



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

FACULTY OF
SOCIAL WORK

2020-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

Making a world of difference.



As one of the founding schools of the University of Calgary, the Faculty of Social Work was proud to join the university's 50th anniversary celebration in 2016. We have established ourselves as one of Canada's largest and most successful social work schools. Our graduates leave ready to create social justice and wellbeing for families and communities around the world. Our exceptional faculty members are recognized internationally for developing and applying new knowledge to address complex social problems.

We are not complacent about our success. To that end, we are delighted to share our 2020 - 2022 strategic plan. This plan maps the foundation for our future and defines collective directions in education, research, and community engagement.

Our strategic plan aligns closely with the University of Calgary's own *Energized Eyes High* strategic plan. That institutional plan articulates both a focus and core goals that all academic units support:

The University of Calgary is a global intellectual hub located in Canada's most enterprising city. In this spirited, high-quality learning environment, students will thrive in programs made rich by research, hands-on experiences and entrepreneurial thinking. By 2022, we will be recognized as one of Canada's top five research universities, fully engaging the communities we both serve and lead.

Based upon this foundation, our own strategic plan declares three bold goals related to our work with students, research, and our community partners. It describes specific priorities and actions that accompany each goal. Finally, it also articulates the values and culture we strive to create and uphold within the Faculty of Social Work.

We are excited and confident about our direction as a faculty. In many ways, we reflect the core values of the citizens who make Alberta their home: we are proud of our traditions, committed to our communities, and care strongly about one another. Yet, at the same time, we are innovative, ambitious, and visionary. We invite you to be part of this future as we work towards making "a world of difference" in communities locally, nationally, and internationally. Let us, together, display the courage to imagine and create social justice and healthy communities.



Jackie Sieppert, PhD, RSW
Former Dean, Social Work
(2010-2020) University of Calgary



Ellen Perrault, PhD, RSW
Dean, Faculty of Social Work
University of Calgary

September 21, 2020



International Definition of Social Work

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and Indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.”

International Federation of Social Work

Faculty of Social Work Vision

Creating social wellbeing and just societies.

Faculty of Social Work Mission

We are:

- Dedicated to promoting societies that respect human dignity and worth, meet basic human needs, are anti-oppressive, inclusive, and based on principles of social justice.
- Committed to learners by providing and building a knowledge base and set of skills in environments designed to stimulate and support a spirit of critical inquiry.
- Focused on serving as a catalyst for positive community impact through the creation and dissemination of knowledge and innovation.

Values

We are social workers. This fact establishes a foundational commitment for all who are engaged in the Faculty of Social Work. We strive to create social justice, practice with integrity, be diverse, and demonstrate the power of positive, reciprocal relationships.

Several core values define our identity and the interactions we have with one another and our external communities:

Integrity

We honour the ethical and moral standards established for social work practice and commit to action that creates social justice locally, nationally, and internationally.

Inclusion & Diversity

We celebrate the strength that comes with diversity, embrace our differences, and value all that engage with us. Our dialogue and actions will create equity in our work and in all of these essential relationships.

Relational Accountability

We accomplish mutual goals through the power of positive, reciprocal relationships, and hold one another accountable for creating a supportive, collegial, equitable, and engaging environment.

Respect

We uphold the personal dignity and capacity of every individual, striving every day to demonstrate courtesy and professionalism.

Compassion

We are called to individually and collectively care for one another, with compassion and kindness.



Enriching Learning Experiences

Our Goal

We will graduate highly knowledgeable, insightful, compassionate, and skilled social workers.

One of our most important commitments is to the students who will earn a social work degree from the University of Calgary. These individuals come to the Faculty of Social Work with high expectations regarding the knowledge and skills they develop here. It is our obligation to create a rich, respectful, and diverse learning environment that challenges these students to become global-minded citizens, critical thinkers, and innovative, ecologically-minded, and skilled professionals.

Key Actions

Enhance Student Experience

- Deliver curricula with innovative and unique content and delivery models.
- Invest in the creation of innovative and sustainable practicum opportunities.
- Invest in innovative teaching initiatives that offer students unique learning experiences locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Increase experiential learning opportunities and innovative strategies for community-based learning activities.
- Streamline our curriculum to ensure critical and transformative educational experiences.
- Contribute to a culture of wellbeing and respect in learning environments.
- Be informed by and integrate diversity across learning experiences.
- Integrate anticolonial and Indigenous ways of knowing across our curricula.
- Coordinate curricula and delivery structures across the faculty's regions to provide effective and cohesive programs.

