



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Start something.

DRAFT

2023-2030

UCalgary Draft Strategic Plan

FOR COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

OUR GOAL

We will be a place where students, faculty and staff take action to improve the world around us.

Through excellence in teaching, research, and community partnership, we will create a world that is healthier, fairer, safer, more prosperous, more sustainable, and more just. The University of Calgary will be a nimble and action-oriented university, ready to shape and respond to a changing world.

OUR MISSION

The University of Calgary is committed to igniting global change that involves everyone, lifts everyone, and inspires unwavering commitments to reconciliation and walking a better path with Indigenous communities. We strive for excellence and accessibility, with a community focus.

As a research university, we believe it is our duty to support new knowledge creation and knowledge mobilization. As an entrepreneurial university, we value action, and we believe it is through our commitment to action we are most able to realize our goals.

OUR VALUES

We value excellence, authenticity, critical thinking, diversity, inclusivity, collaboration and action. As independent thinkers, we celebrate curiosity and investigation, all with the goal of solving what is thought of as unsolvable. In all things we do, we are future focused.

OUR STRATEGIES

We will reach our goals and realize our values through a focus on five core strategies:

- 1. Establish a shared core of research, critical thinking, and entrepreneurial thinking.**
- 2. Provide Canada's most accessible student experience.**
- 3. Expand research opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and community partners.**
- 4. Place community at the centre of everything we do.**
- 5. Make it simpler to undertake and accomplish goals here than any other university.**

These strategies will be realized through central initiatives and through students, faculty and staff holding each other to account in the development and delivery of programs, services and supports.

STRATEGY 1

Establish a shared core of research, critical thinking, and entrepreneurial thinking.

As part of building a distinct University of Calgary culture that supports well defined values and goals, the University will establish common courses and programming to provide students with shared skills, built by bringing together students across disciplines, serving the additional purpose of supporting transdisciplinary scholarship by fostering unique connections and breaking down traditional silos.

Academic and support staff will also be offered the opportunity to come together across functions to build these skills and engage in ongoing professional development.

By highlighting these competencies, we will establish a unique University of Calgary approach and profile, providing valuable opportunities to our students, faculty, and staff in order to tackle significant challenges, improve our world, and prepare for jobs that do not yet exist.

Potential initiatives

These potential initiatives have: come through reviews of existing internal plans, the external landscape; and/or been proposed through consultation process. Further assessment, consultation and (in some cases) negotiation is required to determine their feasibility and appropriateness for our University.

First year required course — “Research and Creative Scholarship”

One semester, team-taught, modular course on creating a research question, gathering data, developing hypotheses, performing quantitative and qualitative analyses.

First year required course — “Entrepreneurial Thinking”

One semester, team-taught, modular course on the elements of entrepreneurial and innovative thinking: taking initiative, exchanging knowledge across disciplines, being resourceful, and learning from experience.

Create a shared core for university faculty and staff

This core would have faculty and staff — across faculties and units — come together in workshops to get to know each other, build culture, and pipeline supports and services that are available in teaching, research, community partnership and operations.

STRATEGY 2

Provide Canada's most accessible student experience.

Learning is a lifelong process that should be available to people no matter their stage of life or background. The pace of change is dramatically changing the half-life of skills, driving an increased need to seek additional knowledge. As our need for education increases, so too do the diverse needs of our student body. It will be important to increase the accessibility of our courses and programs and support for mental and physical wellbeing.

To be accessible, we must also grow. The demand for post-secondary education in the Calgary region is anticipated to rise dramatically by 2030. To support our future students, we will need more seats and a wider variety of formats and modalities. We will also need a strengthened focus on the diversity of learner needs: financial, social and transdisciplinary. We must be a place that is inclusive to all who have the talent and ambition to attend.

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Target sustainable enrolment growth, with a particular focus on growing graduate enrolment

In order to meet the anticipated demand for post-secondary education, target undergraduate enrolment growth in the range of 300-400 seats/year, and graduate enrolment growth in the range of 700-800 seats/year.

Increase tuition support for first-in-family students

Provide a grant equivalent of one semester worth of tuition to students who are the first of their family to be attending university.

Increase financial support for graduate students

Raise the average financial support for thesis-based graduate students to the highest in the U15 group of research universities.

