaluation are the evaluation questions. These questions are important as the outcomes achieved during the change initiative are often impacted by the chosen M&E measures (Deszca et al., 2020).

Institutional WIL Quality Assurance

In Chapter 1, the author reviews several WIL quality frameworks to be considered for implementation as part of the change process (Campbell et al., 2019; McRae et al., 2018). Most of the literature around WIL quality frameworks focuses on assessing the quality of the WIL experiences and does not address the full scope of institutional WIL requirements. A framework developed by Campbell et al. (2021) across Australian universities contains four domains: student experience; curriculum design; institutional requirements; and partner engagement. A guiding principle is developed for each domain, and indicators for each are provided before, during, and after the WIL experience. The set of quality standards developed for the institutional requirements domain was guided by the principle, "Quality WIL activity across tertiary institutions requires effective leadership, management of risk and resources, and reporting around WIL experiences supporting continual improvement" (Campbell et al., 2019, p. 15). Campbell et al. (2021) highlighted "the practice of WIL needs to align with the broader institutional strategy and expectations" (p. 513). These institutional requirement standards are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Institutional Requirement Standards

Standard	Description
Standard 3.1	Institutions have shared goals, policies, principles, and values about WIL.
Standard 3.2	Institutions have identifiable leadership and governance structures for WIL.
Standard 3.3	WIL is supported by adequate and effective IT and administrative systems.
Standard 3.4	Institutions provide targeted professional development for academic and professional staff, and industry and community partners.
Standard 3.5	Enacted legal and risk management frameworks, compliance procedures and processes.
Standard 3.6	Provision of funding, resourcing, support, and recognition necessary to achieve WIL strategic goals.
Standard 3.7	Evaluation and tracking of short to long term WIL outcomes for continuous quality improvement.

Note: Campbell, M., Russell, L., Smith, L., McAllister, L., Tunny, R., Thomson, K., & Barrett, M. (2019). *A framework for the institutional quality assurance of work-integrated learning* [Grant]. ACEN Research Grant.

These quality standards were considered and mapped by the author against the strategic

priorities and objectives developed in the change implementation plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation Questions

Based on the PoP, three guiding questions were introduced in Chapter 1 focusing on WIL

leadership, adequate resourcing for institutional systems and infrastructure, and change considerations

for implementing a centralized process at a multi-campus institution. These guiding questions and

Campbell et al.'s (2019) institutional quality standards, influenced the development of the M&E

questions. The evaluation questions were also classified according to Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016)

evaluation criteria of appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

Change Plan Model Alignment

Monitoring and evaluation are important activities throughout the entirety of the change

initiative, and are of a particular focus in the institutionalization phase of Deszca et al.'s (2020) change

path model. This includes monitoring the progress of the change implementation, keeping notice of any

current requirements, determining progress towards completion of goals and objectives, and adjusting

strategies as necessary. M&E serve to mitigate risks, and "develop and deploy new structures, systems,

processes and knowledge, skills and abilities, as needed, to bring life to the change and new stability to

the transformed organization" (Deszca et al., 2020, p. 372). The CPM will serve as a guide for the

development and implementation of the M&E plan, particularly since alignment with the model will

ensure any required interventions are carried out in a timely and effective manner during

implementation. M&E will be supported by operationalizing the aligned communication requirements

with the M&E detailed plan. The evaluation questions in Table 7 align with strategic WIL priorities,

objectives, and Campbell et al.'s (2019) institutional quality standards guiding the development of the

integrated M&E plan in Appendix E.

Table 7

Evaluation Question Alignment

Evaluation Questions	Strategic Priority	Objective	Standard (Campbell et al., 2019)
Appropriateness: Has there been an increase in institutional awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning?	Increase institutional awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning.	Objective: Inspire an institution-wide commitment and develop processes to support growth, expansion, and innovation in work-integrated learning.	Standard 3.1 Institutions have shared goals, policies, principles, and values about WIL. Standard 3.2 Institutions have identifiable leadership and governance structures for WIL.
Effectiveness & Efficiency: Has there been a change in capacity level (i.e. funding, resources, IT system) to support WIL at WC? Are the systems effective and efficient?	Build capacity to support and expand work-integrated learning.	Build capacity and develop new strategies to increase course, program and alternative WIL opportunities extending access to and support for learners in campuses throughout the province.	Standard 3.3 WIL is supported by adequate and effective IT and administrative systems. Standard 3.6 Provision of funding, resourcing, support, and recognition necessary to achieve WIL strategic goals.
Effectiveness & Efficiency: Has there been a change in capacity level (i.e. funding, resources, IT system) to support WIL at WC? Are the systems effective and efficient?	Develop and implement a college-wide WIL quality framework.	Develop a quality WIL framework for pre-, during-, and post-WIL activities in collaboration with schools and campuses.	Standard 3.4 Institutions provide targeted professional development for academic and professional staff, and industry and community partners. Standard 3.5 Enacted legal and risk management frameworks, compliance procedures and processes.
Sustainability: Are there ongoing benefits to WIL at WC, and a mechanism for enhanced WIL operations relating to the student experience, curriculum design, and partner engagement?	Maintain continuous improvement in WIL activities by establishing monitoring and evaluation practices.	Utilize tools for monitoring and evaluation of the organizational change initiative to determine if activities are an effective solution to the PoP. Act on findings that show what is working well and what still needs to be improved upon.	Standard 3.7 Evaluation and tracking of short to long term WIL outcomes for continuous quality improvement.

