

St. John's College Strategic Plan Outline

2026-2031

Our 5-year Strategic Plan sets the principles and priorities to guide us through the demolition of our original building (May 2026), and the completion of our new home within the Lower Mall Precinct (2030).

Expanding our community and broadening our mission

Strategic Planning Timeline

- **Fall 2024:** Engaged with current residents, SJC alumni, SJC Fellows and other members of our community on the core values and strengths of SJC; analyses drawn from the SJC 25-year longitudinal alumni survey/SoTL-supported study of 2000+ SJC alumni.
- **Spring - Fall 2025:** Design and Development with SHCS (both Student Housing and Food Services), Campus and Community Planning, and UBC Properties Trust of the academic functional programming of SJC spaces within the \$560 million Lower Mall Precinct residential development.
- **Fall 2025:** Collaborate on strategic planning with our partners in SHCS, Student Health and Well Being Support, Graduate + Postgraduate Studies; consultation with Working Group of current SJC residents; participation in G+PS Working Groups on Student Housing and Health and Well Being.
- **December 2025:** Finalize 5-year strategic plan

Who We Are



[SJC LOTUS](#)

Motto: *The World Around Our Table*

Goal: Bringing people together to make the world better.

Tagline: *UBC's International Academic Community*

St. John's College (SJC) has been an academic home for international cultural exchange and community-building since its founding in 1997. SJC's motto, "The World Around Our Table," reflects our community charter and our goal of sharing meals and conversation as a way of "Bringing People Together to Make the World Better." SJC offers an academic setting that encourages discussion, respectful debate and cultural and culinary exchange. Our SJC Fellows are comprised of UBC

faculty, staff, students, visiting scholars, and residential graduate student Fellows from all over the world and from diverse cultural backgrounds.

St. John's College is the realization of a dream held by local and international alumni (called "Johanneans") of the former St. John's University (SJU) in Shanghai, to revive the spirit of their alma mater and perpetuate the SJU motto: Light and Truth. The Johannean spirit of learning and integrity have been kept alive at SJC UBC in its commitment to Fellowship and community service through bringing people together over a shared meal – "The World Around Our Table."

The College offers SJC Fellows an eclectic mix of academic programming and social activities — from speakers, panels, language and cultural exchange and informed discussions about challenging topics, to concerts, film screenings, culinary events, and charitable initiatives.

SJC Fellowship

"SJC Fellows" are defined as graduate students, staff, faculty, alumni, honorary community members—and in the future academically advanced undergraduate students who plan to pursue graduate studies—who actively and consistently participate in achieving SJC's goal of "Bringing people together to make the world better." St. John's College is shifting from a residential membership model to a distributed fellowship model anchored in program participation. During the first 28 years of our existence, living in the St. John's College quadrangle equated to being an SJC Fellow.

SJC's exciting next phase of growth and expansion will take place within the new graduate student-focused Lower Mall Precinct (LMP) arising between 2026-2030 from the ashes of the original SJC quadrangle. Although many of the graduate students living in LMP will be SJC residential Fellows, our community-building programming and SJC fellowship will extend both to the 1530+ residents who live in the LMP complex as well as beyond the LMP residents.

SJC's mission will focus on creating a more productive international academic community at UBC, more impactful interdisciplinary and intercultural exchange, and a stronger sense of belonging through supportive social relationships that enhance the well-being of UBC students, staff, and faculty. Through the core activity of creating intellectual and cultural exchange through conversations over shared meals, SJC fellowship as a practice embodies our motto of "The World Around Our Table," both in defining who we are as an international academic community, and by naming the primary means by which community-building is achieved.

