



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Faculty of Social Work Strategic Plan 2013 - 2018



Making a world of difference.



As one of the founding schools of the University of Calgary, the Faculty of Social Work is proud to join the university's 50th anniversary celebration in 2016. Over the years, 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 well-being for families and communities around the world. Our exceptional faculty members are recognized internationally for developing and applying new knowledge that addresses complex social problems.

As we reach this historic milestone, however, we are not complacent about our success. To that end, I am delighted to present our 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, which maps the foundation for our future. This Strategic Plan aligns closely with the University of Calgary's own *Eyes High*[™] strategic direction (read more at ucalgary.ca/eyeshigh). In it, we declare three bold goals related to our work with students, research and our community partners. I encourage you to learn more about each of these goals by reviewing the priorities and actions contained in this document.

I am excited and confident about where we are headed 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 entrepreneurial, 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

Dean

Faculty of Social Work

The University of Calgary has established a bold and ambitious vision to become one of Canada's top five research universities, grounded in innovative learning and teaching and fully integrated with the community of Calgary by the university's 50th anniversary in 2016. *Eyes High* was developed through Project Next, a month-long campus-wide strategy planning process that reached out to the entire university community. While this process was concluding, the Faculty of Social Work embarked on its own parallel planning process.

Modeled after Project Next, our planning process included wide-ranging consultation with students, faculty and staff in face-to-face sessions. In addition, faculty leadership conducted numerous meetings with key stakeholders across the province and distributed an online survey. We were extremely pleased to receive extensive feedback from the many communities we serve. The data collected has served as the framework upon which we have built our plan.



The University of Calgary is a leading Canadian university located in the nation's most enterprising city. The university has a clear strategic direction to become one of Canada's top five research universities by 2016, where innovative teaching and groundbreaking research go hand in hand, and where we fully engage the communities we both serve and lead. The strategy is called Eyes High™, inspired by the university's Gaelic motto, which translates as 'I will lift up my eyes.'



students

We will be the school of choice for those who want to become Canada's most insightful and skilled social workers.

“Change is the end result
of all true meaning.”

Leo Buscaglia
(famous special needs teacher)

our goal

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 and diverse learning environment that challenges these students to become critical thinkers and skilled professionals.

We will graduate Canada's most prepared, insightful and skilled social workers.



Joanne is a second-year MSW student with a focus on international development and an emphasis on immigrants and refugees.

key actions

- Streamline our curricula to ensure students experience focused and effective educational experiences.
- Coordinate planning of curricula and delivery structures across the faculty's regions to provide effective and cohesive programs.
- Work with key social work employers to enhance graduates' skills and knowledge in order to better prepare them for the workplace.
- Make student engagement a priority, both within the faculty and in our community.
- Invest in strategic post-degree programs that support graduates' transitions into the workplace.
- Engage in ongoing teaching development in order to ensure our students receive the best possible instruction.
- Invest in innovative teaching initiatives that offer students unique learning experiences locally, nationally and internationally.
- Engage community professionals in our classrooms, and in turn take our classroom experiences into the community.



“ All of our programs are designed to attract excellent students who are committed to the principles associated with social justice. Through their work with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations, our graduates contribute to the health and well-being of our society.”

Dave Este
Professor and Associate Dean (Research and Partnerships) and former Associate Dean (Academic)
Calgary

“ The University of Calgary’s social work program created a place to share my professional questions, knowledge and passions. The faculty supported and challenged me. The diverse opportunities they provided me with – attending conferences, doing research, attending lectures and completing an international placement – helped me explore my ideas even further.”

Karen Paul
MSW graduate
Calgary



our reach: local and global

“Not all those who
wander are lost.”

J.R.R. Tolkien

The International and Community Development (ICD) MSW is unique to the University of Calgary; there is nothing quite like it anywhere. In recent years, ICD students have travelled to more than 40 countries for their advanced practicums. Our students have worked with the United Nations in New York, the World Health Organization in Geneva, as well as with NGOs, big and small, in remote locations scattered across the world. In Alberta-based practicums, ICD students learn from organizations and government partners that are addressing fundamental social justice issues.

While adding to their learning in the field, and whether it is in a small African village or an inner city in North America, our students take part in research, advocacy, community education, curriculum development and teaching. As well, they participate in frontline work with refugees, immigrants, women, children and families. They help create policy, evaluate programs and engage the public in social justice. They help build communities.

