

Dr. Cathy Roche – Dean, University of Regina, Faculty of Social Work
Vision and Goals, 2025-2030

The mission of the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Regina is to contribute “to critical social work through innovative teaching, research, policy development, and community engagement, thereby preparing students to work towards an equitable, diverse, and inclusive society in Saskatchewan and beyond”.

I have built my own vision for the Faculty of Social Work upon the [*Faculty of Social Work 2021-2025 Strategic Plan*](#). I envision the Faculty to be known for our teaching excellence and impactful research. Teaching excellence includes: supporting faculty and sessional instructors in their teaching endeavor; ensuring that staff have the skills and resources to provide excellent student support; striving for our students to graduate with the knowledge and skills to make the world a more just place and, our alumni to remain engaged and become champions for the Faculty. My vision for impactful research includes providing faculty with the resources and support they need in their research endeavor; champion faculty research through accessible knowledge translation and a robust communication plan and, advocating for faculty research to influence public discourse and policy decision makers.

My vision includes ensuring the Faculty maintains two main pillars – financial stability and collegiality. It will be important as the Dean of the Faculty of Social Work to secure adequate financial resources to maintain our current programming, invest in strategic priorities as outlined in the *Faculty of Social Work 2021-2025 Strategic Plan* and, seek out new financial resources to expand our programming to meet the needs of social work students in the province of Saskatchewan. Strong collegial relationships within the Faculty are imperative to ensure that we can focus on the work that needs to be done in meeting our goals for teaching excellence and impactful research.

Embedded in my vision for the Faculty of Social Work are the goals of Indigenization and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. I will seek to have the Faculty become a leader in the indigenization of social work education and to be recognized for our work in reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The Faculty will align the indigenization of our programming with the [*Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*](#), the University of Regina [*All Our Relations: kahkiyaw kiwâhkômâkaninawak Strategic Plan 2020-2025*](#) and, the University of Regina, Indigenous Engagement Strategic Plan [*Tapwewin kwayaskwastâsowin: Truth and Putting Things Right*](#). I will work to become known for the innovative ways to integrate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion into everything that we do.

Finally, my vision for the Faculty of Social Work needs to be translated to our partners within the university and our community stakeholders. I envision the Faculty as a place where we work in partnership with university faculties and units in creating impactful research and delivering teaching excellence. Within the community, I will strive to: ensure our graduates are viewed as knowledgeable and skill social workers; our community partners view our curriculum and

research as relevant to the current social issues; enhance our relationship with the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers, and highlight our research and expertise with government and policy decision makers in the goal of creating a more just society.

Goals

To further the above vision for the Faculty of Social Work, I have outlined a number of goals that I will work to achieve in the next 5 years, if I am reappointed as Dean of the Faculty of Social Work. These goals have been themed under the strategic priorities of the University of Regina [*All Our Relations: kahkiyaw kiwâhkômâkaninawak*](#) Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the [*Faculty of Social Work 2021-2025 Strategic Plan*](#).

Discovery

- Explore and develop Bachelor of Social Work cohorts in rural and remote areas in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Services. Current negotiations are underway to determine the viability and seek one time funding from the Province of Saskatchewan for these initiatives that will address the staffing shortage of social workers in the rural and remote regions of the province. The staffing shortage is most acute in the area of child welfare and initial plans are to recruit for a cohort with a child welfare specialization.
- Continue to spearhead and support the development of a bilingual Bachelor of Social Work stream within the Faculty. In 2023, La Cite successfully secured funding for this bilingual initiative and the search for faculty to support the bilingual Bachelor of Social Work stream has begun. It is hoped that the bilingual Bachelor of Social Work stream can begin delivery in the Fall 2025 term.
- Explore the development of a Doctorate in Clinical Social Work (DSW) to be offered by the Faculty of Social Work. Currently the Faculty has a number of faculty members who could support this graduate program with their clinical expertise. It is also anticipated that this program would be very attractive to Master of Social Work practitioners within the province of Saskatchewan and may also be very attractive nationally for social work practitioners who are interested in enhancing their clinical skills. At the time of writing, I am only aware of one other similar program within Canada and if developed could fill a need in the Canadian market.
- Explore and develop micro credentials to support social work practitioners. Registered social workers in the province of Saskatchewan are required to engage in 40 hours of professional development in order to maintain their registration. This requirement creates a market for educational programs.

