



community report 2023/2024



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
WERKLUND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



werklund strategic priorities

page 04.

**committing to
decolonization,
Indigenization,
and equity-
deserving
groups**

page 06.

**enhancing
student
experience**

page 14.

**elevating
research**

page 19.

**engaging
with
communities**

page 22.

**cultivating
trust and
wellbeing**

page 24.

**VISION, MISSION,
STRATEGY, VALUES**

message from the dean



Education is the key to a better future.

David Werklund recognized this when, in 2013, he gifted the University of Calgary 25 million dollars to transform education. This past year marked a decade since his landmark donation and the naming of the Werklund School of Education. In that time, the Werklund School has grown exponentially, rising 100 spots in the QS World University rankings. And we're not finished!

Guided by our five-year strategic plan, we continue to prepare students to play influential roles as educators, psychologists and school counsellors.

At Werklund, our commitment extends beyond the classroom, embracing a holistic mission to connect high-quality programs with cutting-edge research, programs that tie theory with practice and opportunities for experiential learning.

This report highlights stories and initiatives that exemplify our strategic priorities. Dedicated to decolonization and Indigenization, we recognize the importance of fostering inclusive environments that honour and uplift equity-deserving groups.

This is evidenced in newly designed physical spaces, such as Aapiiniiyis — White Buffalo Lodge — and likewise through the introduction of AI technology that is supporting faculty in creating more inclusive curricula.

New programs, like the MEd in School Counselling, are enhancing student experience, helping educators acquire the necessary skills to meet the changing needs in their classrooms, and creating future pathways for every learner to thrive.

Faculty at the Werklund School remain committed to research that drives meaningful change. Through purposeful partnerships and critical attentiveness to community concerns, our faculty are advancing education policy and practice in significant ways, whether by evaluating the relationships between police and school communities, or expanding Indigenous-led models of mental health care.

None of this would be possible without the commitment of faculty, students, staff, alumni and community. As you read the stories captured in this report, know that your ongoing support and collaboration remain the cornerstone of a better future and for the flourishing of all learners.

Dr. Dianne Gereluk
Dean, Werklund School of Education

a decade of the werklund school

« I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN
INSPIRED BY THE
POTENTIAL IN OTHERS,
AND I HAVE SPENT MY
CAREER DEVELOPING
ENVIRONMENTS THAT
EMPOWER PEOPLE TO
CREATE THEIR OWN
SUCCESS.

Dr. David Werklund



In 2013, David Werklund provided the largest single gift to an education faculty in Canadian history. It transformed how education is taught and researched at the University of Calgary.

Ranking fourth in Canadian education and teaching

In the ten years since the Werklund gift, the School has risen 100 spots in the Quacquarelli Symonds World University ranking to 53rd, and 11 spots in the rankings of top Canadian faculties of education, all the way to fourth.

Expanding experiential learning opportunities

The Werklund School provides students a more dynamic, relevant and impactful post-secondary education by offering an array of experiential learning options. Beyond mandatory internships and field training, more than 30 experiential initiatives are available, including a land-based learning series, peer-to-peer mentorship, opportunities with Let’s Talk Science and the Canadian Wildlife Federation, as well as Teaching Across Borders, which offers student placements in nine countries spanning five continents. Since the Werklund Endowment in 2013, students have had 4,290 experiential learning opportunities, an increase of 2,000 per cent.

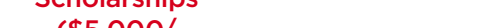
18
Werklund
Doctoral
Scholarships
(\$25,000/award)



53
Werklund Teaching
and Learning grants
totalling \$295,550
involving 51 faculty
and 30 research
assistants, towards
the creation of digital
tools, course re-
designs, supports for
Indigenous learning,
experiential learning,
and wellbeing



62
Werklund
Community-
Engaged
Scholarships
(\$5,000/
\$10,000/
\$20,000/award)



335%
increase in
Indigenous
student
enrollment



14
Werklund
Undergraduate
Research Awards
(\$3,750 -
\$7,000/award)



22
doctoral seminar
publications
since 2013



225
Teaching Across
Borders travel
grants



2
PhD programs
in Educational
Psychology
with national
accreditation
from governing
bodies



220%
increase in
International
student
enrollment



4
new programs
created



Prioritizing Indigenous initiatives at UCalgary

The Werklund School’s Indigenous Strategy — entitled Moving Forward in a Good Way — was passed nine years ago. Our intention was and remains to courageously and humbly progress with integrity, respect and in truth alongside Indigenous Peoples to strengthen education for all students. Supporting this, the Werklund Endowment has provided funds for multiple initiatives, among them seed funding for Books to Build On: Indigenous Literatures for Learning; a new gathering space, Aapiiniiyis or White Buffalo Lodge; and a dedicated space for Indigenous Elders and emeriti, honouring their knowledge and place within the faculty.

