

# Lead with Purpose

*Transforming learners to leaders and purpose to action.*

Strategic Direction for the Sobey School of Business

2025-2030



**Sobey School  
of Business**

Saint Mary's University

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

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As Dean of the Sobey School of Business, I am proud to share with you the Sobey School's Strategic Plan 2025-2030 and I am energized by both the strength of our community and the clarity of the direction we have set together. Lead with Purpose: Transforming learners to leaders and purpose to action captures not only where we are going as a School, but also how we will move forward—thoughtfully, collaboratively, and with intention.

This strategic plan reflects our shared belief that business education must be grounded in values, connected to community, and responsive to a rapidly changing world. Centering the student experience, prioritizing regional and global impact, and influencing organizational practice are interwoven commitments that resonate strongly with me. These themes will guide us as we work collectively to strengthen our programs, advance impactful scholarship, and deepen our partnerships across the Atlantic region, Canada, and beyond.

The Sobey School has a proud foundation in experiential learning, community engagement, and responsible management education. Lead with Purpose builds on these strengths and challenges us to be even more ambitious in how we support learners, collaborate with organizations, and contribute to society. I am grateful to the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners whose insights and generosity shaped this plan. Its success will depend on our continued engagement with one another.



**Michel Delorme PhD**  
**Dean, Sobey School of Business**

I look forward to working alongside our community to bring this vision to life. Together, we will translate purpose into action and ensure that the Sobey School of Business continues to be a catalyst for innovation, impact, and shared prosperity.





## OUR CONTINUING COMMITMENT

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Building on our Mission, Vision, and Purpose, the Sobey School of Business views education as a powerful foundation for positive economic and social change.

This belief shapes how we design transformative learning experiences, advance impactful research and collaborate with businesses and communities.

It reflects our commitment to developing responsible leaders who contribute to a more innovative, inclusive and prosperous global future.

# **LEAD WITH PURPOSE:**

**Transforming learners to leaders and purpose to action.**

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The Sobey School of Business (SSB) at Saint Mary's University is proud to present its strategic vision and goals for 2025–2030 Lead with Purpose: Transforming learners to leaders and purpose to action. This bold and future-focused roadmap is designed to elevate our role as a regionally grounded, globally connected leading business school committed to promoting innovation, impact and prosperity.

Three interwoven themes form the framework for Lead with Purpose and underscore our strategic direction and goals:

- **Centering the student experience.**
- **Prioritizing regional and global impact.**
- **Influencing organizational practice.**

Building on our strong foundations in experiential learning, community engagement, and responsible management education, this plan articulates a vision for the Sobey School as a catalyst for positive transformation in the Atlantic region, Canada at large and beyond. It responds to the urgent challenges and opportunities facing business organizations, higher education, and society as a whole.