The author, adopting a distributed-transformational leadership approach as discussed in Chapter 2, will focus throughout the change process on engaging participants and partners in the WIL change initiative. This engagement is particularly important at the campus and academic school level. Feedback from individuals and groups will be facilitated and welcomed as it will support the full success of the implementation. The WIL advisory committee, created in the first stage of the implementation plan, will be mobilized and empowered to support this leadership approach.

Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) provide templates for individual or integrated M&E plans. The author chose to modify the integrated plan formats to place the focus on aligning the M&E framework with the implementation plan strategic priorities, Campbell et al.'s (2019) quality standards, and the interrelatedness between these components. The monitoring section of the integrated plan in Appendix E includes the indicators, targets, data sources, and who is responsible and when. The evaluation section includes the summary of monitoring, evaluation methods, method implementation, and who is responsible and when.

Investing time in designing, refining, and implementing appropriate M&E criteria is crucial to steering the change initiative towards desired outcomes (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010) and ultimately addressing the identified PoP. The methods of data collection, interpretation, and usage will influence the change process and play a role in determining the overall effectiveness of the initiative. Consideration has been given to WC's capacity to support the collection and analysis of the data. The OIR, as an arms length unit, will support the OSI and produce support for M&E activities. As this DiP is actioned through a functionalist lens, the OIR will help ensure objectivity. The change agent, with the support of the director of WIL and the WIL advisory committee, will be fully engaged, but also recognizes a bias towards wanting the change initiative to be a stellar success. This neutral third party may increase the comfort level of contributing participants and partners. A significant amount of data

will be collected through online surveys. While leaning more towards interpretivism, the addition of focus groups and key informant interviews is deemed valuable to obtain richer feedback. This mixed approach of both quantitative and qualitative methods may reduce the limitations from using only one means (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Engaging in qualitative methods collaboratively seeking input from participants and partners will foster an inclusive, participatory approach, which can mitigate potential barriers and resistance to change (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

Ethical Considerations

To adhere to both the change agents' ethical principles, and the expressed values of the college (excellence, diversity, respect, integrity and transparency), the integrated M&E plan will be grounded in ethical considerations. Kezar (2018) encouraged change agents to carefully consider their ethical conduct throughout all elements of the change process as said conduct will have an impact on the success of the change initiative. In Chapter 2, the author utilizes Wood and Hilton's (2012) model of multiple paradigms for ethical decision making for community college leaders when analyzing possible solutions to the PoP. Building on these ethics, the author will adhere to five ethical principles developed by Rossi et al. (2019) for M&E. These are systematic inquiry, competence, integrity and honesty, respect for people, and common good and equity. Staff expertise from the OIR will be engaged in M&E plan refinement and implementation, including setting performance indicators, data collection and analysis, and dissemination of formative and summative results. OIR follows an institutional policy which dictates the IR team adhere to the CIRPA (n.d.) code of ethics. This code includes complementary principles to those outlined by Rossi et al. (2019). Of noted relevance are the practices of objectivity, quality of secondary data, management of the data, and confidentiality. The M&E plan will be refined and implemented based on these ethical principles.

Next Steps

WIL has emerged as not only a significant priority for Waterville College (WC, 2023c), but also for provincial and national employers and governments as they struggle to address labour and skills shortages across many industries (Peters & Pizarro Milian, 2024). WIL, as defined by CEWIL Canada (2021), includes an engaged partnership between an academic institution, a host organization (employer or sponsor), and a student. This DiP has focused mainly on one of these partners, an academic institution. Through the development of this DiP, the author identifies the first priority of WC is to improve experiential learning in the form of WIL, by improving institutional practices and supporting structures.

The quality framework developed by Campbell et al. (2019), and other frameworks such as the AAA framework developed by McRae et al. (2018) and Winchester-Seeto (2019) provide quality assurance guidelines which consider the student experience, curriculum design, and partner engagement. These quality assurance frameworks all suggest it is critically important to have quality WIL focused on exemplary experiences for students. As a next step the author recommends the newly established centre for WIL delve into understanding how students and employers can be supported through a more comprehensive quality framework, going beyond institutional requirements.

The principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion are of significant importance to WC and are outlined as a priority in its recent 2023-2026 strategic plan (WC, 2023c). As a recommended next step, the change agent, along with the WIL advisory committee and director of WIL, need to engage in broader discussions to identify and address barriers and other EDI priorities. Many individual community college students, as described by Hromalik et al. (2021) are a combination of adult learners juggling family and work responsibilities, part-time learners, rural or urban students, commuters, lower-income students, students with disabilities, Indigenous, or international students. This diverse student

population contains a range of ages, races, ethnicities, languages, and cultures. Care and consideration must be given to the needs of our diverse student population.

To inform this work, recent literature by Goldman et al. (2023) on a five stage WIL framework applying the equity, diversity, inclusion, and access (EDIA) framework should be considered. The five stage framework is intended to assist practitioners to design and deliver equitable WIL opportunities. The five stages include: (a) program design, (b) promotion and outreach, (c) student preparation and supports, (d) reflection and assessment of learning, and (e) program evaluation. Suggestions put forth by Goldman et al. (2023) aimed at enhancing the inclusivity of WIL involve integrating universal design principles (multiple means of: representation of information, student action and expression, and student engagement) (CAST, 2018) into WIL program development, adjusting prerequisites to WIL programs to eliminate barriers for academically challenged students, allocating extra funding for students to offset a range of additional WIL related costs, and offering staff professional development to support their work with equity-deserving groups. Since over 27% of WC students are online learners (WC, 2023a), challenges surrounding remote work placements need to be understood and considered when implementing programming going forward.

Student well-being is emerging as a critical issue at WC, particularly following the pandemic. Most of the focus at WC currently is only student well-being on campus, although student well-being in the workplace needs to be better understood. WC, like most post-secondary institutions, is experiencing increasing diversity in its student population and is struggling to understand how best to support all students at this time of complex needs. Gillett-Swan and Grant-Smith (2018) proposed a framework concept for managing the impacts of WIL on student quality of life. Their research identifies WIL well-being as a construct to identify potential impacts within and beyond traditional learning contexts. The framework considers student diversity, individual coping strategies, formal policy, and informal

institutional support. Student well-being is an important, yet complex area, for the center for WIL to address.

WIL opens the doors for institutions and students to participate in the world of work. Zegwaard and Pretti (2023) offered an important reminder that WIL, as a model of education directly engaging institutions with society, provides an opportunity to ensure important societal and global issues are considered as students are prepared for the world of work. WC has an opportunity going forward to engage in discussions around how WIL can help address broader college and provincial educational goals, and to fully participate in a rapidly expanding national and international WIL ecosystem – with a focus on quality and not just quantity.

Narrative Epilogue

Approximately one year after I walk across the stage and graduate with my hard-earned doctorate degree, I will be eligible to retire after thirty-five years in the workforce. In many ways, this program has served as the capstone to my career. It has been a sincere honour to contribute to post-secondary education in my home province and to work (and have fun) with so many wonderful colleagues over the years, way too numerous to mention.

While, admittedly, there have been many days when I wondered why I ever thought taking on this challenge was a good idea, I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity and all I have learned along the way (both personally and academically). It has broadened my knowledge, forever changed how I look at problems, and sharpened my analysis and writing skills. It has also taught me perseverance and made me appreciate the value of digging in deep. I am grateful for my classmates who shared their knowledge, experiences, humour, as well as their vulnerabilities. I sincerely wish you all much continued success. I also have immense gratitude for a stellar lineup of professors who pushed us all to higher ground.

Through it all, my yoga practice has sustained me. Showkeir and Showkeir (2013) writes "Yoga has great potency for helping you alter your perspective about the purpose of work, the people you work with, and the organizations you work in" (p. 7). My next chapter is just around the corner, and I am looking forward to the freedom of a blank page and all the possibilities lying ahead. In many ways, I feel like I am just getting started.

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets

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Appendix A: WC Organizational Structure

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                              ┌──────────────┐
                              │ President/CEO│
                              └──────┬───────┘
   ┌─────────┬──────────┬────────┬──┴──────┬─────────┬──────────┬─────────┐
┌──┴────┐ ┌──┴─────┐ ┌──┴────┐ ┌─┴──────┐ ┌┴──────┐ ┌┴───────┐ ┌┴──────┐
│AVP    │ │AVP,    │ │VP     │ │VP      │ │AVP    │ │AVP     │ │AVP    │
│Campus │ │Public  │ │Finance│ │Academic│ │Human  │ │Student │ │Inter- │
│Oper.  │ │Affairs │ │& Admin│ │& Applied│ │Res.  │ │Services│ │national│
└───────┘ │& Adv.  │ └───────┘ │Research│ └───────┘ └────────┘ └───────┘
          └────────┘           └────────┘
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- AVP Campus Operations
- AVP, Public Affairs & Advancement
- VP Finance & Admin
- VP Academic & Applied Research
- AVP Human Resources
- AVP Student Services
- AVP International

