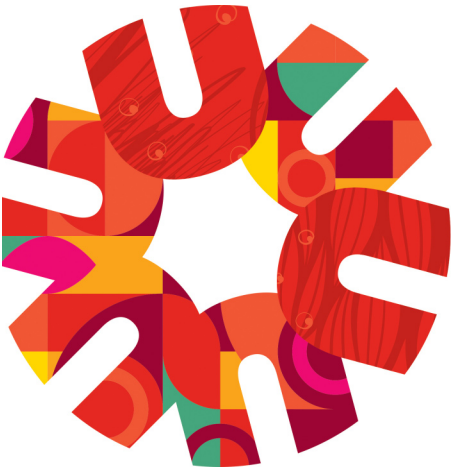UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS

Strategic Plan
2024 - 29
Collaborate, Innovate, Inspire

As we reflect on the challenges we have overcome and the resilience we have shown in the face of global turmoil, it is evident that our strength lies in our shared sense of purpose and community. This is an opportunity for renewal and reaffirmation of our dedication to academic excellence, mutual support, and the pursuit of knowledge.

Aoife Mac Namara
Dean, Faculty of Arts

OUR GUIDING VALUES/PRINCIPLES

The Faculty of Arts upholds the following six values and guiding principles:

1 **EQUITY/DIVERSITY/BELONGING**
We commit to being open, fair, impartial and non-discriminatory
in our actions and processes.

2 **CURIOSITY/CREATIVITY/ORIGINALITY**
We explore our world with curiosity and appreciation for its complexity.

3 **RESPECT/OPEN-MINDEDNESS**
We strive to be respectful of the views of others and to
understand others' perspectives.

4 **INTEGRITY/TRANSPARENCY**
We strive to be consistent and fair in our processes and actions.

5 **ACCOUNTABILITY/RESPONSIBILITY**
We commit to taking responsibility for our actions and their impacts.

6 **TRANSFORMATION/RENEWAL**
We strive to commit to the principles of ii' taa'poh'to'p.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Five strategic priorities will serve as lenses through which we conduct our work over the next five years. These include: **Justice, Equity and Transformation**; **Connection, Community and Culture**; **Digital Futures**; **Health and Wellness**; and **Climate, Energy and Sustainability**. These five areas reflect current strengths within Arts and identify areas we aspire to develop and support during the next five years. These strategic priorities emerged from consultations conducted with faculty, students and staff over the past year.

1
JUSTICE, EQUITY AND TRANSFORMATION

The realm of *justice, equity and transformation* underscores creating, maintaining, and sustaining a more just and harmonious world. By addressing historical and systemic inequities experienced by marginalized groups, this priority focuses on the promotion of social cohesion, integrity, appreciation of and support for diversity, and social justice. *Justice, equity and transformation* contribute to positive social impact, innovations, and the overall welfare and dignity of individuals and communities. This theme includes critical scholarship that shines a light on persistent bias, discrimination and marginalization.

Substantive research areas may include, for example:

Activism and performance
Feminist, de-colonial, gender diverse, anti-racist approaches
Pluralism
Public policy
Creative and cultural practice
Canadian democracy
Gender and politics
Global literatures
Urban studies
Food and water security
Gender and sexuality studies
Disability studies
Social innovation and entrepreneurship
Cultural literacies
Race, migration and well-being

2

CONNECTION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

The relationships and bonds that individuals, communities and societies form provide a sense of belonging and a platform for collaboration, shared experiences and support. Culture encompasses shared beliefs, traditions, creative expression, customs and values shaping ways of life, influencing behaviours and providing a sense of identity. Cultural diversity enriches societies by offering different perspectives, promoting tolerance and fostering cross-cultural understanding. Embracing and nurturing these aspects can lead to stronger relationships, vibrant communities, and a more enriched and diverse world.

Substantive research areas may include, for example:

Social-impact research
Creative and cultural practice
Land-based research
Community-engaged/
community-based research
Urban security
Indigenous research,
Indigenous ways of
knowing and being
Global South
Cultural literacies
Race, migration and well-being
Historical literatures,
cultures and practices
Urban studies
Cultural policy
Decolonization
Global literatures
Languages and linguistics
Trauma-informed practice
Disability studies

3

DIGITAL FUTURES

Significant quantities of information are available to individuals and groups through the widespread use of digital technologies, online platforms and social media. These digital media increasingly shape and transform everyday life, including our social interactions, the way we conduct the daily business of our lives, and how we are educated and entertained. Technological change fosters global connections, widespread and increasing access to information, new forms of creative expression, and how we engage as citizens and community members. At the same time, challenges such as privacy invasion, algorithmic bias, and the spread of misinformation and hate speech proliferate in the digital landscape. Scholarship and creative activity in the theme of digital societies seeks to understand or advance innovations in this realm, while probing the significant and pervasive problems in the increasingly online human existence.

Substantive research areas may include, for example:

Smart cities
Creative and cultural practice
Digital activism
Data justice
Surveillance
Social media
Digital literacy
Digital arts
Digital humanities
Digital cultures
Human-machine interactions
Artificial intelligence
Quantum computing
Security and defence

4 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Understanding the complex interplay of physical, mental, and emotional health of individuals and communities requires a holistic approach. Prioritizing health and wellness is not only beneficial for individuals, but also for society as a whole, as it contributes to a more vibrant population through enhanced social relationships, better quality of life, improved productivity and performance, longevity, and illness-prevention. Scholarly research in health and wellness addresses the myriad factors that influence health outcomes, including the social determinants of disease and well-being. It also critically examines the barriers experienced by persons with disabilities and other health challenges with the aim of more inclusive and just health-care systems and other societal supports.

