



Faculty of Law

Strategic Plan

2025 - 2030



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA



Territorial Acknowledgement

The University of Alberta, its buildings, labs and research stations are primarily located on the territory of the N hiyaw (Cree), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), M tis, Nakoda (Stoney), Dene, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) and Anishinaabe (Ojibway/Saulteaux), lands that are now known as part of Treaties 6, 7 and 8 and homeland of the M tis. The University of Alberta respects the sovereignty, lands, histories, languages, knowledge systems and cultures of all First Nations, M tis and Inuit nations.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Fiona Kelly
Dean, Faculty of Law

This strategic plan reflects both who we are today and who we aspire to be as a Faculty of Law. At its heart is a commitment to being a true home for our community, a place where students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community and industry partners feel valued, supported, and inspired to thrive. It is a plan that builds on our proud history of academic excellence while charting a bold course forward with a shared sense of purpose.

Our priorities are clear: to provide our students with an outstanding and future-focused legal education, to support faculty in their pursuit of research excellence, and to strengthen our relationships with the profession, alumni, and community. Over the next five years we are committed to investing in transformative learning experiences, impactful research, and modern, welcoming spaces that reflect the needs of today's learners.

This plan also reflects the vital role we play beyond the Law Centre's walls. Through experiential learning, community and industry partnerships, and the work of our centres and institutes, we serve our city, province, and country. Guided by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, we also affirm our enduring commitment to the work of reconciliation and building reciprocal relationships with First Nations, non-status, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

Above all, this plan is a call to collective action. Its success depends on the energy, creativity, and dedication of our entire community. Together, we will ensure that the University of Alberta Faculty of Law continues to uplift the whole people, a vision that has guided our university since its founding.

Fiona Kelly
Dean, Faculty of Law

FACULTY OF LAW Introduction

The mission of our Faculty is to be a home for every member of our community: students, faculty, staff, and broader partners alike. By “home,” we mean a place where people are respected, where diverse perspectives and lived experiences are genuinely welcomed, and where each person is empowered to thrive. Home is where impactful and innovative scholarship is cultivated to advance knowledge and justice; where teaching inspires curiosity, excellence, and care; where the desire to serve each other, the legal profession, and our community begins; and where relationships are built on trust, respect, and belonging.

Our strategic plan focuses on our intentions and obligations towards our key constituencies — students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members — recognizing our current strengths while charting our aspirations for the next five years. It is both a reflection of who we are and a roadmap for who we aim to become.

This mission is grounded in a culture of academic excellence, innovation, and social responsibility. We are committed to building a diverse, inclusive community that not only meets the highest scholarly standards but also works boldly to advance justice and respond to the needs of society, especially those at its margins. Through critical inquiry, engaged learning, and impactful research, we empower one another to think deeply, act ethically, and serve and lift others with purpose.

In all of this, we carry forward the vision of the university’s founding president, Henry Marshall Tory: to uplift the whole people. This vision lives on in our commitment to making this Faculty not just a place of learning, scholarship, and service, but also a true and lasting home.

Serving our Students

We aim to serve our students by fostering academic excellence, delivering an innovative and rigorous legal education, and helping them prepare for and discover fulfilling careers. Our Faculty is dedicated to cultivating not only the intellectual and practical skills students need to thrive, but also a deep commitment to integrity, access to justice, and service. Through our foundational curriculum, principled mentorship, experiential learning, and the cultivation of a student-centred approach, we prepare our students to be thoughtful advocates and leaders. We are also committed to creating modern and flexible student spaces that provide sanctuaries for focused study, as well as collaborative hubs where ideas are exchanged, debated, and refined.

We are committed to fostering an engaged and inclusive student community that offers multiple pathways for involvement and promotes well-being. We recognize that our students have diverse interests and we are committed to providing them with the curriculum and career resources needed to pursue their individual goals as well as comply with the legal profession's educational requirements.

The Faculty's student body includes those enrolled in the Juris Doctor (JD) degree, graduate degrees, the Internationally Trained Lawyer Pathway program, as well as non-law students. As the Faculty pursues strategic growth, we remain committed to providing an outstanding educational experience to all of our students, recognizing that each cohort requires unique services and support.



Experiential learning

- We will increase the quantity and quality of our experiential learning offerings and explore the possibility of establishing a University of Alberta Law Clinic.
- We will explore offering academic credit to volunteer day leaders at Student Legal Services.

