



PROVIDENCE

CENTRE FOR ON-DEMAND EDUCATION (CODE)

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE | THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



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INTRODUCING CODE



Providence is developing a Centre for On-Demand Education (CODE), comprising a series of offerings that will maximize opportunities for people to pursue their gifts and callings in ways that are accessible on-demand and in keeping with their particular need, level, timing, and interest.

Utilizing innovative systems such as, competency-based education, work integrated learning, proficiency learning, prior learning assessment, and adult degree completion, Providence will align its services and opportunities to make available a full spectrum of learning from micro-credentialing to academic graduate degrees, while maximizing efficiency of its human and physical resources.

This prospect will take full advantage of partnership with related industries, employers, and agencies to accelerate and enhance the employability of its students, while opening markets both regionally and globally for the best possible effect on people and on God's Kingdom.

Note: The following document describes a program under development, including a set of aspirational understandings and targets. Providence is working rapidly to establish and enhance the concepts for immediate implementation in a few early-adopting agencies, willing to act as pilot projects for this exciting initiative.

PARADIGM SHIFT



It is proposed that the Centre for On-Demand Education at Providence will focus its offerings along a spectrum of ladder educational opportunities, credentials, and services. Potential students, clients, and partners will be able to approach these offerings like a menu of options, depending upon their qualifications and experiences. Whenever possible, Providence will work with partner agencies and employers to bring these opportunities into context for students and their employers. The goal is for Providence to maximize alignment of these pieces for the best possible efficiency in service and in cost.

Providence understands its primary “customer” as those missional agencies and employing organizations that see our graduates as a primary resource necessary to the achievement of their vision. Developing a competent labour force is difficult and expensive. But by connecting to CODE, these groups will find their efforts enhanced by the full power of Providence and its faculty. This level of partnership requires a sense of ownership on the part of these partners, such that the school acts as a servant of the agency’s mission. By working collaboratively, these agencies should see an exponential impact.

By means of this Centre, students will be encouraged toward the education that they need at the moment that they require it, without dead ends or irrelevancies. They will see how the work they do is immediately productive toward the thing that they feel called to. They will be able to invest as much or as little time as needed, with fewer barriers and a more immediate result.

The educational model intended by the Centre for On-Demand Education (CODE) represents a paradigm shift in academic delivery. Learning facilitated by the Centre will focus on proficiency learning facilitated by mentors. As the focus will be on the context instead of the classroom, care must be taken to assure quality standards throughout the process. This document, then, offers a framework for quality assurance in the development and delivery of curriculum within CODE.

EDUCATIONAL VALUES

Programs and curriculum developed and delivered through CODE will be guided by the following educational values:



CONTEXTUAL LEARNING

Framing learning within relevant contexts ensures that curricular design will be suited to the outcomes expected by employers and mission-holding agencies. These organizations must be included in the development of curriculum so they can recognize the product as sufficient for their needs. By learning in context, students can prove their proficiency is more than conceptual and that they can be trusted to handle their subjects in non-theoretical environments.



MENTORED PROFICIENCY

CODE curriculum is focused on student proficiency which allows Providence to work outside of some of its conventional structures such as semesters and credit hours connected to seat time. The key is mentoring. CODE curriculum depends upon teams of academic and contextual mentors committed to each student in their context who can observe and assess the student's development and display of proficiency.



ON-DEMAND INTEGRATION

CODE will fit education to the student in the time and manner that they need it, customized to their life situation, integrating the knowledge, skill, and character essential to a fully formed graduate. Instead of demanding that the student conforms to the structures of the school, the school will adapt to the needs of its students. The curriculum will be mapped to a ladder of requirements and products so that the student always has a way forward without loss of value and without dead ends.

WHY CHOOSE CODE?

- It leverages technology.
- It's all about proficiency.
- It's self-paced.
- It drives affordability and accessibility.
- It's part of the big picture.
- It teaches real-world skills.

QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The primary building blocks of CODE curriculum will be described as “outcomes” (sometimes referred to as “courses,” “badges,” or “competencies”). These discrete learning blocks can be accumulated and gathered according to prescribed patterns for the student to achieve larger designations and degrees:

OUTCOMES

Outcomes are the primary, irreducible, academic building blocks that integrate the knowledge, skill, and character necessary for the student to display proficiency of a carefully described expectation. Outcomes will normally comprise of three academic credits (but as few as one and as many as six), usually available at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels.

CERTIFICATES

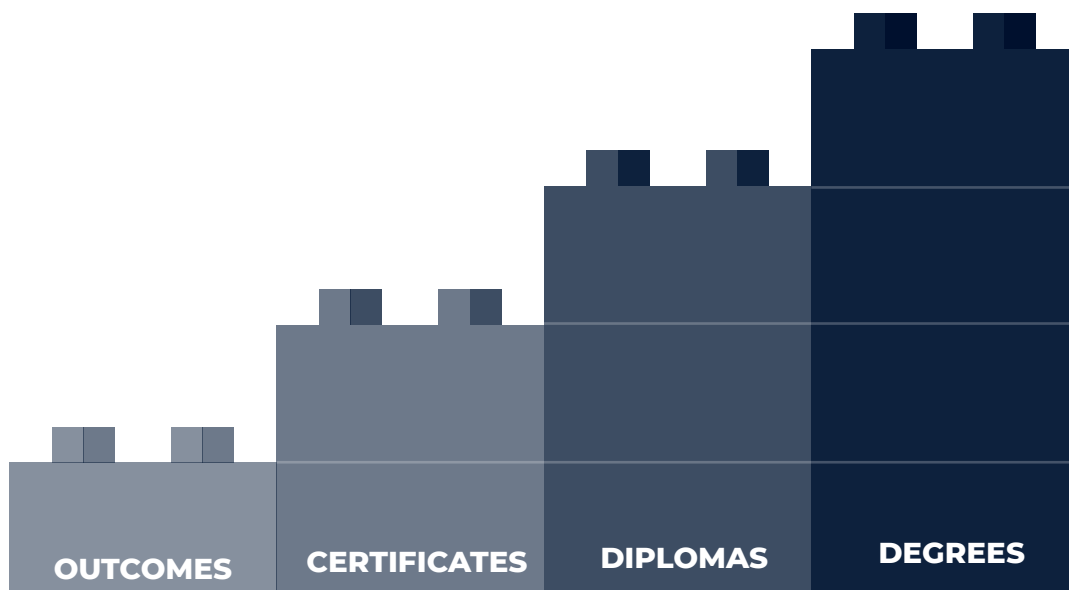
Certificates are awarded to students who complete a prescribed bundle of outcomes (usually four, or 12 academic credits) focused on a missional objective.

DIPLOMAS

Diplomas are awarded to undergraduate students who complete a prescribed bundle of outcomes and/or certificates (usually 10 outcomes, or 36 academic credits), focused on a particular missional objective.

