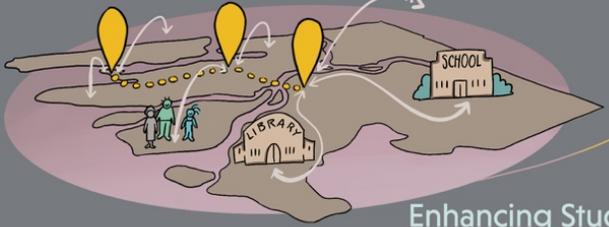# Faculty of Education Strategic Research Plan

Priorities

Strengthening Community Research Practices

Enhancing Student Research Opportunities
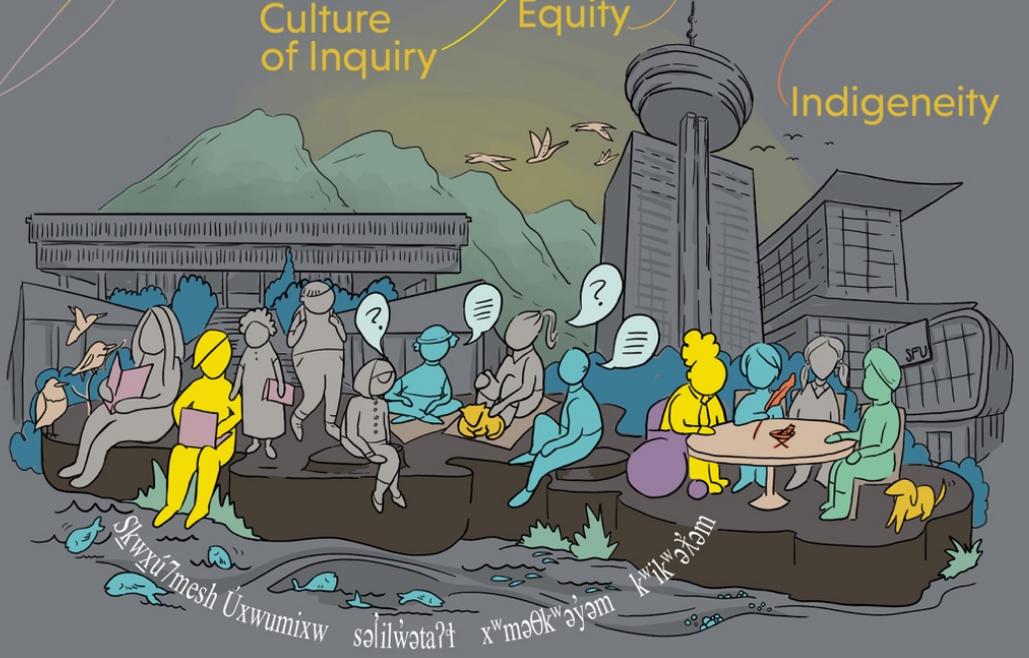
Fostering Cross Faculty Research Collaborations

Forging New Partnerships and Expanding Funding Opportunities

Culture of Inquiry

Equity

Indigeneity

What is the goal of the Strategic Research Plan?

The Faculty of Education's 2021-2025 Strategic Research Plan has two main goals: first, to articulate how current research activities in our Faculty of Education align with the three core values of the 2018-2023 Five-Year Academic Plan *(equity, Indigeneity, culture of inquiry)*; and second, to support new research activities related to the key priorities of the Five-Year Academic Plan. In terms of the first goal, the document highlights and communicates current work aligned with the Faculty of Education's core values to our colleagues and community. Regarding the second, the document intends to support *new* research and scholarship activities, which include ways of seeking funding, mobilising student research, collaborating with communities, and pursuing tenure and promotion. This document is meant to create a cohesive and supportive research community in the Faculty of Education. Like the Five-Year Plan, the SRP is considered a *living document* that faculty will engage with and contribute to continuously over the its four-year period.

What was the process?

The 2021-2025 Strategic Research Plan draws on the Faculty of Education's Five-Year Academic Plan (2018–2023) to focus on four priority areas that are traversed by the three, intertwined core values of Indigeneity, equity and culture of inquiry. As the threads in the illustration indicate, these values are both independent of *and* intertwined with each other. They function to support and guide the four priorities. Given that we are already halfway into our 5-year plan, this SRP aims to highlight the research initiatives already been underway and how we plan to build on them in the coming years.

