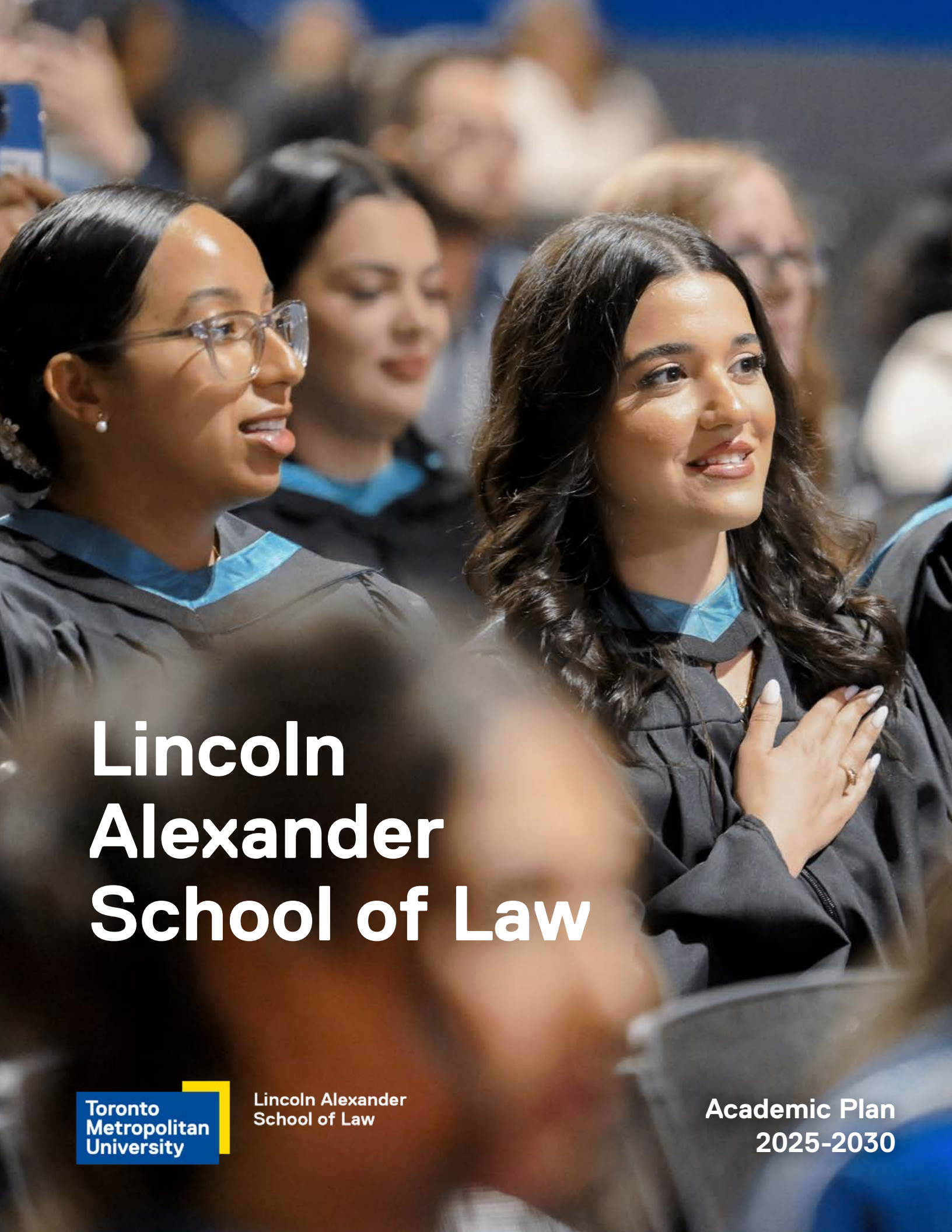

Lincoln Alexander School of Law

Toronto Metropolitan University

Lincoln Alexander School of Law

Academic Plan 2025-2030

Message from the Dean: Launching Our Academic Plan

I am proud to share the 2025-2030 Academic Plan for the Lincoln Alexander School of Law - a bold vision shaped by our shared values, collective achievements, and unwavering commitment to excellence. More than a roadmap, this plan represents the next chapter in our academic journey and is a call to deepen our impact as a community committed to innovation, inclusion, and the future of legal education.

As we celebrate five transformative years since our launch in 2020, we are grateful for the sustained passion and dedication of community members and supporters who have shaped our journey. In just half a decade, we have transformed from an aspirational vision into one of Canada's most innovative law schools - driven by purpose, equity, and bold thinking.

