

Academic Plan 2014–2019



**Empowering Adults to Reach
their Life and Career Goals**

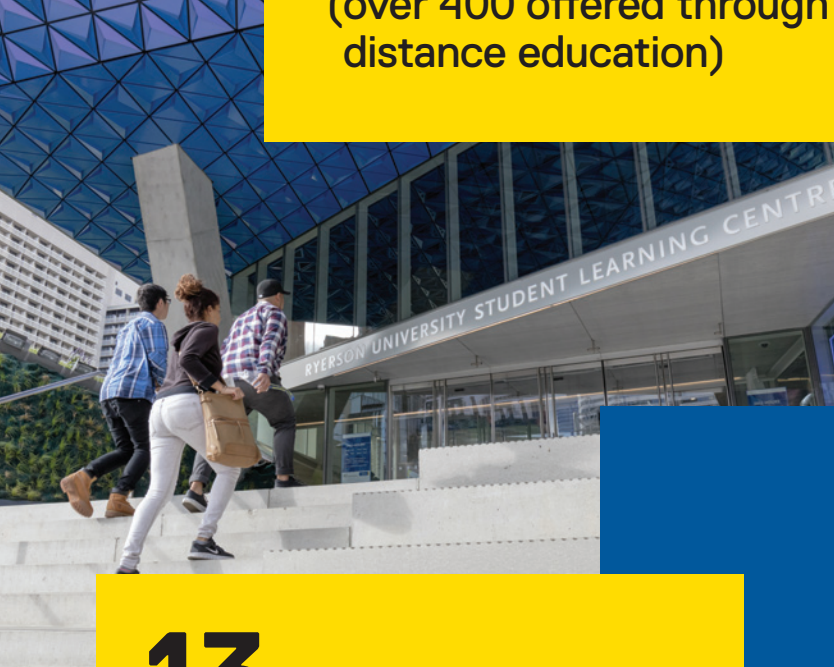
**Ryerson
University**

**The Chang School
of Continuing
Education**



1,500

courses, seminars,
and workshops
(over 400 offered through
distance education)

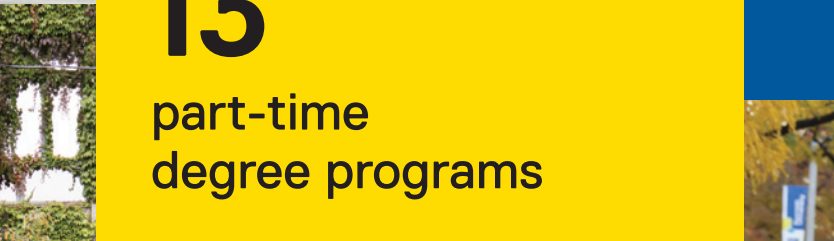


82

career-related
certificate programs
(22 fully online)

13

part-time
degree programs



courses
towards
accreditation by **10**
professional institutes
and associations



Introduction

The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education (The Chang School) is Canada's largest continuing education provider, developing transferable skills for a diverse population of students through 1,500 courses, seminars, and workshops, leading to 82 certificates and 13 part-time degrees. Our Digital Education Strategies unit has received international recognition for excellence and numerous awards in online teaching and learning.

Our mission is to be a leader in innovative, quality lifelong learning that empowers adults to reach their life and career goals. The learners who choose The Chang School value our innovative programming, educators with real-world experience, connectedness through partnerships, supportive learning environment, and collaborative relationship with Ryerson University's academic faculties on professional program development, educator development and recruitment, and academic standards.

The six goals described in the following pages were developed through internal staff consultation to complement the 29 strategies identified in *Our Time to Lead*, Ryerson's 2014–2019 Academic Plan. This plan provides a dynamic vision for Ryerson University to become Canada's leading comprehensive innovation university, recognized for its high-quality, career-related, and professional programs.



Goal #1

Continue to develop a student-centric environment that engages and supports students and alumni.