Under VP Academic & Applied Research:

- Director [Dean], Strategic Initiatives
  - Director, Work-Integrated Learning
- Deans (6), Academic Schools
- Dean, Applied Research
- Director, Academic Planning
- Director, Teaching & Learning
- Director, Academic Assessments

Appendix B: Change Implementation Plan

Phase 1: Awakening	**Strategic Priority:** Increase institutional awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning. **Duration:** September – December 2024 **Phase Objective:** Inspire an institution-wide commitment with a vision to support growth, expansion, and innovation in work-integrated learning.			
Goal	**Tasks**	**Lead**	**Resources /Institutional Supports**	**Target (intended outcome)**
1.1 Increase institutional awareness and focus on WIL by establishing a cross-institutional WIL Advisory Committee to collaborate with the Director, OSI.	• Seek expressions of interest from institutional representatives to form a WIL Advisory Committee. • Initiate WIL Advisory committee and establish terms of reference. • Develop orientation for Advisory Committee (Incl. info on WIL in general, value of WIL for students and employers, opportunities as well as transition planning) • WIL Advisory Committee to review and revise implementation plan, and integrated monitoring & plan.	Director, OSI (Change Agent)	Support from the Office of VP Academic & Applied Research	Creation of WIL Advisory Committee Creation of committee Terms of Reference Advisory committee orientation and WIL knowledge acquisition
1.2 Increase WIL Advisory Committee's understanding of the problem	• Review the Lean Six Sigma report with the Advisory Committee • Create and present an overview of PoP and associated data	Director, OSI	Invite the Author of LSS report to present to the advisory Committee	Identify the need for change and confirm the problem and opportunity from available data
1.3 Identify types of WIL at WC	• Propose a definition of WIL at WC based on CEWIL definition (source) • Approval of definition and scope by VP Academic	Director, Experiential Learning	Office of Institutional Research staff expertise and time	Clarity on definition of WIL at WC Identify types of WIL currently at WC
1.4 Determine the extent of WIL Activity at WC	• Review and analyze existing WIL course data available in student information system (SIS) to determine volume of WIL activity. • Sort by academic program, academic school, campus location, and other student profile information (i.e. gender) if available	Director, Experiential Learning	Office of Institutional Research staff expertise and time	Understanding of existing level of WIL activity at WC, and profile of students participating.
1.5 Develop & disseminate vision for WIL at WC	• Engage WIL Advisory Committee and other key representatives to develop a vision for WIL at WC. • Create communication tools to share WIL	Director, OSI	Academic Communication Specialist support WIL Advisory Committee	WC WIL participants and partners will have a shared understanding of the need for WIL change plan; how this initiative will

Goal	Tasks	Lead	Resources /Institutional Supports	Target (intended outcome)
	• visions with various identified partners. • Communicate WIL vision broadly organization-wide			address this need; alignment to WC's strategic plan. A document containing vision will be approved by VPAAR in consultation with the Academic Team.
1.6 Develop WIL institutional policy and procedures for approval	• Research best practices in WIL policies and procedures. • Develop draft policy and procedure. • Vet documents to the Academic team and other key individuals for input. • Incorporate feedback and finalize policy and procedure for Executive/Presidential review and approval.	Director, Experiential Learning Director, Policy & Planning	Staff resources from the Office of Policy & Planning	Approval of institutional policy and procedure; policy posted on WC website and disseminated to all college
1.7 Implement institutional WIL policy and procedures	• Disseminate policy and procedures by means of All College Email • Post policy and procedure on website • Develop and deliver webinar to ensure opportunity for discussion and clarification on policy and procedures	Director, OSI	Director, Centre for Teaching & Learning Innovation Director, Policy & Planning	The institution ensures WIL participants receive training, assistance, and support for WIL knowledge acquisition

	Strategic Priority: Build capacity to support and expand work-integrated learning.
Phase 2: Mobilization	**Duration:** December 2024 – April 2025
	Objective: Build capacity and develop new strategies to increase course, program and alternative WIL opportunities that extend access to and support for learners on campuses throughout the province.

Goal	Tasks	Lead	Resources /Institutional Supports	Target (intended outcome)
2.1 Formalize organizational structure to support institutional level WIL activities	• Reorganization of WIL staff resources • Review and fund resources required to enable WIL unit to meet goals and expectations.	Director, OSI VP Academic & Applied Research	Human Resources department (staff supervisor reassignments if necessary) Organizational Budget Analyst (relocate budgets)	New organizational structure developed, approved, and implemented
2.2 Develop a fulsome understanding of the roles of all WIL participants in organization; support them through change process.	• Complete WIL participant analysis • Utilize Successful WIL relationships: A framework for sustainability (Fleming et al. ,2018).	Director, OSI	Director, Experiential Learning Office of Institutional Research	Completed participant analysis. Greater understanding achieved.