As we look ahead, I am reminded of the words of our namesake:

"It is not your duty to be average. It is your duty to set a higher example for others to follow."
- The Honourable Lincoln Alexander

This Academic Plan builds on the strong foundation established over our first five years and sets out a future-oriented agenda aligned with Toronto Metropolitan University's academic pillars. Our five strategic priorities reflect our commitment to reimagining legal education and advancing justice through scholarship, teaching and community engagement.

- Enhance Student Experience and Success
- Lead Locally & Connect Globally through SRC Excellence
- Support Our People and Community
- Advance Reconciliation and Indigenous Engagement
- Build Agility and Preparedness for a Changing Future

These priorities will guide our efforts as we prepare students for a dynamic and evolving legal landscape, expand our research and social impact, and ensure that we remain at the forefront of legal education in Canada and beyond.

This plan was developed over several months through thoughtful and inclusive engagement with faculty, staff, students, and alumni. We are deeply grateful to all those who shared their insights, ideas, and aspirations to help shape this collective vision for the years ahead.

Donna E. Young
Dean, Lincoln Alexander School of Law

Vision, Mission, and Pillars

The Lincoln Alexander School of Law's Academic Plan outlines five strategic priorities along with goals and initiatives for the next five years, which build on the values and priorities identified in Toronto Metropolitan University's Academic Plan 2025-2030, as well as the law school's vision and mission.

Our Vision:

To serve the public through a model of education that advances excellence in law while fostering inclusion, innovation, and intellectual exchange.

Our Mission:

To prepare leaders with the knowledge, skills, and experience to create solutions and advance justice in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

Our Pillars:

Academic Excellence

Access to Justice

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Strategic Priorities, Goals and Initiatives

The 2025-2030 Academic Plan articulates the strategic priorities that will guide our growth and development as a leading institution in legal education, research, and scholarship. The plan is anchored by five strategic priorities, each with a series of goals and associated initiatives to achieve success.

Priority 1:
Enhance Student Experience and Success

Lincoln Alexander Law is committed to fostering an inclusive, experiential, and supportive environment that promotes equity, practical learning, and student success. Our Integrated Practice Curriculum (IPC) is nationally recognized for providing early, hands-on legal training and real-world preparation. Academic success is further supported through targeted initiatives such as a successful mooting program and numerous volunteer opportunities where students refine their lawyering and advocacy skills. Experiential learning plays a central role in the curriculum and provides students with practical opportunities through internships and clinical placements. The law school's stand-alone legal clinic serves both the university community and remote areas via technology.

Mentorship, career services, and health and wellness programs ensure student success. In addition, we support a wide variety of student clubs and associations, especially those representing equity-seeking groups as well as social programming.

Building on our achievements and strengths, we strive to further enhance student experience and success in 2025-2030. Our strategic goals and actions are as follows:

Strategic Goals	Initiatives
Strengthen Strategic Enrolment Management Across the Student Lifecycle	Continue to strengthen holistic admissions process that assesses academic, professional, and lived-experience merit in line with Lincoln Alexander Law's pillars and LSO competencies. Enhance internal processes and monitor application, enrolment, and retention trends across the student lifecycle to support data-informed decision-making. Develop Lincoln Alexander chapter of "Law In Action Within Schools" (LAWS) program, pathway and mentorship programming for TDSB youth; launch an equity-focused LSAT & Application Readiness offering (prep, advising, panels, profession exposure), and deepen TMU department-level partnerships to expand access for first-generation, racialized, newcomer, 2SLGBTQ+, and other equity-deserving candidates. Adopt a competitive, merit, and values-aligned offer-and-aid strategy (entrance awards bundled with admission offers); cultivate a "culture of care" from pre-arrival through enrolment; and further develop mentorship (peer/within legal profession) and academic supports and resources to increase acceptances, reduce melt, and strengthen retention.