Our Time to Lead provides a clear vision of our role as a university: “Ryerson will provide students with the best learning experience, leading to great careers and engaged graduates who enable change.” It also emphasizes our open, accessible, and inclusive environment: “The university sustains its commitment to ensuring a strong sense of belonging and engagement for students, alumni, faculty, and staff.”

Supporting this direction, The Chang School will provide the resources students and alumni need to reach their academic and career goals, including innovative and experiential learning opportunities, high-quality academic and career advice, and prompt and effective issue resolution.

The Chang School is guided by the following Client Service Principles:

1. We welcome all individuals who visit or contact The Chang School in a courteous and inclusive manner.
2. We are respectful of each individual’s needs and situation.
3. We interact with each individual in a professional manner.
4. We strive to provide an accurate, reliable, and timely response to an individual’s inquiry, engaging in as much follow-up as appropriate to ensure high client service satisfaction.

To achieve Goal #1, we will:

- Identify and address areas for service improvement, building on the solid foundation of our Client Service Principles, including streamlining existing policies and practices related to student support, recruitment, retention, and advising
- Engage students, alumni, and staff in the development of experiential learning opportunities that will enhance their continuing education learning experience
- Recognize excellence by expanding the number of student awards, and make learning more accessible by increasing the amount of money available through student bursaries
- Provide more opportunities for students to connect with industry leaders and build professional networks, and for The Chang School to communicate the value of our credentials and initiate new programs, through an outreach program in partnership with Ryerson’s Career Centre

Goal #1 reflects these Ryerson University priorities and strategies:

Priorities:

- Enable Greater Student Engagement and Success through Exceptional Experiences

Strategies:

- Create transitional pathways that lead current students to become engaged alumni who can remain involved in the university after graduation.
- Offer services, supports, spaces, and improved engagement opportunities that enable student success at all levels, encourage high retention, and facilitate the timely completion of students' academic goals.
- Evolve and expand experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.

“I wanted to improve my work life. I wanted to grow. I wanted to excel. And I knew that in order to do that, I needed to further my education ... Ryerson has a great reputation for having one of the best business schools in the country. Also, all the credits earned at The Chang School are degree credits that can be put towards my degree program.”

Peter McGregor
Graduate, Certificate in
Business Communication, Spring 2013
Ryerson degree student, Sociology

“I looked at the skills my manager had, which I didn't have – and decided to bridge that gap. The environmental engineering certificate program at Ryerson gave me the background I needed to understand environmental impacts and apply that knowledge to the workplace – in my case now, the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC). My motto is, never stop learning!”

Stephanie Fortin
Graduate, Certificate in
Environmental Sciences, Fall 2014
Ryerson Gold Medal recipient, Spring 2015



Goal #2

Actively engage continuing education educators and staff through innovation and learning excellence opportunities.

“Ryerson’s vision of being a leading innovation university extends to how its faculty and staff think, act, and get things done,” states *Our Time to Lead*. “The university will continue cultivating a collegial environment that takes advantage of the enterprising ideas of experienced faculty and staff to increase teaching, learning, SRC [scholarly, research, and creative] activity, and operational excellence.”

At The Chang School, we fully support a “people first” approach to implementing our goals, prioritizing educator and staff engagement. We will work hard to retain talented people by continuing to build an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible work environment that also reflects Ryerson values such as collegiality, inclusion, community, and lifelong learning.

To achieve Goal #2, we will:

- Engage staff at all levels to identify, incubate, and propose innovative solutions, and develop communication, recognition, and engagement activities that resonate for them
- Provide learning opportunities for new staff and partner organizations that include Workplace Communication in Canada modules
- Generate greater awareness of staff mental health and well-being initiatives, as well as accessibility best practices
- Support academic coordinators and educators by offering leadership in teaching and learning excellence that results in continuous improvement of programs
- Recognize high-quality teaching practices, promote sharing among educators, and provide them with opportunities to further develop their skills
- Encourage the use of pedagogically dynamic teaching strategies in collaboration with the Learning and Teaching Office (LTO)

