





## BROCK UNIVERSITY GUIDING VALUES AND PRINCIPLES



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## INTRODUCTION

*We acknowledge the location of Brock University and the Faculty of Humanities on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, and on land protected by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Agreement. This land is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people.*

Since it opened in 1964, Brock University has overcome growing pains and challenges to become a vibrant institution of more than 19,000 students, with rich academic programs and world-class research. As it was half a century ago, Brock remains a proud partner committed to improving the vitality of neighbouring communities across Niagara even as it extends its global reach.

Today, Brock offers 120 undergraduate and graduate degrees through six academic Faculties, is home to 13 Canada Research Chairs and among Ontario's top 5 universities for 3M Awards for Teaching Excellence.

Brock University is also ranked as one of the best universities in Canada for student satisfaction, and a leader in career success and experiential learning. Two years after graduation, the employment rate for Brock grads is higher than the average for Ontario universities.

Brock University is one of a few Canadian universities with an autonomous Faculty of Humanities. We are proud to have been a founding member of Brock University and we applaud Brock's continued commitment to providing a supportive environment for the study of the human experience in all its diversity. Critical thinking lies at the core of Humanities and includes being responsive, reflective, analytical, and creative in relation to events (past, present, and future), artifacts, and texts (whether literary or visual). What is most exciting about this process is that we have no specific temporal or even geographical limits. Critical thinking and response is often transformative for human beings, communities, and societies more broadly, and also makes us stewards of knowledge in ways that are unique to Humanities. We are dedicated to continuing this discourse as a coherent Faculty, by supporting and developing overlapping areas of interest, encouraging exchanges among our various disciplines, and respecting the unique facets of our various departments and centres. We also recognize and support our faculty as founding members of transdisciplinary institutes and research centres and as regular contributors to the growing network of interdisciplinary teaching and research units at Brock University and beyond.



## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

### Who We Are

The Faculty of Humanities at Brock University comprises the following departments, centres, and interdisciplinary programmes focused on cultural expression, community, performance, creativity, reflection, and the study of human experience and interaction:

#### Departments:

- Classics
- Dramatic Arts
- English Language & Literature
- History
- Modern Languages, Literatures, & Culture
- Music
- Philosophy
- Visual Arts

#### Centres:

- Canadian Studies
- Digital Humanities
- Medieval and Renaissance Studies
- Studies in Arts & Culture

#### School:

- Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts

#### Graduate Programs:

- MA in Classics
- MA in English Language and Literature
- MA in History
- MA in Philosophy
- MA in Studies in Comparative Literature & Arts
- PhD in Interdisciplinary Humanities

#### Research Centres and Institutes:

- Humanities Research Institute
- Research Centre in Interdisciplinary Arts and Creative Culture

The teachers and researchers in these units all affirm a belief that the experience, thought, and expression of individuals and cultural groups matter.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

As a unit of Brock University, the Faculty of Humanities faces the same challenges and opportunities as the University as a whole:

- Demographic realities;
- Increased competition;
- Technological change;
- Attitudes towards post-secondary education;
- Societal expectations and demands;
- Reconciliation and decolonization;
- Provincial policies on post-secondary education;
- Financial pressures;
- Geographic factors;
- Regional location;
- Internationalization and globalization;
- Transportation network.



Added to these, the Faculty of Humanities faces some unique challenges and opportunities. The financial pressures that the entire institution faces are particularly intense for Humanities, as one of the smaller Faculties, since budgets are so much driven by student enrolments. Making the numbers add up so that we have the resources to do our work appropriately can be difficult.

Visibility is also a challenge for Humanities. We must put significant effort into ensuring that our activities and our impact are seen across the University and beyond the campus.

One of the greatest challenges facing the Humanities is that of public perception. It is a common misperception that a degree in the Humanities offers few employment prospects, and we must counter this perception vigorously. We need to do a better job spreading the word about the benefits that accrue from an education in the Humanities: skills in language, argument, persuasion, analysis, research, and interpretation.