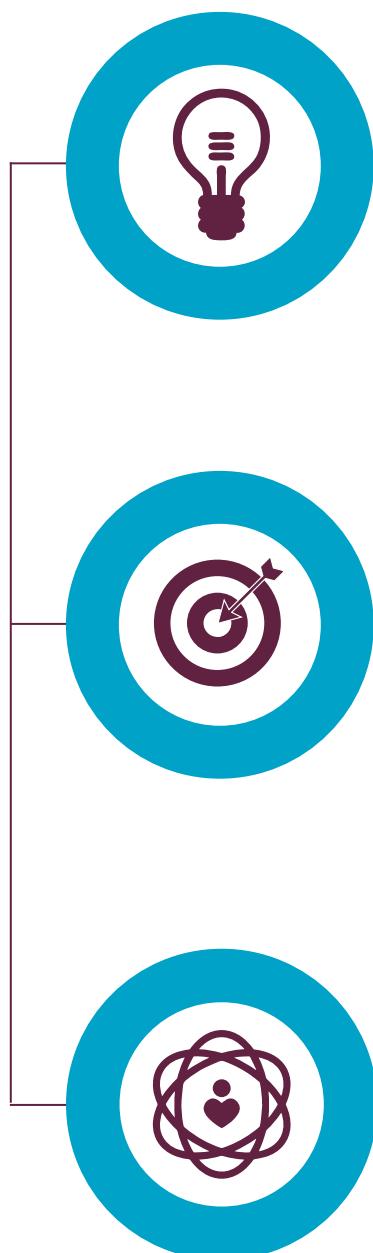


# VISION, MISSION AND PURPOSE

# OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

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To guide and focus our efforts, we revisited and updated our vision and mission. For the first time, we have also articulated our purpose. Increasingly, organizations are considering why they exist - to crystallize their reason for being. Together these communicate the kind of business school we aspire to be, how we see doing so, and the contribution we seek to make to society.



## Our Vision

To ignite a global movement of responsible leaders who drive innovation, sustainability, and shared prosperity.

## Our Mission

Through experiential education and the creation and mobilization of knowledge, we inspire and empower diverse learners to lead thriving enterprises and communities.

## Our Purpose

We exist to advance knowledge and develop leaders to shape a better world.

We share the Core Values of Saint Mary's University:

- Intellectual Transformation
- Individual and Collective Resilience
- Intercultural Engagement
- Alumni and Community Connection
- Ethical Wisdom

# DISTINCTIVE STRENGTHS AND IDENTITY

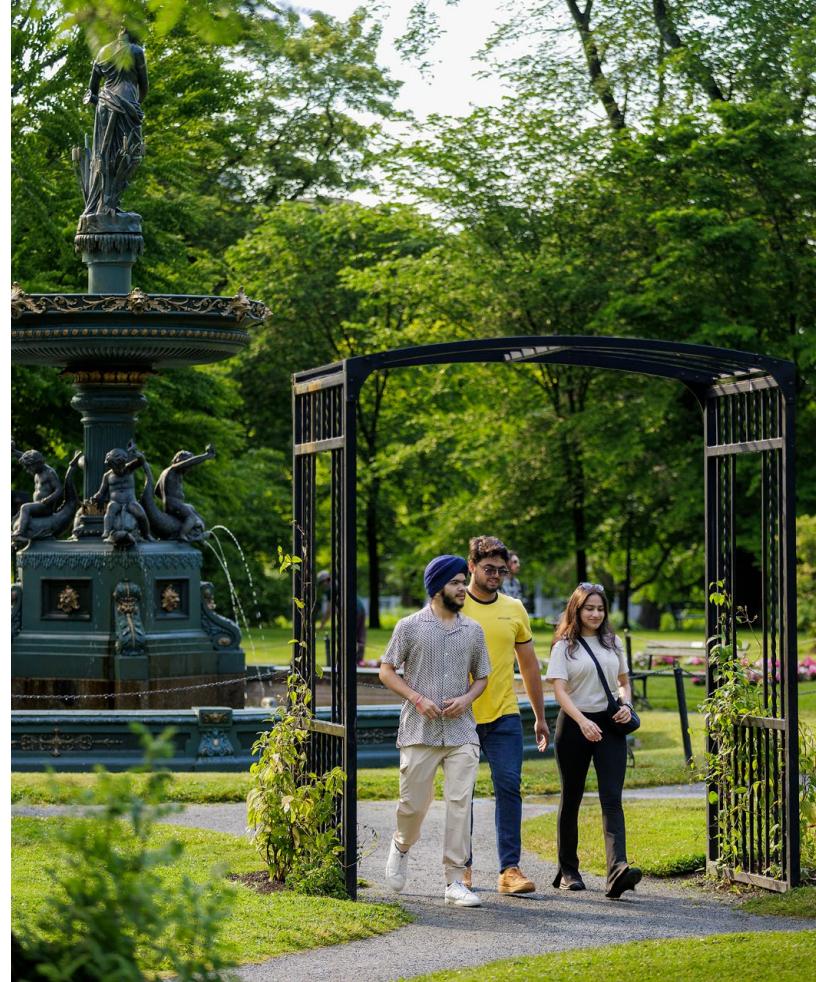
We are a business school with two prestigious global accreditations. As one of only eight Canadian business schools accredited by both the Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), we strive for excellence and leadership across all academic domains.