The development of this plan began in Spring 2020, under the leadership of the Associate Dean, Research, John Nesbit and the Director of the Research Hub, Cindy Xin. With the participation of 2019-2020 RAWG members (Mark Fettes, Gillian Judson, Ena Lee, Masahiro Minami, Amy Parent, Stephen Smith, Suzanne Smythe, Poh Tan, Phil Winne), a list of priorities was drawn from the Faculty of Education's Five-Year Academic Plan. These were then crystallised into the four priority areas. In September 2020, the new Associate Dean, Research and International, Nathalie Sinclair continued the process with Cindy Xin and the 2020-2021 RAWG members (Elina Birmingham, Mark Fettes, Gillian Judson, Ena Lee, Masahiro Minami, Michelle Pidgeon, Stephen Smith, Suzanne Smythe, Poh Tan and Phil Winne). Draft versions of the Strategic Research Plan have been discussed by the Executive as well as at the Indigenous Education Research Council. The illustrations were developed by Kristen Elbow from Drawing Change.

Fostering cross faculty research collaboration

The objectives and actions for this priority draw on insights from past activities and initiatives (The *Possible's Slow Fuse* Series, *From the Ground Up* scholarship series at the FoE Surrey Campus, Faculty writing retreats at the Vancouver campus, Research Hub website, Research in Focus newsletter).

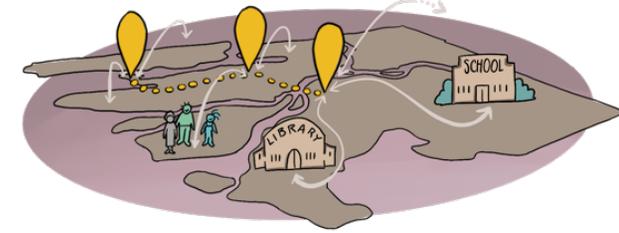| 2020-2021 Activities	Objectives	Actions

1. Faculty Forum celebrating recently funded research projects
 	
2. New faculty orientation to the Research Hub services
 	
3. New faculty writing circle
 	
4. The Research Hub interactive visualisation project
  a. Identify programs that already cut across cognate areas to find out how they were initiated and the extent to which they provide opportunities for cross-faculty research collaborations
  b. Identify existing research centres that are offering cross-faculty collaborations
  c. Identify existing cross-faculty collaborations and potential new directions
	1. Provide an inter-disciplinary forum for faculty members to meet and share their research interests and work, especially in relation to our three core values
	
	2. Identify possible transdisciplinary and plurilingual projects that could mobilise a diverse range of faculty expertise in relation to current, significant challenges
	
	3. Make the scholarship of our faculty and students more visible to internal and external audiences through various means of communications and marketing
	
	4. Provide adequate research space to support the activities of specific research teams, Centres, as well as facilitate potential cross-faculty collaborations
	
	5. Support the career trajectories of new faculty members as well as mid-career faculty members
	
	6. Review and support the sustainability and research activities of existing Centres
		1. Continue two years of *Possible's Slow Fuse* with a specific mandate to foster cross-faculty research collaboration, especially that which includes Indigenous perspectives and inclusive practices
		
		2. Create appealing and informative data visualisations that can communicate, both internally and externally, the range and diversity of faculty projects and draw attention to our collective work
		
		3. Formulate a set of (10 or so) core questions that could drive faculty research, support inter-disciplinary approaches and reduce the siloing effects of the current "cognate" structure
		
		4. Make the Research Hub and the Learning Hub complementary to each other by having the former dedicated to quiet work, research meetings, storage of confidential materials, and access to research software etc., and the latter used for workshops, larger meetings and production activities (e.g. podcasting, maker space)
		
		5. Continue new faculty onboarding related to research and develop a research-informed programme for mid-career faculty members
		
		6. Devise ways of connecting the activities of FoE Centres to research funding opportunities

Enhancing student research opportunities

The objectives and actions for this priority draw on insights from past activities and initiatives (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE), MiTACS, the Reading/Talking/Doing (RTD) club, Writing Retreat Wednesdays, the Aboriginal Transitions: Undergraduate to Graduate (AT: U2G) project).

