

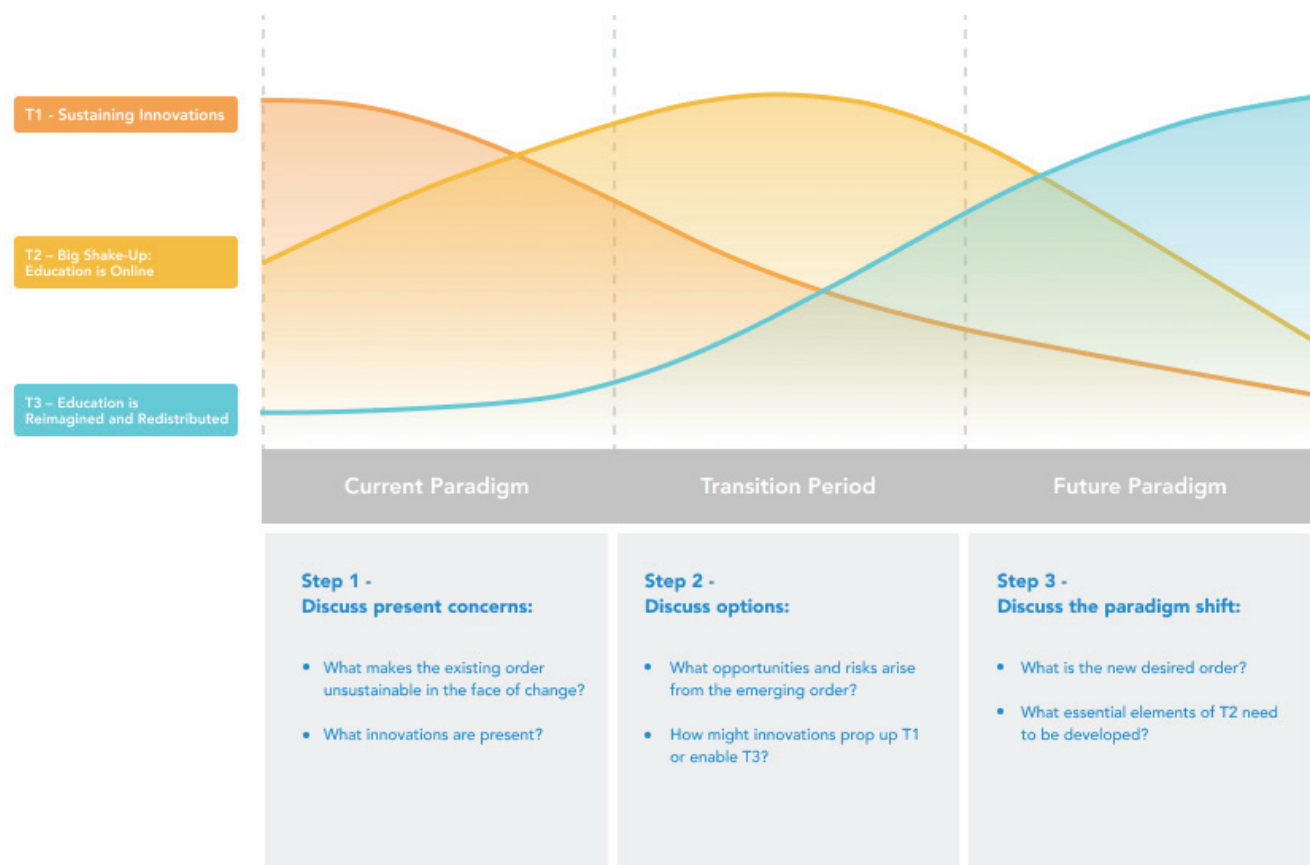


A Scenario Based Approach to Strategic Planning

Like so many other institutions, the day to day reality at Columbia College has changed dramatically over the past year. We're incredibly proud of the unique and rapid supports we made available to students through the pandemic: an emergency response fund, free laptops to students, a tuition freeze, and an astounding array of support services to transition to learning in an online environment.

Despite these efforts it's clear that what happens in the next 6 months to 3 years will be anything but predictable. In this context, it was difficult to conceive how to go about long term strategic planning.

At the suggestion of one of our Board members, we've opted to use a three horizons planning framework. This is a scenario based planning approach intended to equip all members of the College community to consider provocative questions over three time horizons depicted in the chart below.



After a series of preliminary planning and info sessions, our team selected three titles to capture key driving forces across each time horizon:

T1 Sustaining Innovations: what about the College is likely to remain relevant and mission-critical as the world continues to change?

T2 Big Shake-Up - Education is Online: This is intended to capture the reality that online learning is no longer an optional service for select institutions; this methodology and reality is now ubiquitous across the globe and sector (though access to online learning remains severely unequal).

T3 Education is Reimagined and Redistributed: this horizon is intended to capture the possibility of completely new educational delivery models, and to encourage our team to grapple with future possible roles for the College in the educational paradigm of the future.

Using this framework, participants in the planning process are encouraged to consider different possible scenarios using provocative questions such as the following.

T1	T2	T3
<p>Is the Canadian education brand still resilient?</p> <p>What surprises (ie., concerns/ excites) you the most about the current situation?</p> <p>What are we not talking about that needs to be addressed?</p>	<p>What are the principal challenges (ie., breakthroughs) in responding to current risks?</p> <p>Which actors are the principal/ secondary drivers of change (ie., fed gov't, e-learning platforms, etc)?</p> <p>Do you see new types of resources (ie., eLearning platforms) emerging?</p> <p>How do you see the student experience (ie., in-class/ online) evolving in the next 2-3 years?</p> <p>What relationships/ capabilities/ assets should be modified, discarded, or converted into new products and services?</p>	<p>Do you see hints of new trends/ innovations that are likely to drive transformational change in the coming months/years?</p> <p>What types of education institutions/services will lead the market in the next 3-5 years?</p> <p>In the next 2-3 years, can you imagine a general purpose technology/business model that could fundamentally redefine the current education model?</p>

Equipped with this framework and questions we can contemplate different possible responses or priority areas for the College across the three different timelines above.

Rather than a static plan, the hope is the process will equip our team to continue meeting the needs of aspiring students from across the globe to access the education of their choice – a new key element in the organizational Vision of the College.

What questions, or time horizons, are driving your thoughts about the future?