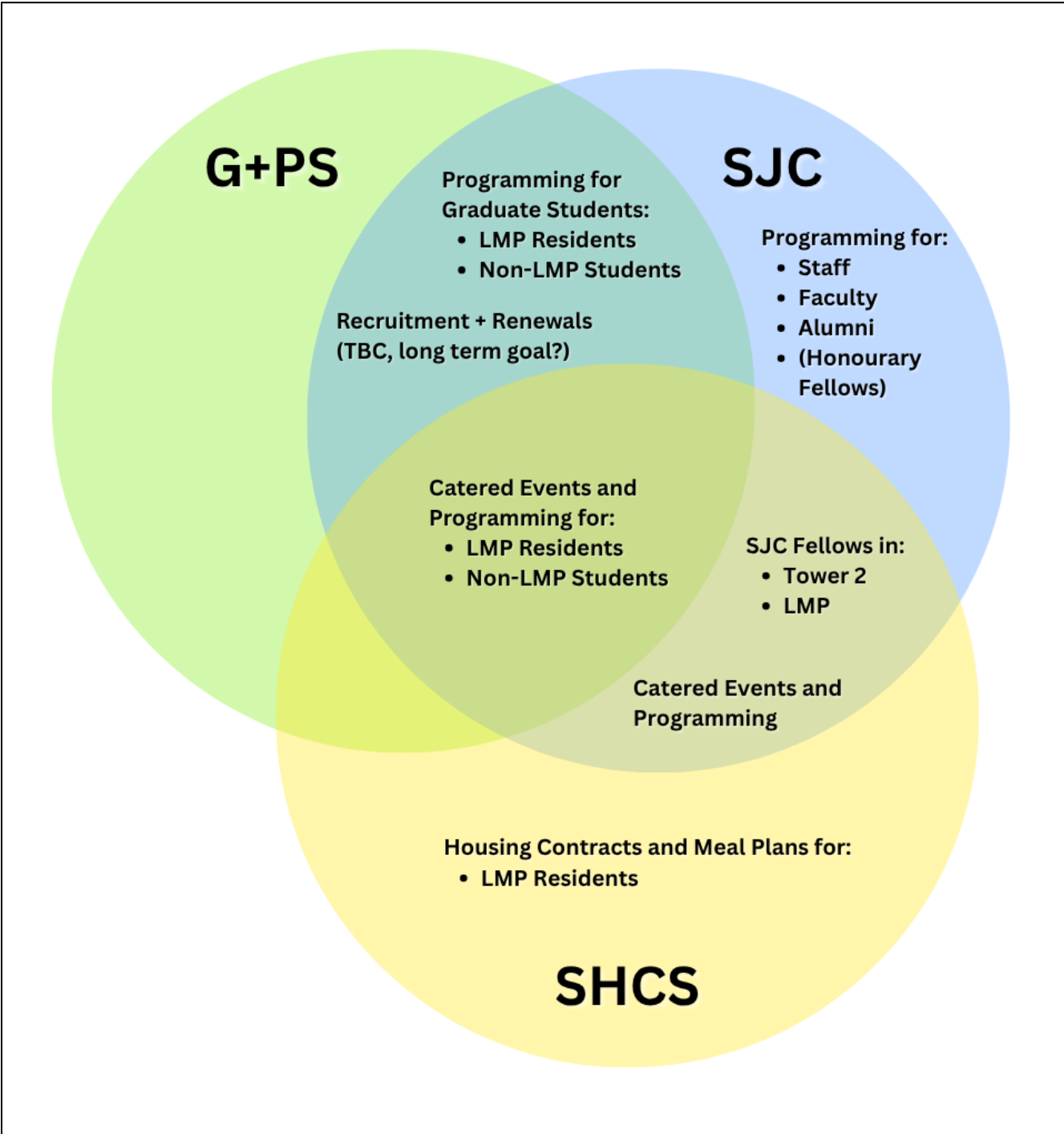
Who does SJC Serve?

St. John's College's (SJC) mission is to create a strong international academic community at UBC through programs that serve graduate students, staff, faculty, and alumni. Through offering welcoming and inclusive intellectual and cultural exchange over shared meals, our programming builds relationships of trust that are mutually supportive and a foundation for a strong sense of belonging—a core element for maintaining well-being and productivity within the highly stressful lives of the graduate students upon whom UBC's research and teaching mission rely.

