



STLHE SAPES

Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

La société pour l'avancement de la pédagogie dans l'enseignement supérieur

ENVISIONING A PATH FORWARD

As a 40-year-old organization, a lot has changed since our early days. We started out as a small group of educational developers who created the Society to reflect their common goals and interests. That small group has evolved into a diverse membership of almost 1000 – administrators, faculty, staff, researchers, educational developers, and students from a variety of educational institutions and disciplines – all held together by a belief that working with people from across the post-secondary landscape on teaching and learning provides us with something that, individually, is missing. Fundamentally, our members are united behind the mission to improve teaching and learning in higher education.

The educational landscape has changed considerably over the last eighteen months. Institutions have been challenged to ensure the continued delivery of programs and support to students and instructors. Individuals have been called upon to do difficult work, and STLHE members have worked to support the evolving nature of teaching and learning throughout the pandemic. STLHE has also been challenged to examine the ways in which we work – to learn and unlearn, to grow and evolve. Working together to improve teaching and learning has always had its challenges. These challenges have been no less evident during this pandemic.

STLHE is at an important turning point. We have just received the final report of the STLHE Equity Diversity and Inclusion Task Force with its findings and recommendations. As we move forward, STLHE must engage in an ongoing process of transforming the Society into a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community, committed to reconciliation. We also have a new bylaw to which we must align our policies and processes. We have additional financial constraints brought on by a reduction in membership due to a lack of a national F2F conference two years in a row. Furthermore, we must also work to prevent volunteer burnout given the additional stresses of the pandemic and resulting demands on work and personal time.

As we envision a new path forward for the organization, the STLHE Board is committed to engaging with all members in the coming months in several key ways:

1. Establishment of a Standing Committee on Equity Diversity and Inclusivity

In response to the first recommendation of the STLHE Task Force on Equity Diversity and Inclusion, the STLHE Board has moved to establish this Committee and issued a call for interest for serving on the committee to the membership. Members are encouraged to join the committee and work together to implement the EDI Task Force recommendations across the Society.

2. Engagement with STLHE Leaders

The STLHE Board began regular meetings this fall with the leaderships of the many affiliated groups within STLHE. We intend to continue these open conversations with the leaders of these groups as we work to improve communications and work through challenges facing the Society.

We also want to remind you that any STLHE member can bring to the Board's attention an issue by emailing: board@stlhe.ca.

3. Strategic Planning

With limited financial and human resources, the Society must focus on key strategic priority areas to make progress towards achieving the mission of advancing teaching and learning in higher education.

The STLHE Board is launching a strategic planning process to identify, with the membership, the strategic priority areas and goals to which key activities and budgets across the Society would be aligned. These strategic priority areas and goals would guide the work of STLHE for the next few years.

The Strategic Planning Process and Timeline

Step 1: Member visioning session to identify challenges and opportunities facing STLHE – early December 2021.

Step 2: Survey of members to gather information on member needs – January 2021.

Step 3: Two member consultation sessions to share survey results, identify strategic priority areas and generate strategic goals– February/March 2022

Step 4: Meeting with the Board and Executives of the groups within STLHE and others in leadership roles to review strategic goals within the strategic priority areas and identify key metrics – March 2022.

Step 5: Board review and finalization of the draft strategic plan – April 2022.

Step 6: Executives of the groups and others in STLHE leadership roles to develop key activities for remainder of fiscal year and any budget adjustments – April/May 2022.

Step 7: Administrative Centre to support implementation and reporting on new strategic plan.

4. Visioning for the role of the communities within STLHE

The STLHE Board would like to invite you, as a STLHE member, to participate in a visioning exercise that explores the roles and objectives of our affiliated groups: constituency groups, special interest groups, and teaching and learning networks.

Members are invited to participate in a Visioning Session on [date/time/ Zoom link](#).

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

We recognize that we are living through significant change. What once worked may no longer work and, in some instances, what once was should no longer be. The strength of STLHE is its ability to cut across silos – of discipline, institution, profession, and role. If we are to improve teaching and learning in higher education in the future, we must continue to be innovative and open to change. We look forward to working with members through this process.

Respectfully,

The STLHE Board