

FACULTY OF COMMUNITY SERVICES ACADEMIC PLAN 2025 - 2030

Community
Equity
Innovation



Land Acknowledgement

As we embark on the Faculty of Community Services' 2025-2030 Academic Plan, we begin by acknowledging the land on which our institution stands.

We operate on the Treaty Lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and on the traditional territories of Anishinaabe Peoples, the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee Nations, and many other Indigenous Nations and Peoples who have stewarded these lands since time immemorial—land that is now home to Inuit, Métis and First Nations Peoples from across Turtle Island. We honour and uphold the Dish With One Spoon Treaty, we commit to valuing the Two Row Wampum and we vow to treat the land and people with an understanding grounded in relational accountability and co-learning.

We encourage our community members to take time to recognize the lands on which we teach, learn and live and we commit to educate ourselves on Indigenous histories and the ongoing impacts of colonialism. As we advance our mission, we remain committed to creating pathways for meaningful engagement and partnerships with Indigenous communities, ensuring that our academic and social contributions reflect the principles of respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility.

Message from the Dean

Over the past five years (2020-2025), the Faculty of Community Services has demonstrated its commitment to responding to social needs, supporting students through turbulent times, and producing knowledge that is of immediate relevance to social relations and the political economies of Ontario, Canada, and the world. During the pandemic, FCS programs continued to be present in person. Almost all our professions were deemed essential. The Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing participated in vaccine clinics; our Social Work colleagues and students provided essential peer to peer counselling and support. Colleagues in Public Health were part of the public education strategies, ensuring public health recommendations found traction within TMU's community and beyond. Early childhood educators provided child care services and child and youth care practitioners were present to support youth through their isolation wherever they were. From the pandemic to a world in disorder, the past five years were a time for FCS faculty, staff and students to engage with issues and themes that are complex, that are very real, and from which we cannot hide. I am proud to have been the Dean of a Faculty that navigated these circumstances with humility but also with determination.

The coming five years (2025-2030) bring new challenges and new opportunities. The world continues to present itself as precarious. From economic instabilities to social and political inequities, and from spaces of exclusion and inaccessibility to the suffering of people here and abroad from the evils of war and violence, we enter these next five years determined to contribute goodness and value to our local communities and to the world. Notwithstanding funding constraints, we nevertheless want to optimize our resources, our knowledges, and our relationships such that we can be relevant and impactful with our actions locally and globally. To this end, our Academic Plan 2025-2030 is designed to be ambitious, bold, and unapologetically forward-looking. From new programs and degrees in tune with 21st century priorities to doubling down on efforts at reconciliation, and from practicing equity at all levels of our Faculty to ensuring wellness across all roles in our Faculty, we aim to push ahead to do better. Our students rely on us to provide them with current, practical, meaningful skills and abilities that allow them to thrive in workplaces not through passive labour but through the exercise of new leadership. We intend to meet them where they are at. From nutrition and food sciences to how we design our cities and public spaces, and from our focus on accessibility to the protection of young people subject to exploitation, FCS will advance the goals of TMU's Academic Plan by staying true to its commitments to communities, equity, and innovation in sectors such as health care, education, and social justice.

I am proud of the FCS Academic Plan. Together, the seven priorities identified will strengthen FCS and provide endless opportunity for achieving our aspirations. Of course, we will succeed only as a collective of faculty members, contract lecturers, staff and students, and only in partnership with our extensive list of community partners, representing the full diversity of communities across Ontario. The FCS Academic Plan is about relationships – together we thrive!

Dr. Kiaras Gharabaghi, Ph.D
Dean, Faculty of Community Services

Consultation Process

The FCS Academic Plan is the outcome of consultations and collaboration across TMU's central units and within the Faculty itself. It is built on the foundations of the TMU Academic Plan, 2025-2030 entitled Transforming Futures. That plan involved thousands of hours of consultation across all stakeholder groups within the TMU community. In Spring 2025, FCS put forward an Action Plan, designed to conceptualize our actioning of TMU's priorities. After receiving feedback from central and Faculty-based units, we drafted the FCS Academic Plan and presented it to the FCS Dean's Council, which includes the academic leadership of all FCS Schools. From there, Directors were asked to share the draft with their colleagues in Schools, solicit feedback, and report back on ideas, suggestions, edits and desired changes. Additionally, the draft academic plan was distributed to all FCS community members in mid-October for confidential and individual feedback by the end of October. Based on all feedback received, revisions were made and a final FCS Academic Plan, 2025-2030 was produced.