Investing in faculty, staff and students

More than \$1.5 million in scholarships, awards and bursaries were awarded to Werklund School undergraduates during the 2022 – 23 academic year alone. “Having significantly large scholarships has made a difference,” says Dr. Dianne Gereluk, dean of the Werklund School. “And we’re attracting stronger students because of it.” Prior to the Werklund endowment, there had been no funds for internal grants and awards for faculty members and staff. Now exceptional leadership and contributions that drive research, teaching and learning to the next level are celebrated every year.

Funding international research collaboration

The Werklund Endowment supports the annual International Doctoral Research Seminar, a formal partnership that promotes collaboration among doctoral students and faculty members at the faculties of education at Beijing Normal University, Queensland University of Technology and UCalgary.



committing to decolonization, Indigenization, and equity-deserving groups

AAPIINIOYIS (WHITE BUFFALO LODGE) FOSTERS CONNECTION & CONTEMPLATION

The Werklund School began a new chapter in fostering connection and inclusivity with the unveiling of Aapiiniioyis (White Buffalo Lodge) on the third floor of the Education Tower.

Given its name by retired educator and Kainai Elder Ninna Piiksii (Dr. Mike Bruised Head) at a Pipe Ceremony in September, the room is marked by features evocative of nature and attentive to the spirit of Indigenization and decolonization.



Seating arranged in a circle echo circles printed on the floor, and encourage gatherings of a non-hierarchical nature. The 3,000-plus wooden dowels hanging from the ceiling with strategically placed light fixtures nestled in between suggest dapples of sunlight in a forest, while a faux fireplace and Indigenous artwork foster an atmosphere of warmth and contemplation. The lodge also provides a nearby room for visiting Elders.

Director of Indigenous Education Dr. Aubrey Hanson believes these elements demonstrate that Indigeneity is explicitly valued in the lodge.

Since opening, the space has hosted research lectures, served as a classroom, been the site of PhD oral defences that open with a Smudge, and is a place where education students, faculty and staff can visit to gather their thoughts, unwind, or converse.

PROVINCE-WIDE COLLABORATION DEEPENS INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES IN TEACHING PROGRAMS PATRICIA DANYLUK

A team led by Associate Professor Dr. Patricia Danyluk is partnering with colleagues from nine other Alberta post-secondary institutions to explore how teacher education programs across the province are addressing racism by integrating Indigenous knowledge into their curricula.

The project, named Combatting Racism Towards Indigenous Peoples Through the Inclusion of Indigenous Perspectives in the Classroom: Bachelor of Education Programs and Schools Working Together, came about because of the Alberta Education Teaching Quality Standard 5 requirement that teachers possess and apply a foundational knowledge of Indigenous peoples in their practice.

Teachers have been working to meet the mandate since it was introduced in 2018, but some questioned whether they were going about it correctly or could be doing it better.

In response, Danyluk and her partners created free culturally responsive lesson plans for use by K-12 teachers. Topics explore the differences between Western and Indigenous ways of knowing, conservation of biodiversity and patterning in math with traditional Métis sashes.

In addition to the lesson plans, Métis, Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators from across Alberta shared their experiences, insights, and teaching strategies in a series of 10 podcasts.



USING AI TO BOOST EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY SOROUSH SABBAGHAN

A new tool using artificial intelligence is helping Werklund faculty incorporate greater equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) into their teaching. Developed by Dr. Soroush Sabbaghan, director of EDIA at the Werklund School, the Strategic Module Assistant for Rubrics, Tasks and Inclusive Education, or SMARTIE, utilizes the power of GPT-4 to help educators construct inclusive curriculum and better set students up for success.

SMARTIE can be used to generate various course components such as descriptions, learning outcomes, corresponding EDIA-aware learning activities, and even procure recommendations for rubric redesigns.

In addition, the program is enhancing student experience by facilitating flexible teaching and learning practices, creating an educational environment that is both accessible and adaptable for all students.