Technological literacy

- We will prepare our students for how technology will change their lives as legal professionals in the 21st century and ensure they leave the Faculty both ready to embrace the challenges posed and with the confidence to show leadership in the responsible use of technology.
- As we increase our undergraduate non-JD offerings, we will develop a vision and policy for taking this learning online to promote flexible and innovative modes of evaluation, grading, and pedagogical practice

Curriculum

- We will develop course clusters for upper-year courses and provide an annual information session and video on course selection.
- We will continue to invest in and support Indigenous legal perspectives in teaching Indigenous law, including Indigenous methodologies and land-based learning.
- We will review the Internationally Trained Lawyer Pathway program with the goal of providing an improved student experience and academic outcomes, and modest enrolment growth.
- We will continue to support faculty integrating their research, perspectives, and subject-matter expertise into their teaching.

Student diversity

- We will continue our commitment to increasing financial aid to students across all of our programs to make our law school more accessible.
- We will continue our commitment to working with Black, Indigenous and people of colour to develop practices and programming that attracts and retains a diverse student body.
- We commit to addressing internal cultural and procedural barriers presenting a welcoming and diverse multicultural Faculty.



KEY AREAS

Recruitment
Admissions
Learning
Career preparation
Alumni connection and experience

Our aspirations are:

Recruitment and admissions

- We will extend our recruitment initiatives even further beyond Edmonton and Alberta.
- We will cultivate recruitment, application, and admissions processes as tools of institutional culture creation.

Student experience

- We will continue to provide our students with a high quality, current legal education that satisfies the needs and requirements of the legal profession.
- We will adapt our curriculum to support a variety of career paths.
- We will promote health and wellness, inclusion, and participation of all students as pillars of the student experience.
- We will provide tailored and comprehensive career support that prepares students for a variety of careers in Alberta, Canada, and beyond.
- We will explore renovating the law library and other internal spaces to create more accessible, modern, and flexible teaching and learning spaces.
- We will commit to fair, transparent, and accessible Faculty processes, from admissions through to graduation.

Supporting our Faculty Members

KEY AREAS

Research support and recognition
Research impact
Graduate student education and mentorship
Service

We aim to serve the scholarship of law and the broader research community by supporting and enhancing a scholarly community that values, promotes, and rewards innovative scholarship and high quality, impactful research. With strong research leadership, augmented by several years of significant faculty renewal, and dedicated research services in the Faculty, College of Social Sciences and Humanities, and university, we are in a strong position to accelerate our research trajectory. Through strategic investment, targeted mentorship and support, and increased collaboration, our goal is to be national and international research leaders who influence scholarly debates, professional practice, judicial decision-making, and law reform. Our centres and institutes offer largely untapped opportunities to increase the breadth and depth of our research and will support our growth as a research-focused Faculty.

The world of legal scholarship is expanding, with transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary, cross-sector, and community-based research flourishing in this new scholarly ecosystem. We are committed to supporting scholars who pursue various approaches to legal research and who disseminate their research in disciplinary, transdisciplinary, and interdisciplinary outlets. A multiplicity of methodologies and perspectives allows us to tackle some of the most challenging issues facing modern society and reminds us of the centrality of law in providing a framework for change.

We are committed to communicating our research to diverse audiences to maximize access, increase impact, and enhance legal literacy. The Faculty will work closely with university communications to continue to increase the visibility of our research outcomes and successes.

Our commitments:

Research excellence

- We will continue to invest in becoming national and international research leaders who influence scholarly debates, professional practice, judicial decision-making, law reform, policymaking, and work in community.
- We will foster a research environment characterized by collegiality and generosity, where we are invested in each other's success.
- We will continue to support our existing research centres and institutes and work to better integrate them into the research life of the Faculty.
- We will strive to increase Tri-Council funding for scholars within the Faculty, positioning us for a Canada Research Chair appointment in the Faculty.



Scholarly support

- We will reward and recognize research excellence by introducing faculty research awards and by nominating colleagues for university and other research awards.
- Drawing on College of Social Sciences and Humanities and university resources, we will support individual researchers to pursue research that is meaningful to them.
- External research grant success will be rewarded with teaching release that supports timely research project implementation.
- We will commit to creating opportunities for faculty to dedicate more focused attention to research by providing enhanced administrative support for research-related activities, especially grant-related events and management.
- We will enhance onboarding processes to provide a uniform and robust welcome into the culture and practices of the Faculty.

Impact

- We will bring our research and scholarly practice into the classroom to enrich student learning.
- We will offer opportunities for faculty members to explore emerging knowledge creation and dissemination technologies.
- We will continue to invest in and support research in Indigenous law and Indigenous legal perspectives.
- We will develop a strategy to disseminate our research to diverse stakeholders, including industry, government, and community groups, to maximize access and impact.

Graduate education

- We will develop an online graduate certificate in Indigenous law.
- We will enhance our graduate program by increasing the size of the graduate student cohort and providing new, specialized learning opportunities.