2020-2021 Activities	Objectives	Actions

1. Panels on supporting the transition to conceptual research
 	
2. Graduate Research Dialogues podcast
 	
3. Faculty Forum on Supporting Undergraduate Research
 	
4. Research skills workshops for graduate students, including podcasts, in collaboration with the Library and Research Commons[iii]
	1. Match students with expertise and relevant interest with faculty members and/or program areas
	
	2. Ensure the equitable distribution and use of bursaries and fellowships for graduate students
	
	3. In collaboration with the Indigenous Education Research Council (IERC), broaden student exposure to Indigenous theories and methodologies
	
	4. Review the methodology course EDUC 846 to better reflect the values of the 5-year plan
	
	5. Develop the research capacity of graduate students through an inter-generational mentoring process that builds capacity across the undergraduate-graduate and faculty lines
	
	6. Provide graduate students with space to engage in research activities, meet with one another and interact with faculty members
	
	7. Increase opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in research and develop key research skills
		1. Create a database in which graduate students seeking RA opportunities can list their skills, experience and availability
		
		2. Set and meet goals for equitable distribution of scholarships and fellowships
		
		3. Offer an Indigenous research workshop series to help faculty members better support Indigenous research for both Indigenous and settler[iv] students
		
		4. Devise and implement a modular approach to design and delivery of the EDUC 864 research course
		
		5. Create a curricular structure through which students can continuously build and strengthen their research skills
		
		6. Create physical space conducive to graduate students working individually and/or collaboratively that is accessible during and after work hours
		
		7. Implement the following initiatives:
		  a. Offer a directed reading course for undergraduate students that introduces them to faculty research (in view of potentially regularising it)
		  b. Identify opportunities to include undergraduate students in faculty research activities
		  c. Identify faculty members interested in and available to mentor undergraduate students and teacher-learners in the Pre-Service Professional and Advanced Professional Studies programs to conduct research projects

Strengthening Community Research Practices

We understand community research practices to involve reciprocal and trusting relationships between faculty members and community groups/organizations as they investigate issues of mutual interest and concern. While the processes and activities of community research may vary according to context, they include the "4Rs": respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991)[v]. We recognise the importance of upholding academic independence while remaining responsive to power relations and diverse (and sometimes not always aligning) needs/interests/agendas of the community.

2020-2021 Activities	Objectives	Actions
1. Faculty Forum on Community-Engaged Research (CER) to showcase diversity of existing activities and develop ties with SFU's Community-Engaged Research Initiative (CERi) 2. Identify Faculty expertise and assess capacity with respect to community needs 3. Identify good models of supporting CER in other institutions 4. Develop guidelines that outline how CER is understood in the FoE	1. Develop models for how to share CER stories/outcomes and impacts 2. With the IERC, support faculty in aligning CER with Indigenous research protocols, recognizing that these protocols already exist and will differ in each community 3. Provide intentional support for CER in recognition of the sustained efforts required to cultivate committed, longer-term research partnerships 4. Develop protocols for the Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee (TPC) to support CER 5. Respect research ethics protocols recommended by communities, including Indigenous communities and organizations 6. Foreground the community partner's voice and CER experiences	1. Collect and archive exemplars of respectful Indigenous research processes that are long-term and reciprocal in collaboration with Indigenous knowledge holders. 2. Create anti-/de-colonial ethical values (vs. "protocols") to guide CER and Indigenous research in education. 3. Explore and identify what might be missing from TPC criteria in fully representing the types, range, management and impacts of CER 4. Develop TPC exemplars where faculty members "tell stories" of CER research[vi] 5. Through *Research in Focus*[vii], support faculty in sharing processes and outcomes of CER[viii] and foregrounding community partner's voices 6. Hold community consultations to explore how to represent the impact/s of CER in ways that are equitable, collaborative, and reciprocal in conceptualization, design, management and knowledge dissemination 7. Invite school teachers and students to conceptualize questions relevant to them and their communities that can be taken up in CER

Forging new partnerships and expanding funding opportunities

The objectives and actions for this priority draw on insights from past activities and initiatives including current Research Hub support of funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Vancouver Foundation along with the current grant-writing workshops.