SMARTIE is also being employed outside of Werklund, with academics in the Schulich School of Engineering using it to measure diversity in their reading lists and individuals in the Faculty of Social Work using it to personalize tasks and develop fair assessment strategies.

Listen to podcasts
or check out
lesson plans



Engage
with a
story



BOOKS TO BUILD ON: INDIGENOUS LITERATURES FOR LEARNING AUBREY HANSON AND ERIN SPRING

The pathway to Indigenous education starts with a story.

That's the premise behind an interactive web resource that's helping educators weave Indigenous knowledge into their teaching. The Books to Build On: Indigenous Literatures for Learning web collection, which includes more than 375 recommendations for Indigenous books, art collections, and websites, has registered more than 32,000 visits from across Canada, and 30 additional countries. The resource also includes over 150 lesson plans intended to support teachers in the classroom.

The project started in 2021 as an online database for teachers who were searching for ways to introduce Indigenous knowledge into their teaching. Now it's also a resource for anyone who wants a trusted place to find Indigenous stories.

The team has presented the collection to over 1,000 teachers, community members and district representatives and continues to look for literature that plugs learners into work that is being done to reclaim culture, revitalize languages or regenerate ways of knowing. They also look for curriculum connections and ensure the resources are easy to find in libraries or online.

enhancing student experience



**BEd TRANSFER AGREEMENT
HELPING ADDRESS RURAL AND
REMOTE TEACHER SHORTAGE
ATHENA WILLIAMS**

Athena Williams was able to realize her professional aspirations thanks to the Werklund School and Northern Lakes College (NLC) partnership.

After moving to the hamlet of Canyon Creek, Williams assumed her dream of becoming a teacher would never happen as she could not uproot her family to pursue an education degree.

Fate — not to mention a well-timed partnership — intervened in 2019 as Werklund and NLC formalized their Bachelor of Education transfer program agreement through which NLC University Studies students complete most of their program requirements via online courses with NLC, plus a two-week residency at the University of Calgary for each year of their program.

The transfer program provides a real-world solution to the teacher shortage crisis in rural and northern communities. Such communities often rely on attracting out-of-province teachers through incentive programs, but these are usually a short-term fix at best, as individuals tend to stay in these roles for only a couple of years at a time.

For her part, Williams says the annual on-campus summer residency is a highlight of the program. She credits both Werklund and NLC for making remote students feel connected year-round.

1,883

student teacher
placements

1,440

pre-service
teachers

88

school
districts

409

partner
schools

931

partner teachers
supported Werklund
students in practicum

69

partner schools
in rural and
remote areas



**RESEARCH-FOCUSED AWARD
CULTIVATES RICHER STUDENT
ENGAGEMENT
JASMINE EL-HACHA**

Being introduced by President Ed McCauley during her convocation is but one honour recent graduate Jasmine El-Hacha, BEd'24 earned as a student in the five-year concurrent degree program. Last year, she received a UCalgary Program for Undergraduate Research Experience (PURE) Award, which allowed her to engage in a mentored research project over a 16-week summer studentship, and to conduct and present original research.

PURE empowers students to gain mentorship and learn valuable skills for their future. It provides up to \$7,500 for undergraduate students in all disciplines to embark on a summer research project with a supervisor in a field they are passionate about.

El-Hacha, who is committed to social justice education and enhancing accessibility for all learners, says she can't overstate the game-changing impact of such programming on her education and career trajectory. She believes that by recognizing diversity as an asset to innovation, the program is cultivating a richer experience for UCalgary students.

Next year, El-Hacha will pursue an MEd in Leadership, where she will further develop the important bridges between theory and practice in the classroom.

282
undergraduate
students participated
in 463 experiential
learning activities

66
students participated
in Teaching Across
Borders

2,497
hours of experiential
learning, including
service learning,
tutoring, land-based
learning, Teaching
Across Borders,
mentorship, and other
professional learning
opportunities

136
graduate students
participated in
internships/practicum

NEW BEd HONOURS PROGRAM
ENHANCES RESEARCH SKILLS
AND FOSTERS COMMUNITY
SIMRAN SALLAN

Last year, the Werklund School introduced a new BEd Honours program, offering students the opportunity to delve more into educational research. Simran Sallan, BEd’24, had already completed an honours thesis in political science when she applied to do one in the field of education. In her research, she used discourse analysis to explore the implications of Bill 15 on the teaching profession in Alberta. The study revealed that the bill, by transferring disciplinary authority from teaching professionals to the government, marks a potential trend towards de-professionalization that undermines the self-regulating power of teachers in Alberta. Sallan says she was



surprised by the extent to which teachers’ decision-making power in disciplinary matters had been reduced, with the government holding authority to initiate, suspend and make decisions in matters of teacher misconduct.