With the challenges to Humanities in the current climate also come opportunities. We have the chance to celebrate and publicize the consistent growth in the Arts & Culture sector of the Canadian economy, and the opportunities this affords our students. We also are seeing the revival of interest in questions of truth, bias, and power. The Humanities provide the tools necessary for critical thinking about these questions.

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The activities of the Faculty of Humanities currently support and align with the Strategic Priorities outlined in the University's Plan.

### Brock University's Strategic Priorities:

#### 1. **Provide a transformational and accessible academic and university experience:**

An education in the Humanities is inherently transformational: we give students the skills to ask important questions and deal with the answers. We strive to make the experience accessible, by working to give students the tools they need to succeed. We commit to enhancing our participation in this strategic priority by (*inter alia*):

- Proposing changes to the General Humanities programme;
- Identifying the competencies that a Humanities graduate will master during the course of a degree program; and
- Improving tracking of existing experiential and service learning opportunities in Humanities.

#### 2. **Build research capacity across the University;**

The Faculty of Humanities supports a rich research and creative culture, especially through the Humanities Research Institute. This entity sponsors research award competitions, as well as annual symposia for the sharing of research and creative work. We commit to building the research culture by:

- Promoting members of the Faculty for major external awards; and
- Helping members develop research networks across the Faculty.

#### 3. **Enhance the life and vitality of our local region and beyond:**

The Faculty of Humanities is committed to continuing the activities that connect us to the surrounding communities and the rest of the world, and building upon these by:

- Expanding the very popular "Brock Talks" series;
- Exploring the development of Continuing Education options; and
- Exploring the creation of a series of *Alumni Talks*, bringing alumni with interesting occupations and stories to campus to talk to our students.

#### 4. **Foster a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization:**

The Faculty of Humanities is committed to providing an academic experience that is accessible and inclusive, and will engage actively with the decolonization of the academy by:

- Beginning community consultation and stakeholder identification for FoH Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education plans;
- Establishing engagement groups for FoH Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education; and
- Developing 2026 FoH Strategic Plan Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education calls to action.

## CONSULTATION PROCESS AND FINDINGS

The strategic planning process for the Faculty of Humanities comes at a propitious time to highlight the ongoing excellence in and trajectories of our departments and centres. Recognizing that the impacts of provincial directives significantly impair our ability to implement large-scale initiatives, we nonetheless relish the opportunity to consider internal processes that allow us to strengthen our programs. We focus on the congruity of our degree offerings to further our commitment to teaching, to promoting the research and creative excellence of our community members, to re-engaging with our faculty, staff, and sessional instructors, and to reaching out to our surrounding communities.

After a call for volunteers, the Dean convened and chaired a Strategic Planning Committee, consisting of:

James Allard  
Nadine Brundrett  
Neta Gordon  
Rachel Rensink-Hoff  
Andrew Roth

The committee drew themes from faculty, staff and student surveys, the Academic Program Review Prioritization Report, and departmental and centre Final Assessment and Implementation Reports. The committee consulted with faculty, staff, and students about using these themes to summarize the core identity and values of members of the Faculty of Humanities. These themes largely coalesced around:

- Teaching
- Research
- Service to Multiple Communities
  - o Communities in and beyond the University
  - o Internal Cohesion and Community-building

These themes align with the University's Strategic priorities, and therefore provide the basis for this plan.



We look forward to listening to and engaging with all community members within the Faculty of Humanities and beyond, including, but not limited to, the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, Aboriginal Student Services, PACHRED, the Office of Human Rights and Equity, and the Two Row Council to formulate recommendations and calls to action for decolonizing education in the Faculty of Humanities by 2026.



# FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

## Vision, Mission and Principles

### What We Do

We teach: by providing our students with the **experience**, tools, and knowledge to be successful and to serve their communities as informed, ethical, and engaged citizens.

We discover and create: by **enriching** and **expanding** human understanding through our research and creative work.

We serve: by building, connecting, and strengthening communities around the principles of respect, civility, **empathy**, and humanity.

### The Frame Within Which We Work:

#### Brock University's Strategic Priorities:

1. Provide a transformational and accessible academic and university experience;
2. Build research capacity across the University;
3. Enhance the life and vitality of our local region and beyond; and
4. Foster a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization.