ICD-MSW students at the University of Calgary develop the necessary skills to work with and for people wherever they happen to be in the world.

“In 2011, for four months, I was privileged to collaborate with eight local leaders/elders, living in underserved communities in Quezon City, Philippines. The eight elders became my co-researchers to explore how community organizing is an effective strategy to address issues/challenges in the development context.”

Crystal Kwan
PhD student
Calgary



Bangladesh
Belgium
Cambodia
Switzerland
Ghana
India
Japan
Middle East
U.S.A.
Philippines
Rwanda
South Africa
St. Lucia
Tanzania
Zanzibar





research

We will be the leader in social work research in Canada.

"An investment in knowledge
pays the best interest."

Benjamin Franklin

our goal

Our research helps to shape understanding of complex social issues and points to relevant and effective solutions to these challenges. The solutions we seek demand focused effort on our part and the adoption of new approaches to the research process. They require interdisciplinary partnerships and active engagement, integration of research into our curricula, and new strategies to translate research findings into creative models and strategies for practice.

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



Liza Lorenzetti is a PhD candidate and the recipient of the prestigious SSHRC and Killam Doctoral Awards.

key actions

- We will develop mechanisms and strategies to increase our success in peer reviewed grant applications and scholarly publications.
- Research content will be enhanced and fully integrated across our curricula.
- We will benchmark our progress against other leading schools of social work nationally and internationally.
- The Centre for Social Work Research and Professional Development will foster research excellence and productivity within the faculty.
- We will build and support new models for community engaged scholarship.
- The Faculty of Social Work will invest in and build new models of knowledge mobilization to ensure our research has meaningful impact in our community.



“ Social work research is the backbone for the development and enhancement of evidence-based knowledge for practice and policy decisions.”

Daniel W.L. Lai
Professor and former Associate Dean
(Research and Partnerships)
Calgary

“ We are committed to ensuring that students enrolled in our programs become aware of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), child welfare, disabilities, homelessness, mental health and addictions. We work closely and maintain a national research agenda on FASD and child welfare with other universities and organizations engaged in child welfare related work.”

Dorothy Badry
Assistant Professor
FASD Specialist
Calgary



Our Research: Transforming Knowledge into Action

Social work is about creating changes for a better society for everyone. Social work research plays an important role in most of these change efforts. Evidence-based practice represents and requires strong integration of research and practice knowledge, expertise and skills.

"Knowledge is a treasure,
but practice is the key to it."

Lao Tzu



Leading

International
Social Development

Understanding

Cross-Cultural Diversity
and Discrimination



Promoting

Social Health
and Well-Being

Eliminating

Family Violence, Abuse,
Poverty and Homelessness





community

We will ensure that our community is part of us and we are part of our community.

Jasmine Yip moved from Vancouver to Calgary in late 2011 to complete her master's in social work, conducting research into how immigrant Chinese seniors get around the city.