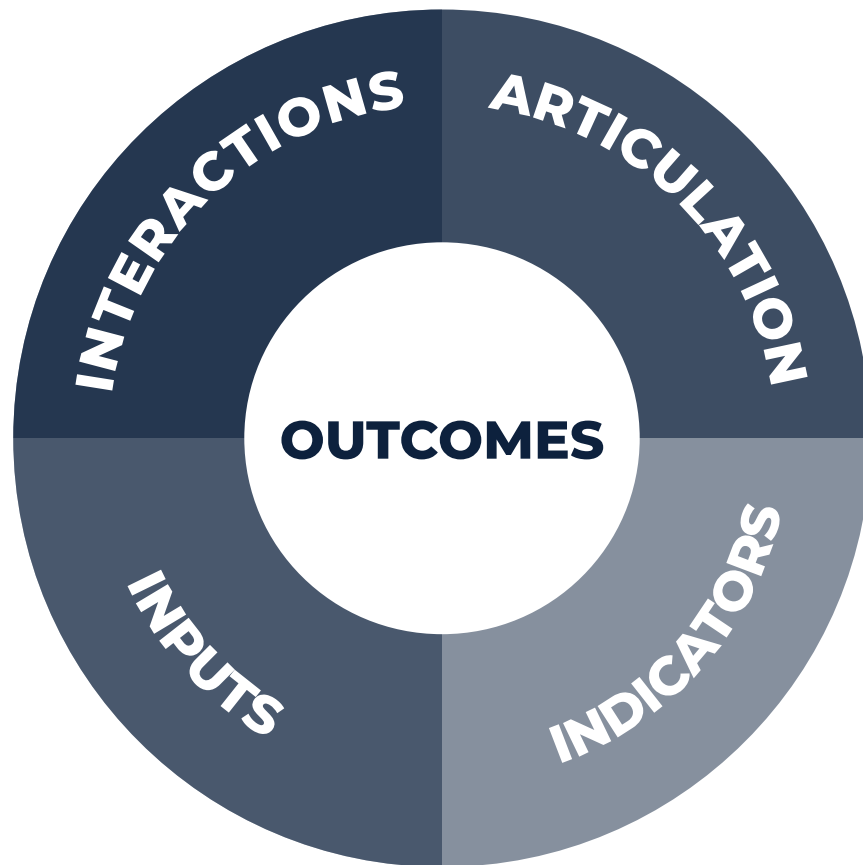
DEGREES

Degrees are awarded to students who complete a prescribed bundle of outcomes and/or certificates at the undergraduate (usually 40 outcomes, or 120 academic credits) or graduate (usually 10 outcomes, or 30 academic credits) levels, focused on a particular missional objective.



OUTCOME CONSTRUCTION

Outcomes are focused on a discrete learning expectation, describing a full integration of the knowledge, skill, and character necessary to the student's full formation. These outcomes are constructed to allow the student opportunity to both develop and display their proficiency of the expectation in live context to the satisfaction of their mentors. Outcomes comprise the following four elements:



1. ARTICULATION

The outcome must be expressed in clear, but comprehensive and measurable language so all stakeholders have an effective grasp on the description of proficiency.

2. INDICATORS

Each outcome expression must clearly state a set of tangible indications of student proficiency, written in terms that the mentors can readily observe and assess. These indicators (usually three to five discrete and measurable statements) will combine to express a full articulation of the student's proficiency of the expressed outcome.



3. INPUTS

Each outcome articulates both the compulsory and/or suggested inputs leading to the student's proficiency. Such inputs could include conventional forms like lecture and prescribed reading, or they might be more creative, including such means as podcast, seminar, and structured conversation. These inputs must be accessible to the student and built with the engagement of the contextual organizations wherein the work might be applied. Students could have accessed these inputs prior to the prescribed learning period.

Mentors and students should feel free to suggest further inputs or alternative pieces that might be of greater use to a particular student in his/her context. For that reason, inputs should only be listed as compulsory when strictly necessary to an organizational partner or employment objective. Students will be expected to report on their progress in accessing these inputs on an at-least-quarterly basis.

4. INTERACTIONS

Each outcome will clearly state the interactions, compulsory or suggested, which are useful to the student's development and display of outcome proficiency, and which will ideally be constructed in conversation with those employers and agencies wherein the work will be completed. While these interactions might include traditional means such as academic papers and examinations, curriculum designers will take advantage of the contextual situation to conceive of more creative learning opportunities such as projects, experiences, and other engagements.



Care should be taken to avoid rigid or required interactions to preserve the opportunity for customization in the interest of the student and their situation. Students will be expected to report on their progress in engaging these interactions on an at-least-quarterly basis.

OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS



CONTEXT

The system requires the commitment and involvement of an applied contextual situation where the student can both develop and display proficiency of the articulated outcome. Suitable contextual situations could include businesses, communities, churches, or agencies. The key is that the organization is focused on some productive, missional good in the world and can provide the space necessary to the student's action and formation. .

