It is anticipated that by fall 2019, the English Language Proficiency Exam will no longer be offered to students at the University of Waterloo. In its place, undergraduate students will successfully complete at least one course that addresses the undergraduate communication outcomes endorsed by Dean’s Council in May 2015. This memo addresses various components of these courses, including resource commitments and the role of instructors and Faculties.

The 2013-2018 Strategic Plan notes the significance of strong communication capacities for our students, and states that “Communication skills are important work-ready skills and will help our students be successful in their chosen fields.” Likewise, the endorsed undergraduate communication outcomes identify concrete curricular priorities related to communication for students in all Faculties.

There are three central components of this initiative.

- **Resource commitment.** The Provost’s office will support all Faculties in the provision of at least one course for all undergraduates that is centrally focused on the undergraduate communication outcomes and taught primarily by continuing faculty (i.e., tenure line faculty members, continuing lecturers, and definite term lecturers).

- **Faculty engagement.** It is crucial that in regard to the communication outcomes and courses, Faculties are committed to the highest level of curricular and pedagogical quality, to a reliance on those with disciplinary expertise at and beyond the University of Waterloo, and to consultation and collaboration both within and beyond their units. Faculty members are participating in, and will contribute to, this effort in various ways. Specific areas of engagement for faculty members include Department and Faculty committees that approve curriculum, the development of program-specific approaches to the communication outcomes, and teaching courses focused on the communication outcomes.

- **Accountability.** Clear processes for accountability and review will be central to the success of the undergraduate communication outcomes initiatives. Based on recommendations of the Steering Committee, English Language Competency Initiative (SCELCI), I anticipate that Senate Undergraduate Council will have an important role in ensuring the successful implementation of the undergraduate communication outcomes.

The undergraduate communication outcomes have been designed to be sufficiently broad so that departments and faculty members can ensure that they have a strong fit with existing curricular priorities.
and directions. It is also worth noting that research addressing communication-intensive courses points to the successful components of such courses, including:

- Small class sizes, with caps of 25 or fewer;
- Iterative assignments that focus on communication and offer multiple opportunities for feedback;
- Syllabi that clearly describe communication assignments and goals.

The **Steering Committee, English Language Competency Initiative** is tasked with providing a place for dialogue and consultation that will lead to the successful implementation of the undergraduate communication outcomes in each of the Faculties. The Associate Deans, Undergraduate from each of the six Faculties sit on this committee, as do representatives from Renison University College and St. Jerome’s University. Faculty members can direct questions about any aspect of this initiative to their Associate Dean responsible for programming and curriculum. Staff can direct questions to the chairs or directors of their respective units. Finally, faculty members and staff are encouraged to visit the [Undergraduate Communication Outcomes](#) website for additional information.

In closing, based on research analyzing similar efforts, I expect that our engagement with this initiative will offer substantial benefits to our students, during both their time at university and following graduation. I would like to express my appreciation for the extensive commitment of each of the Faculties and various support units to the undergraduate communication outcomes and our students’ success.