Goal	Tasks	Lead	Resources /Institutional Supports	Target (intended outcome)
	• WIL Committee to review/revise communication plan.			
2.3 Engage Campus Directors in WIL change implementation process	• Identify, map and prioritize areas for improved processes and communication using the action Plan.	Director, OSI	Lean Centre of Excellence resource	Increased understanding amongst campus managers of change initiative process; increased buy-in and support.
2.4 Launch WIL Central Office as an entity within OSI	• Branding exercise by means of communications plan (internal and external)	Director, OSI Director, Experiential Learning	Office of VPAAR	Recognition of WIL office as the 'one-stop-shop' for all things WIL related
2.5 Formalize and increase support for WIL professional development of faculty, staff and administrators.	• Offer services of WIL webinars focused on: general WIL knowledge; trends; benefits; quality considerations; recent research	Director, Experiential Learning	Center for Teaching & Learning Innovation Learning Consultants	Increased knowledge of WIL throughout organization
2.6 Communicate the need for change institution-wide	• Visit campuses with a WIL roadshow presentation and facilitate discussion sessions. • Offer online overview of WIL changes and provide opportunities for discussion	Director, OSI Director, Experiential Learning	Engage with Campus Directors and Deans/Associate Deans Travel expenses for campus visits	Increased knowledge of WIL throughout organization, specifically at the campus level
2.7 Expand deployment of WIL Information System for all WIL activities across institution	• Purchase additional modules of ORBIS Software • Installation of additional modules • Training on management system • Integrate system to WIL homepage with necessary content on usage	Director, Experiential Learning	Budget ~$20,000 Resources from Director, IT & IM and Manager, IT Infrastructure Staff position $65,000 Orbis Systems Analyst $3000 training budget	ORBIS software is successfully utilized to track and manage all WIL activities in all academic schools and campuses (and not just engineering work terms as is at present)

Phase 3: Acceleration	**Strategic Priority:** Create a coordinated college-wide WIL Quality Framework
	Duration: April 2025 – December 2025
	Objective: Develop a quality WIL framework for pre, during, and post-WIL activities in collaboration with schools and campuses At end of this phase, should start seeing early outcomes related to improved WIL services through consistency of processes and applied policies by means of the quality framework.

Goal	Tasks	Lead	Resources /Institutional Supports	Target (intended outcome)
3.1 Develop a student success framework in collaboration with Academic division, Schools and Campus Administrators.	• Engage WIL Advisory committee with expertise from the Academic Quality Assurance Office to develop WIL Quality Framework based on existing best practice	Director, OSI Director, Experiential Learning	Director, Academic Quality Assurance	WIL Quality Rubric for WC developed, vetted and approved by Academic Team

Goal	Tasks	Lead	Resources /Institutional Supports	Target (intended outcome)
	models including models created by Campbell et al. (2021), and McRae et al. (2018)			
3.2 Test WIL Quality Framework by reaching out to WIL participants at various campuses and various schools and engage them in providing feedback.	• Test the WIL Quality Framework with a sample of programs. • Incorporate feedback into the framework	Director, OSI Director, Experiential Learning	Director, Academic Quality Office	Tested and improved WIL Quality Rubric
3.3 Increase the knowledge and skills of those involved in WIL activities to understand the quality framework.	• Create webinar and online 'how-to' materials to support the implementation of the WIL quality framework.	Director, Experiential Learning	Director, Centre for Teaching & Learning Innovation Learning Consultant	The institution ensures WIL participants receive training, assistance, and support for WIL knowledge acquisition
3.4 Increase knowledge and awareness of barriers through professional development workshops relating to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and WIL	• Develop and delivery PD workshops on topics relating to WIL and EDI	Director, Experiential Learning	Director, Centre for Teaching & Learning Innovation Learning Consultant	The institution ensures WIL practitioners receive training, assistance, and support for WIL knowledge acquisition relating to EDI
3.5 Share and celebrate smalls wins and milestones relating to WIL improvements	• Actively solicit feedback. • Share improvements supported by the data collected via the Lean Six Sigma Process	Director, OSI Director, Experiential Learning	VP Academic & Applied Research Academic Communication Specialist	Promotion of WIL related 'good news' tidbits through various newsletter, presentations, etc.
3.6 Develop WIL quarterly communique to continue to share benefits of WIL and new knowledge learned in process	• Gather information, write communique, share it widely	Academic Communication Specialist	Director, OSI Director, Experiential Learning Office of VP Academics & Applied Research	Distribute online communique to all college distribution list as well as external partner list (via Advancement Office).