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Strategic Goals	Initiatives
Enhance Student Learning and Well-Being	Expand learning opportunities to include experiential learning, internships, placements, faculty-student partnerships, and community/industry collaborations. Enhance space and technology to improve the student learning experience, using lessons learned to inform future space planning aligned with academic goals and evolving needs. Develop a holistic accommodation framework that improves clarity, consistency, and accessibility; streamlines coordination; and ensures that implementation is guided by principles of privacy, equity, and inclusion. Offer regular check-ins, intentional opportunities for connection with peers, staff, and faculty, and increased awareness of comprehensive support services available across the law school, university, and legal profession.
Strengthen Academic Programming	Collaborate with faculty committees to create and distribute recommended guidelines for grading approaches, timely feedback, and communication protocols. Through existing governance channels, these guidelines will aim to clarify how students will be assessed, foster consistency across courses, and uphold fairness, while respecting academic freedom. Facilitate faculty/instructor coordination across classes (especially 1L cohorts) including a review of curriculum overlaps, assignment scheduling, and emerging pedagogical methods. Encourage cross-course coordination to reduce assignment overload and explore new teaching modalities. Recruit high-calibre and diverse academic leaders to contribute to student learning experience and law school goals.
Expand Professional and Post-Graduate Opportunities	Address curriculum gaps by increasing engagement in key legal areas and establishing clear objectives aligned with a focus on access to justice. Expand elective course offerings through directed research or clinical education that is co-supervised by practitioners. Strengthen career development and mentorship across sectors. Build alumni and employer networks to connect students to professional opportunities. Develop graduate and professional programs that extend our mission and expand pathways for advanced learning. Expand legal clinic experiential learning opportunities through the provision of legal services in the public interest, community projects, and law reform initiatives. Launch part-time and full-time graduate programs – LLM and PhD – focused on legal theory and its applications, combining coursework with research through theses or major research papers. Expand the scope and impact of the Professional Development program offerings.

Priority 2:
Lead Locally & Connect Globally through SRC Excellence

Our faculty are leading the way in scholarly, research, and creative (SRC) work, exploring bold ideas and advancing legal thinking that responds to today's most pressing challenges. We've built a diverse and talented community of scholars committed to generating knowledge that drives meaningful change—both within the legal field and across society.

Students are active contributors to SRC activities at the law school. Through research assistantships, mentorship, and hands-on opportunities, they help move projects forward while gaining valuable experience and insight. Driven by a strong interest in research and academic engagement, student involvement is central to the school's collaborative and impactful SRC environment. The future development of a graduate program will offer additional opportunities, further enhancing our SRC excellence.

Complementing this Academic Plan, our 2025-30 Strategic Research Plan lays out a clear and forward-looking path for expanding SRC across the law school. It aligns with TMU's institutional research priorities and reflects our ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of the communities we serve—locally and globally.

TMU's Strategic Research Themes	**Lincoln Alexander Law Strategic Research Plan Areas of Focus**
Health & Well-Being	Health Law & Innovation Global Health Gender & Family
Transformative Technology	Justice and Technology Law
Resilient and Inclusive Communities	Indigenous and Aboriginal Laws International Law & Global Justice Migration
Climate, Environment, and Sustainability	Climate & Environmental Sustainability Law
Democracy, Justice, and Governance	Human Rights Law Racial Justice Constitutional Law Corporate & Commercial Law

Our faculty members have successfully secured funding to support collaborative research initiatives that engage a wide range of stakeholders in exploring and addressing pressing contemporary legal issues. To further develop and strengthen SRC excellence both locally and globally, and implement the themes outlined in the Lincoln Alexander School of Law Strategic Research Plan, we have established the following strategic goals and actions:

Strategic Goals	**Initiatives**
Strengthen Research Capacity through Chairs and Research Centres	Collaborate with law faculty to explore the establishment of named research chairs in areas of scholarly distinction, supporting both existing strengths and emerging priorities. Facilitate faculty-led initiatives to create research centres and specialized academic programs that align with key areas of interest and strategic importance.
Expand Support for Faculty SRC Activities and Mentorship	Develop and implement a comprehensive support framework to assist faculty in securing, managing, and sustaining SRC projects, while maintaining a healthy workload balance. Increase external research funding by identifying new funding opportunities, providing strategic advice, and building internal capacity for successful funding applications. Foster a strong culture of mentorship, collaboration, and peer support within the faculty to elevate research productivity, spur innovation, and enhance the academic profile of the law school.
Enhance Multidisciplinary and Community-Based Collaborations	Promote and facilitate interdisciplinary research partnerships both within the law school and across faculties at Toronto Metropolitan University, as well as with other Canadian post-secondary institutions. Strengthen inclusive SRC collaborations that actively engage students, members of the legal profession, community organizations, and other diverse stakeholders. Explore and support the development of international research collaborations and global academic partnerships to expand the school's research reach and impact.
Promote and Encourage Knowledge Mobilization, Translation, and Dissemination	Establish systems to map, track, and evaluate SRC outputs for internal and external reporting, planning, and recognition purposes. Increase the visibility and impact of faculty research through coordinated communication strategies, public engagement, and partnerships with media and knowledge users. Develop a compelling and accessible public profile for the law school's SRC activities, including digital platforms and events that showcase faculty work. Launch internal awards and formal recognition initiatives to celebrate excellence in research and promote a culture of scholarly achievement.