Introduction

The Faculty of Community Services is built on the values of equity, impact, and community transformation. We aim to improve social, economic, and political conditions locally and globally that center human dignity, while working to disrupt existing structures that reflect the inequities of colonial and neocolonial institutions and social relations. We champion and support contributions to new, innovative, forward-looking social relations built on the strengths of diverse ways of knowing, being, and doing.



Our Priorities

The FCS Academic Plan, 2025-2030 is built on the foundation of the five priorities identified in TMU's Academic Plan, *Transforming Futures*:

Enhance student learning journey for greater student success

Create positive impact through SRC excellence and local and global collaboration

Support people and community

Continue our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation

Ensure future readiness

Our Strategic Goals

Congruent with TMU's Academic Plan 2025-2030, *Transforming Futures*, our strategic goals are:

1. Recruit and engage with students representing diverse demographics and lived experiences and support their intellectual and social growth through excellent, critical, and innovative pedagogies within and across professional fields.
2. Strengthen equity-focused and community-engaged research in local and international research collaborations and build spaces for direct and ongoing reciprocal research learning and community relationship.
3. Strengthen contributions to reconciliation and Indigenous resurgence by building purposeful relationships with Indigenous communities, advancing Indigenous-informed pedagogies and scholarship, and providing support and mentorship to Indigenous faculty, staff and students.
4. Build degree and non-degree academic programs that transcend traditional disciplinary siloes and prepare students to understand and engage with the complexities and fluidity of Canadian and global social relations and political economies.
5. Be a leader in the production of diverse knowledges, structures and processes related to public health, healthcare, nutrition, health equity, education, and urban spaces through transdisciplinary, interprofessional and innovation-based pedagogies, curriculum, research and creative activity.
6. Be locally relevant and impactful and globally engaged and connected in everything we do.
7. Support the establishment of a Faculty-level equity strategy that promotes equity in community care, belonging and human flourishing of our staff, faculty and students, and takes action on anti-racism and anti-oppression.

Strategic Goal #1

Recruit and engage with students representing diverse demographics and lived experiences and support their intellectual and social growth through excellent, critical, and innovative pedagogies within and across professional fields.

How we will work towards this goal:

As part of our engagement with TMU's Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) strategy, we will focus on student retention as well as on recruiting new students. We will expand our engagement with senior high school students and with communities facing social and economic adversities in the GTA by offering pre-credit and potentially university credit-based learning opportunities in community. This will ensure that students with limited prior exposure to post-secondary education become familiar with TMU's culture of equity and inclusion and potentially choose TMU as their first choice.

To this end, we will continue to build on models of collaboration and partnership currently in place, such as partnership with Peel District School Board for the Future of Health program, establish new school and community-based partnership with programs such as the TDSB's Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement, and support faculty members engaged in community-based youth programs and projects. Furthermore, we will gear programming activities of the FCS Community Transformation Café toward fostering relationships with youth in Brampton and northern Mississauga, to help acquaint them with TMU.

We will also ensure that first year students from specific groups are brought together for gatherings each semester to enable both peer and staff support and to ensure that new students are able to take advantage of TMU's central student support services. In the classroom, we will ensure that our curriculum, pedagogy, and delivery methods account for the lived experiences and the complex life circumstances of diverse students, and that teaching and learning experiences are reflective of equity, in that students of all background and circumstances are provided with the resources and support they need to succeed.

How we will know we are making progress:

- We will see an increase in applications to our programs.
- We will implement student surveys exploring student experience at regular intervals.
- We will analyze data from the University Planning Office about student demographics, including first generation students and students from equity-deserving groups.
- We will use our Faculty Curriculum committee to do audits of course curriculum to ensure it reflects the lived experiences of diverse student groups.
- We will work with Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching to ensure our pedagogic methods are inclusive and meaningful to diverse groups of students.



Strategic Goal #2

Strengthen our community relationships and community-engaged research and built spaces for direct and ongoing reciprocal learning for and from communities.

How we will work towards this goal:

Faculty members across FCS schools are engaged in local and international research collaborations and FCS has over 2000 community partnerships as part of its internship, field placement, and co-op placement programs. Many of these partnerships have greater potential for engaging equity-focused and community-engaged principles and strategies in collaborative teaching, research, and community work. We will ensure greater opportunities for joint training and learning, shared research opportunities, and shared physical and virtual spaces where equity in collaborative endeavors can be learned and lived out, and where gatherings can foster meaningful relationships between community partners, faculty members, and community organizations we already partner with. In the context of Brampton and Peel Region, we will leverage our FCS Community Transformation Café as a site for partnership development and collaborative projects in that region. Each year, we will invite up to 50 placement partners for a symposium of joint learning and informal engagement. Each School will be supported in holding partner appreciation and engagement events once per year. We will continue to support international partnerships by engaging different models for transnational partnership development, while supporting faculty members to solidify and advance international research partnerships.