Graduating this spring in the concurrent degree pathway, Simran recommends the BEd Honours program for the unique opportunity to explore research methods and topics of personal interest, which led to her study of government policy. While attentive to her studies, her favourite memories from Werklund are the relationships she formed with peers in her cohort, and the time they made for connecting, sharing food and conversations between classes.



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
(NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS)

Professional learning	88
Service-learning	71
Teaching Across Borders	66
Mentorship	46
Land-based learning	36
Tutoring	25
Ambassadors	25



357 PLACEMENTS

199
Indigenous
students

83
international
students





REVITALIZING LAND-BASED
PRACTICES WITHIN TSUUT'INA
SCHOOLS
TEENA STARLIGHT

The entirety of Teena Starlight's learning and teaching journey has been about giving back — giving back to students, educators and Elders.

Starlight, who recently became the first Tsuut'ina Nation member to earn a doctoral degree, says the only Indigenous teachers she had growing up were those leading the Tsuut'ina cultural classes. While she was proud to attend, she learned that these instructors were permitted to teach only this course, and none of the core subjects.

The marginalizing of Indigenous knowledge led Starlight to design programming that embedded Indigenous knowledge, language and culture into every aspect of curriculum taught in Tsuut'ina schools.

In addition, she worked with Elders to develop guidelines to help those working in the schools to understand the importance of land and ceremony and how to properly engage the community without fear of offending.

Decades later, Starlight's journey came full circle when she interviewed many of those same Elders for her doctoral thesis about ways to sustain and legitimize Tsuut'ina way of life, and restore land-based practices critical for identity and survival within Tsuut'ina Nation schools.

She says the study carries significant implications for systemic education reforms and allowed her to give back to the Elders who helped her become the teacher she is today.



HIGHLIGHTING TEACHER
WELLNESS
LISA TAYLOR

Former K-12 teacher Dr. Lisa Taylor, PhD'24, was in the process of defining her doctoral dissertation topic when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Upon learning of the increased exhaustion and stress teachers were enduring because of the outbreak, she knew she had to give voice to their health and wellness experiences.

Taylor's research led her to conceptualize teachers as bearing metaphorical wounds, perpetuated by a variety of stressors. These stressors are influenced by complex systems such as the education system, political system, and family system, creating unique circumstances for each individual. For instance, the shortage of substitute teachers required educators to give up their preparation time to cover for colleagues.

To heal these wounds, Taylor advocates for a trans-systemic care approach that involves stakeholders from different systems, including educational and political systems, who can take appropriate action. She also emphasizes the importance of teacher wellness as a precursor to student achievement, noting that a healthy teacher is better positioned to support their students.

In recognition of her impactful research, Taylor was awarded the Canadian Association for Teacher Education Award.

NEW MEd IN SCHOOL
COUNSELLING PROGRAM
SUPPORTING HEALTH AND
WELLBEING IN SCHOOLS

This spring, the Werklund School launched a dynamic new degree program for teachers interested in becoming a school counsellor or for those wishing to better inform their teaching practice. The MEd in School Counselling will help prepare teachers to offer essential social, emotional and mental health supports to children and youth in schools.

The program weaves together content related to health and wellbeing, career development, and aspects of comprehensive health education, while using a social justice framework of guidance.

Drawing teachers from across Canada, this unique offering emphasizes research, as well as skills attending to the therapeutic relationship between client and therapist, and the ethical considerations of working in educational settings with school children and youth.

Students are also studying context and content knowledge, perspectives and practices, committed to enacting responsibility and accountability towards decolonizing, Indigenizing, and incorporating principles of social equity, diversity, and inclusion advanced by ministries of education including Alberta's Ministry of Advanced Education and the Canadian Psychological Association.