Priority 3:
Support Our People and Community

In alignment with TMU's Academic Plan, the Lincoln Alexander School of Law is deeply committed to fostering the health, well-being, and safety of its community. This commitment is reflected through intentional programming and dedicated support services to promote inclusion and belonging.

Our efforts focus on ensuring that faculty, staff, and students are supported through timely, equitable, and privacy-conscious practices. We aim to create an inclusive and responsive academic environment where every member of the community feels heard, respected, and empowered to help build a strong, connected institutional culture.

Supporting our people and community is not a parallel priority but the foundation of all others. A law school's strength rests on the relationships among its faculty, staff, students, and alumni, and the trust they place in the institution. For Lincoln Alexander Law, still in its formative years, fostering well-being, inclusion, and belonging is both an ethical commitment and a strategic necessity. Our ability to innovate in curriculum, to advance reconciliation, and to prepare students for a changing profession depends on the resilience and cohesion of our community. This priority therefore emphasizes not only services and supports, but also the cultivation of a culture of trust, reciprocity, and shared responsibility.

Strategic Goals	Initiatives
Expand Health and Well-being Programming	Explore culturally relevant and responsive supports and services to strengthen mental health programming tailored to law school context.
Foster a Culture of Community and Trust	Implement school-wide initiatives that engage students, faculty, staff, and administrators across the academic year. These may include: • Cross-portfolio working groups • Community-building sessions and open forums to reaffirm shared values and promote inclusive dialogue • Restorative practices embedded in engagement strategies • Feedback loops that ensure community voices guide planning and decision-making • Initiatives to support faculty and staff morale and workload balance To foster stronger connections across the law school, initiatives will seek to improve communication and create additional opportunities for dialogue among students, staff, and faculty. We will continue to consider ways to make processes more visible and collaborative, reinforcing a culture of fairness and shared responsibility.
Promote Cross-Functional Knowledge Sharing	Strengthen collaboration across academic programs, research, administration, and student services to enhance all aspects of the student experience. Facilitate regular inter-departmental sessions to foster collaboration, drive innovation, and generate new initiatives such as integrated orientation programs, academic skills development, and career readiness strategies.
Strengthen Engagement with Broader Communities and the Profession	Initiatives will look outward as well as inward, seeking to build reciprocal relationships with the wider TMU community, surrounding neighbourhoods, and the legal profession. These efforts may include creating opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to contribute through service, pro bono, and civic engagement initiatives; fostering professional mentorship and collaborative projects with practitioners and alumni; and convening spaces for dialogue on pressing legal and social issues. By weaving together relationships across community and profession, the law school reinforces its responsibility to both those it serves and the students it prepares for practice.

Priority 4:
Advance Reconciliation and Indigenous Engagement

Building and sustaining relationships with Indigenous communities remains a strategic priority for the law school. This commitment is embedded as a core value in our Academic Plan and informs our broader efforts toward reconciliation.

As a new and still evolving law school, we face distinct challenges in building the infrastructure necessary to support Indigenization. Yet, this stage of growth also presents a unique and timely opportunity to embed reconciliation into the foundation of our institutional frameworks.

This includes deliberate hiring and admissions practices, Indigenizing curriculum, pedagogy, and physical space, and building strong and meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities.

Our TRC-focused initiatives reflect a long-term, structural approach to Indigenizing legal education. We are committed to fostering an environment where Indigenous students,staff, faculty, and knowledge systems can thrive. To support this work, we will appoint a Director of Indigenous Legal Education and implement strategies to ensure that reconciliation becomes
a shared, institutional responsibility.

Through these goals, activities and efforts, we aim to design a legal education environment rooted in respect, accountability, and lasting change.

Strategic Goals	Initiatives
Attract and Support Indigenous Scholars	Develop and implement a targeted recruitment strategy to attract Indigenous scholars, including mentorship opportunities and dedicated research support. Create internal grants to support Indigenous-led research and community partnerships.
Expand Indigenous Admissions Pathways and Financial Supports	Refine recruitment and admissions strategies to better attract and retain Indigenous students. Establish financial and other supports for Indigenous faculty, staff, and students. Secure funding for the establishment of an Indigenous Justice and Reconciliation Initiative.
Strengthen Indigenous Inclusion and Student Success	Establish a dedicated staff position to lead Indigenous student supports and programming. Strengthen culturally grounded services, advising, and community-building initiatives that promote the academic, cultural, and professional success of Indigenous students.
Advance Reconciliation and Partnerships	Establish an external Indigenous Advisory Committee comprising Indigenous legal practitioners, scholars, and community leaders to provide guidance on curriculum development, research initiatives, and student support strategies. This committee could also play a key role in strengthening community engagement, ensuring that Indigenization efforts are informed by Indigenous legal traditions. Create an Indigenous Visitorship Program that invites Indigenous academics, legal practitioners, or knowledge keepers to engage in teaching, research, and community dialogue. Strengthen partnerships with Indigenous nations, organizations, and the wider TMU community, fostering reciprocal relationships of trust and collaboration that extend beyond the classroom.

Priority 5:
Build Agility and Preparedness for a Changing Future

Preparing graduates for an uncertain, changing world involves not only equipping them for today's legal careers but also ensuring they are prepared to lead in the professions and opportunities of the future.

Through the proactive evolution of teaching and learning practices, we will embrace pedagogical innovation, interdisciplinary approaches, and experiential opportunities that reflect the complex realities of a changing world. We will foster a culture of curiosity and critical inquiry, embedding future-facing competencies such as digital literacy, equity-informed practice, and systems thinking into the core of our curriculum.

We also recognize that meaningful innovation must be grounded in sustainability—both environmental and institutional. We will champion resource-conscious decision-making, prioritize inclusive design, and adopt long-term planning that supports resilience and agility across all aspects of our academic and operational ecosystem.

This priority reflects our belief that a forward-thinking legal education must not only respond to change but shape it—with integrity, imagination, and purpose.

Strategic Goals	**Initiatives**
Strengthen National and Global Standing	Expand partnerships with employers and the judiciary to enhance career opportunities for students. Advance strengths in justice and technology, climate justice, and health governance, while fostering leadership in the governance of artificial intelligence and other transformative technologies. Deepen alumni engagement to amplify impact, serve as ambassadors, and create pathways for collaboration and student success. Host high-impact conferences, symposia, and public lectures that elevate thought leadership on pressing legal and societal issues.
Prepare Students for Evolving Careers	Integrate emerging trends - such as advancements in artificial intelligence, changing social norms, and shifts in legal frameworks into curriculum design and delivery.
Reimagine Learning and Teaching	Expand experiential and community-engaged learning opportunities within our clinical program, placements, and pro bono initiatives - connecting students to real-world legal issues and community needs. Co-design learning experiences with students and foster collaborative pedagogical renewal and review of learning activities and course structures. Promote technology-driven pedagogy and assessment methods—encourage faculty to experiment with technology in teaching. Adopt community-centered design and enhance physical and digital spaces to support accessible, inclusive, and collaborative learning.
Cultivate Environmental and Institutional Sustainability	Advance planning for a future law school building designed to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2040 reflecting the law school community's commitment to environmental sustainability and responsible infrastructure development. Implement sustainable practices across operations, procurement, and events in line with financial and human resources. Build and engage a strong alumni network to support mentorship, fundraising, advocacy, and long-term institutional resilience. Ensure that curriculum research, and community engagement remain responsive, forward-thinking, and aligned with the law school's pillars.

Measuring Success: Implementation & Evaluation

To support the effective launch and ongoing implementation of this Academic Plan, the Lincoln Alexander School of Law will align with Toronto Metropolitan University's metrics and key performance indicators. We are committed to leveraging data and measurable outcomes to drive continuous learning, improvement, and accountability to stakeholders. Recognizing that implementation and evaluation are intertwined, we will identify specific metrics for each strategic goal within the implementation plan itself.

Progress will be tracked through clear milestones at Year 1, Year 3, and Year 5, with ongoing evaluation to inform adjustments. Both qualitative and quantitative indicators will be used to assess impact, focusing on equity, access, reconciliation, academic excellence, and student success. Regular updates will be shared with all stakeholders to maintain transparency and reinforce our commitment to evidence-based decision-making throughout the plan's lifecycle.

Let’s connect

@lincolnalexanderlaw

The Lincoln Alexander School of Law is in the “Dish with One Spoon” territory.

Our law school is situated on the Treaty Lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit. This land has been part of the traditional territories of the Mississauga, Anishinaabe, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee. They are now home to many First Nations Peoples, Inuit and Métis from across Turtle Island.

As members of the legal profession, we recognize treaties as binding legal relationships and commit to advancing reconciliation by respecting Indigenous laws and legal traditions. We affirm our responsibility to honour the Dish with One Spoon Treaty and the principles of the Two Row Wampum, and to engage with this land and its peoples through mutual respect, understanding, and a deep commitment to truth, ongoing learning, and accountability.

Toronto Metropolitan University

Lincoln Alexander School of Law