How we will know we are making progress:

- Feedback through surveys administered at the annual placement partner symposia.
- Each School participates in at least one partner appreciation and engagement event per year.
- At least one FCS course is offered at a partner site instead of at TMU each year.
- Participation and attendance data at the FCS Community Transformation Café.

Strategic Goal #3

Strengthen contributions to reconciliation and Indigenous resurgence by building purposeful relationships with Indigenous communities, advancing Indigenous-informed pedagogies and scholarship, and providing support and mentorship to Indigenous faculty, staff and students.

How we will work towards this goal:

We will continue to develop curriculum with and about Indigenous communities, Canada-First Nation relations, Metis Nations, and Inuit communities. We will ensure that every student in FCS completes at least one mandatory course focused on Indigenous topics. Furthermore, we will build experiential learning opportunities in partnership with Indigenous communities. We also aim to recruit more Indigenous faculty members and provide supports to those faculty members as per MOU 26 of the TFA Collective Agreement. Finally, we aim to support the production and dissemination of Indigenous scholarship.



How we will know we are making progress:

By Fall 2026, we will have at least one experiential learning course involving student travel to Indigenous communities (housed in School of Occupational and Public Health), in partnership and by invitation from Indigenous communities.

By Fall 2027, FCS will be hosting at least one event disseminating Indigenous scholarship per semester (ceremony or presentation of research), involving both FCS faculty and Indigenous community partner organizations.

By Fall 2027, FCS 200 and FCS 400 are implemented across at least four of our Schools as core elective curriculum and where possible, one or both courses are implemented as required curriculum.

By Fall 2028, we will have hired additional Indigenous faculty members into tenure stream positions in FCS.

By Fall 2030, all FCS students will have been exposed to Indigenous themes as mandatory curriculum, either through the FCS 200 and 400 courses or through locally developed courses or integrated curriculum, as appropriate in each School.

By Fall 2030, FCS will have at least five fully active partnerships with urban Indigenous organizations in the GTA.

Each year, we aim to add at least one urban Indigenous organization to the active partnerships of at least two of our Schools.

Strategic Goal #4

Build degree and non-degree academic programs that transcend traditional disciplinary siloes and prepare students to understand and engage with the complexities and fluidity of Canadian and global social relations and political economies.

How we will work towards this goal:

We will develop several new undergraduate degree programs, focused on thematic areas such as: Health Sciences, Global Health, and Social Innovation; at the graduate level, we will implement the new Master of Health Sciences in Combating Child Sex Trafficking and Online Child Sexual Exploitation.



In addition, we will build micro credentials and short cycle certifications in the areas of specialized nursing, early childhood education, and public health through our Health Education and Innovation Catalyst.

How we will know we are making progress:

- By Fall 2026, we will have presented at least one Letter of Intent for a new program.
- By Fall 2027, we will have completed a full proposal for at least one new program and Letters of Intent for two more.
- Each year, we will measure revenues generated through the Health Education and Innovation Catalyst (HEIC) and aim to increase such revenues.

Strategic Goal #5

Be a leader in the production of diverse knowledges, structures and processes related to public health, healthcare, nutrition, health equity, education, and urban spaces through transdisciplinary, interprofessional and innovation-based pedagogies, curriculum, research and creative activity.

How we will work towards this goal:

The launch of our new Master of Health Sciences in Combating Child Sex Trafficking and Online Child Sexual Exploitation will provide further opportunities for innovation and interprofessional research and knowledge translation. Parallel to curricular changes in FCS Schools, we will focus on changes in the orientation of existing research centres (Centre for Urban Research) and new centres (Combating Child Sex Trafficking). These are spaces created for dynamic exchange of ideas and expertise among key stakeholders in the field, both locally and globally.

We will support our Schools in developing new curricular foci and broadened, interprofessional and transdisciplinary pathways for students. Two areas of initial focus include the School of Occupational Safety and Public Health, which will move from inspection-focused curriculum to a much broader conceptualization of public health, and the School of Nutrition, which will introduce a Nutrition Science concentration.

Additionally, we will be developing new internal mechanisms to provide support in establishing structures for transdisciplinary research and international partnerships within the Faculty and across Faculties at TMU.