Goal #2 reflects these Ryerson University priorities and strategies:

Priorities:

- Enable Greater Student Engagement and Success through Exceptional Experiences
- Foster an Innovation Ecosystem

Strategies:

- Recognize high-quality teaching and provide opportunities for faculty, educators, and teaching and graduate assistants to continually develop their teaching practices and skills, and encourage the use of new and diverse learning and teaching methods.
- Offer services, supports, spaces, and improved engagement opportunities that enable student success at all levels, encourage high retention, and facilitate the timely completion of students' academic goals.
- Evolve and expand experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.
- Attract and retain high-quality faculty and staff with diverse backgrounds.

Ryerson's Teaching Chair program provides leadership in cultivating teaching excellence by offering:

- ♦ **Orientation sessions for new educators at the beginning of each semester**
- ♦ **Workshops on topics such as engaging adult learners and developing a teaching philosophy statement**
- ♦ **A four-week, facilitated online course on teaching adult learners online**
- ♦ **Opportunities to receive formal feedback on teaching**

“It has been a rewarding experience, and I look forward to revising my existing online courses and developing new distance learning courses,” said one workshop participant. Another commented, “Thank you! I found this course helpful for helping assess how I’m doing regarding my online teaching.”



Goal #3

Continue to improve internal systems and manage budgets to optimize fiscal contribution.

As Our Time to Lead suggests, “Ryerson’s reputation for strong digital, design, and technology capabilities” can contribute towards “enhancements and modernizations to the university’s IT [information technology] assets, digital communication channels, and enterprise platforms.”

By making structures, processes, and services more efficient—for example, by minimizing duplicated efforts and redundant manual tasks—we can optimize The Chang School’s resources. Streamlining will result in flexible, nimble, responsive internal systems that can adapt to the changing needs of Ryerson University.

To achieve Goal #3, we will:

- Launch a new Chang School website that improves the user experience, simplifies registration, and aligns with the university’s communications strategy
- Enhance operational processes to support service excellence for staff, educators, students, and prospective students
- Develop better tools to support decision-making by the Dean, directors, and managers, and transparency in enrolment, budget, and financial transfer data

Goal #3 reflects these Ryerson University priorities and strategies:

Priorities:

- Enable Greater Student Engagement and Success through Exceptional Experiences

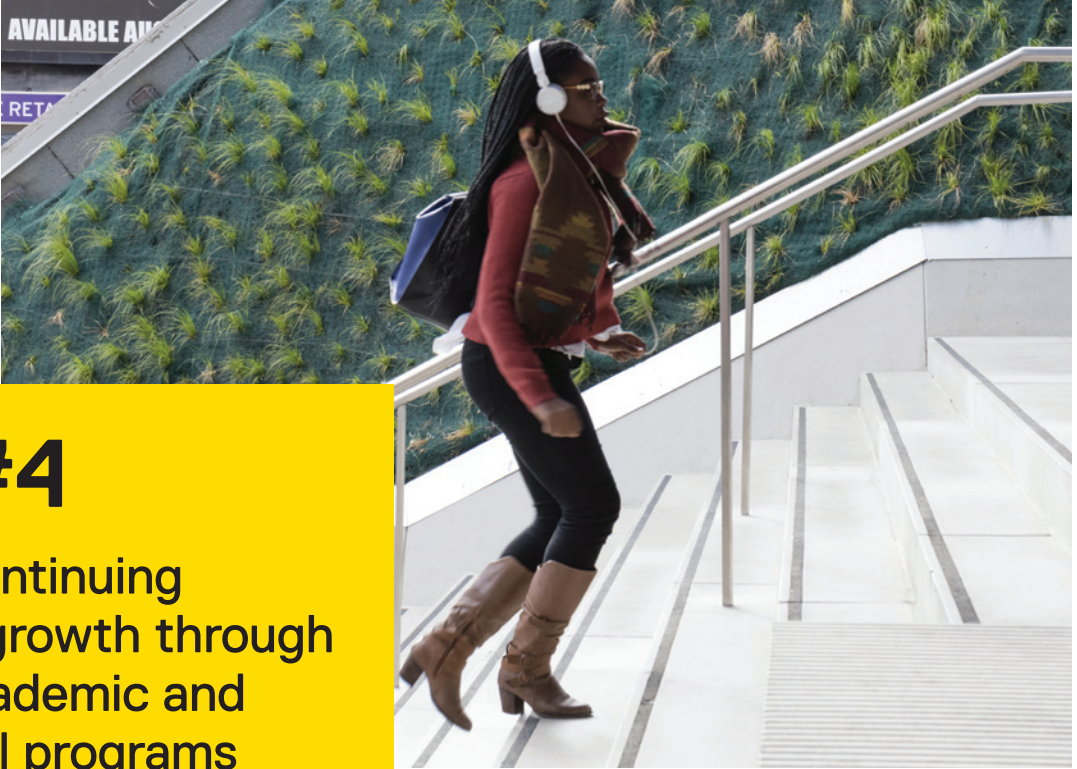


We are committed to making it easier for people to access learning – and one of the ways we’re doing that is by streamlining our processes. Making our internal systems more efficient will allow us to accomplish more on behalf of learners, educators, staff and our partners outside the university.”

**Dr. Marie Bountrogianni
Dean, The Chang School**

Strategies:

- Develop a university-wide community engagement and communications strategy that values equity, diversity, and inclusion; leverages current engagement activity; and builds a more visible Ryerson presence in our city.
- Offer services, supports, spaces, and improved engagement opportunities that enable student success at all levels, encourage high retention, and facilitate the timely completion of students’ academic goals.
- Assess administrative structures, processes, and services to ensure ongoing effectiveness of university assets, support for academic programming and SRC activity, and enhanced space utilization.
- Attract and retain high-quality faculty and staff with diverse backgrounds.



Goal #4

Support Continuing Education growth through relevant academic and professional programs with industry connections.

Learning needs are not static. “The university, through the sustained work of faculty and staff, is continuing on a transformative path to meet the changing needs of students and helping to shape Canada’s future generation of change-makers and advocacy leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs,” states *Our Time to Lead*.

The Chang School’s high-quality curriculum must continue to evolve so that it remains innovative and responsive to students. We will work with faculty to review certificates, renew curricula, and identify new programs that will attract adult learners.

“I wanted to take my career in a different direction and try something new. The biggest benefit was engaging with the educators and the other students—having casual interactions, discovering what others are doing in various industries, and making connections.”

Peter Raynham
Graduate, Certificate in Data Analytics,
Big Data, and Predictive Analytics, Fall 2015

To achieve Goal #4, we will:

- Strengthen and nurture existing programs to ensure they continue to reflect developments in professions, industries, and scholarly fields
- Provide strategic leadership in identifying areas of growth and areas of declining interest
- Develop 15 to 20 new and revised certificates, course series, and specialized programs over the next five years
- Consider new ways to deliver learning—for example, through advanced certificates, and self-paced and ongoing enrolment in online courses
- Assist the Yeates School of Graduate Studies in the development of Professional Master’s Diplomas (PMDs)
- Expand the non-certificate English as a Second Language (ESL) program by adding summer semester courses and identifying international partners
- Encourage entrepreneurial and innovative thinking across disciplines through new initiatives that complement the curriculum, such as promoting zone learning and other experiential learning opportunities

Goal #4 reflects these Ryerson University priorities and strategies:

Priorities:

- Enable Greater Student Engagement and Success through Exceptional Experiences
- Foster an Innovation Ecosystem

Strategies:

- Support and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation across a greater number of disciplines through new initiatives that will complement the curriculum.
- Recognize high-quality teaching and provide opportunities for faculty, educators, and teaching and graduate assistants to continually develop their teaching practices and skills, and encourage the use of new and diverse learning and teaching methods.
- Encourage partnership between Ryerson University's academic departments and The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education to support growth in continuing education through on-campus and distance education offerings.
- Evolve and expand experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.
- Continue the ongoing evolution of Ryerson's high-quality curriculum, so that programming and its delivery remain innovative and responsive to students. Courses will be made more accessible, students will be given more choice, and transferability will be enhanced.

