

*“Institutional changes that result from an attention to well-being are essential to fulfilling the promise of higher education.”*

M. Harward. 2016  
Author: *Well-Being and Higher Education.  
Bringing Theory to Practice*

Well-being in the  
Classroom  
Well-being in the  
Workplace  
***Well-being for all,  
Sustainably***

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## What is well-being and why is it important for Dawson College?

In 2016, Dawson College developed its third-generation Strategic Plan. During consultation for the plan, feedback was collected from an unprecedented number of community members: 1600 students and 350 faculty and staff members. Themes that emerged from this feedback included: commitment to student success, dedication to employee engagement, sustainability and well-being for the entire community.

The final Strategic Plan affirms well-being for all as a College value:



We cultivate a healthy and inclusive learning and working environment in which all members of our community feel respected, valued and supported in the pursuit of their personal and professional goals. We aim to promote long-term health and well-being for all, sustainably.

Though many definitions of well-being exist, there is agreement that well-being is achieved when social, mental, physical, intellectual and spiritual potential is realized. The Dawson Living Campus Initiative has identified following components as being necessary to achieve well-being:



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## What is Sustainability and why should we care?

The most common definitions of sustainability include the idea that we as a society must meet our needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. These include **social, environmental** and **economic** needs. Sustainability is a valued concept that many individuals and organisations strive to integrate into their daily lives and policies. The Dawson College 2016-2021 Strategic Plan references sustainability in several places, most visibly as a Goal for the next five years:

**Goal 7<sup>1</sup>:** Be a leading Canadian educational institution in promoting and practicing sustainability in all its endeavours.

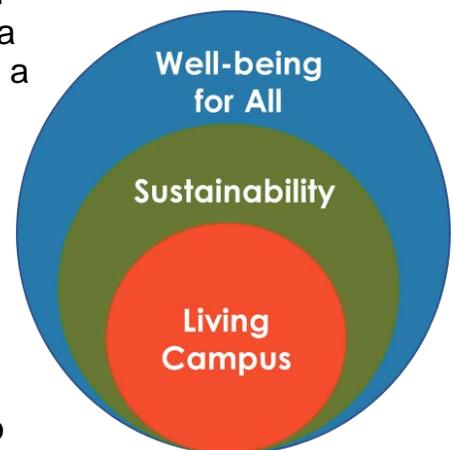
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## What is Living Campus? A concept? A place?



Living Campus is a concept that integrates educational experiences under the vision of well-being for all. It is a place in the sense that the Dawson campus is used as a living lab through which learning, relationship building, connection to Nature and the other components of well-being are made accessible to our community.

Living Campus initiatives encourage experiential learning and are led by students, faculty and staff. Many initiatives have explicit links with Nature<sup>2</sup>, and all relate to sustainability as they explore issues related to social, environmental and economic needs.



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<sup>1</sup> Dawson College 2016-2021 Strategic Plan: <https://www.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/leadership/wp-content/uploads/sites/131/dawson-strategic-plan-2016-2021.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> The word Nature was introduced in the 12<sup>th</sup> century in reference to all living and non-living things in the universe. Nature is spelled with a capital "N" as a sign of respect.

Living Campus was developed to address the challenges of academic institutions. One of these is that disciplines and administration structures sometimes work in silos. Specialists focus on their own areas and may lack connection to others. Despite recognition that extra-curricular projects enrich student, faculty and staff experiences, participants in these projects must compete for limited resources.

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”*

-Nelson Mandela

The enrichment of student, faculty and staff experiences is what Living Campus is all about. Research has shown us that there is a link between well-being, student success, and personal fulfillment. By considering the whole person, not just academics or job functions, in the context of well-being, we can break down existing barriers and help our community of students, faculty and staff achieve personal fulfillment in the classroom and in the workplace. Living Campus initiatives link educational experiences to sustainability and promote opportunities for the whole community of students, faculty and staff to attain well-being.

The benefits of well-being are not limited to the Dawson community, however. “Well-being for all, Sustainably” is a paradigm shift in education that has the potential to impact the larger society also, directly aligning with Dawson College mission statement:

**Our mission is to:**

Educate a diverse population of students through **transformative and innovative learning** activities;

**Engage learners and empower them** to become active, responsible citizens;

Enrich society by offering life-long learning opportunities, cultivating partnerships and **contributing to a peaceful and sustainable future.**

Through Living Campus, with the overarching goal of well-being for all, Dawson College endeavors to be one of the leaders for educational change that researchers write about, students hope for, and society needs to address complex 21st century issues.

# Living Campus Projects and Partners include:

