



UBC Vantage College
Annual Report: First Edition
September 2014-2020



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

UBC Vantage College Mission Statement

We seek to further establish Vantage College, at the university and among Canadian post-secondary institutions, as an interdisciplinary hub, where applied linguistics and disciplinary faculty, staff and students collaborate to mobilize and create new knowledge regarding international student language learning trajectories and academic outcomes. With the Vantage One programs, our mission is to offer an enriched student experience that incorporates and develops innovative pedagogies, interdisciplinary approaches, and transformative learning opportunities to ensure that Vantage students are academically successful and thrive at UBC throughout their undergraduate degrees.

Content

Message from the Principal

Programs, People, Purpose

Four Vantage One Programs

Staff and Student Positions

Our Faculty

Vantage College: Our Purpose

6 Years Later:

Program Growth & Progress

Student Progression and Readiness for Year 2

2019 Vantage One Program Enrolments

Showcasing Innovative Educational Leadership

Featured Examples of Transformative Learning

Capstone Conference

Featured Student Perspectives

Inclusion & Student Access

Reflection & Impacts

Vantage College Impacts During COVID-19

2014-2020 in Numbers

Message from the Principal

Welcome to the first edition of the UBC Vantage College Annual Report (2014-2020). This document covers highlights from establishing the Vantage One programs, examples of transformative teaching and learning from the faculty, students and staff here at Vantage, and milestones we have achieved since the first intake of students in 2014.

Over the last six years, Vantage College's academic focus has centered around innovations in transformative learning and the student experience. We have adopted interdisciplinary approaches to deliver customized, intensive, and enriched first year programs for international students who are all multilingual language learners. This document details how the faculty and staff of Vantage have developed educational innovations to support our mission of transformative learning, as well as firsthand accounts from students of their personal experience during the program and in their degree programs at UBC.

In this Annual Report, you will find infographics that track the success of Vantage students as they progress through their degrees, stories of educational innovations launched in our programs, and our reflections on the impacts of Vantage.

Warm regards,

Joanne Fox
Principal, Vantage College



**ORCHARD COMMONS:
Location of Vantage College
at the UBC Vancouver Campus**



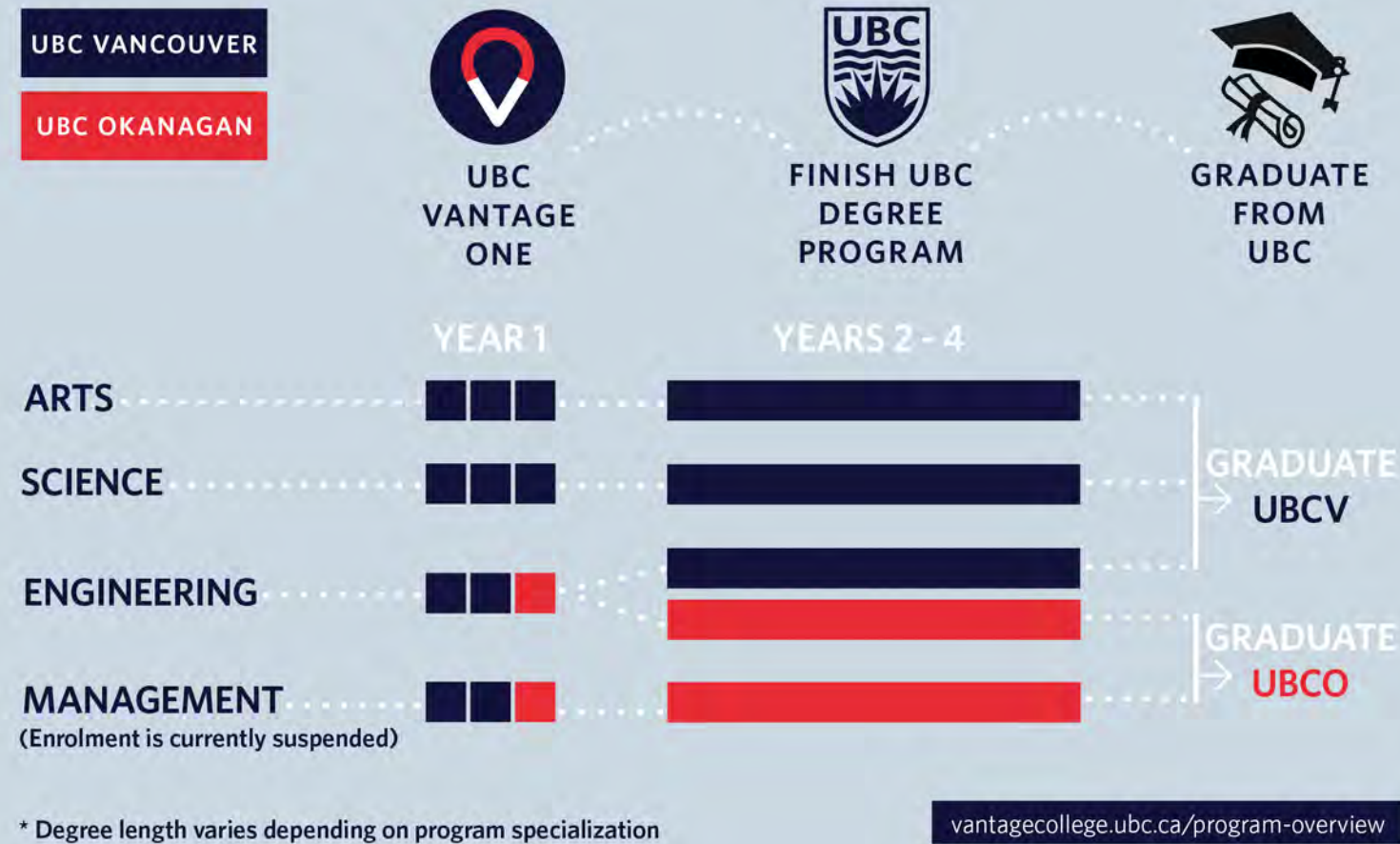
Program People Purpose



**Vantage One Students @
The UBC Nest: AMS Student
Union Building**

Four Vantage One Programs

streamed degree paths



FOUR DEGREE PROGRAMS

Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science:

For all three terms, students study at the **Vancouver campus**.

Bachelor of Applied Science and Management:

For terms 1 & 2, students will be studying at the **Vancouver campus**

For term 3, students will be at the **Okanagan campus**.

Dual campus

UBC Vantage College offers specially-designed pathway programs for international students. In addition to the UBC Vancouver Campus, the Vantage One Engineering and Management programs also extend out to UBC Okanagan. The award winning Vantage One programs are customized to offer students an enriched first year experience that is 11-months long in duration.

While all Vantage students complete Term 1 and Term 2 at UBC Vancouver, where they study throughout Term 3 will depend on their chosen program.



Our Faculty

The faculty who teach and develop the Vantage One programs hold appointments in the UBC Faculties of Arts, Applied Science, Education, Forestry, Management, Science or directly at UBC Vantage College. Our faculty represent 18 different departments across both the UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan campuses. They include five Killam Teaching Prize winners (2018 Anka Lekhi and Kayli Johnson, 2017 Brett Gilley, 2013 Joanne Fox, 2012 Fok-Shuen Leung) and bring extensive scholarly and educational leadership as well as teaching innovations to the programs. Many of our faculty have international teaching experience, and speak other languages in addition to English (including Arabic, Dutch, French, German, Korean, Mandarin, Persian, Serbian, and Spanish).

Academic English program instructors at Vantage design and deliver discipline-specific language and literacy courses that socialize students into the disciplinary language and discourse practices in their subjects of study. This tailored instructional approach relies on close interdisciplinary collaborations between academic English and other subject area instructors.

On Vantage's approach to language and disciplinary learning:

"Instruction at Vantage College, where there's collaboration between disciplinary and language instructors, generates so many tools for us to teach students how to unpack disciplinary meanings and what they want to communicate. These resources improve students' access to the specialized cultures of their chosen disciplines. Vantage College allows for us as instructors in the program to create a curriculum that is not in line with the status quo. At Vantage, innovations in teaching and learning are an everyday thing"

- ALFREDO FERREIRA
LECTURER, AEP (VANTAGE SCIENCE ONE PROGRAM)



On Vantage's approach to English language discourse:

"A lot of other programs, nation-wide and around the world, offer general academic English, whereas ours is really situated in the disciplines. We're using authentic texts and authentic discourse to then talk about how language is used. "

- JENNIFER WALSH MARR
LECTURER, AEP (VANTAGE ARTS ONE PROGRAM)



CURRENT SNAPSHOT OF STAFF AND STUDENT POSITIONS

PEER MENTORS

10

STUDENT SERVICES TEAM

7



ADVISING

Science APSC Counselling Services

5



Arts Manager

WORK LEARN STUDENTS

6

CURRICULUM MANAGER & FACULTY LIASON

1



Vantage College: Our Purpose

Transformative Learning

Transformative programs like Vantage One offer dynamic interdisciplinary learning experiences for students and provide faculty members with rich environments in which to develop and pilot creative approaches to enhance teaching and learning effectiveness. Innovation in the classroom, with the curricula, and with co-curricular experiences has benefits for both our instructors and students at the College. With a mandate to innovate and spread educational best practices, the College has over 50+ faculty members who focus on teaching and educational leadership. Through positions that are embedded in departments and by working collaboratively with faculty and staff from across the College, many examples of pedagogical innovations have emerged.

KEY FEATURES

- Intensive and innovative Academic English courses.
- Interdisciplinary connections to enrich learning learning.
- Transformative learning experiences (e.g., the Vantage One Capstone research and design conference which engages first year international students as novice scholars).

Student Experience

We asked our students about their experience at UBC Vantage College...

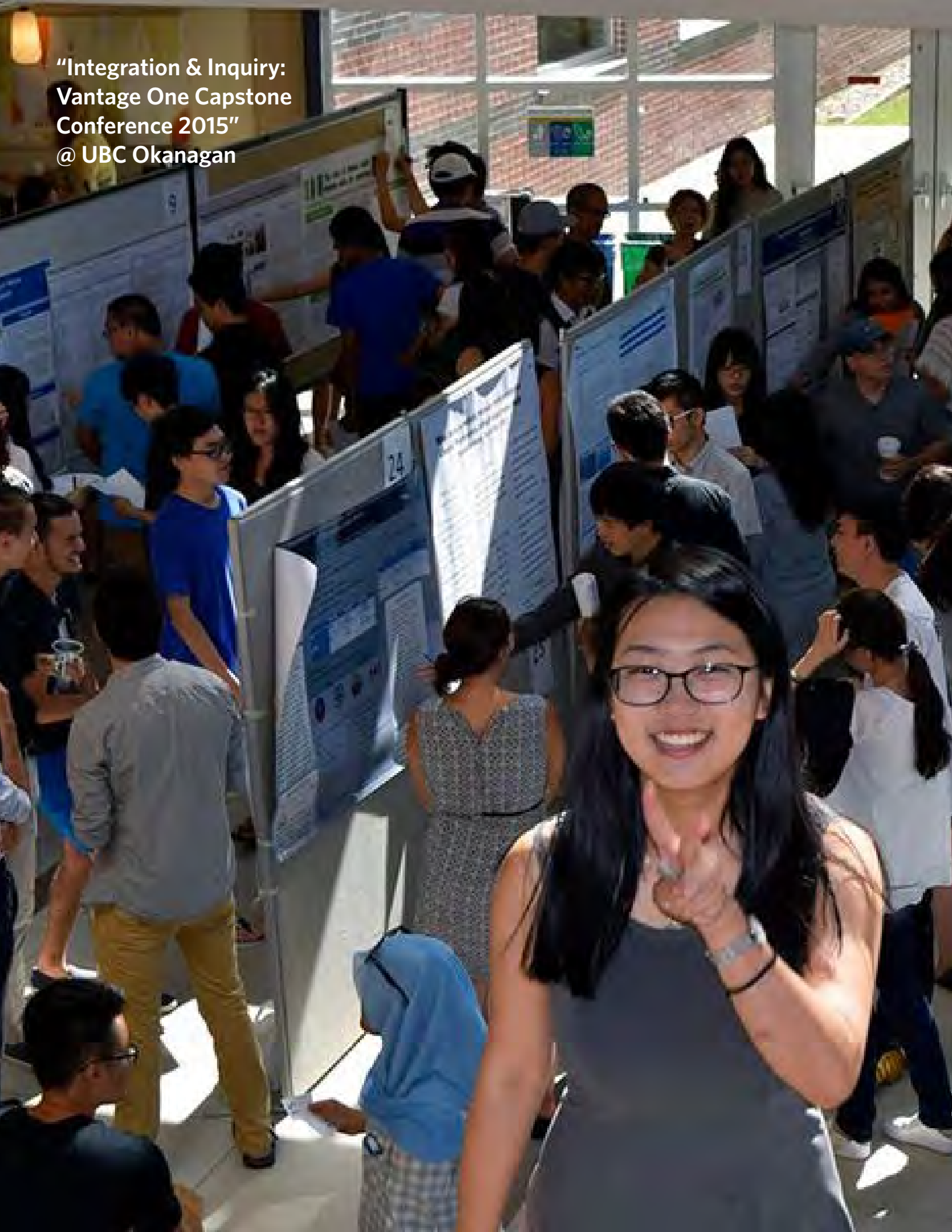
"That is unique experience that a international students can have. I have gained a lot of support and made a lot of friends in Vantage. And that is the place you will feel warm, it is like a big group, a family. And I will miss the experience, friends, professors, TA, faculties in Vantage College. And I hope that Vantage is getting better." (Cohort 2)

"Small space makes student feel engaged and secured. Also, the learning space provide for students after class time was a very good offer. We really enjoy using classrooms and the study spaces. For example, we used the computer in the classroom to review courses content, and also is a good chance to get used to our test-taking environment." (Cohort 3)

"I learned how to write references in APA format, and how to write research paper. I also learned how to do a speech. I have to mention that LLED course is very helpful for my academic writing." (Cohort 5)

"Since all of us came from different countries and bring different cultural backgrounds, it is very interesting in discovering little things that are common or different between countries. Behaviour, language use, and daily habit different across countries and I found it pretty interesting to see the differences." (Cohort 4)

"Integration & Inquiry:
Vantage One Capstone
Conference 2015"
@ UBC Okanagan

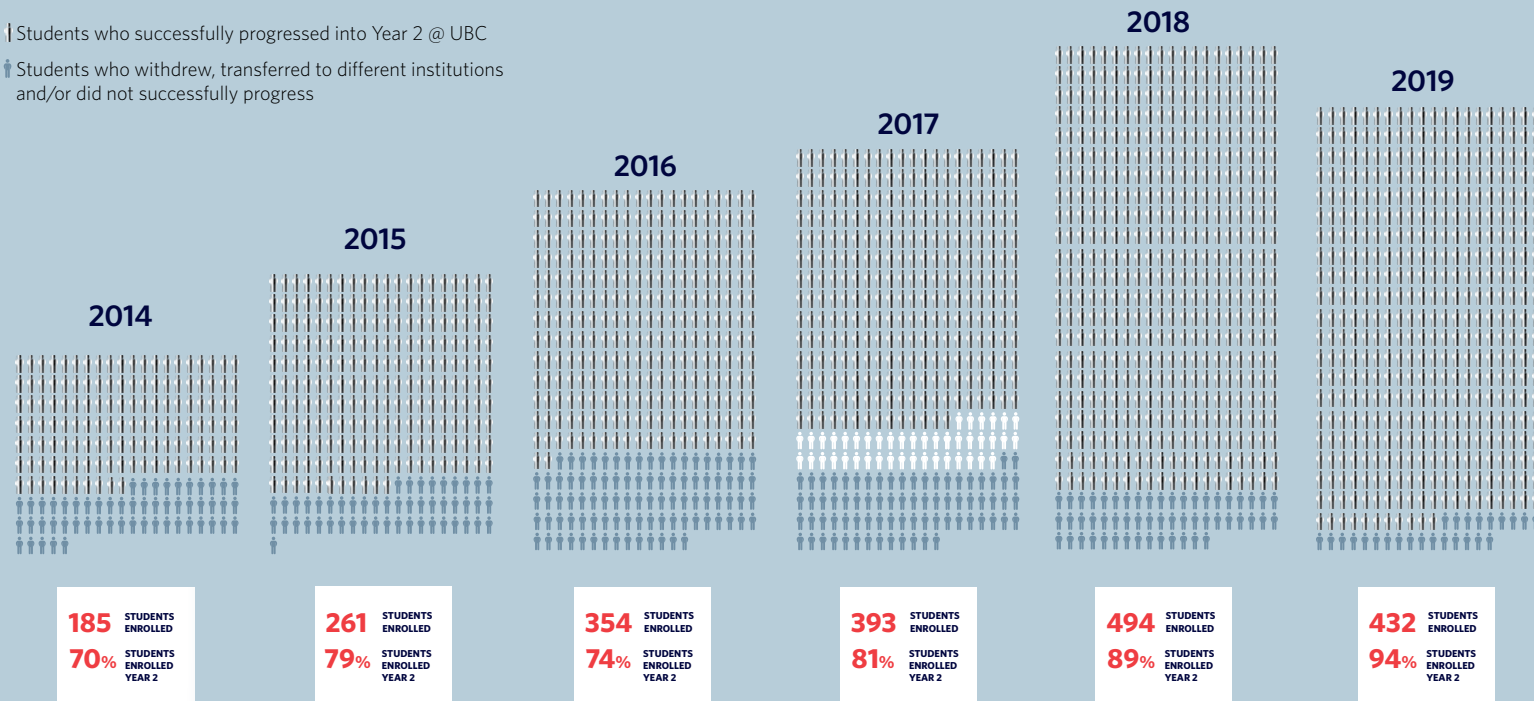


6 Years Later: Program Growth & Progress



Student Progression and Readiness for Year 2

Students who successfully progressed into Year 2 @ UBC
 Students who withdrew, transferred to different institutions and/or did not successfully progress



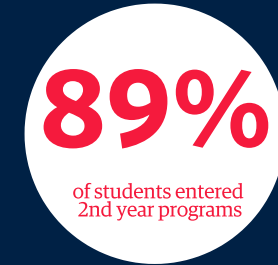
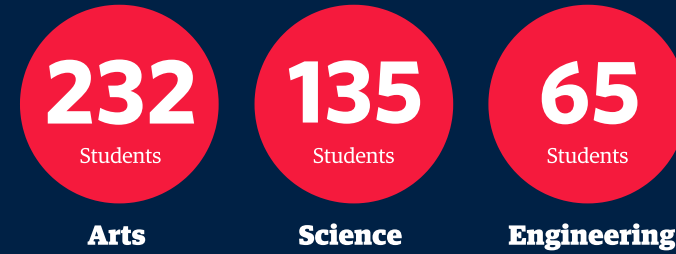
To be guaranteed progression to year 2, Vantage One students must pass all courses with an average of at least 60%. In contrast, students enrolled directly in degree programs in the Faculties must maintain a passing average of at least 50% across 24-27 credits to progress. The retention rates for Vantage One students transitioning into second year at UBC have ranged from 70-81%.

96% of students said **YES**

When asked if they were prepared to transition into second year of their degree @ UBC (2018/2019 Exit Survey)

2019 VANTAGE ONE PROGRAM ENROLMENTS

Vantage One Programs



Capstone Conference

400+ Students

65+ Research Posters

50+ Academic Talks

Arts



72%

4th Year Average Grades

Vantage One Arts students compared to sessional averages of 74% for domestic and international students

Science



70%

4th Year Average Grades

Vantage One Science students compared to sessional averages of 74% for domestic and international students

Engineering



75%

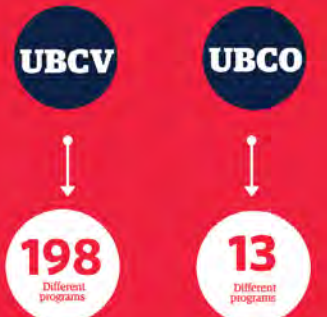
4th Year Average Grades

Vantage One Engineering students compared to sessional averages of 71% for domestic and international students at UBCV

2014-2020 Vantage Students Degree and Faculty Programs @ UBCV and UBCO



Vantage students will graduate with degrees from:



Showcasing Innovative Educational Leadership

Academic Speaker Series

Launched in 2020

Provides a forum for dissemination of work generated by faculty and staff at Vantage College. The inaugural talk, presented by Dr. Joanne Fox (Principal) and Dr. Sandra Zappa-Hollman (Director, Academic English Program), provided an overview of the mission, structure and underlying pedagogies of Vantage One programs.



Podcast

REFERENCES THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PEDAGOGY



References is a podcast that explores how to make language your superpower. Each episode brings you the latest and greatest news from UBC Vantage College where we have English language experts working side by side with discipline-specific faculty to help our students power up their communication and academic literacy skills so that they can thrive in a rigorous academic setting.

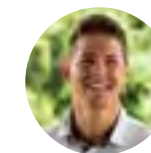
Featured Examples of Transformative Learning @ Vantage College

Numerous examples of transformative teaching and learning are showcased in this section, illustrating the range and diversity of project, as well as the high-level of interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary collaboration that characterizes much of the work at Vantage.



Rewriting multiple choice exams to reduce linguistic complexity

Jennifer Lightfoot, Daniel Riccardi, Mark Lam, Katherine Lyon, Simon Lolliot



A team of researchers recently published an article, entitled, "Investigating the effects of reducing linguistic complexity on EAL student comprehension in first-year undergraduate assessments," based on their findings when looking at how unpacking dense academic language in multiple choice questions can increase student performance. This involves a socio-cultural process between the teacher and learner, in which the teacher adapts his or her support as the student needs, and eventually "fades" in his or her involvement and withdraws carefully and intentionally so that the learner is able to perform independently.

"Although this is challenging," says researcher Daniel Riccardi, "it is exciting to begin to share some of our own research-based discoveries that demonstrate how language specialists can assist instructors of any discipline in delivering a curriculum that recognizes the linguistic needs of English as an Additional Language (EAL) students."

Diffusion of Pedagogy

Pedagogical innovations and areas of expertise in the College include innovative approaches to embedding academic English, collaborative curricula development and integration, multidisciplinary teaching, the use of technology, and the internationalization of curricula. UBC Vantage faculty and staff have systematically shared their work with each other, in their departments, with other student services units across campuses, and have published their work and shared best practices at international, national, and local conferences. While many examples of innovative practices and educational leadership exist at the College (and these initiatives are being shared at international, national, and local conferences), it has sometimes been a challenge to keep the teaching and learning activities of the College visible within the UBC land-scape. As a new unit on campus, many UBC faculty members outside the College have not heard about, or are still just learning about, the Vantage One programs. Increasing visibility through outreach efforts, local professional development initiatives, and/or new partnerships and collaborations offers the College strategic opportunities for achieving goals relating to disseminating innovative pedagogical approaches, and encouraging adoption across other contexts at the university.



Multidisciplinary Spoken Language Assignments

Various instructors and faculty, including:

Amber Shaw, Won Kim, Brett Todd, Alfredo Ferreira, Neil Leveridge, Chris Gradin, Noosha Mehdián, Liet Hellwig and Alys Avalos-Rivera



In addition to requiring strong academic writing skills, university students are also expected to perform well orally. To support the development of academic interactional skills, a number of academic English lecturers created assignments that provided students with opportunities to hone their spoken communication skills. For instance, Amber Shaw designed a podcast assignment in which groups of Vantage One Arts students studied the features of an effective podcast and made their own on a topic from one of their Arts courses. Won Kim and Brett Todd used the film *Apocalypse Now* as the basis for structured debates. Colleagues teaching Psychology, History, and Geography provided propositions about the film from their respective disciplinary angles, and the students debating these propositions were assessed on relevant language use. In Academic English Program courses, Alfredo Ferreira, Neil Leveridge, Chris Gradin, and Noosha Mehdián introduced students to the structure of debates (with an emphasis on logical fallacies), using examples from Science. And Liet Hellwig and Alys Avalos-Rivera, working alongside engineering instructors, provided explicit instruction and opportunities for practicing giving oral presentations on engineering design projects.

Content and Language Integration in Lab Report Writing

Gabriel Potvin & John Pringle



Chemical and Biological Engineering instructor Gabriel Potvin and Academic English colleagues (first Mike Murphy, now John Pringle) have been collaborating to teach students the genre and register features of lab reports. Throughout the first and second term, students are asked to submit a number of lab reports to their chemical engineering instructor for grading based on content, and some of these reports are also submitted to the academic English lecturer, who gives feedback on the writing. The tightly integrated approach helps students to see that both correctness of the calculations and clear explanations of the steps in the reasoning process matter for effective communication in engineering. The outcomes of these collaborations have been documented and disseminated at several professional conferences in engineering communication and English as a second language education (refer to selected publications listed in this report).



Walking Tours in Geography: Experiential learning through augmented reality

Katherine Lyon, Siobhan McPhee and Brian Wilson



In collaboration with students and the Emerging Media Lab, and with support from Brian Wilson, Geography Senior Instructor Siobhán McPhee created a walking tour app to engage Vantage One Arts students in the physical urban environment about which they are learning. Students use their smartphones for an interactive tour of downtown Vancouver, Chinatown, the Downtown Eastside and Gastown. One of the pedagogical aims is to mimic the technology students use on their smartphones and to use educational technologies in ways that allow the instructor and the student to have more of an ownership of their own learning. Additional content is made available as students approach certain locations set by the instructor. Combining the ideas of active learning and experiential learning, this innovation expands traditional learning spaces beyond the classroom walls. The app has now been made available to the general public. In 2018, this project received two-years of funding from the UBC Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF).

Capstone Conference



Recipient of the 2020 BCCIE Award for "Outstanding Program in International Education"

The Vantage One Capstone Conference is an academic conference showcasing student research and design projects completed in the first year of their UBC program.

During the conference, presentations and posters are produced by students in the Vantage One Arts, Engineering, and Science programs. It is an opportunity to explore other disciplines, to ask questions, and to engage in discussions about the answers their peers offer. This conference is a chance for them to reflect on their experiences in the Vantage One program and build on the connections they have made this past year.



Featured Student Perspectives



Maryam Begzada
from Afghanistan
Vantage Arts Student,
Vantage One Excellence
Scholar
Winner

"The best part of Vantage One program for me has been having all the support I have received, both academically and emotionally. The professors and teacher assistants are amazing here. They are one of the most supportive, respectful, and understanding people I have ever met in my entire life. No matter which kind of problem I have had, whether academically or emotionally, they have always been there for me, and they have always found a solution for me. The support network here is great! I came to UBC very late, and I missed two weeks of my classes, because of my visa issues, but thanks to my professors and TAs and the entire Vantage program as a whole who helped me with catching up with everything very soon. To be honest, I thought I would fail my courses because it was my first doing my classes in English and I was studying in a worldwide known university, but thanks to all the support I have been receiving here, I haven't failed any of my courses."

"I want to gain knowledge to be able to explain something logically with proper reasons and evidence, not just memorizing and putting other scientists' ideas. I want to satisfy my curiosity and broaden my horizons with high quality classes and diverse community at UBC.

At Vantage College, you can have an opportunity to have small classes. You can make close relationship with your professors and instructors. You can have lots of office hours which give you time to communicate about your curiosity and what you did not understand during classes. Especially, you can have additional English classes. So, if you feel awkward to speak and use English, it will be a great opportunity to adapt at UBC."



Chunga Lee
from South Korea
Vantage Science Student,
Vantage One Excellence
Scholar
Winner

Inclusion & Student Access

UBC Equity Enhancement Fund: Vantage College's Plan and Vision

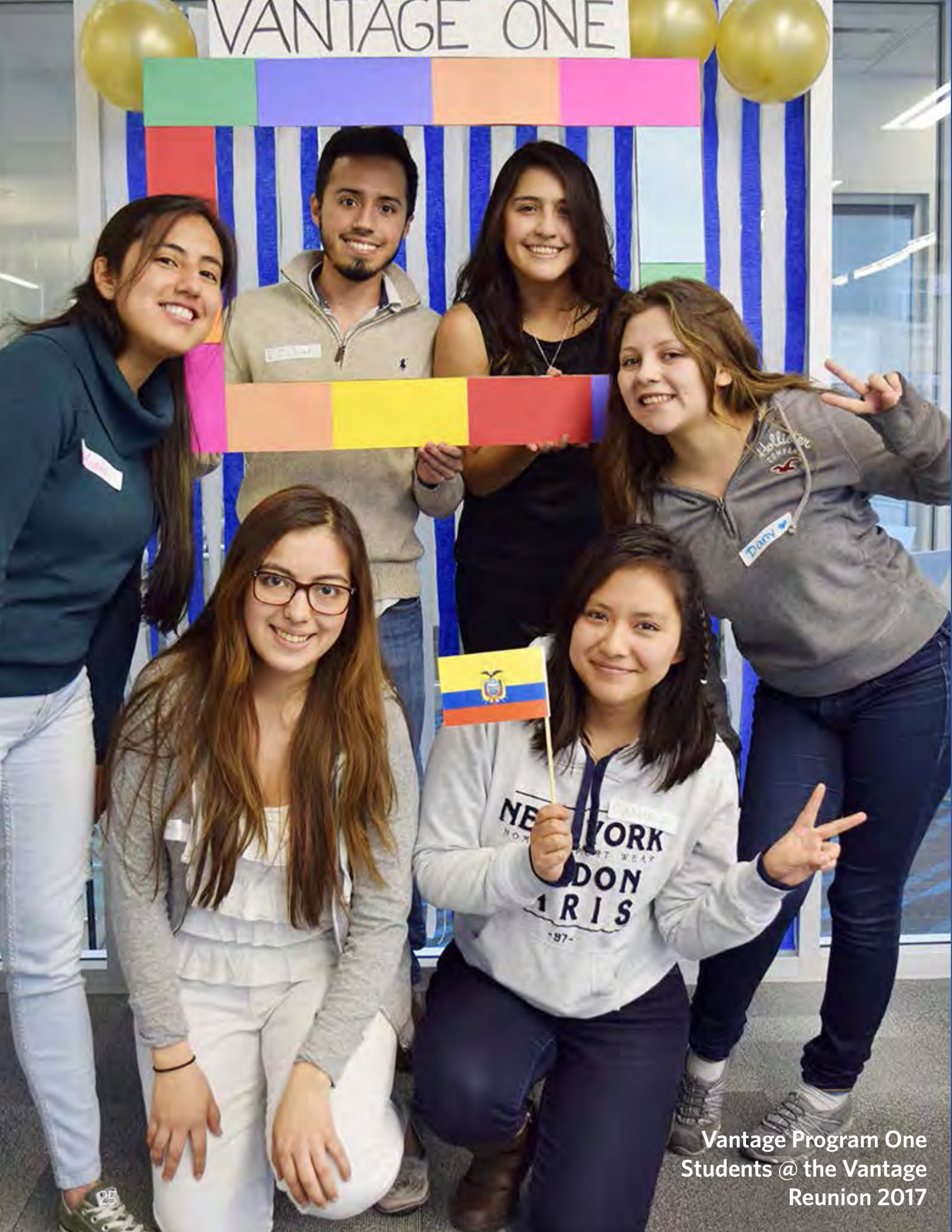
The UBC Equity Enhancement Fund (EEF) supports community-based initiatives that enhance equity, diversity, and inclusion – one of the core themes of UBC's strategic plan. In 2018, the Vantage College Intercultural Communication Committee applied for and was awarded support from the EEF to develop a new symposium hosted by Vantage College educators. This symposium would create a space for Vantage educators to share what they have learned, and participate in a dialogue with the wider UBC community of educators. Vantage College hopes to discuss strategies with other educators on engagement and support for UBC students, especially 1st-year international English-language learners.

Vantage Scholarships & Awards 2019

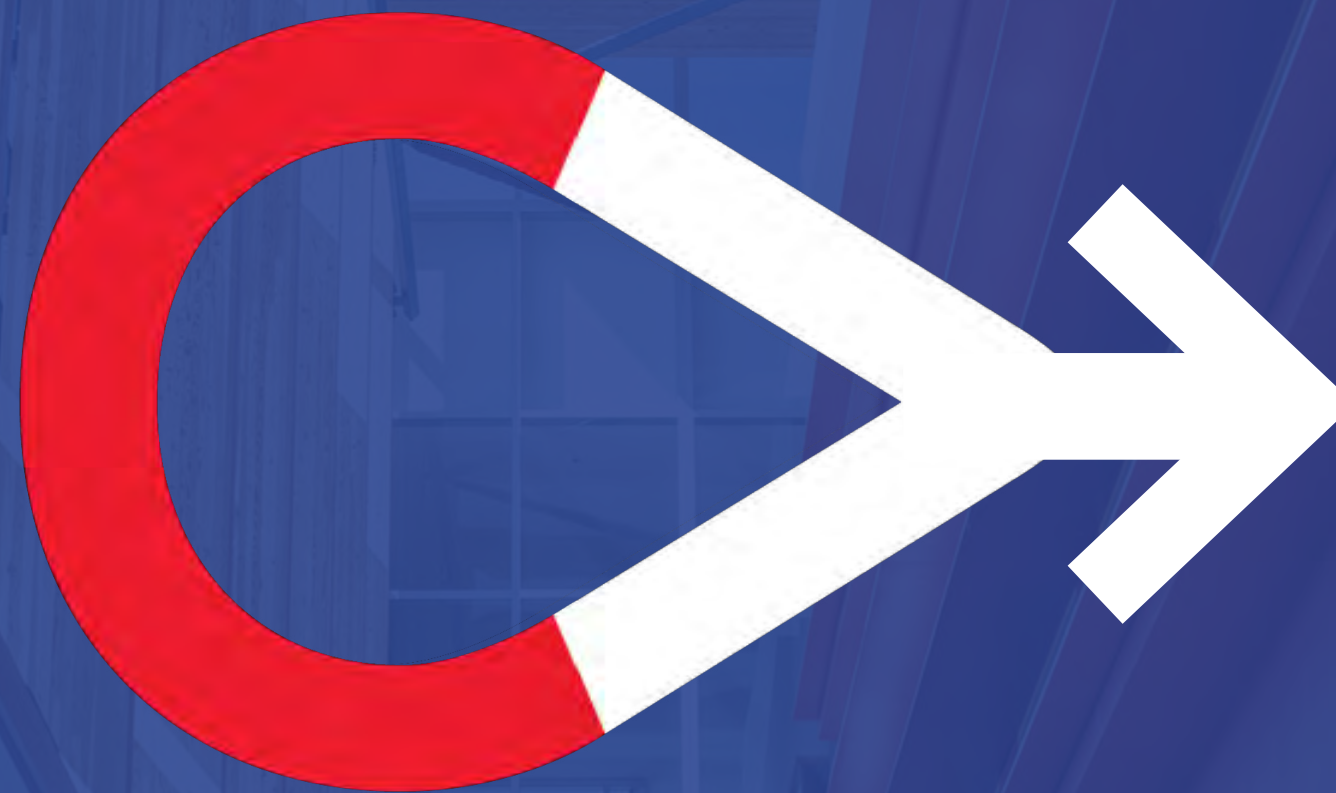
\$1.1M
Award Amount
Offered

42
Awards
Offered

26
Nationalities
Represented



Vantage Program One
Students @ the Vantage
Reunion 2017



Reflection & Impacts

Vantage College Impacts During COVID-19

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic changed the fabric of our societies, the way the higher education experiences can be delivered, and impacted all of our daily lives. In the Vantage One programs, we offer an enriched student experience that leverages innovative pedagogies, interdisciplinary approaches, and transformative learning opportunities. As I reflect on the impacts of COVID-19, this focus on the student experience and on transformative learning has served us well. The importance and impact of teaching expertise and educational leadership has been brought to the forefront.

In mid-March, our faculty and staff made an emergency pivot to remote teaching and virtual delivery of student services. Our students showed incredible resiliency, adaptability, and optimism as they navigated these unprecedented circumstances. Our students, faculty and staff demonstrated a readiness to adapt using the innovative and collaborative approaches that have become a hallmark of the Vantage community. Students stayed connected with their peers across timezones. Faculty demonstrated empathy, kindness, and used innovative strategies (many of which they already had in place). Our faculty reported increased engagement in online settings and our conversations around best practices for online teaching included topics on community building, balancing synchronous delivery and timezone management, as well as maintaining a high ethic of care and engagement with our students. Vantage students, faculty and staff actively supported each other and shared their experiences within and outside the unit (e.g., acting as resource people, participating in our virtual annual retreat, delivering workshops in departments, contributing as both participants and facilitators at CTLT workshops, and, as panelists in our academic speaker series event). Reflecting the extensive expertise that exists at Vantage, six Vantage faculty members served on university-wide working groups that led to the development of a guiding principles document for Fall 2020. Two Vantage faculty members led a project aimed at sharing student experience survey data from across the University. Vantage faculty and staff transformed all of our Summer and Fall courses for online environments and successfully delivered our capstone conference as a fully virtual experience for more than 350 students in July 2020. Our faculty and staff are launching new initiatives in curricular and co-curricular spaces to engage incoming students and support student readiness for online environments in the Fall. This has included the creation of the new Academic Essentials program, launched in August 2020, that was open to all UBC students and attracted more than 7000+ course registrations.

As we move forward into the 2020 school year, our faculty and staff are committed to continuing to deliver the high quality and calibre of educational experiences that the world expects from an institution like UBC. I am confident that new ideas will emerge out of this pandemic that will fundamentally transform teaching. As the Principal, I see first-hand how members of our Vantage community are supporting each other and approaching this crisis with a sense of optimism. This is a chance for us to focus on the essentials, to learn how our students interact on a personal level, to understand how their education shapes their lives and their cultures, and to show kindness and compassion to our students, to ourselves, and to each other.

Written by Joanne Fox, September 2020

2014- 2020 IN NUMBERS

2100+
Students
Enrolled

5
Killam
Teaching
Awards

2
National
Teaching
Awards

2020 BCCIE
Award
Outstanding
Program in
International
Education

110
Course
Sections Offered
each winter session

150+
Faculty
Publications



facebook.com/ubcvantage



twitter.com/ubcvantage



instagram.com/ubcvantage



youtube.com/ubcvantage



vantagecollege.ubc.ca

VANTAGE COLLEGE

Orchard Commons
6363 Agronomy Rd #2001
Vancouver, BC
Canada V6T 1Z4
604.827.0337