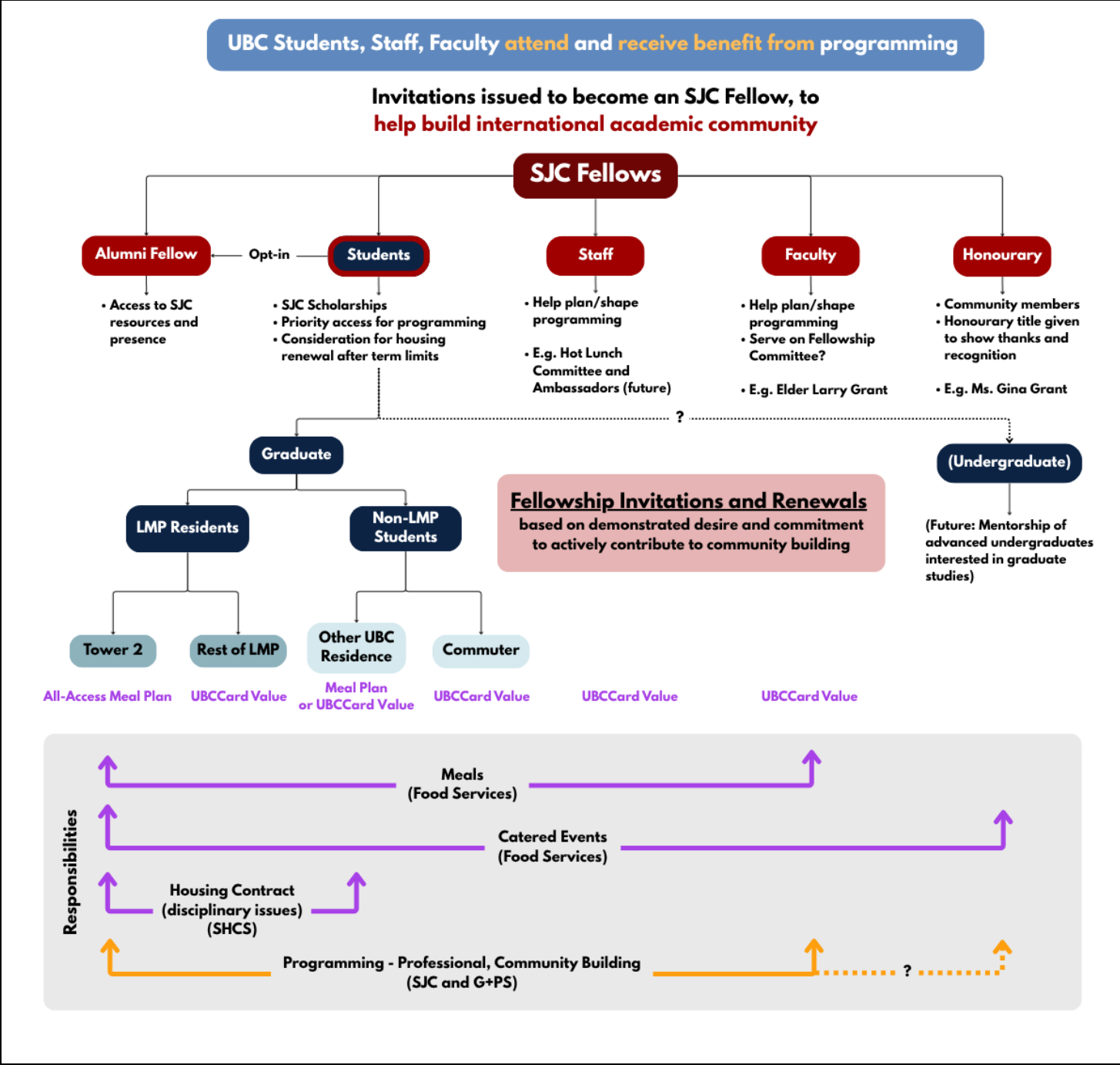
Whether through community-building programs such as “Hot Lunch” for UBC Staff--repeatedly cited since its creation in 2014 as one of the reasons that UBC is considered one of British Columbia's top places to work--or through the stimulating conversations over a meal that take place during our dinner series that have been named in honour of SJC's founding Principal Dr. Grant Ingram, our long-time Faculty Fellow Elder Larry Grant, or our Johannean Founder Dr. George Shen, our goal is to support mutual learning through dialogues about challenging--and sometimes difficult--topics.

Hard yet necessary conversations about difficult problems and divisive issues are moderated by mutual respect and relationships of reciprocity--a shared trust developed through metaphorically 'breaking bread together'--something which in our international academic community over the last 28 years has often meant in practice sharing meals over rice rather than bread. SJC has embodied a sociality where sharing food together at the same table creates an ethic of respecting each other's cuisines and cultures, bringing people together to experience our differences in culinary tastes even as we agree to disagree over our intellectual divergence.

Stakeholder Map



SJC Fellowship Model



SJC Community Charter

St. John's College UBC
聖約翰學院

Welcome to The World Around Our Table

YOU have a place here. WE are committed to:

**Diversity, Inclusion
and Cultural Exchange**

Our goal is:

Bringing People Together to Make the World Better

In this place, we acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the hə́nqəmíṇəm-speaking xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people.

We respect, appreciate and embrace diversity in all forms, including: age, race, ethnicity, place of origin, language, nationality, faith and religious beliefs, socioeconomic class, social status, level of education, abilities, body types, gender identities and expression, sex and sexual orientation, lived experiences,

and everything else that makes you,

you!