Service

- We will continue to recognize and promote our faculty members' diverse service contributions within the university, to the profession, and to the community.

Supporting our Staff

Our faculty, staff, and students form a tight-knit community within the Law Centre. The health of this community impacts our work, our relationships, our general well-being, and our success. The Faculty is committed to creating a positive workplace culture that supports professional development and growth, empowered leadership, general happiness and fulfilment, and equity. We acknowledge that success in this area requires a conscious commitment to supporting and celebrating the diversity that already exists within the Faculty and taking deliberate steps to increase it.

Staff in the Faculty of Law serve in student-facing and administrative roles that impact every phase of the student life cycle in the Faculty, from recruitment to students, to alumni relations and beyond. Staff ensure the smooth operation of the Faculty and interface with their colleagues across the university in ways that support their own job satisfaction and the goals of the Faculty. Their commitment to student success and well-being provides an essential support for students in navigating academic programs and extracurricular offerings.



KEY AREAS

Recruitment,
hiring,
and retention

Staff
professional
development

Supervisor
Effectiveness

Recognition
Job satisfaction

Staff development

- We will explore creating programs and recognition for outstanding staff members.
- We will support participation in programs to enhance job satisfaction and retention for all staff.
- We will continue to provide a welcoming, collegial environment.
- We will enhance current onboarding processes to provide a uniform and robust welcome into not only functional roles but also the culture of the Faculty.
- We will conduct meaningful performance reviews, tied to our values and our strategic goals.

Faculty and staff connection and well-being

- We will create opportunities to bring faculty and staff together to discuss important workplace issues and build social connection.
- We will continue to create opportunities to invest in and celebrate each other's successes, including nominating staff for university awards.

Partnership with Alumni, the Legal Community and Donors



A strong relationship with the legal community is critical to the Faculty's mission and the success of our students. We are grateful for the contributions members of the profession make to our Faculty by teaching courses, mentoring students, collaborating with faculty on research projects, coaching moot teams, and making a wide range of career options available to our students. We are committed to regularly welcoming members of the legal community into the Faculty and maintaining a close relationship with the profession by being active in relevant professional bodies, including the Law Society of Alberta, Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Law Foundation, Legal Education Society of Alberta, and Assist: Alberta Lawyers' Assistance Society.

We are proud that the Faculty's graduates are such outstanding leaders in the legal profession, business, government, and notable organizations and institutions in our communities, including non-profits and the arts. They are also leaders within the Faculty, generously lending their support to the next generation of lawyers through the sharing of their time, expertise, and resources in support of our academic mission and student success. We are committed to maintaining these relationships by delivering meaningful and sustainable alumni engagement that fosters strong connections among alumni, students, and faculty members, celebrates alumni achievements, and nurtures both established and new relationships with members of our alumni community.

Philanthropy plays a transformative role in advancing the Faculty of Law's mission, enabling us to move beyond excellence towards true distinction. Rooted in a culture of shared purpose, our approach to fundraising is deeply donor-centric — focused on building trust, fostering meaningful relationships, and earning philanthropic investment through demonstrated impact. Donor contributions create the margin of excellence that elevates student experience — from expanding experiential learning opportunities that promote access to justice and economic development to supporting participation in moots across the country. Philanthropy helps build modernized, inclusive spaces like a renewed law library, and celebrates student excellence and leadership through scholarships and awards. It also supports students with financial need through bursaries. We are committed to responsible, transparent stewardship and strategic endowment management, ensuring every gift has enduring impact. Together with our donors, we will build a Faculty that is not only academically exceptional but also equitable, inclusive, innovative, and deeply connected to the community.

KEY AREAS

Alumni
relationships
and events

Mutually
beneficial
partnerships with
members of the
legal profession

Meaningful
opportunities
for alumni and
community
engagement

Purposeful
donor
partnerships

Stewardship that
demonstrates
impact

Our commitments:

Legal profession

- We will continue to work with the legal profession, including professional organizations in Alberta and beyond, to maintain and enhance our reputation for producing high quality graduates who are versatile, professional, and ethical leaders in their community.
- We will continue to leverage the enormous expertise, energy, and innovation in our legal community to enhance our Faculty, where appropriate.
- We will continue to serve the legal community through our academic mission, partnerships, and our participation in the ongoing development of the law.
- We will explore joint initiatives in service of issues such as access to justice, legal literacy and public awareness, and the underrepresentation of communities in legal education and the legal profession.