Expand the use of pass/fail for first-year courses

Reduce the pressure on new students and provide them a safe space to make mistakes by reducing the focus on grades in the first year – increasing, in turn, the focus on experiential learning and finding one's footing, testing different areas.

Expand the use of flexible micro-credentials and stackable certificates

Deliver programming and short-cycle upskilling/reskilling opportunities in a way that is accessible to a different type of student that we can expect to see in the future.

Expand the use of experiential learning

Provides a hands-on and immersive approach that encourages learners to develop practical skills, to deepen their broader understanding, and to apply knowledge in real-world situations.

STRATEGY 3

Expand research opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and community partners.

Research defines us and predicts the future, but we need to be proactive rather than reactive. Expanding student research opportunities provides hands-on experience, valuable skills, and the chance to work with faculty on world-changing projects. This experience enhances academic and professional credentials and prepares students for careers that rely on critical thinking.

For faculty and staff, transdisciplinary research opportunities lead to important discoveries and new connections, and the opportunity to address some of society's biggest challenges. These are challenges too big for one scholar or one discipline to address on their own.

Expanding research opportunities for community partners leads to new collaborations and solutions to urgent real-world problems. Embedding research in everything we do sets us apart from the growing education options, grows human knowledge, and increases our ability to improve our world.



We will look to embed research opportunities — including opportunities to conduct research and publish research — in all student learning.



Wherever possible we will be open with our research and look to collaborate with community partners, colleagues from other disciplines, and students.

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Summer research opportunity

Top 1000 students in “Research Scholarship” offered a 4-month summer research opportunity with a \$10,000 scholarship to be taken between first and second year.

Open access

Support open science and research initiatives to make UCalgary research accessible to the world.

Incentivize transdisciplinary scholarship

Address structural barriers to connections across faculties and departments. Improve the ability to be cross-appointed. Review merit and tenure to reward activity that crosses faculties.

STRATEGY 4

Place community at the centre of everything we do.

We are increasingly aware of the importance of place in the work we do — our place in Treaty 7, our place in the City of Calgary and our place as Canadians in an increasingly complex world. Changing and improving the world will require us to be deeply connected to these contexts. We are a young university with strong ties to multiple communities, but those connections will need to be further strengthened to reach our goals for impact.

Community partnership is also among our greatest potential sources of strength. It can improve teaching, provide opportunities to students, and produce research prospects. With over 30% of Calgary's population newcomers to Canada from elsewhere, we are poised to connect to the global stage.



Community is included by default, and the decision to exclude community representation from initiatives and committees will be the exception.



We will invite community representatives and partners into conversations while it's still messy, rather than waiting to get our “ducks in a row.”

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Campus “Global Project”

Work with the community to identify a societal grand challenge, and then establish a campus-wide surge of research and innovation activity to address that challenge. Running one challenge at a time, UCalgary will focus on critical outcomes and timely delivery.

Associate Deans (Community)

Create a position in each faculty of Associate Dean (Community) to be responsible for knowledge mobilization, partnerships, integration, fostering a community-first focus and tracking the community interactions in the faculty.

Partnership database

Create a common database of community partnerships to allow faculty and staff to understand and leverage existing community relationships readily.

Recognize and incentivize student contributions in the community

Expand the use of community engagement opportunities for students and provide credits and scholarships for the same.

STRATEGY 5

Make it simpler to undertake and accomplish goals here than any other university.

A common issue for faculty and staff at universities everywhere is that processes in support of the academic mission often seem slow, opaque, and overly complex — built for the worst-case scenario rather than the usual case scenario.

The University of Calgary can improve quality-of-life for students, faculty and staff and stand apart from other post-secondary institutions by empowering staff to make decisions and ensuring that it is simpler — and faster — to set ideas in motion here.



When faced with the choice, we will choose nimble, lightweight processes.



The default position of our services and supports will be to find ways to make things happen — quickly.



The default position is to be fully transparent with all processes and information and to explain how decisions are being made.

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Increased ability to register in other program's courses

Enable students to more easily take courses in a range of faculties and departments with the default being that permission will be granted if space exists.

Streamline operations

Make the University of Calgary the easiest place to set ideas in motion and enable their outcome so our entrepreneurial ambitions can be met with streamlined processes.