Our EFMD accreditation is reinforced through the Business School Impact System (BSIS), which assesses our societal, economic, and environmental impact and supports continuous improvement aligned with global standards.

Our faculty expertise and commitment to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) position us as leaders in responsible business and organizational practice with a focus on positive social impact.

Our traditional focus on entrepreneurial thinking and innovation, alongside a strong foundation in core and emerging disciplinary areas, reflect our commitment to ensuring learners acquire essential management knowledge and skills.

This approach, coupled with practical engagement outside the classroom, helps our learners develop the problem-solving capacity needed in an increasingly complex and turbulent environment.



Our excellent track record of creating and disseminating theoretical and applied research of the highest quality enhances knowledge and business and organizational practice. Through our longstanding relationships with businesses, organizations, and community leaders, the impact of this scholarly work extends beyond the Atlantic region to other parts of Canada and the world at large.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

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## Planning Committee and Guiding Principles

Our strategic planning process took place from November 2024 to September 2025 and was stewarded by an ad-hoc committee of emerging scholars at the Sobey School of Business to generate fresh perspectives and insights about our strategic direction. Committee members included: Ali Shirazi, Amna Chalwati, Hadi Eslami, Mahdi Tajeddin, Mohamed Drira, Leo (Hao) Lu, Annika Voltan, ML Wei, Hui Xiao, and Jane Mulatz. The Sobey School Decanal team consisting of Dean Michel Delorme and Associate Deans Ashraf Al Zaman, Margaret McKee and Vurain Tabvuma were also involved.

Guiding principles developed by the ad-hoc committee for shaping our strategic direction include:

### Future-ready

Our programming, teaching methods and research contributions need to align with the knowledge and skills needed for a rapidly evolving society and workplaces.

### Adaptable, agile and resilient

We're facing complex challenges and uncertainty that require comfort with emergence and change.

### Impactful

We need to focus our energy where we can have the most positive impact on society.

### Human flourishing and belonging

We need to ensure that our students feel a sense of community belonging at the Sobey School of Business, and that our faculty and staff feel valued, respected and part of a team with a shared purpose.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

## Stakeholder Engagement

In November 2024, the Dean's Advisory Council, comprised of business and community leaders, met and provided the Dean with their perspectives on the Sobey School's strategic direction. Shortly thereafter, Faculty Executive members, consisting of department chairs and academic program coordinators, gathered for a day-long retreat to reflect on the Sobey School's external operating environment and market position, and consider the newly released Saint Mary's Strategic Plan World Without Limits. The outcomes of these sessions were provided to the ad-hoc committee who began meeting in early December.

Over the course of the planning process, input from key stakeholders was gathered at multiple points in time. In late February, the ad-hoc committee presented and gathered input about its early findings and priorities at a Faculty Council meeting of all academic staff. In late March and early April, focus group sessions were held with faculty, staff and students to go deeper into potential actions related to the identified priorities. A follow-up survey to faculty and staff was administered for those unable to participate in the on-campus focus groups.

The ad-hoc committee met bi-weekly from January to March, and weekly in April and May. A first draft of the plan was shared with key internal stakeholders, e.g., Sobey School faculty and staff and Saint Mary's University President and Provost, as well as selected external stakeholder, e.g., Dean's Advisory Council. Feedback was requested and considered, and a final draft of the plan was prepared in September for approval by Sobey School governance bodies in October. In mid-December 2025, Faculty Executive met on the final approved plan to prioritize initiatives and develop key progress indicators.





