Module 4 Workbook:

Building Sustainable Online Programs

# Unit 1: Sustainability and Online Programs

## Reflection 1

To promote sustainability, we need to think about the big picture or vision as to why we are developing the online program. The following 6 prompting questions will aid you in your reflection, which encompasses various areas to consider when planning your programs.

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| Question | **Reflection** |
| 1. What needs are the proposed program addressing? | Write your response here. |
| 1. What is the plan beyond implementation? | Write your response here. |
| 1. Who are the champions or key stakeholders? | Write your response here. |
| 1. How does the program “fit” with other programs at the institution? | Write your response here. |
| 1. What quality implement measures are already, or should be, adopted? | Write your response here. |
| 1. What are the resources required? | Write your response here. |

## Activity 1

Using the ecosystem framework, complete the table below reflect on program sustainability with the lens towards the future. Remember, you can leave any element blank that you are unsure of at the moment—this may signal a need for further investigation and collaboration.

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| **Element** | **What actions might you need to take in the long term (5 years or longer) related to program sustainability?** | **Existing Collaborators or Resources** |
| Program Vision | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Program Feasibility, Impact, and Approval | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Program Outcomes | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Course Design | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Teaching and Learning | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Program Feedback | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Institutional Vision and Strategy | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Educational Technology Stack | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Marketing and Recruitment | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Faculty Expertise and Readiness | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Instructional Design and Educational Technology Expertise | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Enrolment, Tracking, Credentialling | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Academic Support Services | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Technical Support Services | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Health and Wellness Student Services | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Co-Curricular and Social Engagement | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |

# Unit 2: Preparing for Sustainability Planning

## Reflection 1

Revisit the activity above from Unit 1 in this module, where you documented what actions you might need to take in the long term related to program sustainability for each of the online ecosystem elements) and consider the following:

* How do/will these elements interact and impact each other?
* How do/will you assess the effectiveness of your programs and identify areas for improvement related to this element? In other words, who do you reach out to and what data do you collect? For example, internal (faculty, staff, admin, HR, facilities etc.) external (industry - grads), users (students).

Remember, you can leave any element blank that you are unsure of at the moment—this may signal a need for further investigation and collaboration.

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| **Element** | **Which element does it interact with and how what is the impact?** | **How and from whom might you collect data about impact and improvement?** |
| Program Vision | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Program Feasibility, Impact, and Approval | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Program Outcomes | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Course Design | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Teaching and Learning | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Program Feedback | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Institutional Vision and Strategy | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Policies and Procedures | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Educational Technology Stack | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Marketing and Recruitment | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Faculty Expertise and Readiness | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Instructional Design and Educational Technology Expertise | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Enrolment, Tracking, Credentialling | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Academic Support Services | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Technical Support Services | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Health and Wellness Student Services | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |
| Co-Curricular and Social Engagement | Write your response here. | Write your response here. |

## Reflection 2

Use the checklists below to record what you have already done to promote institutional readiness to create and adopt a sustainability plan. For the items that remain unchecked, reflect on when, how, and with whom you will collaborate to complete those tasks.

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| **Key Area** | **Check the Tasks You Have Completed to Promote Institutional Readiness and Adoption of a Program Sustainability Plan** |
| Preparation and Commitment | Commit to creating and using a sustainability plan once developed  Ensure the sustainability plan aligns to shared vision of the purpose/intent of the online program  Build consensus among stakeholders on what sustainability means in the context of your program  Review existing policies, procedures, quality assurance processes, and collective agreement documentation as it relates to online programs and consider how your sustainability plan might align with, complement, or enhance them |
| Leadership | Identify formal and informal sustainability and sustainability planning champions  Promote opportunities for professional development related to online sustainability to ensure all leaders have a similar knowledge base |
| Collaboration | Create a team of key stakeholders to develop the sustainability plan, including faculty, staff, students, and administrators  Identify internal key stakeholders who are impacted by or impact the online program, including librarians, information technologists, and student affairs  Engage external partners who have influence or can advise regarding the online program  Create opportunities for collaborators to work together synergistically to promote sustainability |
| Communication | Develop a communication strategy, considering all key stakeholder groups  Revisit and reflect on your communication strategy regularly. Update it as needed |
| Financial | Work with finance individuals at the department/unit and institutional level  Review the current fiscal situation of the institution and how this program is situated  Determine total or actual costs of running the program, with a lens to when the program is financially viable/sustainable  Engage external partners who might partially or fully fund the program costs |
| Evaluation | Develop an evaluation plan, taking into account all aspects of the online program system (make sure to include its sustainability)  Identify sustainability metrics and assessments that complement your institutional context. Include evaluations in ongoing online program visioning and development |

# Unit 3: Creating a Sustainability Plan

## Reflection 1

Complete the following table to create a shared vision of sustainability across your program.

