



Laurel Schollen, Vice-President, Academic (centre), says the Seneca Case Development Centre will lead to enhanced student learning across all programs.

Seneca makes a case for case writing

Project focuses on student learning

Nov. 28, 2019

Seneca is hoping to change the way students learn in the classroom by writing cases that will be integrated into the curriculum across all programs and credentials.

The Seneca Case Development Centre (<https://inside.senecacollege.ca/cdc/>) will bring together Seneca's talented faculty and committed partners to develop cases that will allow students to explore real problems faced by real working professionals in real organizations. The cases, with varying levels of complexity, will make critical thinking an integral component of education at Seneca.

Laurel Schollen, Vice-President, Academic, said the primary focus of the initiative is to enhance student learning.

"Cases are an important pedagogical tool with which we can engage students with content and, more importantly, the context. It will not be passive learning," she said. "Students will actively engage in discussions about a problem in an actual workplace and the dilemmas that are faced in decision-making."

The initiative will break new ground in college education by developing cases specific to college students.

"The cases we develop will be used across the breadth of our programming, not only from a discipline perspective but also from a credential-level perspective," Ms. Schollen said. "They will be used in diploma programs, in our advanced diploma programs, in our degrees and in our graduate certificate programs. It is very important for us to make this as inclusive as possible."

Not only will the Seneca Case Development Centre augment student learning, it will also present an exciting opportunity for faculty to collaborate with Seneca's industry partners and employers who are interested in being featured in case studies. Training will be provided to the first cohort of 20 to 30 faculty in February 2020 and the first cases will be ready in 2021.

Ms. Schollen said that presently most professors draw on their own research or experiences to excite students and keep the classes engaged.

"The use of personal anecdotes in teaching is common and has its place," she said. "On the other hand, the case method — case writing and case teaching — is a more deliberate approach. The centre will provide an opportunity for professors to write cases that will be used in classrooms for years to come."

Ariff Kachra, who has a longstanding affiliation with the Richard Ivey School of Business and has helped many different institutions around the world launch case-based initiatives, is Seneca's consultant on the project. He said the goal of the centre is to help Seneca's students develop into talented, employable individuals who are also good problem-solvers and strong thinkers.

"Seneca has a very interesting confluence of engaged, talented faculty and a very committed management team," he said. "I think that's very rare to find. You need that level of commitment for a case centre to work."

For more information, check out the Seneca Case Development Centre FAQs (<https://inside.senecacollege.ca/cdc>).

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