## “ Lead with Purpose

means fully embracing my environment and making the most of the opportunities available to me at Sobey. This involves applying myself across all areas of my life—academically, through extracurricular activities, and on the volleyball court. I strive to stay present, lead by example, learn from challenges, and support those around me. Balancing varsity athletics, managing Scholar's Edge Painting, and engaging across campus has taught me that leadership is not just about outcomes, but about building trust, acting with integrity, and turning learning into meaningful action.

— TAYLOR LOUGHEED  
2025 Frank H. Sobey Award recipient

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**From my MBA to my EDBA,**  
the Sobey School has consistently been a place where good work is expected, faculty inspire, and students collaborate. For me, access to world-class research tools, research librarians, and expert research faculty enabled me to push my research agenda far beyond what I thought was possible. The research I was able to do will have a positive impact on the industry and will aid future researchers. In short, doing good and meaningful work is inspiring.

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— JONNY STEVENS  
BComm'02 MBA'07 EDBA'25 EDBA '25



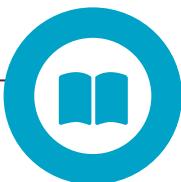
A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a black top, is speaking to an audience in a classroom. She is gesturing with her hands and has a ring on her finger. In the foreground, a laptop is open on a desk, showing a document. The background is blurred, showing other people in the room.

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

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Five strategic goals will guide our work over the next five years. They are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, designed to centre and strengthen learner experiences and focus faculty and staff endeavours to create mutual and shared value with our partners and communities.



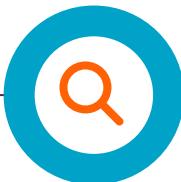
## Learning for Leadership

To elevate the learner experience through inclusive, experiential, and interdisciplinary learning that equips graduates to lead with confidence, agility, and a clear sense of purpose.



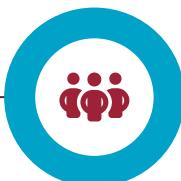
## Building Global Community

To build global communities through our programs, research, partnerships, and pedagogy and ensure our graduates thrive in diverse, interconnected environments.



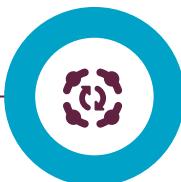
## Research for Change

To advance positive change in business and society through exemplary, boundary-pushing, and stakeholder-engaged research that bridges practical relevance with scholarly significance.



## Collaborating for Positive Impact

To address the real-world challenges of businesses and communities through partnerships in research, learning, employment, and executive education.



## Thriving Together

To cultivate a workplace where faculty and staff feel connected, supported, and inspired in a collaborative and resilient learning environment.





## LEARNING FOR LEADERSHIP

# STRATEGIC GOAL 1:

## Learning for Leadership

The learner experience at the Sobey School of Business spans the full spectrum of academic engagement, learning environment and professional development opportunities that collectively shape the learning journey. Our responsibility is to inspire, challenge, and nurture the potential of our learners to drive meaningful change in business and society.

### **Goal:**

To elevate the learner experience through inclusive, experiential, and interdisciplinary learning that equips graduates to lead with confidence, agility, and a clear sense of purpose.

### **Objectives:**

Deliver consistent and high-quality learning experiences.



Provide clear pathways that enable learners to customize their academic experience.



Prioritize the knowledge, skill and mindset development necessary to address society's most urgent challenges.



Equip learners for professions influenced by rapid technological advancement.



Embed engagement opportunities with alumni, employers, and organizational leaders into courses and programs.



### **Strategic Integration**

Our objectives were developed to advance our strategic goals. Here, we aim to demonstrate the ways in which they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

- Learning for Leadership
- Building Global Community
- Research for Change
- Collaborating for Positive Impact
- Thriving Together





**BUILDING GLOBAL  
COMMUNITY**

## STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Building Global Community

We have a rich history of internationalization and remain committed to the strategic integration of global perspectives across all core areas — learner experience, academic programs, research initiatives, employee development, and partnerships.

### **Goal:**

To build global communities through our programs, research, partnerships, and pedagogy and ensure our graduates thrive in diverse, interconnected environments.

### **Objectives:**

Promote the widespread adoption of inclusive and culturally informed pedagogy.