2020-2021 Activities	Objectives	Actions
1. Inventorying and categorizing current FoE partnerships 2. Identifying provincial and federal funding opportunities beyond Tri-Council ones 3. Identifying international grant opportunities 4. Identifying grant and contract opportunities from Foundations and organizations, including Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR), Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, and Spencer Foundation	1. Foster international research collaborations and partnerships 2. Develop research collaborations and partnerships with other SFU faculties 3. Increase visibility of our collective (faculty and student) expertise in educational research 4. Leverage SFU institutional research support from the VPR Office, Institutional Strategic Awards (ISA), Office of Research Services (ORE), Office of Research Ethics (ORE), Knowledge Mobilisation Hub, CERi; and external support, such as that from SSHRC, MITACS. 5. Develop capacity within the Faculty on how to find, manage, work with and report on working with external organizations. 6. Develop systems and processes to support the pursuit of additional funders, partnerships and donors	1. Develop database-driven visualization tools that allow for searching and filtering meta-level information on research projects and theses (e.g., year, area, abstract, etc.) 2. Strengthen collaboration with the SFU Communications office to promote FoE research and researchers 3. Developing Knowledge Mobilisation expertise within the FoE for faculty and students by leveraging support and resources from the SFU Knowledge Mobilisation Hub 4. Conduct one-on-one short interviews of our faculty members to document their partnerships 5. Offer workshops on applying for Foundation funding 6. Devise new forms of support for partnership development (consider working with CERi, hiring RAs, and working with teaching faculty) 7. Conducts annual reviews of all theses produced within the past 12 months (e.g., reading abstracts), identify external organizations partnered in the thesis work, and provide suggestions and recommendations to the FoE on further research partnership development 8. Develop reciprocal partnerships with Indigenous organizations active in the territories and communities where we work and in the field of education 9. Identify areas of research that could potentially attract donors (e.g., ecological education, imaginative education, and arts education[ix]

References

Kirkness, V. & Barnhardt, R. (1991). First Nations and Higher Education: The Four R's--Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility. *The Journal of American Indian Education*, 30, 1–15.

Pidgeon, M., Archibald J. & Hawkey, C. (2014). Relationship matter: Supporting Aboriginal graduate students in British Columbia, Canada. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 44*(1). [Available: https://journals.sfu.ca/cjhe/index.php/cjhe/article/view/2311]

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[i] Please see https://www.sfu.ca/education-research-hub/events/past/2021.html—use the tabs to find out about the 2019 and 2020 speakers.

[ii] Use the link above to find speakers from 2018 to 2019.

[iii] See https://www.sfu.ca/education-research-hub/services/education-graduate-student-research-resources.html

[iv] The use of the term 'settler' is informed by the report of the SFU Aboriginal Reconciliation Council (ARC): http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/reconciliation/SFU-ARC%20Walk%20This%20Path%20With%20Us_Full%20Report_Sept5.pdf

[v] Kirkness and Barnhardt introduce the 4Rs as principles for decolonizing relationships between higher education institutions and Indigenous students (Pidgeon, Archibald & Hawkey, 2014). These same principles resonate for community research, including: *respect* for community processes and ways of knowing; the *relevance* of research questions and processes for individuals and communities; commitment to *reciprocity* in research processes such as acknowledging participation in research as labour, creating different avenues for participation, freely sharing research findings with communities for their own use; and *responsibilities* for the wellbeing and integrity of those involved in the research with respect to power differences and the potential impact of research for individual and community well-being.

[vi] For example: The University of Victoria peer review guidelines for FTP & impact rubric: https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/8165)

[vii] See https://www.sfu.ca/education-research-hub/research-in-focus.html

[viii] See, for example, FoE's "Surrey Scholarship Series: From the Ground Up" (https://www.sfu.ca/education-research-hub/events/past/2019.html) and SSHRC's "Storytellers" competition (https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/society-societe/storytellers-jai_une_histoire_a_raconter/index-eng.aspx).

[ix] This might be done in connection with the proposal of research challenge areas in Priority 1.