### The Goal:

We are committed to maintaining a flourishing, cohesive community of teachers and learners. We support committed and thoughtful teaching and excellence in research and creative activity. We strive to engage with all members of our internal community (students, faculty, staff, and sessional instructors) to ensure a fruitful experience of teaching and learning, and we shall continue to reach out to and enhance the communities around us.

### The Format:

The Faculty of Humanities Strategic Plan is based on four major themes, and the actions supporting them will play out over three timeframes:

#### Themes

1. Teaching
2. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity
3. Community
4. Internal Community and Cohesion

#### Timeframe

Short term: by 2021

Medium term: by 2023

Long term: by 2025



# FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

## ENGAGING COMMUNITIES: Strategic Thought and Action Plan 2019-2026

As part of our Strategic Plan, we commit to the maintenance of the high quality teaching, scholarship, and service that has Characterized Brock's Faculty of Humanities since its inception.

### 1. Teaching

#### Short Term

- Identify and communicate the benefits of a Humanities education, undergraduate and graduate, including in the global job market (**University Priorities 1, 3, 4**)
- Improve tracking of existing experiential and service learning opportunities in Humanities courses and promote the variety of experiential learning opportunities in the FoH more widely (**University Priority 1**)
- Identify the competencies that a Humanities graduate will master during the course of a degree program and circulate these findings on the website and in literature for distribution (Open Houses, events) (**University Priorities 1,3,4**)
- Create 1 (or 2) banners for the FoH to be displayed at Open Houses and in the corridor outside FoH offices. These should be completed by Smart Start in July (**University Priority 1**)
- Propose changes to the General Humanities programme, revising it as a valid and meaningful degree path that facilitates student retention; this will include adding a four-year option and considering how best to mentor this group of students (**University Priority 1**)



### Medium Term

- Conduct a faculty wide curricular review of graduate and undergraduate programmes (**University Priorities 1,4**)
- Publicize the core competencies and make use of Alumni, MarComm, and other avenues to promote the value of a Humanities degree (**University Priorities 1,3,4**)
- Launch an Annual Humanities Teaching Day, during which faculty members, instructors, and graduate students share their pedagogical innovations and successes (**University Priorities 1,4**)
- Consider offering greater variety in course scheduling and delivery methods (spring, summer, evening courses) (**University Priorities 1,3,4**)
- Promote members of the Faculty for major external awards – 3M Teaching Fellow (**University Priority 1**)



### Long Term

- Based on the curricular review, format “majors maps” for every programme (**University Priority 1**)
- Explore Humanities-specific co-curricular programming (“Plus” programme) (**University Priorities 1,2,3,4**)



## 2. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

### Short Term

- Launch research, scholarship, and creative activity “speed networking” events to introduce members of the faculty to one another’s research projects (**University Priority 2**)

### Medium Term

- Further develop the research networking event to address any flaws in the original offering
- Build on research networking event to identify networks and collaboration possibilities, and support those groups in starting the funding application processes
- Create Faculty-wide catalogue of potential in-kind contributions for grant applications (**University Priority 2**)
- Promote members of the Faculty for major external awards – Royal Society of Canada (**University Priority 2**)

### Long Term

- Build on research networks to apply for a large collaborative, cross-Faculty grant application (**University Priority 2**)

## 3. Community

### Short Term

- Work with the internal Brock community and the external community to communicate what we do and develop partnerships to advance our goals (**University Priorities 2,3**)

### Medium Term

- Expand “Brock Talks” beyond St Catharines by connecting with libraries and other organizations in the municipalities of Niagara (**University Priorities 2,3**)
- Explore development of Continuing Education options: including general interest, credit courses, certificates and non-credit learning options; increase involvement with broader University efforts to develop continuing education, and work with departments to encourage them to expand their offerings (**University Priorities 1,3,4**)

### Long Term

- Explore the creation of a series of *Alumni Talks*, bringing alumni with interesting occupations and stories to campus to talk to our students – and/or work with Careers to promote specific FoH workshops for students to help translate their academic skills (competencies) into resume skills – this could also involve alumni (**University Priorities 1,3,4**)