◀◀
WE FOSTER A LEARNING
JOURNEY THAT ATTENDS
TO DIVERSE STUDENT
NEEDS IN EDUCATION
AND PSYCHOLOGY TO
PREPARE THEM FOR A
COMPLEX FUTURE.
▶▶

—
\$4.2M
—

awarded to
graduate
students

◀◀

THE CREATION AND DELIVERY OF THE 'KOKUM CALLS YOU' PROJECT GIVES STUDENTS A FIRSTHAND OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN A PUBLIC-FACING INITIATIVE THAT MOVES THEM OUT OF THE CONFINES OF THE CLASSROOM AND INTO OUR CAMPUS COMMUNITY... [IT] IS A REMINDER OF HOW WE CAN INDIVIDUALLY SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER TO ADVANCE A VISION OF SHARED HUMANITY.

Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt

▶▶

Indigenous Education: Kokum Calls You

Each year, Werklund's MEd program, Indigenous Education: A Call to Action, invites students to participate in an awareness-raising initiative focused on Indigenous issues. This year, the cohort chose to use the colourful kokum scarf as a sign of solidarity, hanging them in trees around the UCalgary campus, along with a personalized call to action.

Kokum, also spelled kookum, is the Cree word for grandmother and the brightly coloured floral pattern scarves symbolize the longstanding relationship between Indigenous and Ukrainian communities.

While Ukrainian settlers were sometimes shunned by other settlers in Canada, they were welcomed by the Cree. This respect and friendship resulted in commercial and cultural exchanges that saw both peoples through difficult times. In due course, the Cree, and other Indigenous nations, adopted the Ukrainian hustka as the kokum scarf.

Students in the Call to Action program employed them as a tool to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action. The class was led by Professor and UCalgary Research Excellence Chair Dr. Yvonne Poitras Pratt, Assistant Professor and Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Youth Well-Being and Education Dr. Jennifer Markides and Kainai Elder Wanda First Rider.

◀◀

BY EDUCATING OURSELVES ON LAND CONSERVATION, MY HOPE IS TO BREAK DOWN THIS BARRIER AND ADAPT A MORE INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE OF RECIPROCITY WHERE WE GIVE BACK TO THE LAND AND ANIMALS IN ADDITION TO MAKING MORE CONSCIOUS CHOICES.

THIS SUMMER RESIDENCY HAS FOREVER CHANGED HOW I VIEW MY WORLD, INCLUDING MY HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS. I HAVE BEEN CALLED TO WALK ALONGSIDE THOSE WHOSE VOICES I CAN HELP MAKE SPACE FOR AND UPLIFT. AS I MOVE FORWARD IN MY PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIFE, I KNOW I VIEW THE WORLD WITH A DIFFERENT LENS AND AS UNSETTLING AS THIS CAN BE AT TIMES, IT IS ALSO A POWERFUL TOOL NEEDED TO BE A CHANGEMAKER AND PUSH FORWARD WITH THE WORK OF DECOLONIZATION AND RECONCILIATION.

Brooke Lingnau, MEd student

▶▶



elevating research



NEW RESEARCH EXCELLENCE
CHAIR FOCUSES ON ADOLESCENT
DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL
INTEGRATION OF NEWCOMER
YOUTH
XU ZHAO

In July, Dr. Xu Zhao, an associate professor in counselling psychology, was appointed a University of Calgary Research Excellence Chair.

Zhao studies youth psychosocial development from a sociocultural perspective. Across China, the United States and Canada, she has listened to the stories of the young, vulnerable, marginalized and oppressed, aiming to understand how educational narratives are constructed and communicated to shape children's understanding of self, others, society and history, thereby influencing both individual and collective identities and wellbeing. Often employing a critical theoretical lens, Zhao examines the forms and functions of narratives as sources of oppression and liberation at the societal level, and as contributors to vulnerability and resilience at the community and individual levels.

As the UCalgary Research Excellence Chairholder, she will lead an in-depth exploration of intergenerational narratives within the Indian, Filipino, and Chinese communities — the three largest immigrant groups in Canada. By examining the complex process of cultural transmission within family settings, this study aims to provide essential insights into the family and community dynamics that shape the historical consciousness and cultural identities of future generations of Canadians.



CULTIVATING FACULTY AND
STUDENT GROWTH THROUGH
SUPERVISORY DEVELOPMENT
MICHELE JACOBSEN

In 2024, Dr. Michele Jacobsen, a professor in learning sciences, delivered Werklund's Distinguished Research Lecture. Informed by extensive research on promoting quality graduate education in online and blended contexts, she described how investments in supervisory development lead to shared and mutually beneficial faculty and student growth, enabling post-secondary learning and research cultures to thrive. When faculty members are empowered and supported as graduate supervisors, they can better support and unleash the potential of their students.