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|  | **Response** |
| Sustainable programs in our institution/department share the following qualities: | Write your response here. |
| Essential components of online programs at my institution include . . . | Write your response here. |
| Essential components of our program that need to be sustainable are . . . | Write your response here. |

## Activity 1: Using a Sustainable Assessment Tool (PSAT or CSAT)

Select one of the two sustainability frameworks outlined above that would be most appropriate for your own context. Complete the sustainability assessment tool for the associated framework:

* PSAT: <https://sustaintool.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Sustainability-ToolV2_w-scoring_12.11.13.pdf>
* CSAT: <https://sustaintool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CSAT-tool-and-scoring_1.14.20.pdf>

## Activity 2: Create a Sustainability Plan

Use the Washington University’s Action Planning Template to create your program sustainability plan. template created by our colleagues at Washington University, St Louis MO (CC BY-NC-SA license), use this template to create your sustainability plan.

We’ve included the Action Planning Template below for your for your convenience, but you can also access it and example plans at <https://www.sustaintool.org/psat/plan-for-sustainability/#develop-an-action-plan>. The template has a [Creative Commons BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/) license, so you can share and modify it as needed for non-commercial purposes.

If you find that the Clinical Sustainability approach more relevant to your program you can access those planning tools here: <https://www.sustaintool.org/csat/develop-your-plan/#develop-an-action-plan>.

If you are using the template below (which aligns with the Program Sustainability framework), fill out the outline section first and then the following 8 tables to develop your sustainability plan. These 8 tables cover important topics for you and your team to consider, including environmental support, funding stability, partnerships, organizational capacity, program evaluation, program adaptation, communications, and strategic planning. Use the other Activities you have completed in this Module (Units 1 and 2) to help you work through ideas about data, collaborators, and timelines.

**[Name of Program] Sustainability Plan**

**Program Vision Statement:** [Describe the final long-term goal or vision of your program or initiative.]

**Background:** [Briefly summarize the history and current state of the program you wish to sustain.]

**Current Funding Sources**: [List the current funding sources for this program along with their expiration dates.]

**Sustainability Results:** [Summarize your program’s strengths and areas for improvement identified in your results from the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool.]

**Program Elements to be Sustained:** [List the program elements that your team has decided to sustain. Refer to your evaluation data to see which program elements are most effective and essential.]

**Partners**: [List partners involved in the sustainability assessment and/or creation and implementation of the sustainability plan.]