Alumni and Friends

- We will actively utilize the Faculty's relationship with Law Alumni and Friends to engage and communicate with alumni and to continue to foster a close relationship between the Faculty and alumni.
- We will review the types of alumni events and opportunities we offer to ensure we are responsive to the diversity within our alumni community.
- We will explore ways to best recognize and celebrate alumni achievements.
- We will work closely with Law Alumni and Friends to support meaningful and transformational giving to the Faculty.

Donors to the Faculty of Law

- We will harness philanthropy as a catalyst for distinction — ensuring every gift advances our shared strategic vision, creating the margin of excellence that elevates the Faculty beyond what traditional funding sources can deliver.
- We will co-create lasting impact alongside our donors by aligning clear philanthropic goals with the Faculty's strategic direction to drive visible and enduring outcomes.
- We will strengthen endowment stewardship to ensure timely use, transparency, and lasting impact of every gift.

Serving Society

The work of the Faculty of Law is that of striving to build, through our teaching, scholarship, and service, a more just and equitable society.

We aim to serve local, provincial, national, and global communities by reaching out and welcoming in a diverse array of community members, partners, research collaborators, and knowledge holders. Through the Faculty's experiential learning program, our support of Student Legal Services, and our centres and institutes, we will make important contributions to the city of Edmonton and the surrounding region by providing free legal services and public legal education to those most in need.

The Faculty is committed to building legal literacy by providing educational opportunities to the broader community, including non-law students and members of the public and professional organizations who want to increase their understanding of how the Canadian legal system operates. By offering undergraduate legal studies and continuing education opportunities beyond the Juris Doctor, the Faculty will contribute to building a more informed and engaged citizenry.

KEY AREAS

Program creation
for non-law
students and
the public
Student
Legal Services
Experiential
learning
Centres and
institutes

Our commitments:

Community partnerships

- We will continue to work with existing clinical partners to provide legal services to the Edmonton community, including Student Legal Services.
- We will launch new clinics that respond to areas of need.
- We will continue to find ways to share our vision with the broader community and to welcome into the Faculty individuals and groups from whom we can learn and with whom we can partner in pursuing shared goals.
- We will continue to draw on our research to contribute to law reform, legal practice, and media debate.

Increasing legal literacy beyond the JD

- We will develop an undergraduate certificate in law for non-law students, with enrolment available to University of Alberta students, students enrolled at other universities, and members of the community.
- We will explore other certificate and continuing education programs for lawyers and other professionals.



Entrepreneurial Law Clinic students meet with their client in his shop.

Our Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation

We aim to serve the goal of reconciliation by continuing to act upon the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, including subsequent inquiries and reports. We affirm our enduring commitment to the work of reconciliation and building reciprocal relationships with First Nations, non-status, Inuit, and Métis Peoples, recognizing reconciliation as a continuous and evolving responsibility embedded in all aspects of our teaching, research, and community engagement. This includes continuing to attract, support, and retain Indigenous faculty members, staff, and students. We will continue to support existing initiatives within the Faculty and explore new opportunities to act on reconciliation while building respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples locally, provincially, and across Canada.

KEY AREAS

Examine hiring strategy

Curriculum development

Indigenous ways of knowing

Research on Indigenous legal matters and issues

Alignment with *Braiding Past, Present, and Future Indigenous Strategic Plan*

Our commitments:

- We will advance reconciliation by hiring Indigenous faculty, instructors, and staff and support their success by fostering an inclusive environment that values Indigenous knowledge, experiences, and perspectives.
- We will continue to recruit Indigenous students and provide the support, resources, and community needed to foster their academic success.
- We will continue to work with the Indigenous Law Students' Association and support their advocacy and community-building activities.
- We will advance reconciliation through meaningful initiatives, partnerships, and curriculum development that honour the principles of truth and reconciliation.
- We will continue to support the work of the Wahkohtowin Law and Governance Lodge (WLGL) to respond to the TRC's Call to Action No. 50 and revitalize Indigenous law through community-led research.
- We will support the WLGL to continue to provide culturally safe welcoming space, and will support them to secure sustainable resources and expand their impact.
- We will continue to collaborate with College of Social Sciences and Humanities and university offices to support Indigenous students, faculty, and staff, including First Peoples' House, the Office of Indigenous Programming and Research, and the Faculty of Native Studies.
- We will continue to participate in diversity-focused initiatives within the university and beyond that foster solidarity and promote substantive equality.
- We will build reciprocal relationships with First Nations, non-status, Inuit and Métis groups, communities and Peoples locally, provincially, and across Canada.



Wahkohtowin Law and Governance Lodge celebrated the debut of the Wahkohtowin Intensive: Miyo-wicêhtowin Principles and Practice course film and the launch of the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation hide-tanning manual

Leading with Purpose.



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