our goal



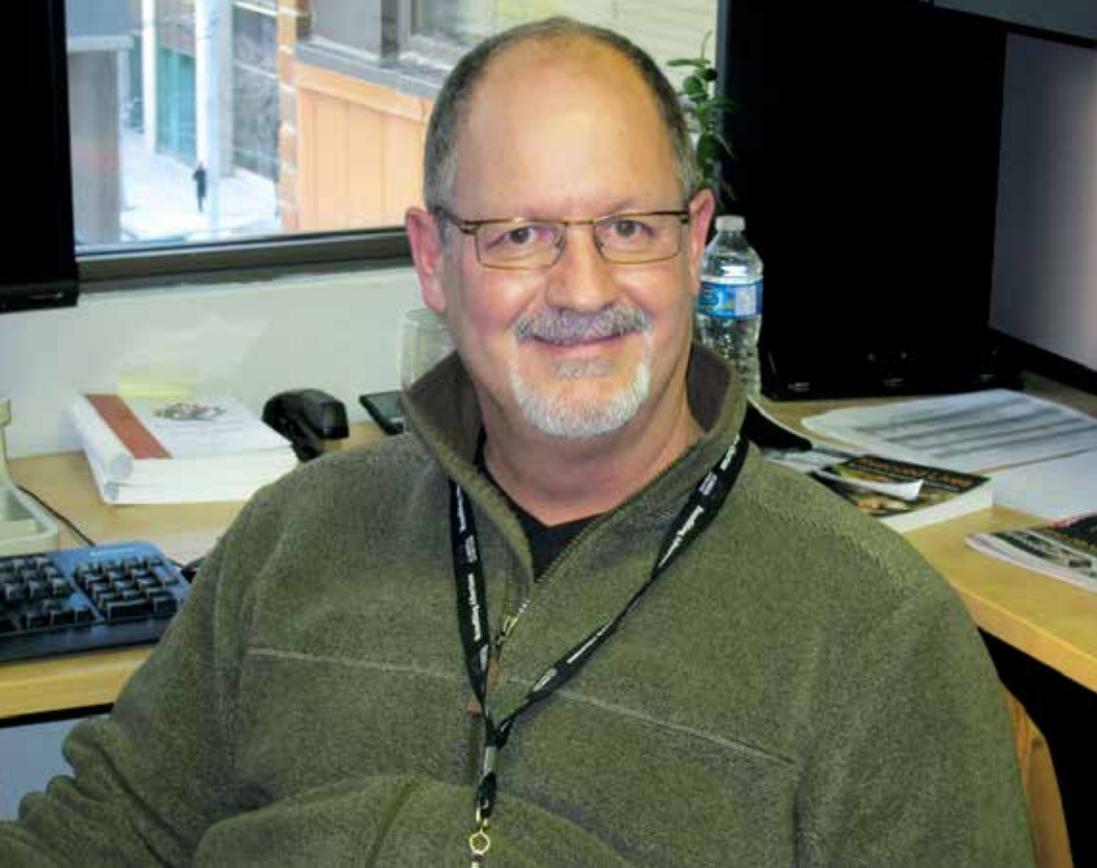
The Faculty of Social is proud of its involvement with community groups across Alberta including many First Nations communities.

The Faculty of Social Work is unique within the University of Calgary and the Province of Alberta. We deliver our programs and engage our communities across the entire province. They are based on 'communities' that span a wide geographical area, but also include communities defined by cultural, professional, intellectual and educational criteria. Our relationships with communities are complex, marked by reciprocal and mutually beneficial exchanges between partners. They are based on a belief that diversity and differences are enriching and valuable. As a professional school, the Faculty of Social Work benefits from the active engagement of our communities.

We will actively engage our community throughout our educational and research programs.

key actions

- Develop innovative strategies to support meaningful knowledge exchange, and to broaden the breadth and depth of our community involvement and impacts.
- Integrate new opportunities for student engagement with social work professionals in their community settings.
- Create a community integration and engagement strategy within the faculty.
- Renew our criteria and procedures for merit, tenure and promotion to give recognition to community-based research and community involvement.
- Actively create initiatives to support university-community research, learning and social action alliances.



“ The 'Working with Homeless Populations: Practice Fundamentals Certificate' increases the homeless-serving sectors' ability to end homelessness in Calgary. The Calgary Homeless Foundation values its partnership with the Faculty of Social Work as it provides academic support and adult learning expertise for those working with people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.”

Tim Veitch
Quality Assurance Specialist
Calgary Homeless Foundation

“ This is the goal that defines us as “social workers” – that we have a fundamental commitment to being of use to the various communities who experience the impact of social injustices. I am inspired by faculty members and students' passions for locating our teaching and research directly within community contexts and serving geographic communities and marginalized groups across Alberta and internationally.”

Rick Enns
Associate Dean
Central and Northern Alberta





“In partnership with several key organizations in the Lethbridge area, the Southern Alberta Region takes a leading role in organizing a Professional Development Forum. Now in its 13th year, the Forum has addressed timely topics relevant to social work practice. Each year, more than 100 social workers attend this event, which is the highlight of the professional development calendar for the year.”

Peter Gabor
Associate Dean
Southern Alberta Region

“Domestic violence is pervasive, costly and preventable. We are working closely with the Government of Alberta and the community to build primary prevention into government policy and community-based initiatives across Alberta.”

Lana Wells
The Brenda Strafford Chair in the Prevention of Domestic Violence is leading “Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence”, which is aimed at creating transformational change using a primary prevention approach to stop first-time victimization and perpetration of domestic violence.



One faculty, three innovative campuses, a world of difference.

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