Developing trusting mentoring and advising relationships takes attention, intention, and care. Jacobsen shared practical strategies for faculty to foster relational trust in supervision and mentoring relationships. By improving these practices, the goal is to ensure that students receive more personalized and impactful support, leading to enhanced academic performance, personal growth, and wellbeing. Connecting both research and practical advice, she encouraged approaches to cultivating connections and communities of support for faculty and student flourishing.



UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIETAL
FACTORS OF BURNOUT
TANYA MUDRY

According to Registered Psychologist and Associate Professor, Dr. Tanya Mudry, the COVID-19 pandemic was a game changer in terms of burnout, with illness, job loss and children being at home contributing to increased stress levels.

Burnout is a state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion that is related to, but distinct from, anxiety and depression. While the condition is most associated with work-related demands and pressure, Mudry's research proves that burnout can happen to anyone facing unrelenting stress without rest or reprieve — emotional, caregiver and parental burnout are on par with work-related burnout as hazards to physical and mental health.

She says it's important to learn the early signs of potential burnout but is critical of mainstream burnout literature that, she feels, overly emphasizes individual strategies. While self-care is commonly prescribed as the ultimate remedy, she highlights that this individual focus can reinforce burnout as a personal problem, rather than seeing it as a byproduct of societal factors that requires a collective response.

«
WE LEAD CREATIVE AND
INNOVATIVE RESEARCH
AND SCHOLARSHIP
IN EDUCATION
AND PSYCHOLOGY
RESPONSIVE TO AN
EVER-CHANGING
WORLD THAT ADVANCES
SOCIAL JUSTICE.
»



PIONEERING ETHICAL
AI USE IN EDUCATION
SARAH EATON

Dr. Sarah Eaton, a leading expert in academic integrity has been appointed a Werklund Research Professor centring on the intersection of ethics and artificial intelligence (AI) in education. Eaton’s research focuses on the challenges and opportunities that AI presents for maintaining academic integrity in post-secondary institutions. She has addressed how AI tools, while beneficial for educational advancement, can also be misused for academic dishonesty, such as generating automated essays or facilitating plagiarism.

Eaton emphasizes the need for educational institutions to develop robust policies and strategies to address these issues. She advocates for a proactive approach, integrating AI literacy into curricula to help students and educators understand both the capabilities and ethical implications of AI technologies. Her research suggests that fostering a culture of integrity and awareness around AI can significantly reduce incidents of academic misconduct.

Collaborating internationally, Eaton is making crucial contributions in helping educational institutions navigate the complex landscape of AI, ensuring that technological advancements enhance rather than compromise academic integrity.



RESEARCH ON EATING
DISORDERS AND WEIGHT STIGMA
MAKING A DIFFERENCE
SHELLY RUSSELL-MAYHEW

Dr. Shelly Russell-Mayhew, professor and associate dean of research at Werklund, is championing research that drives meaningful change. Globally recognized for her expertise on eating disorders, obesity, and weight bias, her research has influenced practice and policy in Canada and beyond. Her Body Image Research Lab uses a transdisciplinary approach, fostering teams that are better able to advance knowledge and impact.

Russell-Mayhew’s work earned her the 2023 Killam Research Excellence Award, recognizing her significant contributions to academia and social sciences. Her research program comprises three “communities of practice.” The Weight Bias Research Teams combat weight stigma, notably contributing to the 2020 Canadian Guidelines for Obesity. The Body Image Research Lab’s collaborative model nurtures postdoctoral, doctoral, and master’s students, promoting a supportive learning environment.

Her third focus, Teachers of Tomorrow, partners with Ever Active Schools to implement comprehensive school health approaches. Russell-Mayhew emphasizes creating environments where students and teachers thrive, supported by initiatives like the PodClass podcast, which has reached a global audience.

In addition to the Killam Award, this year Russell-Mayhew was also honoured with an appointment as a fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association.