Pursue international alliances and partnerships that generate reciprocal economic and social value.

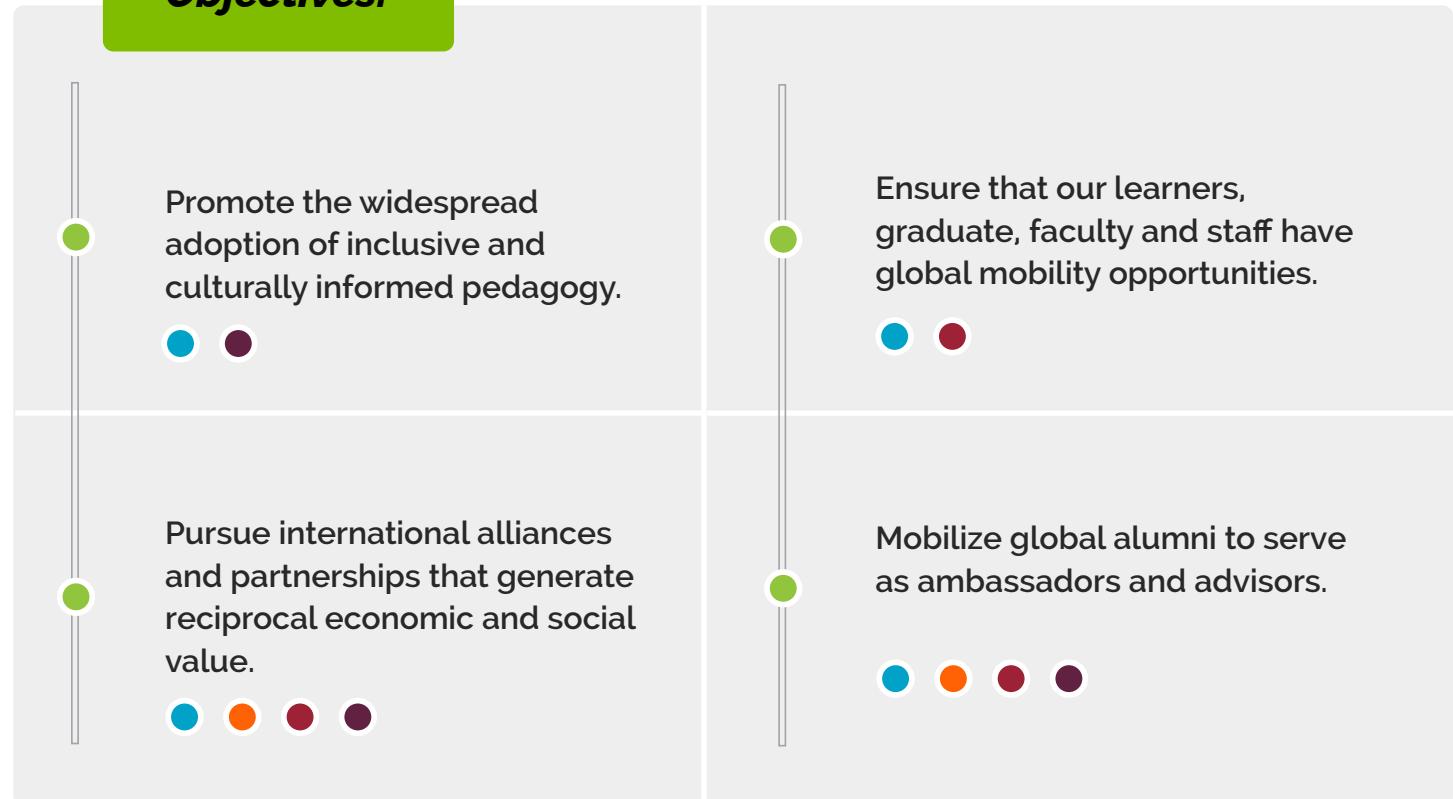
Ensure that our learners, graduate, faculty and staff have global mobility opportunities.

