

STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN 2004-2009

As an institution offering a comprehensive range of programs, the University of the Fraser Valley supports research and scholarly activities in a diversity of fields and topics. At the same time, as a regional post-secondary institution UFV nurtures a unique relationship with the communities it serves by offering education, training, and research programs that closely match the emerging needs of the community and the labour market.

One of UFV's main goals for the 2004-2009 planning period is to further enhance its research, scholarly, and creative activities. To achieve this goal, the institution will endeavour to achieve the following five strategic objectives.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Increase support for research, scholarly, and creative activities. This objective will be achieved by:
 - 1.1. Making strategic use of internal funding mechanisms to support excellence in research, scholarly and creative activities;
 - 1.2. Providing timely and useful information about research opportunities to faculty and students;
 - 1.3. Providing support for Standard Grant, Strategic Grant, Aid to Small Universities Grant, and other grant applications;
 - 1.4. Providing support in the form of course releases and research leaves to faculty members involved in research, scholarly, and creative activities;
 - 1.5. Ensuring the highest standards of research ethics, integrity, and financial accountability through compliance with Tri-Council and UFV policies;
 - 1.6. Supporting the development of a research infrastructure and research facilities on UFV campuses;
 - 1.7. Developing a clear strategy for enhancing and maintaining library collections and other information sources in support of research and scholarly activities;
 - 1.8. Taking concrete steps to attract and retain new faculty members with a solid research record and an ongoing commitment to research; and,
 - 1.9. Assisting faculty in the communication of the results of their research and other scholarly and creative activities, including holding research conferences and seminars, and create a new UFV academic journal.
2. Support the integration of research and education, and enhance the research training of students. This objective will be achieved by:
 - 2.1. Creating undergraduate research awards for students;
 - 2.2. Increasing opportunities for students involvement in research and creative activities;
 - 2.3. Including integration of research and teaching and learning in professional development activities for Faculty members;
 - 2.4. Publicizing the experience of student researchers at UFV;
 - 2.5. Increasing the number of paid research assistant positions for undergraduate students;
 - 2.6. Facilitating students' attendance at research conferences; and,

- 2.7. Increasing students' access to labs and other research facilities.
3. Support knowledge transfer and technological innovation through the institution's University-Industry Liaison Office and Trade and Technology Division, in close cooperation with the region's businesses and industries. This objective will be achieved by creating a research and technology transfer capacity in, *inter alia*, the following areas:
 - 3.1. Alternative fuel vehicle development;
 - 3.2. Composite materials repair technology in the aerospace industry; and,
 - 3.3. Safe food processing.
4. Secure substantial funding for research, scholarly and creative activities in the arts, science and education areas and in particular: (a) Cultural, Aboriginal and Indo-Canadian Studies; (b) Crime prevention and criminal justice; (c) the environment and sustainable development; and, (d) health, wellbeing, and children and family development (See *Appendix 1*). This objective will be pursued by:
 - 4.1. Obtaining accreditation with NSERC;
 - 4.2. Seek NSERC and CFI Funding
 - 4.3. Increasing the Institution's participation and success rates in grant applications to the major granting Councils;
 - 4.4. Developing an integrated environment research lab;
 - 4.5. Seeking funding for the establishment of a Public Safety and Leadership Institute;
 - 4.6. Establish an Indo-Canadian Research and Studies Centre;
 - 4.7. Obtain funding for Regional Economic Development Chair;
 - 4.8. Building Aboriginal research group around the Canada Research Chair on Aboriginal Studies;
 - 4.9. Establishing a Research Institute on Citizenship and Culture
 - 4.10. Working closely with UFV Foundation to explore new research funding opportunities.
5. Encourage multidisciplinary, collaborative research within UFV and develop alliances and partnerships with other institutions, in Canada and abroad, as well as with community, public, and private sector organizations. This objectives will be accomplished by:
 - 5.1. Developing and formalizing an research and education alliance with the Fraser Region Health Authority;
 - 5.2. Developing and implementing a Community University Research Alliance Project (CURA) on sustainable economic development strategies that will benefit Fraser Valley communities;
 - 5.3. Extending current initiative on Children and Family Development Research in the Fraser Region;
 - 5.4. Developing partnerships and formal cooperation agreements with Indian Universities
 - 5.5. Developing new institutional partnerships for collaborative research.

Appendix 1

Strategic Clusters of Interdisciplinary Research

As a small university in one of the fastest growing areas in Canada, UFV has many opportunities to respond to issues of concern to the many communities and interests of the Fraser Valley region. UFV departments are engaged in a significant number of research projects, often multi-disciplinary, that both enrich the learning environment of the university and contribute to the development of the area. Although other clusters will no doubt develop during the current planning period, four main clusters of research will continue to be at the Centre of UFV's research activities.