How we will know we are making progress:

- By Fall 2026, new SRC supports available to faculty under the SPARK program.
- By Fall 2027, we will see a measurable increase in external research grant applications by mid-career faculty members.
- By Fall 2027, public health curriculum changes in OPH are completed and implementation has started.
- By Fall 2027, Nutrition Science concentration is in place.
- By Fall 2030, FCS operates multiple transdisciplinary research centres.
- By Fall 2030, FCS will consistently have measurably higher external research grants compared to 2024/2025 as the base line.



Strategic Goal #6

Be locally relevant and impactful and globally engaged and connected in everything we do.

How we will work towards this goal:

We will build partnerships with universities and NGOs in the global north and south that focus on research, study abroad and experiential learning opportunities for our students, joined student and faculty projects involving at least two countries, and faculty mobility. We will also develop structures and processes to benefit from the international scholars visiting us, and we will implement regular faculty talks about their international research and community engagements.



How we will know we are making progress:

- **Each year**, we aim to increase our active and funded research partnerships with international institutions. **By Fall 2030**, we aim for these to total seven.
- **By Fall 2027**, our students in most programs will have multiple study abroad and/or experiential learning options. **By Fall 2030**, these learning options will total seven.
- **By Fall 2027**, we will have at least two joined projects for students and faculty involving at least two countries. **By Fall 2030**, this number will total four joined projects involving at least two countries.
- **Each year**, we aim to increase the number of faculty applications to the faculty mobility fund.
- **Each year**, we will have one gathering/symposium involving FCS faculty members and international visiting scholars.
- **Each year**, we will have two presentations per semester by FCS faculty about their international work.

Strategic Goal #7

Support the establishment of a Faculty-level equity strategy that promotes equity in community care, belonging and human flourishing of our staff, faculty and students, and takes action on anti-racism, ableism, sexism, gender normativity, neuro-normativity, and all forms of oppression.

How we will work towards this goal:

The primary purpose behind developing and implementing an FCS equity strategy is to create united and communal spaces that foster the success and growth of our people, sustain caring and thriving communities, both internally and externally, and promote equity-driven practices in teaching, research, and leadership. The FCS equity strategy does not replace local equity-focused initiatives in individual Schools and instead seeks to support and enable such initiatives. Specific equity-focused initiatives in each of the Schools might differ in nature based on the differences in professional fields.

Where appropriate, we will support our Schools to enhance curricula that are equity responsive in learning and engagements among a community of teachers and learners and that are inclusive of 21st century issues such as climate justice, earth wellbeing, health equity, and food security. We will create equity-driven procedural processes to build the capacities of our researchers in EDI research, support community engagement in research, and support the career pathways of new researchers to build the social impact of their research. In fostering a sense of belonging and community care, we will build an equity-responsive leadership model focus on promoting a culture of EDI and building capacities to engage solutions towards anti-oppressive practices.

FCS will continue to champion the Black Scholarship Institute and pursue wider recognition for this initiative across the university. The Black Scholarship Institute is an important initiative that responds to the recommendations from the Anti-Black Racism Climate Review carried out in 2020 and aims to amplify and support the academic and community work of Black Scholars. It is a pan university initiative housed in FCS. We will ensure that the Black Scholarship Institute is known across the university and accessible to Black Scholars from across disciplines.

More specifically, the FCS equity strategy will allow FCS to promote equity-sensitive decisions in hiring and retention, mentorship initiatives for staff and faculty from equity-deserving groups, frameworks/designs for inclusive and EDI-focused curricula and pedagogy, comprehensive admissions processes in graduate education, EDI training for staff and faculty, EDI research symposiums/conferences, and other approaches to advance equity work in FCS.

How we will know we are making progress:

- By Fall 2026, FCS equity strategy will be implemented, discussed, and disseminated.
- By Fall 2027, we will see an increase in conversations about equity in School and Faculty-level meetings.
- By Fall 2027, we will engage with all FCS Schools about strategies for enhancing equity in curricula and pedagogy.
- Each year, we will plan and implement at least one EDI training session and one EDI research symposium in collaboration with Schools.
- Each year, discussions will be held with new racialized staff and faculty to assess their mentorship and support needs.
- By Fall 2028, a mentorship initiative will be proposed and implemented using information acquired from the assessment of mentorship needs and other discussions with faculty.
- By Fall 2030, our graduate programs will have comprehensive admissions processes that are accessible and provide clear pathways for admission to diverse applicants.