Mobilize global alumni to serve as ambassadors and advisors.

### **Strategic Integration**

Our objectives were developed to advance our strategic goals. Here, we aim to demonstrate the ways in which they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

- Learning for Leadership
- Building Global Community
- Research for Change
- Collaborating for Positive Impact
- Thriving Together





## RESEARCH FOR CHANGE

## STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Research for Change

Rapid technological advances, evolving societal expectations, and growing global uncertainties demand fresh approaches to business and organizational challenges. Research at the Sobey School of Business is grounded in our purpose and mission. It drives responsible leadership, innovation, and community impact. To stay competitive and relevant, we must invest in research capacity, strengthen research support systems, and align policies to encourage research activity.

### **Goal:**

To advance positive change in business and society through exemplary, boundary-pushing, and stakeholder-engaged research that bridges practical relevance with scholarly significance.

### **Objectives:**

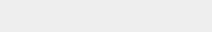
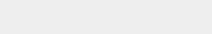
Support faculty in their efforts to produce impactful, high-quality research.



Expand community-engaged research to influence policy development and organizational practice.



Better integrate research into teaching and learning.



Strengthen the position and profile of the School's research centres by aligning them strategically and operationally to our mission.



## **Strategic Integration**

Our objectives were developed to advance our strategic goals. Here, we aim to demonstrate the ways in which they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

Learning for Leadership

Building Global Community

Research for Change

Collaborating for Positive Impact

Thriving Together




**COLLABORATING  
FOR POSITIVE IMPACT**

## STRATEGIC GOAL 4:

### Collaborating for Positive Impact

We are committed to creating long-term value with businesses, community organizations and society through formal and informal partnerships. Together we foster organizational development through co-operative education and service-learning opportunities for our students, employment for our graduates, executive education for our alumni and the community at large, and research collaborations that inform practice and curriculum.

#### ***Goal:***

To address the real-world challenges of businesses and communities through partnerships in research, learning, employment, and executive education.

#### ***Objectives:***

Ensure our degree programs, executive education offerings, and micro credentials are responsive to evolving industry and community needs.



Create cost-effective, upskilling pathways for early and mid-career alumni and professionals.



#### ***Strategic Integration***

Our objectives were developed to advance our strategic goals. Here, we aim to demonstrate the ways in which they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

 Learning for Leadership

 Building Global Community

 Research for Change

 Collaborating for Positive Impact

 Thriving Together



# THRIVING TOGETHER



# STRATEGIC GOAL 5:

## Thriving Together

Employees who feel respected and valued are more likely to be dedicated to improving the quality of services and the workplace experience. How information is communicated, decisions are made, and people interact contribute to peoples' sense of belonging and shared purpose. We are committed to ensuring that clear and inclusive processes and structures are in place to foster transparency, trust, and collaboration among faculty and staff.

### **Goal:**

To cultivate a workplace where faculty and staff feel connected, supported, and inspired in a collaborative and resilient learning environment.

### **Objectives:**

Better understand and take actions to ensure a consistently positive work environment.



Ensure transparent access to information to all faculty and staff about what is happening at the Sobey School of Business.



Increase employee participation in governance procedures and decision-making in the Sobey School of Business and across the university.



Create opportunities for formal and informal employee interactions.



Build opportunities to work collaboratively with the broader university community on areas of mutual benefit.



### **Strategic Integration**

Our objectives were developed to advance our strategic goals. Here, we aim to demonstrate the ways in which they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