93
academic faculty

4
Canada Research
Chairs

17
Postdoctoral
Scholars

13
awards for
excellence in
teaching, research,
& community
engagement

11
Research
Professorships

Award-winning faculty 2023 – 2024

Maren Aukerman	Best Reviewer Award, Editors of Research in the Teaching of English, 2024
Sharon Friesen	Award for Research on Teacher Education, Canadian Association for Teacher Education, 2024
Shibao Guo	International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame
Stephen MacGregor	Michael Fullan Emerging Scholar Award 2024, Journal of Professional Capital and Community
Yvonne Poitras Pratt	Community Engagement Award, Faculty Association of the University of Calgary, 2023
Yvonne Poitras Pratt	Lifetime Achievement Award, Métis Nation of Alberta — Region 3, 2023
Shelly Russell-Mayhew	Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) 2024
Shelly Russell-Mayhew	Killam Research Excellence Award, 2023
Shirley Steinberg	Paulo Freire Legacy Award, the American Educational Research Association, 2024

University of Calgary awards

Amy Burns	Teaching Award for Educational Leadership, University of Calgary
Shannon Clare	Students' Union Teacher Assistant Award, Honourable Mention
Nadia Delanoy	Teaching Award for Sessional Instructors, University of Calgary
Garry Jones	Students' Union Teaching Excellence Award

engaging with communities



WE WORK ETHICALLY IN
AND WITH COMMUNITIES
TO SUPPORT ONE
ANOTHER IN IMPROVING
PEOPLE’S LIVES
THROUGH EDUCATION
AND PSYCHOLOGY.

A UNIVERSAL COMPREHENSIVE WELLNESS MODEL FOR STUDENTS GABRIELLE WILCOX

Associate Professor Dr. Gabrielle Wilcox is working with the Calgary Police Youth Foundation to level the playing field for students facing barriers to academic success and wellbeing.

The intent of the Integrated School Support Program (ISSP) is to provide a universal comprehensive wellness model that will improve academic performance and support student mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing by offering nutrition, physical education, and after-school programs, and embedding mental health experts and a positive police presence in schools.

Recent Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction grant funding allowed for an expansion of ISSP and the opportunity for Wilcox to evaluate the program’s efficacy and impact.

Wilcox says an on-site mental health professional is better able to support teachers in implementing schoolwide programs. They can also identify students who need additional assistance and either provide those supports within the school environment or make a referral to community providers. As well, preliminary evidence suggests that intentional relationship building activities where police and students work together to solve a problem can support student growth.

Findings from Wilcox’s evaluation will be used to inform improvements in ISSP implementation.



GUEST LECTURE: IN A HUMAN VOICE WITH CAROL GILLIGAN

In November, the Werklund School hosted Dr. Carol Gilligan, the pioneering psychologist and renowned feminist and scholar whose work has significantly influenced the fields of psychology, gender studies and education.

Gilligan is best known for her groundbreaking research on gender differences in moral development, which challenged traditional theories and highlighted the importance of a care-based perspective. Her seminal book, “In a Different Voice,” introduced a new understanding of how women and men approach moral reasoning and ethical decisions differently, emphasizing the value of relational and contextual factors.

Three things have become clear since its publication, she says: the “different voice” — the voice of care ethics — initially heard as “feminine”, is in fact a human voice; the voice it differs from is a patriarchal voice (listen for gender binaries and hierarchies); and where patriarchy is in force or enforced, the human voice is a voice of resistance, and care ethics is an ethics of liberation.

A collaborative event, this lecture was made possible through the support of Dr. Pratim Sengupta, (Werklund), Drs. Pallavi Banerjee and Ariel Ducey, (the Faculty of Arts Department of Sociology) and the University of Calgary Alumni Association.



TEACHING CURSIVE HANDWRITING TO YOUNG CHILDREN? HERE'S HOW THEY LEARN, AND RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTION
HETTY ROESSINGH

Developing control over the shape of the 26 letters of the alphabet ultimately unlocks the ability to engage in the world of fact, fiction — and endless possibilities of the imagination afforded by written communication.

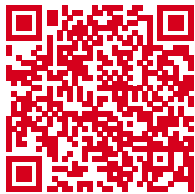
Legible handwriting can be achieved by most young learners by the end of Grade 2, given direct instruction and ample opportunities for practice. Fluency can follow in a similar fashion with continued instruction and practice.

But school instruction in cursive is bound for failure unless strong resource support is provided for kindergarten to Grade 3 teachers. For this reason, Dr. Hetty Roessingh collaborated with the Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild to create Teaching Handwriting to Young Children, an open-educational resource.

The 15 downloadable files cover concepts and skills leading up to and including cursive handwriting in the kindergarten to Grade 3 years. It comprehensively mobilizes research to explain the “how and why” of teaching cursive handwriting and combines theory and practice to help teachers or parents instruct children in developmentally progressive ways, beginning with setting in place strong foundational skills.