Truth and Reconciliation

- Work to align the University of Regina, Indigenous Engagement Strategic Plan [*Tapwewin kwayaskwastâsowin: Truth and Putting Things Right*](#) with [*Faculty of Social Work 2021-2025 Strategic Plan*](#). This work will begin with a Special Meeting in the Fall 2024 focused on this goal.

- Continue to enhance our relationship with First Nations University Indigenous Social Work Program. To begin achieving this goal, a meeting is planned in the Fall 2024 term between senior members of both programs to explore ways to collaborate across our programs.
- Explore and enhance the Faculty of Social Work relationship with North Central Family Centre (NCFC). In a recent community-centered research and education partnership agreement, the Faculty agreed to work together with NCFC to explore ways to enhance social work student practicums and engage in collaborative research projects that benefit the North Central neighbourhood.

Environment and Climate Action

- Support the piloting of courses at both the undergraduate and graduate level on social work and environmental justice. In the 2021, the Canadian Association of Social Work Education accreditation standards included the requirement for course content on environmental sustainability and ecological practice. The proposed courses are in response to this accreditation requirement.
- Support the plans for securing research funding in environmental social work.

Well-being and Belonging

- Incorporating *Faculty Work Activity Dashboards* to ensure transparency and fairness in faculty assigned teaching and service duties. This initiative will be based on recent research that encourages faculties to create dashboard that outline academic teaching and services assignments for each faculty member that is accessible to fellow colleagues with the goal to ensure transparency and support collegiality. Current plans are to introduce this in the Fall 2024 term.¹
- Continue to support the development of intergroup dialogue at the University of Regina. This initiative has been completed in partnership with undergraduate student and research assistant Bradley Fraser. In building capacity at the University of Regina, a virtual training introducing intergroup dialogue skills is scheduled for May 2024. Participants include faculty and staff members from across the university. A future training will be planned to build intergroup dialogue facilitation skills. The ultimate goal is to create an intergroup dialogue program at the University of Regina. To support this goal, I have ensured that these plans were included in the University of Regina 2022-2025 Academic Plan.

Impact and Identity

- Prepare for 2027 accreditation self study. The Faculty of Social Work was able to obtain an 8-year accreditation in 2020. A work guide to prepare for accreditation was developed by a past faculty member. Currently I have developed a small team to review our accreditation

¹O'Meara, K., Beise, E., Culpepper, D., Misra, J. & Jaeger, A. (2020). Faculty work activity dashboards: A strategy to increase transparency. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, May/June, pp. 32-44.

requirements and determine areas that need enhancing and collect all of the data that will be required for the self-study. As mentioned earlier, since the last accreditation the standards have changed, and the Faculty will need to work to adjust our curriculum to meet the new requirements.

- Work together with the Associate Deans to support a robust and adequately resourced Faculty academic misconduct process. With the advent of AI, the reports of academic misconduct within the Faculty have dramatically increased and there is a need to develop a Faculty response to this new challenge.
- Continue to highlight faculty research through a robust communication plan. In the past year, the Faculty of Social Work hired a communications and student engagement coordinator. One of the main goals of this position is to highlight the research that is being produced and with the use of different social media platforms our metrics have increased substantially. Future goals are to create a digital newsletter that will reach provincial, national and international audiences.
- Prepare for the upcoming 50th anniversary celebrations. The Faculty of Social Work will be celebrating our 50th anniversary in the 2024-2025 year. A number of events are planned that will include a robust communication plan to highlight our history and the achievements of our alumni over the years.

I believe that my past tenure as the Dean of the Faculty of Social Work has laid the foundation for me to achieve the vision and goals that have been set out in this document. I would be honoured to be given the opportunity to achieve these goals if I am renewed for a second term as Dean.

Dr. Cathy Rocke
May 13, 2024