

BROCK UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Strategic Plan
Approved by Chairs and Directors May 16, 2012

VISION

The Faculty of Social Sciences is devoted to excellence in research, teaching, and learning. The Faculty is equally committed to strong academic advising, and inclusive, equitable, and transparent governance structures and processes that support the Faculty's teaching and research missions, which include connections with a wide range of groups, institutions, and communities at the local, national, and international levels.

The Faculty serves its students with high-quality opportunities to learn in dynamic, student-centred environments through a range of large and small group, cooperative, experiential, service, disciplinary and transdisciplinary activities. Research and other forms of engagement by members of the Faculty of Social Sciences create knowledge with the potential to transform individuals and communities in Niagara and beyond.

MISSION

To maintain and enhance our national and international reputation for our unique combination of disciplinary and transdisciplinary programming and scholarly activity, our excellence in teaching and student-centred learning environments, and our engaged scholarship and service in local, national, and international communities.

FACULTY PROFILE

The Faculty of Social Sciences is the largest faculty at Brock University. In 2011-12, 4,918.5 students, 27 percent of the university total, majored in its programs. The Faculty's courses are popular across the university. Twenty-eight percent of all university course enrolments were in the Faculty (4,616 full-time equivalent, or 23,080 individual, course enrolments). The 299.5 course sections taught in 2011-12 represent 18% of the university total. The average course size of 73.1 is the highest at the university, 24.6 above the university average. The Faculty's 146.5 faculty members formed 25% of the University full-time faculty complement, while its budget of \$27,008,081 million represented 24.8% of the University's total academic budget.

The Faculty of Social Sciences comprises a unique blend of discipline-based and interdisciplinary units. In addition to five Departments housing long-established disciplines such as Economics, Geography, Political Science, Sociology and Psychology, there are three interdisciplinary Departments: Child and Youth Studies; Communication, Popular Culture and Film; and Tourism and the Environment. Four interdisciplinary Centres complement these Departments: Applied Disability Studies; Labour Studies; Women's and Gender Studies; and the recently created Environmental Sustainability Research Centre.

All Departments offer undergraduate programs, as do the Centre for Women's and Gender Studies and the Centre for Labour Studies. The Faculty is also home to a BA in General Studies (Social Sciences) program and serves a very large percentage of the numerous

“undeclared” students taking courses at the university. Social Sciences co-operates with other Faculties to deliver programs such as the concurrent BA/BED (in conjunction with the Faculty of Education) options in Child and Youth Studies and Geography, Neuroscience (with the Faculties of Applied and Health Sciences and Math and Science respectively) and Business Economics (with the Faculty of Business).

The Faculty of Social Sciences has been a leader in the development of graduate programs at Brock. The MA in Political Science was one of the first Masters programs and the PhD in Psychology program was among the first doctoral programs to be offered by Brock. In addition, Masters programs in Geography, Psychology and Sociology and interdisciplinary Masters programs in Applied Disability Studies, Business Economics, Popular Culture, and Social Justice and Equity Studies provide a wide range of well-regarded, high quality graduate education opportunities and experiences.

The Faculty of Social Sciences has a long commitment to innovative pedagogies and course formats. There are Co-op programs available in Business Economics, Economics, Geography, Political Science, and Psychology. Many of our programs include various experiential learning opportunities in the form of field courses, service learning, practica or internships. The Faculty of Social Sciences also offers 19 articulated degree and diploma programs with colleges from across Ontario. A new college to university transition program is currently in development. In response to the recent call from the President for innovative pedagogies, faculty members and units from across the Faculty have developed a wide range of proposals to be implemented beginning this fall for online courses, blended courses, and unique format courses. The overall high evaluations from students and the number of teaching awards received by faculty members confirm the high quality of teaching within the Faculty.

The Faculty of Social Sciences is home to a vibrant culture of scholarship. In the 2010-11 Academic year, the latest for which the data is compiled, 74 faculty members reported publishing one or more articles, 11 reported publishing books or monographs, 42 reported publishing edited books or book chapters, and 82 faculty members reported presenting one or more refereed papers at conferences. Forty-five faculty members reported receiving new research grants housed at Brock or elsewhere and 42 reported working on continuing research grants. Between the academic years 2008-09 and 2010-11, faculty members in Social Sciences received almost \$2.2 million in research grants from the federal government research granting agencies for projects based at Brock University. Many others were co-applicants or collaborators on tri-council grants based at other institutions or recipients of grants from government ministries or agencies and non-governmental organizations.

The Faculty of Social Sciences is equally proud of its tradition of service to the university and the broader community. Many Brock researchers partner with community groups. Eighty-nine faculty members reported participating in community organizations in 2010-11. There was also intensive participation from the Faculty of Social Sciences on Senate, university committees, and in respective professional organizations.

Thirty-five dedicated staff members provide administrative and/or technical support to our teachers and researchers and academic advising to our students. These individuals deal with the

many day-to-day issues that arise, as well as implement the myriad regulations, policies, and procedures governing programs and processes at the university, with diligence and professionalism. The Faculty is proud of the local, national and international service awards garnered by staff members. It encourages ongoing professional development at all levels.

The Faculty of Social Sciences is proud of its tradition of excellent teaching, vibrant and engaged scholarship, and widespread community involvement. The academic strategic priorities described in the following document are intended to maintain and enhance this culture of academic success and social engagement in the face of serious financial pressures. They are aligned with the seven priorities in the University's Integrated Plan and are intended to demonstrate how the Faculty of Social Sciences will contribute to the University's vision and mission in the coming years.