Aboriginal and Indo-Canadian Studies, and citizenship and culture

Research on ethnic diversity and ethno-cultural relations are at the heart of one cluster of research and scholarly activities at UFV. In addition to the work of several individual scholars active in that area, UFV concentrates on the further development of three major areas: Aboriginal Studies, Indo-Canadian Studies, and citizenship and culture.

UFV, since its inception, has been involved with Aboriginal communities. An Aboriginal Community Council comprised of representatives from Sto:lo Nation, First Nations, and Métis, provides advice on educational programs and issues. An Aboriginal Resource Centre (ARC) was established in 1999 to provide assistance to Aboriginal students and develop an Aboriginal presence at UFV. An internal Aboriginal Issues Working Group also provides a forum for exchange and collaboration between faculty members from several disciplines involved in teaching and research in that area.

UFV has recently been awarded a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Aboriginal Studies. The research program will include a number of multi-disciplinary and multi-media research projects involving Aboriginal youth. The research will also include a comparative study of Aboriginal land use, land rights and land claims issues with a focus on Aboriginal youth situate themselves in relation to this issues. The Canada Research Chair in Aboriginal Studies will provide the impetus for further interdisciplinary collaboration among several departments already working in this field. These departments include anthropology, sociology, history, English, geography, criminology and criminal justice, visual arts, Modern Languages, and the School of Social Work. Part of UFV's current plan is to develop an Institute of Aboriginal Studies and to support the work of the cluster of researchers currently active in this area.

UFV has also undertaken to establish a new Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies and Research. The physical facilities in which the Centre will be located have been renovated and the Centre is expected to officially open in January 2005. The Centre will increase the institution's own capacity to conduct research in that area and to pursue fruitful academic, research, and cultural exchanges with other institutions in Canada and in India. The Centre will also host visiting scholars from India. Research projects undertaken by the Centre will focus in part on the barriers to a full participation of the Indo-Canadian community in the social, political, and economic life of the region, the province, and the country. The Institution has initiated discussions with several Indian universities, four of them in the Punjab, on establishing formal links and promoting faculty exchanges. UFV will continue to develop these emerging partnerships and will collaborate with other members of the Shastri Institute which it recently joined. Some of the research conducted at the new Centre will focus on the significant social capital

contribution of South-Asian immigration and on the integration of new immigrants from South-Asia to Canada. The Centre will therefore seek to establish closer ties with other research institutions active in the area.

In addition, UFV has launched a major fund-raising campaign to establish a permanently endowed Chair in Indo-Canadian Research to contribute to and anchor the work of scholars who will be associated with the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies and Research. UFV is being considered for a Regional Innovation Chair by the B.C. Leading Edge Endowment Foundation.

The third aspect of this cluster which studies that will receive special attention at UFV in the coming years is research on citizenship. UFV intends to create a new Institute of Research on Citizenship and Culture. Attributes of citizenship include a sense of public identity, rights, obligations, participation in public affairs and acceptance of basic societal values. Increased awareness of what constitutes good citizenship is fostered by an explicit attention to its historical, political, cultural, gender and socio-economic dimensions. Projects carried by researchers in a variety of disciplines will explore such issues. Historical research in a broad range of national and transnational contexts is one avenue through which UFV scholars contribute to a better understanding of the changing nature of the state, the interaction between formal political institutions and ordinary citizens, the impact of institutions such as the media on political culture, and citizens' interactions among themselves. Also representing a major focus of historical analysis at UFV is the transformation of western and non-western cultures since the 18th century, and the impact that cultural, intellectual, economic, and political changes have had on individuals' understanding of themselves as citizens. Issues of gender identity and power struggles are at the core of many of these historical studies, as are the dynamics of imperialism and anti-colonial resistance.

Crime prevention and criminal justice

UFV Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice has a very active program of research in the areas of crime prevention, youth justice, law enforcement, and corrections. The work conducted is often inter-disciplinary in nature and often involves faculty members from other departments. Over the next three years, the Department will further develop a number of existing initiatives to strengthen its capacity as a leader in criminal justice research in British Columbia.

One key initiative a research lab - in affiliation with the Institute for Canadian Urban Research Studies (ICURS) at Simon Fraser University – the first of an international network of research laboratories to further multidisciplinary research on urban issues that have a focus on crime and safety. The new lab is working on a number of major research projects in collaboration with several criminal justice and community agencies.