The **Certificate in Retail Management** is tailored to the unique and growing needs of Canada's second-largest industry, with a growing employee base of nearly two million people. Graduates go on to pursue careers ranging from e-commerce to buying, marketing, and operations.

Better engaging community members in planning, problem-solving, and decision-making can improve the social, political, and cultural well-being of civic and community life. The **Certificate in Community Engagement, Leadership, and Development** attracts people in diverse fields such as social services, education, labour, health, housing, community policing, land use, and transportation planning.

We offer both a **Certificate and an Advanced Certificate in Public Administration and Governance** for current and aspiring public sector employees, and those who want to better understand public administration and public policy in Canada. Graduates are equipped with analytical, administrative, communication, and management skills that help them develop satisfying public sector careers.



Goal #5

Promote innovative, interactive, and accessible digital learning opportunities.

One of Ryerson’s goals, as described in *Our Time to Lead*, is to “develop best practices for high-quality distance education and hybrid learning as part of a blended learning strategy.” Digital learning is an area where The Chang School is extremely well-positioned to excel.

Recognized with several prestigious awards for its innovation and creativity in online education, our Digital Education Strategies (DES) team creates high-quality, flexible programs to meet the educational needs of Canadian and international organizations. Today, we offer over 400 online courses, including 300 degree-credit courses, two part-time degree programs, 22 fully online certificates, and 19 blended certificates.

We will draw on our 15 years of experience to expand the number of part-time degrees and certificates available fully online, update existing course content, and enhance accessibility. At the same time, we will support educators with professional development that helps them lead online programs more effectively.

To achieve Goal #5, we will:

- Respond to increased demand for online learning by developing more than 60 new online courses over the next three years
- Leverage the work of our strategic online development committee to support and review course development plans
- Provide educators with knowledge, training, and support on topics such as e-learning pedagogy, web accessibility, and inclusive applications
- Foster collaboration among educators and promote the sharing of leading teaching practices that benefit students
- Improve course content management to strengthen online delivery
- Introduce processes and structures that ensure high-quality, relevant courses
- Appoint a lead to support the implementation of Brightspace, our new learning management system
- Continue to explore opportunities to facilitate peer-to-peer interactions and experiential learning online

Goal #5 reflects these Ryerson University priorities and strategies:

Priorities:

- Enable Greater Student Engagement and Success through Exceptional Experiences

Strategies:

- Revise existing digital education courses to ensure updated course content that aligns with trends and developments in professional, industry, and scholarly fields.
- Develop and deliver ongoing professional development offerings to provide educators with the opportunity to use innovative and diverse learning methods.
- Support the university-wide blended e-learning strategy, which incorporates principles of inclusive design and accessibility.

Many organizations have recognized Digital Education Strategies and The Chang School for excellence in content development quality and creative, engaging digital media and program design:

- ♦ **Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE)**
- ♦ **Canadian Network for Innovation in Education (CNIE)**
- ♦ **National University Technology Network (NUTN)**
- ♦ **Online Learning Consortium (OLC – formerly Sloan-C)**
- ♦ **Pearson Higher Education**
- ♦ **The Institute for Performance and Learning (formerly Canadian Society for Training and Development [CSTD])**

“I wanted to learn more about public relations, anticipating that my current job would come up. I live in northern Manitoba, so I take the courses online. The educators are always helpful and supportive, answering my questions quickly and efficiently, and a lot of what I have learned in my first two courses has helped me with situations I face every day at work.”

Twyla Storey
Learner, Certificate in Public Relations,
available via Distance Education
Communications Coordinator,
Northern Health Region, Flin Flon, MB

Goal #6

Grow our presence through outreach, partnerships, and research to support our profile as a city builder.