Substantive research areas may include, for example:

Mental health
Disability studies
Child health and well-being
Public health policy and communication
Health economics
Social and cultural dimensions of health
Cognitive science
Aging
Health and care over the life history
Brain health
Indigenous health and wellness
Creative and cultural practice
Social innovation and entrepreneurship
Neurodiversity
Addictions

5 CLIMATE, ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Substantive research areas may include, for example:

Security politics
Arctic security
Energy transformations
Energy in society
Water research
Environmental economics
Indigenous research,
Indigenous ways of knowing and being
Food sustainability and security
Creative and cultural practice
Literatures
Extractivism and colonialism
Environmental ethics
Science communication
The United Nation's
Sustainable Development Goals
Social innovation and entrepreneurship

Climate, energy and sustainability play a crucial role in addressing existential threats to the environment and ensuring the well-being of our planet and all its inhabitants. This priority follows the wide-ranging themes embedded in the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals. These themes intersect with our work inside and outside of the university, including teaching and learning, research, community engagement, and operations; for example, quality education, industry innovation and infrastructure, and reduced inequalities. Areas of scholarly emphasis include: climate-change mitigation and adaptation; the biodiversity crisis; technological, political, economic and social aspects of energy evolution; sustainable food and water; the changing Arctic; environmental ethics and justice; traditional ecological knowledge; global health and the environment; sustainable cities; human-wildlife interactions; and international co-operation.

1 TEACHING AND LEARNING

Learning and teaching within a post-secondary environment is a dynamic relationship among and between students and instructors. Students develop knowledge and insights through a variety of activities, methods and formats, while instructors design the curricula, learning activities and assessments to develop knowledge and skills. We also recognize that excellent university teaching has a strong relation to research cultures and the two are integrally tied. As central to the mission of UCalgary and the Faculty of Arts, teaching and learning priorities include:

Critical and creative thinking — the ability to evaluate, analyze and assess information, and using original, innovative and flexible means to craft and execute.

In-field competency — ensuring a level of mastery and understanding within specific fields of study.

Foundational skills — are the building blocks including literacy, numeracy and essential cognitive abilities.

Transformative learning — enables students to think "outside the box" of their disciplinary training and exposes them to perspectives and collaboration opportunities beyond traditional avenues to evolve and adapt (transdisciplinarity).

To build and enrich the graduate and undergraduate student experience, we will focus on collaborative programming, teaching methodologies, teaching innovations, graduate teacher training, skills and diversity, and flexible learning and student engagement.

Photos: TIM NGUYEN

2 RESEARCH AND CREATIVITY

The Faculty of Arts is comprised of an extensive variety of research and creative areas and practices; this range is not only a hallmark of the Faculty of Arts but illuminates disciplinary diversity and facilitates research excellence.

To support our scholarly ecosystem, we will establish the Faculty of Arts as a hub for transformational research; support initiatives to enhance equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) in research and creative activities and assessment, as well as implement DORA (Declaration on Research Assessment) principles; build and support research connections with other scholars, students and community partners; provide mentorship in project management; and increase the profile of Arts contributions.

Photos: TIM NGUYEN

3 COMMUNITIES

Communities are central to all that we do. Our overarching goal is to create mutually beneficial relationships with our internal and external communities. Our ability to offer excellent academic and research programs depends on our relationships with our internal communities. As part of larger local and global communities, our success depends on the relationships that we can maintain and create with external communities, and it depends on the benefits that we can bring our community partners.

We will focus on community-centric projects; enduring community partnerships, including establishing an Arts Community Advisory Board; empowering students to work with communities; establishing effective community-engagement opportunities; and engaging with our alumni.

4 ENVIRONMENTS: PEOPLE, SPACES AND SYSTEMS [OPERATIONS]

PEOPLE: The internal ecosystem in which we work is critical to our central missions of learning, teaching and research. Faculty, staff and students are at the heart of our working environment, and the relationships we have with each other and with the communities (internal and external) that we interact with enable us to succeed through collaboration and recognition of our diverse and valued contributions.

We will focus on wellness (including workload) and collegiality; collegial governance and efficiencies; and intercultural and EDIA training.

SPACES: We navigate our relationships not only through the social and practical aspects of our roles, but also through the physical spaces where we work, teach, study and learn. We require facilities and space conducive to the work we do, the research we conduct and the programs we offer. A focus on space will facilitate dynamic working and teaching methods fostering creativity among staff, students and faculty; serve as a model for environmental responsibility; and explore partnerships with our respective communities to ensure that we make the best use of space within our shared ecosystems.

We will develop a comprehensive plan of Arts' physical spaces with a focus on upkeeping and maintaining spaces, eco-friendliness, efficient space usage, and maximum use of available resources; reimagining our work, research and teaching space to adapt to current needs; and create and implement a comprehensive accessibility (and ergonomics) plan to ensure that the physical environment is inclusive and accommodating for all individuals.

SYSTEMS: Our work encompasses interconnected processes, from human resources, to communications, to departmental and unit-level governance structures. How and what we do necessarily involves effective dissemination of information to students, staff and stakeholders, and coherent and transparent processes through which answers are sought and provided.

We will establish effective communication channels among and between communities and units; streamline our processes; establish collaborative partnerships with internal and external units; and offer opportunities for continuous improvement — training, data collection and data-informed decision-making.