MENTORS

The system requires that each student have a mentor team comprised of an academic mentor, a contextual mentor, and a proctor (or learning assistant). This team must be approved by Providence. While the contextual mentor does not have to be employed or directly connected to the contextual agency, it is important for that organization to affirm that the mentor can represent their interests. The fundamental goal of the mentors will be to encourage, guide, and assess the student in his or her journey toward proficiency.

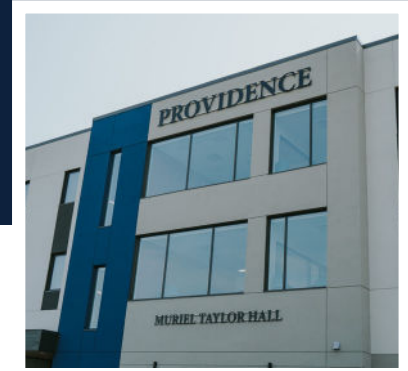
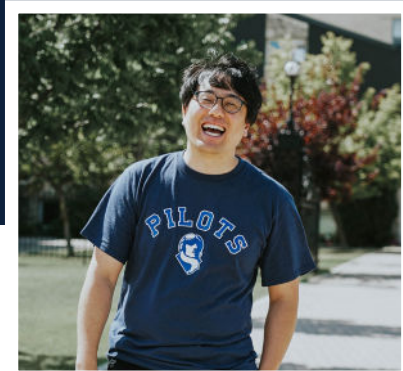
PLATFORM

The student and mentors will be given access to a private, online learning platform where their outcomes are articulated and where student and mentor engagement can be collected and archived. This will serve as the digital record of the student's learning sufficient to justify the mentor's assessment of the student's proficiency.

DID YOU KNOW



Competency-based education is one of the fastest growing trends higher education. Allowing people and organizations to customize learning to the specific needs of students.



PATHWAY

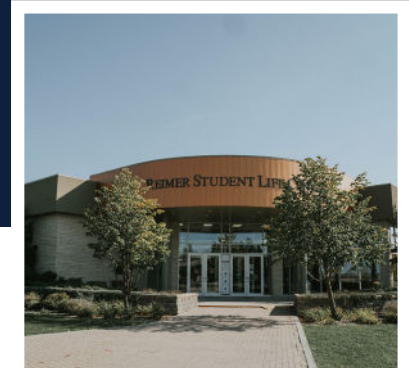
Prior to the official start of the student's outcome engagement, the proctor will work with the student and mentors toward a prescribed learning path articulated on the learning platform. This will include the selection of the inputs and interactions expected of the student, while still leaving room for adjustment along the way. Upon reaching agreement of the learning path, the student will be considered officially enrolled.

TIMEFRAME

The standard expectation is that the student will have one calendar year to develop and display proficiency of a given outcome. (A student will normally work toward several outcomes concurrently with the approval of their mentors.) However, given that each student and situation bring unique needs, that timeframe could be extended if necessary. It is expected that the student will meet with his/her mentors for an evaluative conversation at least once every three months.

FINANCIALS

The student will be charged a prescribed rate of tuition per credit hour out of which 50% will be divided between the mentors and the proctor. Should the student require extra time, she or he will be charged a continuation fee on a quarterly basis in the amount of one/sixth of the original amount of tuition.



APPROVALS

All CODE outcomes will be presented by the proctor to the appropriate Providence dean's office (university college or seminary) for approval before the student's work begins.

ASSESSMENTS

Student assessment will be presented to the appropriate dean's office by the mentors in the form of a letter grade according to the following rubric:

A-range: the student shows exceptional proficiency of the outcome indications

B-range: the student shows reasonable proficiency of the outcome indications

Failure: the student fails to display proficiency within a (extended) timelines approved by the mentors.

ACCREDITATION

Academic accreditation will be sought by Providence for all CODE programs at the graduate level for seminary programs by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and at the undergraduate and graduate level for university college programs by the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), and in accordance with Providence' legislative charter to grant degrees.



PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Providence is willing to speak with any like-minded partner about the possibility of developing custom-fit programs through the CODE paradigm.

For more information, please contact Karen Anderson at karen.anderson@prov.ca.



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