#### 4. Internal Community and Cohesion

##### Short Term

- Hold annual general meeting for all teachers and researchers in the FoH (**University Priority 3**)
- Hold annual orientation and networking event for stipendiary instructors ( **University Priority 1,3**)
- Begin community consultation and stakeholder identification for FoH Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education plans (**University Priority 4**)

##### Medium Term

- Turn monthly C&D e-report into Faculty newsletter, including the same information but with wider distribution (**University Priority 3**)
- Initiate engagement groups for FoH Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education (**University Priority 4**)

##### Long Term

- Create process handbooks for tasks that teachers and researchers are asked to do (academic integrity, expense reports, *etc.*) - take suggestions on what handbooks are necessary (**University Priority 3**); start with a set of the three most common needs and work toward a full set within five years
- Develop 2026 FoH Strategic Plan Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education calls to action (**University Priority 4**)





## NEXT STEPS: ACTIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

After approval of the Faculty of Humanities Strategic Plan, the current planning committee will take on the task of implementation of the plan. The committee will continue for the life of the plan, with replacements and additions when necessary or appropriate.



The tasks of the implementation committee will include:

1. Draft an implementation document to accompany the Strategic Plan, demonstrating how individual actions will be accomplished and assigning responsibility for those actions;
2. Create working groups with volunteers from across the Faculty to plan and work toward the medium and long term actions;
3. Provide a report to the Humanities Chairs & Directors once each Fall and Winter term on the progress of the implementation of the plan;
4. Provide an annual report to a general meeting of the members of the Faculty of Humanities on the progress of the implementation.

## CONCLUSION

Through this strategic planning process, the Faculty of Humanities has confirmed its identity as a unit that values excellent teaching, research, and creative activity, as well as service to our students, our colleagues, and our communities. We provide our students with a valuable academic experience as we involve them in our creative and analytical responses to the human experience.

The plan outlines our priorities as a Faculty, to support and enhance teaching, research, community engagement, and cohesion within our own Humanities community. These priorities align perfectly with the expressed University priorities, as demonstrated within this document.

Through the activities planned for the short-term, medium-term, and long-term in this plan we shall support our scholars, teachers, students, and other members of the Faculty as we collectively fulfill our responsibilities as one of the few Faculties of Humanities in Canada. We shall continue to support and develop complementary areas of interest, encourage intellectual exchange across and beyond the disciplines, and respect the unique features and cultures of our areas of inquiry.



## APPENDIX: Alignment of Faculty of Humanities Strategic Plan with University Strategic Plan

### **University Strategic Priority: Provide a transformational and accessible academic and university experience**

#### Short Term: by 2021

- Identify and communicate the benefits of a Humanities education, undergraduate and graduate, including in the global job market.
- Improve tracking of existing experiential and service learning opportunities in Humanities courses and promote the variety of experiential learning opportunities in the FoH more widely.
- Identify the competencies that a Humanities graduate will master during the course of a degree program and circulate these findings on the website and in literature for distribution (Open Houses, events).
- Create 1 (or 2) banners for the FoH to be displayed at Open Houses and in the corridor outside FoH offices. These should be completed by Smart Start in July.
- Propose changes to the General Humanities programme, revising it as a valid and meaningful degree path that facilitates student retention; this will include a four-year option and considering how best to mentor this group of students.

#### Medium Term: by 2023

- Conduct a faculty wide curricular review of graduate and undergraduate programmes .
- Publicize the core competencies and make use of Alumni, MarComm and other avenues to promote the value of a Humanities degree.
- Launch an Annual Humanities Teaching Day, during which faculty members, instructors, and graduate students share their pedagogical innovations and successes.
- Consider offering greater variety in course scheduling and delivery methods (spring, summer, evening courses).
- Promote members of the Faculty for major external awards.
- Explore development of Continuing Education options: including general interest, credit courses, certificates and non-credit learning options; increase involvement with broader University efforts to develop continuing education, and work with departments to encourage them to expand their offerings .
- Explore the creation of a series of *Alumni Talks*, bringing alumni with interesting occupations and stories to campus to talk to our students – and/or work with Careers to promote specific FoH workshops for students to help translate their academic skills (competencies) into resume skills – this could also involve alumni

#### Long Term: by 2025

- Based on the curricular review, format “majors maps” for every programme .
- Explore Humanities-specific co-curricular programming .