Preparing Professionals for a Changing World

- Work with key social work employers to enhance graduates' skills and knowledge in order to better prepare them for the workplace.
- Deliver outstanding professional development opportunities to support social workers and alum career paths.
- Engage community professionals in our classrooms, and in turn, take our classroom experiences into the community.
- Engage in ongoing teaching development in order to ensure our students receive the best possible instruction.
- Hire gifted and dedicated social work academics who engage with the community, conduct innovative research nationally and internationally, support student engagement with research, and advance teaching and learning through a commitment to research innovation.



Driving Research and Innovation

Our Goal

We will be a leader in developing and actively using knowledge that impacts society's most pressing social issues.

We will be a leader in transformative research that impacts society's most pressing social issues.

Our research aims to advance understanding of complex social issues in order to develop relevant, applicable, and just solutions. In the pursuit of social justice, we actively engage with academics, professionals, policy-makers, community-based collaborators, and students to build strategies for social innovation and community impact.

Key Actions

Supporting Our Researchers

- Develop mechanisms and strategies to increase our success in peer reviewed grant applications and scholarly publications.
- Continue to develop as researchers through ongoing education and mentoring.
- Equip our researchers to engage in our community, e.g. by facilitating interdisciplinary work, provision of seed project funding, providing media training, supporting community engaged knowledge hubs, etc.
- Recognize our range of research by formally valuing community engaged scholarship, and newer forms of knowledge mobilization that yield positive impact.
- Develop and implement a research-informed infrastructure with resources from project development to knowledge translation inclusive of proposal reviews, budget details, research ethics board proposals, and knowledge translation.
- Enhance research support for pre-and post-award processes.
- Increase our number of applications and success rate for competitive research grants.
- Increase our success in high impact scholarly outputs, including peer-reviewed publications and leading conference presentations.
- Continue to offer teaching releases so that researchers are competitive for Tri-Council grants.

Research Beyond Borders

- Build and support new models for community engaged scholarship locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Develop collaborative models for community engaged scholarship in the pursuit of social justice.
- Conduct high quality community-engaged research that prioritizes the needs of marginalized communities and disadvantaged populations.

Transforming Practice

- Prepare quarterly 'faculty research innovation' highlights to promote the integration of current findings into our curriculum.
- Support conference development across the province, bringing practitioners, researchers, policy-makers, and service users together for a dialogue.
- Establish a systematic mechanism to connect community partners, students, and faculty researchers.
- In collaboration with the practice community, be a leader in research that builds models of innovative and cutting-edge social work practice in response to emerging community needs.
- Integrate findings of our cutting-edge research across social work training, teaching, and learning.
- Increase the impact of our research scholarship across academic and policy domains.



Integrating with Community

We will actively engage with our communities to enhance social wellbeing and create positive social impacts.

The nature of our faculty requires that we deliver our innovative programs and engage our communities across the entire province. Our 'communities' span a wide geographic area and include communities defined by cultural, professional, intellectual, and educational criteria. Our relationships are marked by reciprocal and mutually beneficial exchanges between partners for the common good. They are based on a belief that diversity and differences are enriching and valuable.



Key Actions

Community Engagement

- Partner with agencies and research chairs.
- Integrate new opportunities for student engagement with social work professionals in their community settings.
- Create a Social Work Clinic or Practice Hub and building a Social Work Clinic with additional philanthropic funding *(Im)Possible Cases Clinic* to be embedded within the FSW Clinical Simulation Lab.
- Engage internal and external community through collaborative initiatives or events (i.e. Indigenous Scholars Academy).

Contributing to Positive Change

- Create a community integration and engagement strategy within the faculty.
- Develop innovative strategies to support meaningful knowledge exchange, and to broaden the breadth and depth of our community involvement and impacts.
- Actively create initiatives to support university – community research, learning, and social action alliances that engage and honor people’s stories, social locations, and identities.



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

With approximately 50 dedicated faculty members, educating 1000 students across Alberta and online across Canada, the Faculty of Social Work is preparing the leaders of tomorrow by working in our communities today.

Contact us:

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One Faculty of Social Work, three innovative campuses, a world of difference.

Calgary - Calgary, University of Calgary

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Incoming Dean
Ellen Perrault

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