Another key initiative is the new Institute for Safe Schools of British Columbia, as a national resource emphasizing the interconnectedness of theory and practice by providing training and professional research development opportunities for police, educators, students, parents, and other community members. The Institute developing the tools, programs, and resources to assist governments and communities promote safe and healthy schools. A major goal of the Institute is to develop baseline data to facilitate the ability of stakeholders to evaluate policies and practices within schools and communities.

A third initiative will involve the development of Public Safety and Leadership Research Institute which will build on the existing work of faculty members and provide a focus point for public safety research in British Columbia.

The environment, community dynamics, and sustainable development

UFV continues to work closely with the communities it serves, using a multi-disciplinary approach to conduct research, address issues, and contribute to policy development in the areas of social and economic development and the environment.

The Fraser Valley has a diverse natural environment with many rivers and streams, aquatic and terrestrial habitats, lowland and mountainous levels, and agricultural resources. In contrast, the region has been one of the fastest growing areas in Canada over the past twenty years, resulting in an anthropogenic environment of residential development, industry and commercialization, and agriculture intensification. A major influence is the close vicinity of the City of Vancouver and other large communities in a funnel-shaped valley caused by mountain ranges converging eastward. One result of such a complex setting is a unique opportunity to conduct applied research on sustainable development.

Aquatic and terrestrial habitats in the region are being assessed and inventoried by the geography and biology departments and the UFV Cascade Institute. For example, the Cascade Institute provides support for several initiatives including the Sensitive Habitat and Inventory Mapping Program which provided information for flood and drainage management for its partner, the City of Chilliwack, the FVRD Regional Atlas Project, and the Little Campbell River Assessment Project. A new laboratory is being planned for water quality analysis and assessment with the involvement of the Chemistry Department.

A multi-disciplinary group of researchers from UFV, in cooperation with municipal governments, community organizations, and Huxley College, Western Washington University, has developed an ambitious program of research to inform community decisions on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border with respect to a number of environmental, economic and socio-political policy issues relating to sustainable development in the region. The people of this region share the challenge of managing growth while ensuring the continuing viability of a rich environment. Boundaries, whether between countries, the metropolis and its fringe, or between municipalities or social service organizations, present challenges to be overcome as the region wrestles with urban development. The partners of this project are intimately involved with education, governance and social services in the region. Individually, their interests run the gamut of concerns from planning for population growth and settlement, to protection of the environment, to providing for economic development and the provision of social and educational services to a diverse population. Examples from the School of Social Work include research on community services in Abbotsford and the resulting inventory report, and participation in the regional homelessness initiative. All the partner organizations have long histories in the region as well as a record of collaboration and joint planning.

UFV is also planning to create a new Centre for Environmental Sustainability. The proposed Centre will, over a period of a few years, develop and conduct a comprehensive program of research and training to address a whole range of issues relating to environmental sustainability. Part of the research will focus on the impact of intensive farming practices in the Fraser Valley, with a view to

promote the further development of that important segment of the region's economy while improving the quality of the natural environment of the region. The objectives of the proposed Centre are to contribute to the development, implementation, and evaluation of technologies and improved practices in the Fraser Valle.

Health, wellbeing, and community services

UFV's health sciences programs focus on public health and community-based services. A multidisciplinary research partnership is being created between UFV and the Chilliwack Health Services of the Fraser Health Authority (FHA). The main focus of this applied research will be to support the development and evaluation of sustainable and effective community-based public health services and services for aging adults. Broad dissemination of research findings will be emphasized as well as their presentation at the annual Health and Wellness Conference organized by UFV, the FHA and their community partners.

Other research in this area is being conducted by the departments of Kinesiology and Physical Education, Early Childhood Education and Children and Youth Care, and the School of Social Work and Human Services.

The Kinesiology and Physical Education Department (KPE) has many active research programs that reflect the diverse areas of expertise of its faculty. The research aims to investigate the mechanisms underlying human movement, optimal human performance, and active health. It is theoretical and applied, typically interdisciplinary - reflecting the nature of the field. This research includes projects on adapted physical education, applied physiology, biomechanics and ergonomics, health promotion, motor control and motor behaviour, physiology of health and disease, sport psychology, and therapeutic exercise.

In October 2003, UFV, with the assistance of the B.C. Ministry of Children and Family Development, created a special fund, the Fraser Children and Family Development Fund, to support research and demonstration projects and encourage innovative and collaborative approaches to reduce the number of children and youth in care. UFV is taking a multi-disciplinary approach in inviting faculty from across the institution to work with community organizations to develop and implement research proposal. Research will continue to focus on improving preventive services for children and families, promoting the health of children and youth, and supporting communities in their efforts to prevent youth from entering the youth justice system. Other major research initiatives within that cluster will focus on: issues of service delivery; access to services by various groups; substance abuse prevention and treatment methods; youth adaptation; homelessness and mental health.