**Time Frame:** [Enter the period of time over which the sustainability activities listed below will be implemented.]

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| **Environmental Support:** Having a supportive internal and external climate for your program | | | | | | | |
| **Sustainability Objective**: [Write an objective that will enable you to increase sustainability capacity in this domain in a way that is important for your program. The objective should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound (SMART). You may need more than one objective per domain.] | | | | | | | |
| **Steps to achieve objectives:**  [Be very specific and include important sub-steps. Anyone should be able to pick up this document and understand what needs to happen in order to reach your objective.] | **Who will do the work?**  [For every task, there needs to be a responsible party/parties. Who will ultimately ensure the work gets finished?] | **What does success look like?**  [What metrics will you use to track progress on the completion of each step? How will you know it’s time to move on to the next step?] | **What non- financial resources are needed for this step? Where will they come from?** | **Due date**   [In the appropriate quarter, enter a specific date by which the activity must be completed.] | | | |
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| **Funding Stability:** Establishing a consistent financial base for your program | | | | | | | |
| **Sustainability Objective**: [Write an objective that will enable you to increase sustainability capacity in this domain in a way that is important for your program. The objective should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound (SMART). You may need more than one objective per domain.] | | | | | | | |
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| **Partnerships:** Cultivating connections between your program and its stakeholders | | | | | | | |
| **Sustainability Objective**: [Write an objective that will enable you to increase sustainability capacity in this domain in a way that is important for your program. The objective should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound (SMART). You may need more than one objective per domain.] | | | | | | | |
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| **Organizational Capacity:** Having the internal support and resources needed to effectively manage your program and its activities | | | | | | | |
| **Sustainability Objective**: [Write an objective that will enable you to increase sustainability capacity in this domain in a way that is important for your program. The objective should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound (SMART). You may need more than one objective per domain.] | | | | | | | |
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| **Program Evaluation:** Assessing your program to inform planning and document results | | | | | | | |
| **Sustainability Objective**: [Write an objective that will enable you to increase sustainability capacity in this domain in a way that is important for your program. The objective should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound (SMART). You may need more than one objective per domain.] | | | | | | | |
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| **Program Adaptation:** Taking actions that adapt your program to ensure its ongoing effectiveness | | | | | | | |
| **Sustainability Objective**: [Write an objective that will enable you to increase sustainability capacity in this domain in a way that is important for your program. The objective should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound (SMART). You may need more than one objective per domain.] | | | | | | | |
| **Steps to achieve objectives:**  [Be very specific and include important sub-steps. Anyone should be able to pick up this document and understand what needs to happen in order to reach your objective.] | **Who will do the work?**  [For every task, there needs to be a responsible party/parties. Who will ultimately ensure the work gets finished?] | **What does success look like?**  [What metrics will you use to track progress on the completion of each step? How will you know it’s time to move on to the next step?] | **What non- financial resources are needed for this step? Where will they come from?** | **Due date**   [In the appropriate quarter, enter a specific date by which the activity must be completed.] | | | |
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| **Communications:** Strategic communication with stakeholders and the public about your program | | | | | | | |
| **Sustainability Objective**: [Write an objective that will enable you to increase sustainability capacity in this domain in a way that is important for your program. The objective should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound (SMART). You may need more than one objective per domain.] | | | | | | | |
| **Steps to achieve objectives:**  [Be very specific and include important sub-steps. Anyone should be able to pick up this document and understand what needs to happen in order to reach your objective.] | **Who will do the work?**  [For every task, there needs to be a responsible party/parties. Who will ultimately ensure the work gets finished?] | **What does success look like?**  [What metrics will you use to track progress on the completion of each step? How will you know it’s time to move on to the next step?] | **What non- financial resources are needed for this step? Where will they come from?** | **Due date**   [In the appropriate quarter, enter a specific date by which the activity must be completed.] | | | |
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| **Strategic Planning:** Using processes that guide your program’s direction, goals, and strategies | | | | | | | |
| **Sustainability Objective**: [Write an objective that will enable you to increase sustainability capacity in this domain in a way that is important for your program. The objective should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Bound (SMART). You may need more than one objective per domain.] | | | | | | | |
| **Steps to achieve objectives:**  [Be very specific and include important sub-steps. Anyone should be able to pick up this document and understand what needs to happen in order to reach your objective.] | **Who will do the work?**  [For every task, there needs to be a responsible party/parties. Who will ultimately ensure the work gets finished?] | **What does success look like?**  [What metrics will you use to track progress on the completion of each step? How will you know it’s time to move on to the next step?] | **What non- financial resources are needed for this step? Where will they come from?** | **Due date**   [In the appropriate quarter, enter a specific date by which the activity must be completed.] | | | |
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## Reflection 3

After completing the 8 tables in the above activity, review the elements you listed in your outline, particularly your program vision statement, to ensure that your sustainability plan is in alignment with what you want to accomplish. If these tables are not in alignment with your program vision, make the required adjustments and alterations.

## Unit Reflection

In this unit, you have:

* Revisited the online program vision with a sustainability lens
* Created or reviewed a sustainability plan for you institution

Now that you have completed your sustainability plan, it is essential that you put it into action. A plan isn’t useful until it is put in motion. Reflect on any obstacles you can foresee to putting this plan into action. What steps can you take to proactively overcome these obstacles?

Write your response here.