## **University Strategic Priority: Build research capacity across the University**

### Short Term: by 2021

- Launch research, scholarship, and creative activity “speed networking” events to introduce members of the faculty to one another’s research projects .
- Work with the internal Brock community and the external community to communicate what we do and develop partnerships to advance our goals.

### Medium Term: by 2023

- Further develop the research networking event to address any flaws in the original offering.
- Build on research networking event to identify networks and collaboration possibilities, and support those groups in starting the funding application processes .
- Create Faculty-wide catalogue of potential in-kind contributions for grant applications .
- Promote members of the Faculty for major external awards .
- Expand “Brock Talks” beyond St Catharines by connecting with libraries and other organizations in the municipalities of Niagara

### Long Term: by 2025

- Build on research networks to apply for a large collaborative, cross-Faculty grant application



## University Strategic Priority: Enhance the life and vitality of our local region and beyond

### Short Term: by 2021

- Identify and communicate the benefits of a Humanities education, undergraduate and graduate, including in the global job market
- Identify the competencies that a Humanities graduate will master during the course of a degree program and circulate these findings on the website and in literature for distribution (Open Houses, events)
- Work with the internal Brock community and the external community to communicate what we do and develop partnerships to advance our goals
- Hold annual general meeting for all teachers and researchers in the FoH
- Hold annual orientation and networking event for stipendiary instructors

### Medium Term: by 2023

- Publicize the core competencies and make use of Alumni, MarComm and other avenues to promote the value of a Humanities degree
- Consider offering greater variety in course scheduling and delivery methods (spring, summer, evening courses)
- Expand “Brock Talks” beyond St Catharines by connecting with libraries and other organizations in the municipalities of Niagara
- Explore development of Continuing Education options: including general interest, credit courses, certificates and non-credit learning options; increase involvement with broader University efforts to develop continuing education, and work with departments to encourage them to expand their offerings

### Long Term: by 2025

- Explore Humanities-specific co-curricular programming (“Plus” programme)
- Explore the creation of a series of *Alumni Talks*, bringing alumni with interesting occupations and stories to campus to talk to our students – and/or work with Careers to promote specific FoH workshops for students to help translate their academic skills (competencies) into resume skills – this could also involve alumni





## **University Strategic Priority: Foster a culture of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation, and decolonization**

### Short Term: by 2021

- Identify and communicate the benefits of a Humanities education, undergraduate and graduate, including in the global job market
- Identify the competencies that a Humanities graduate will master during the course of a degree program and circulate these findings on the website and in literature for distribution (Open Houses, events)
- Begin community consultation and stakeholder identification for FoH Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education plans

### Medium Term: by 2023

- Conduct a faculty wide curricular review of graduate and undergraduate programmes
- Publicize the core competencies and make use of Alumni, MarComm, and other avenues to promote the value of a Humanities degree
- Launch an Annual Humanities Teaching Day, during which faculty members, instructors, and graduate students share their pedagogical innovations and successes
- Consider offering greater variety in course scheduling and delivery methods (spring, summer, evening courses)
- Explore development of Continuing Education options: including general interest, credit courses, certificates and non-credit learning options; increase involvement with broader University efforts to develop continuing education, and work with departments to encourage them to expand their offerings
- Initiate engagement groups for FoH Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education

### Long Term: by 2025

- Explore Humanities-specific co-curricular programming (“Plus” programme)
- Explore the creation of a series of *Alumni Talks*, bringing alumni with interesting occupations and stories to campus to talk to our students – and/or work with Careers to promote specific FoH workshops for students to help translate their academic skills (competencies) into resume skills – this could also involve alumni
- Develop 2026 FoH Strategic Plan Decolonizing Education and Accessible Education calls to action