Phase 4: Institutionalization	**Strategic Priority:** Maintain continuous improvement in WIL activities by establishing monitoring and evaluation practices. **Duration:** December 2025 – April 2026 **Objective:** Utilize tools for monitoring and evaluation of the organizational change initiative to determine if activities are an effective solution to the PoP. Act on findings that show what is working well and what still needs to be improved upon.

Goal	Tasks	Lead	Resources /Institutional Supports	Target (intended outcome)
4.1 Determine and develop a monitoring plan to assess the overall	• Develop monitoring plan with WIL advisory committee. • Seek appropriate feedback on the plan.	Director, OSI	Office of Institutional Research Office of Planning and Development	Monitoring plan developed and activated. Data collected was analyzed and

institutional change initiative	• Determine KPI's and consult to ensure they are in alignment with institutional indicators for the strategic plan. • Ongoing reflection			disseminated to WIL Advisory Committee and VPAAR
4.2 Evaluate outcomes of change initiative with periodic checks to gauge progress	• Conduct process and outcome evaluation by through Lean Six Sigma framework. • Utilize data and techniques from the 2022 Green Belt project as a benchmark to determine change.	Director OSI	Staff resources from Lean Centre of Excellence	Demonstrate value of the change initiative including what works and what needs to be improved upon.

Appendix C: Communications Plan

Communication Strategy for WIL Change Initiative

Phase 1: Pre-change [Awakening]

Timeline	Audience	Target	Mechanisms
September – December 2024	Executive Leadership	Confirm and demonstrate alignment with strategic plan targets.	Develop and deliver presentation(s) with Q&A Session.
		Share benefits of the desired stated of WIL.	Develop briefing document.
		Connect the initiative to Lean Six Sigma's continuous improvement processes. Set up LSS WIL team.	
		Generate awareness of the volume of WIL activity in organization.	
		Indicate some new resources will be required but mostly existing resources will need to be reallocated.	
	Deans & Directors Council; Academic Team	Outline the benefits of the improved state of WIL at WC.	Develop and deliver a presentation with a Q&A session.
		Confirm and demonstrate alignment with strategic plan targets and Academic School priorities.	Arrange open online sessions with individual Academic Schools.
		Share vision for change.	Individual meetings as deemed strategic.
		Framework will be designed to address needs of Schools so listening to understand needs and challenges; hear concerns.	
		Engage with WC's EDI Committee and EDI staff resources. Maintain this support relationship throughout all stages.	

Phase 2: Developing Need [Mobilization]

Timeline	Audience	Target	Mechanisms
December 2024- April 2025	Deans & Directors Council; Academic Team	Outline data from Office of IR and LSS Office – paint clear picture of current status of WIL at WC.	Report (evidence based)
			Presentation on report (webinar)
		Outline emerging research and national trend data on WIL with WC comparisons.	Engage WIL Advisory Committee
		Provide clear rationale for change and benefits to students, employees, and employers.	Set up Lean Six Sigma Quality Board Huddle (QBH) and design meeting schedule.
		Articulate vision for future improved state.	

		Reassure academic school teams and outline steps in the change process.	
	Campus Administrators	Outline data from Office of IR and LSS Office – paint clear picture of current status of WIL at WC.	Visit campuses with new Director of WIL or online meeting to introduce new Director. Informal consultations to listen, learn & share.
		Provide clear rationale for change and benefits to students, employees, and employers.	Individual meetings with CA's
		Outline steps in the change process.	Set up Lean Six Sigma Quality Board Huddle (QBH) and design meeting schedule.
		Stress support is needed from managers.	
	Faculty	Provide rationale for change initiative based on data and institutional known pain points.	Visit campuses with new Director of WIL, deliver short presentation, informal session with Q&A
		Stress support is needed from faculty.	Offer online sessions consisting of short presentation, informal session with Q&A
		Communicate intent is to improve existing experience of faculty with WIL.	Individual meetings as deemed strategic.
	Student Services	Provide rationale for change initiative based on data and institutional known pain points.	Visit campuses with new Director of WIL or online meeting to introduce new Director.
		Stress support is needed from student services division staff.	Informal consultations to listen, learn & share.
		Reassure student services staff engaged in WIL support activities.	Invite to a presentation (webinar) on Emerging trends in WIL nationally, state of WIL at WC, change plan steps, and nurture opportunities for input and discussion.
		Outline steps in the change process.	Set up Lean Six Sigma Quality Board Huddle (QBH) and design meeting schedule.
		Communicate intent is to improve existing experience of all participants with WIL; especially improve quality student experience.	Individual meetings as deemed strategic.
		Reassurance change will be an improvement in the current process and done in consultation.	