We are glad you are **choosing** to be part of the SJC community. You have decided to become part of a community that is open and respectful to new people and new perspectives.

In this community, we support respectfully expressed ideas; however, we do not permit expressions of hate, harassment, intolerance, disrespect, or unwanted and unwelcome advances of any kind. Such behaviour may lead to sanctions and/or the loss of your privilege to be a part of this community.

If you witness, are aware of, or experience something that does not support these values, please reach out:



linktr.ee/ubcsjc

Strategic Plan Priorities

1.) UBC's International Academic Community

- a. Enriching the student experience with the vibrancy of community life; recognizing this is an important part of the equation in the student experience.
 - i. Collaborating with Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies professional programming and UBC Health & Wellbeing programming, together with SJC community building programming to provide a holistic student experience.
- b. Enriching the staff and faculty experience with the vibrancy of community life; recognizing this is an important part of the equation in the UBC experience.

2.) **The World Around Our Table** – The Johannan spirit of learning and integrity have been kept alive at SJC UBC in its commitment to Fellowship and community service through bringing people together over a shared meal – “The World Around Our Table.”

3.) **Bringing people together to make the world better.**

Strategies

UBC's International Academic Community

- Recognize the unique needs of undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and faculty, while still building community and connections.
- Ensure a vibrant community with programming initiatives like but not limited to:
 - **Finishing Fellowship Lunches** – bi-monthly networking lunch for PhD students completing their dissertations, to meet peers and to hold one another accountable to writing goals
 - **Language Tables** – regular language exchange/learning for students
 - **The World Around Our Table Gatherings** – bi-monthly gatherings over food for alumni, students, and Johannan Founders to stay connected
 - **Family Events:** movie nights – social connection events for parents with provided childcare

Enriching the student experience with the vibrancy of community life

Giving Fellows (students, staff, and faculty) of St. John’s College the opportunity to experience and be a part of a unique community life that comes with living within an international community and/or participating in our programming. We believe that apart from being an expert in your research area, it is also crucial to develop in other areas to become a well-rounded, global citizen. Learning about cultures, traditions, worldviews, cuisines and languages help develop a new perspective towards the world around us.

[UBC Student Strategic Plan](#)

“Living and learning for a better world”.

Enriching the staff and faculty experience with the vibrancy of community life

- Continue to review the objectives of the highly successful initiative UBC Hot Lunch for staff.
- Develop initiatives similar to UBC Hot Lunch to promote faculty connections and wellbeing.

[St. John’s College’s Hot Lunch is included in one of the top 3 reasons UBC is one of BC’s Top Employers](#)

- UBC helps employees foster connections across our two campuses through the longstanding [Hot Lunch](#) networking initiative (monthly events with senior leaders sharing their personal and professional journey while attendees connect over lunch)— additionally, the university organizes [Faculty and Staff Sports Day](#) in May at both Vancouver and Okanagan campuses, with teams competing in a number of games and activities.
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[Focus on People Framework](#)

“Ensure that UBC is an employer of choice in the community, that people feel there is an opportunity to be part of something great by working here.”

The World Around Our Table

- To inspire and foster a spirit of community through cultural and culinary exchange amongst our Fellows, and to cultivate lasting friendships across diverse backgrounds by dining and breaking bread together.
- Bringing people together over food and providing the table or forum is a low barrier way to promote connection, learning and exchange.

Bringing People Together to Make the World Better

Fostering Fellowship in academic and social settings that encourages discussion, respectful debate and cultural and culinary exchange.

- Uniting diverse groups of people through community and collaboration
- Promoting the values of the [SJC Community Charter](#)
- Recognizing that community values and experiences can have a ripple effect in the world through individual action
- Honouring our roots lights our path to the future – [SJC Lotus Framework](#), [SJC History](#)

[UBC Student Strategic Plan](#)

CONNECTIONS WITHIN AND ACROSS CAMPUSES AND COMMUNITIES UBC is home to a diverse set of inclusive and inter-connected communities and activities. From orientation to graduation and beyond, students are part of many academic and social cohorts through which they develop perspective, competences, and a sense of belonging. They have the capacity to build significant relationships and to celebrate and learn from the differences that enrich our world.

[UBC Focus on People Framework](#)

“Having a workplace that reflects the nature of the world we inhabit.”

5-year Strategic Plan Implementation Timeline