Explore the handwriting resources for children



IMPROVING INTERSECTIONAL EXPERIENCES OF LGBTQ2S+ NEWCOMERS THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION
TONYA CALLAGHAN

Professor Dr. Tonya Callaghan is partnering with Calgary’s Centre for Newcomers (CFN) to explore the challenges and gaps in settlement services and supports for LGBTQ2S+ newcomers to Canada.

The CFN helps immigrants and refugees make a successful transition to their new home in Calgary. Callaghan became acquainted with the organization in 2020. With the CFN’s recent implementation of LGBTQ2S+ services and its central role in her research, Callaghan hopes to help the organization find effective ways to support those who find themselves struggling with different intersectional identities.

Callaghan says the reality is that, while settlement services across Canada are good at addressing difficulties regarding culture and race, they often ignore other aspects of human identity, including sexual orientation and gender.

Callaghan was recently appointed Academic Co-Lead for Democracy, Justice, and Sustainability in the University of Calgary Institutes for Transdisciplinary Scholarship.

313
community partnerships

10
international partnerships

88
school district partnerships across AB, BC, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon



cultivating trust and wellbeing

◀◀
WE ARE COMMITTED
TO A COLLECTIVE
RESPONSIBILITY
TOWARDS HEALTHY
AND FLOURISHING
ENVIRONMENTS.
▶▶



INDIGENOUS-LED CARE
PROGRAM OFFERS HOLISTIC
APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH
ELISA LACERDA-VANDEBORN

Dr. Elisa Lacerda-Vandeborn is using an Indigenous-led model of mental health and wellness in her current research, which adapts the Trauma Informed Care and Practices Program (TICPP) to children and youth in Indigenous communities.

Anishinaabe Knowledge Keeper Derek Courchene created TICPP as a community capacity-building program, led through an Indigenous outlook to address issues that impact wellness.

While the program has been successful for adults, its impact on youth has not yet been studied, so Courchene and Lacerda-Vandeborn will team up to learn from youth and those who support them in two Manitoba First Nations communities.

TICPP works alongside communities to tailor its care to the needs of the people. The program addresses the history of colonization and assimilation, individual and collective healing, and more. Program mentors learn about the needs of the community and share the care and practices of TICPP.

Lacerda-Vandeborn adds that the program deconstructs narratives of trauma offered from a Western lens and returns to Indigenous ways of being and understanding wellness as a lifelong journey alongside families, communities and culture.

STRENGTHENING MENTAL
HEALTH SUPPORTS IN ALBERTA
SCHOOLS

In response to mounting mental health challenges among youth, the University of Calgary, in collaboration with the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) and Converge Mental Health Coalition, has launched a project to enhance mental health support within educational settings.

As part of the City of Calgary’s Change Can’t Wait initiative, the Werklund School’s Centre for Wellbeing in Education and The Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research & Education are conducting a comprehensive review of research focusing on the crucial skills, knowledge and competencies student services staff require to nurture adolescent mental health.

The initiative is developing a research-based universal framework for student support, informed by the findings of the environmental scan. This framework will serve as the basis for a professional learning series for student services staff within the CBE. The sessions will help provide more consistent guidance and resources at various levels, ensuring CBE can offer standardized and comprehensive care for student wellbeing.

The professional learning series is currently under development and will be piloted at the school level in 2024.

Calgary
Board of
Education



Calgary Board
of Education

Converge
Mental Health
Coalition



Centre for
Wellbeing In
Education



our vision

Our vision

BETTERING HUMANITY THROUGH EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY.

Our mission

CONNECTING QUALITY PROGRAMS WITH LEADING RESEARCH RESPONSIVE TO LEARNERS, EDUCATORS, AND COMMUNITIES TOWARD A SOCIALLY-JUST WORLD.

Our strategy

THROUGH PURPOSEFUL COLLABORATION AND A CRITICAL ATTENTIVENESS TO RESEARCH, WE WILL INFLUENCE AND ADVANCE EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE, LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY.

Our core values

COURAGE

CREATIVITY

COLLABORATION

COMPASSION



TOP 4
ranking in Canada*



8
degree programs



20+
laddered certificates – MEd Interdisciplinary



1,454
undergrad students



1,357
graduate students



35K+
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