Phase 3: Midstream Change & Milestone Communication [Acceleration]

Timeline	Audience	Target	Mechanisms
April 2025 – December 2025	Deans & Directors Council; Academic Team Academic	Demonstrate progress.	Focus Groups
		Encourage and support champions.	Individual meetings
		Proactively receive feedback on all elements of the change initiative.	Develop WIL Webpage
		Initiative opportunities to receive support and build momentum.	Progress report presented quarterly to VPAAAR and Academic Team
			Academic Team Newsletter
			Submission to the VPAAR regular semester mailout

	Campus Administrators	Proactively receive feedback on all elements of the change initiative.	Focus Groups
			Individual meetings
		Initiative opportunities to receive support and build momentum.	Develop WIL Webpage
		Clarify changes in organizational roles structures, and systems.	
	Faculty	Proactively receive feedback on all elements of the change initiative.	Focus Groups
			Online Survey
		Clarify any miscommunications; address barriers to change.	Individual meetings
		Recognize Faculty WIL Leaders.	Develop WIL Webpage
	Student Services	Proactively receive feedback on all elements of the change initiative.	Focus Groups
			Online Survey
		Clarify any miscommunications; address barriers to change.	Individual meetings
		Clarify changes in organizational roles structures, and systems.	Develop WIL Webpage
		Recognize Student Services staff WIL Leaders.	

Phase 4: Confirming & Celebrating [Institutionalization]

Timeline	Audience	Target	Mechanisms
December 2025 – April 2025	Wider internal WC Community	Identify quality improvements in WIL processes.	WIL Webpage
			College e-pub magazine
		Share value of institutional WIL Quality Framework.	Email
		Report on improvements in various aspects of WIL Activities.	Attend and update campus directors at regular weekly meetings.
	Wider External Community	Communicate strategic priority of efficient/effective WIL experiences at WC	Article in college e-pub magazine.
		Communicate contact info for current/future employers	Communique out by Marketing/Communication department.
	Employers	Communicate new WIL One Stop Shop website.	WIL Webpage.
		Communicate contact info for current/future employers.	Social media post profiling successful WIL opportunities
		Communicate the availability of a wide range of programs with students eager for WIL opportunities.	Annual Sponsor open house sessions (future conference potentially)
		Instill the benefit of sponsoring students for the WIL experience.	
	Senior leadership	Report improved processes for WIL activities.	Submission to WC Annual Report to BOG & Gov't
		Generate enthusiasm for next steps and emerging WIL opportunities.	Presentation to Executive Team and BOG Quality subcommittee.

| | Students | Communicate new WIL One Stop Shop website. | Social media post profiling successful WIL opportunities |
| | | Communicate contact info for students interested in WIL opportunities. | |

Note: This communications plan has been adapted from Deszca, G., Ingols, C., & Cawsey, T. F. (2020). O*rganizational change: An action-oriented toolkit* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd. and is also based on key principles in communicating for change by Klein, S.M. (1996). A management communications strategy for change. *Journal of Organizational Change, 9*(2), p.32-46.

Appendix D: Knowledge Mobilization Plan

Message (knowledge generated)	Audience (partners & participants)	Messenger (who is generating knowledge)	Knowledge Transfer Process (methods)	Impact
Phase 1: Pre-change [Awakening]				
Increase institutional awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning.	Executive Team VPAAR Senior Leadership	Change Agent: Director of Strategic Initiatives	Briefing document Presentation (with slide deck) Face-to-face discussions (online or in-person) with both 1-to-1 or 1-to-several	Change needed to support strategic plan direction.
Phase 2: Developing Need [Mobilization]				
Required capacity to support and expand work-integrated learning.	Change facilitators, implementers, and recipients: • Academic Team • Deans & Directors Council • Campus Administrators • Faculty • Student Services	Change Agent - Director of Strategic Initiatives Director of WIL WIL Advisory Team	Quantitative Data Analysis from LSS report, Office of Institutional Research – WIL program data Qualitative Data from OIR – student satisfaction survey feedback Presentation (with slide deck) Face-to-face discussions (online or in-person) with both 1-to-1 or 1-to-several	Change needed at WC to address problem. Problem is significant and widespread. Resources need to be obtained or redeployed to support solution
Phase 3: Midstream Change & Milestone Communication [Acceleration]				
Creation of a college-wide WIL Quality Framework.	Change facilitators, implementers, and recipients: • Academic Team • Deans & Directors Council • Campus Administrators • Faculty • Student Services	Change Agent - Director of Strategic Initiatives Director of WIL WIL Advisory Team Academic leadership	Structured meetings plus LSS Quality Board Huddles Webpage Focus Groups Online Survey Face-to-face discussions (online or in-person) with both 1-to-1 or 1-to-several	Change occurring and improved WIL processes at WC.
Phase 4: Confirming & Celebrating [Institutionalization]				
Maintain continuous improvement in WIL activities with established monitoring and evaluation practices.	• Wider internal WC community • Wider external WC community • Employers • Senior Leadership • Students	Change Agent - Director of Strategic Initiatives Director of WIL WIL Advisory Team Director, Institutional Research	Structured meetings plus LSS Quality Board Huddles Digital media: website; social media; emails; e-newsletters Written report Presentation (with slide deck)	Strategic goal accomplished. Change occurring and continued improvements in WIL processes. Next steps for WIL at WC being discussed.