Our Time to Lead states, “Ryerson will extend its community engagement. The university will draw new opportunities and global connections to the Greater Toronto Area that encourage social and cultural innovation and economic development. Ryerson will promote inclusion through clear pathways for transfer students, access and outreach initiatives, and support for members of under-represented groups.”

The Chang School will work to enhance our already-strong reputation for welcoming learners who face barriers to education, building connections to industry and the community and demonstrating thought leadership. Our efforts will include expanding existing services and starting new initiatives to build on our support of Aboriginal students, first generation students, students with disabilities, internationally trained individuals, and older adults.

To achieve Goal #6, we will:

- Work with Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services (RASS) to develop an Aboriginal foundation program for students who have been away from formal education for some time, or who need to fill in qualifications for admission to a certificate or part-time degree program

- Launch a program to help first generation students be more effective, resourceful, and self-sufficient learners at university, and create a one-day intensive course on managing academic anxiety
- Expand enrollment by 50 percent in our Bridges to Ryerson program, to increase participation in post-secondary education by people who might not otherwise consider it
- Align our digital materials and Client Service Principles to facilitate accessibility for students with disabilities, and continue to externally promote the Certificate in Accessibility Practices: AODA and Beyond
- Work with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade (MCI) to help more internationally trained individuals get the qualifications they need to work in Canada
- Build on our unique, innovative Programs for 50+ with new opportunities for mature workers to repurpose and redevelop skills, and continue to support popular on-campus events such as the 50+ Festival
- Design an initiative to support members of the Canadian Armed Forces as they transition to civilian life and higher education, drawing on leading practices from other Chang School bridging programs
- Forge partnerships with local, national, and international organizations, including exploring the possibility of delivering programs such as Nursing to international partners
- Deliver presentations at Canadian and international conferences and promote research and publishing about lifelong learning, as well as topics such as learning models in long-term care facilities and using technology in innovative ways to support learning for isolated older adults

“Spanning the Gaps has given me the opportunity to be my most authentic self. Through Spanning the Gaps, I was able to grow my vision for my future, invest in myself, and share that with others.”

Ghazala Knight
Learner, Bridges to Ryerson,
Politics and Governance

“As a two-time Afghanistan war veteran with the Royal Canadian Dragoons regiment in the Canadian Armed Forces, having to transition out of the military into the civilian workforce was frightening. Attending school has helped keep my mind off the stressors while advancing my education. If you come in with a plan, The Chang School will set you on the right path to achieve it.”

Master Corporal Ovais Ahmed

International professionals often come to Canada with a breadth and depth of experience and credentials that aren't recognized here. Our **Gateway for International Professionals** programs accurately assess the skills of international professionals and provide them with the education and experience needed to succeed in the Canadian workplace at levels that correspond with their qualifications.

Goal #6 reflects these Ryerson University priorities and strategies:

Priorities:

- Expand Community Engagement and City Building

Strategies:

- Expand engagement with local, national, and international external organizations to enrich student experiences and inclusion, increase civic engagement, and create valuable academic, research, and innovation opportunities that contribute to Ryerson's profile and impact as a city-building university.
- Develop a university-wide community engagement and communications strategy that values equity, diversity, and inclusion; leverages current engagement activity; and builds a more visible Ryerson presence in our city.
- Cultivate relationships with Aboriginal communities and students to create an educational environment that embraces and supports Aboriginal perspectives and experiences, and builds community for Aboriginal peoples.
- Develop access and program initiatives to support under-represented groups, including Aboriginal students, first generation students, students with disabilities, and internationally educated professionals.

The non-credit **Programs for 50+** redefine retirement as a time to expand your mind, challenge yourself, keep abreast of current developments in the world around you, and learn new skills along with your peers. Workshops also explore the challenges of the mature worker in today's workforce.



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University**

**The Chang School
of Continuing
Education**

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