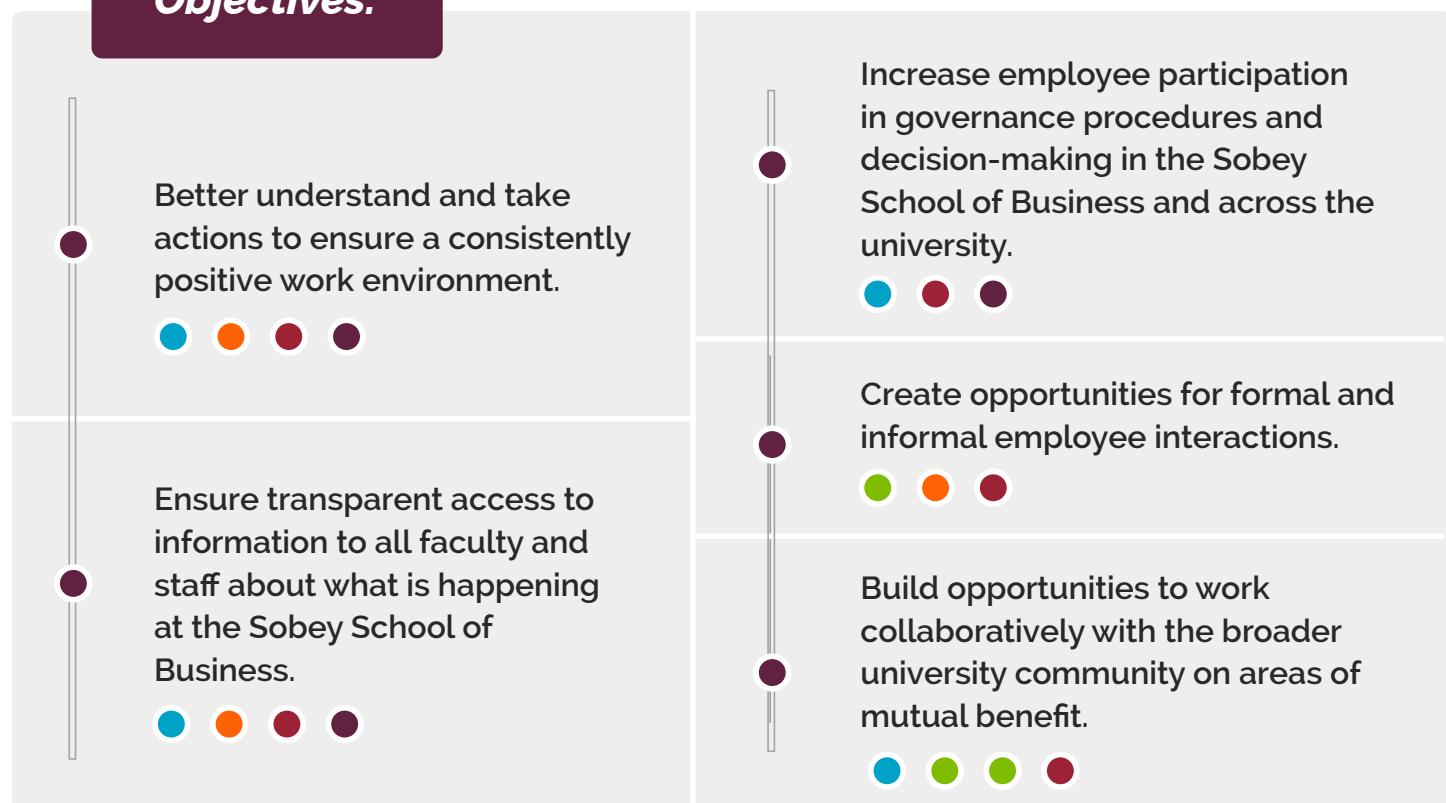
● Learning for Leadership

● Building Global Community

● Research for Change

● Collaborating for Positive Impact

● Thriving Together





## FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

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With our goals clearly defined, the next step is disciplined implementation. Each of the objectives will be translated into actionable initiatives with clear timelines, responsibilities, and measurable outcomes.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be developed to track progress, ensure accountability, and provide transparency to our community.

By aligning our daily practices with these strategic priorities, we will embed our goals into the culture of the Sobey School of Business—continuously monitoring results, celebrating successes, and adapting as needed to stay responsive to a rapidly changing world.





## **Sobey School of Business**

Saint Mary's University