Appendix E: Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Strategic Priority	1.0 Increase institutional awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning			
Evaluation Question	Appropriateness: Has there been an increase in institutional awareness of and commitment to work-integrated learning?			
Quality Standard (Campbell et al., 2021)	Standard 3.1 Institution has shared goals, policies, principles, and values about WIL. Standard 3.2 Institution has identifiable leadership and governance structures for WIL			
Monitoring	Indicators	Targets	Data Source	Who is responsible & When
	Difference in awareness level about WIL throughout college	60% of participants has increased knowledge about WIL goals, policies & procedures	Survey	Director, Office Strategic Initiatives Director, Office of Institutional Research Semi-Annually
Evaluation	Summary of Monitoring	Evaluation Method	Method Implementation	Who is responsible & When
	Level of awareness and commitment to WIL	Survey Focus Groups	Online survey (using eXplore Blue tool) 6-8 focus groups	Director & Analyst, Office of Institutional Research Beginning of change initiative, and then again at end of mobilization stage.

Strategic Priority	2.0 Build capacity to support and expand work-integrated learning			
Evaluation Question	Effectiveness and Efficiency: Has there been a change in capacity level (i.e., funding, resources, IT system) to support WIL at WC? Are the systems effective and efficient?			
Quality Standard (Campbell et al., 2021)	Standard 3.3 WIL is supported by adequate and effective IT and administrative systems. Standard 3.6 Provision of funding, resourcing, support, and recognition necessary to achieve WIL strategic goals.			
Monitoring	Indicators	Targets	Data Source	Who is responsible & When
	Difference between starting level of resources dedicated to WIL and amount actually available. Difference in usage of Orbis WIL tracking system.	70% increase in usage of Orbis Increase from 15% academic Schools usage of Orbis to 65% usage of academic Schools (4/6 schools)	Monthly budget reports LSS QBH data Orbis Usage reports	Director, WIL Organizational Budget Analyst assist to OSI Following quarterly budget cycles & semi-annual for Orbis data
Evaluation	Summary of Monitoring	Evaluation Method	Method Implementation	Who is responsible & When
	Change in resources available to WIL activity. Change in usage of Orbis tracking system.	Targeted survey Individual interviews	Analysis of data available from quantitative collected Analysis of qualitative data collected during interviews	Analyst, Office of Institutional Research Director, OIR Annually

Strategic Priority	3.0 Develop and implement a college-wide WIL quality framework			
Evaluation Question	Impact: Is there a set of institutional policies and procedures for work-integrated learning? Has a WIL quality framework been developed? Are professional development opportunities available to support these?			
Quality Standard (Campbell et al., 2021)	Standard 3.4 Institutions provide targeted professional development for academic and professional staff, and industry and community partners. Standard 3.5 Enacted legal and risk management frameworks, compliance procedures and processes.			
Monitoring	Indicators	Targets	Data Source	Who is responsible & When

	Level of participation in professional development sessions.	70% update in professional development by WIL participants	Number of PD sessions held and number in attendance	Director, Office of Strategic Initiatives Director, WIL
	Usage of WIL Quality Framework by Deans	60% of Deans/Academic Schools using framework	Number of WIL quality reports submitted by Deans to VPAAR	End of each semester.
Evaluation	Summary of Monitoring	Evaluation Method	Method Implementation	Who is responsible & When
	Usage of WIL Quality Framework	Participant Interviews Focus Groups	6-8 focus groups 15-20 interviews Analysis of qualitative data from interviews and focus groups	Director, OSI Director & Analyst, OIR
Strategic Priority	**4.0 Maintain continuous improvement in WIL activities by establishing monitoring and evaluation practices.**			
Evaluation Question	Sustainability: Are there ongoing benefits to WIL at WC, and a mechanism for enhanced WIL operations relating to the student experience, curriculum design, and partner engagement?			
Quality Standard (Campbell et al., 2021)	Standard 3.7 Evaluation and tracking of short to long term WIL outcomes for continuous quality improvement.			
Monitoring	Indicators	Targets	Data Source	Who is responsible & When
	Increased interest in expanding WIL opportunities for students in more programs.	25% increase in WIL placements 20% increase in number of programs with WIL activities added to curriculum	Data from Office of Academic Planning	Director WIL Semi Annual basis
Evaluation	Summary of Monitoring	Evaluation Method	Method Implementation	Who is responsible & When
	Change in levels of interest in WIL	Survey Interviews (including WIL practitioners, Deans, and Campus Directors)	Analysis of data from survey and individual interviews	Director, WIL Office of Institutional Research Annually