

Concordia University of Edmonton
Commitments for the Activation of the Okanagan Charter

Concordia University of Edmonton (CUE) is a community of learning grounded in scholarship and academic freedom, preparing students to be independent thinkers, ethical leaders and citizens for the common good. CUE wants all our students, faculty and staff to flourish, and to that end, demonstrates the following commitments to wellness.

Mental Health and Resilience

- In 2015, CUE created the Mental Health Action Team (MHAT), a working team comprised of key stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, alumni and administration. After extensive consultation with the campus community, the MHAT created CUE's Mental Health Strategy, with 6 overarching strategic areas and 25 action-oriented recommendations. CUE's Mental Health Strategy was formally adopted by the Board of Governors in August 2017. The strategy demonstrates a commitment to care, as CUE mobilizes resources to provide an inclusive and supportive environment that promotes positive mental health and wellness, and provides appropriate supports to those who experience mental health challenges. Annual updates are provided to the General Faculties Council and the Board of Governors, the first of which occurred in April 2018.
- Since 2013, The Concordia Students' Association (CSA), initially through the Alberta Campus Mental Health Innovation Fund (ACMHI), and then through their own funds, prioritized student mental health. The CSA facilitates a variety of initiatives and events, including the creation of the CSA Mental Health Committee, and events such as Wellness Wednesdays, Wellness Fairs, therapy dogs, walking groups and art therapy.
- Beginning in 2017, CUE recruits, trains and supports a peer support team comprised of 5 students with lived experience with mental health issues. Students receive support from peers who can easily identify with their situation, share a generational perspective and relate to contemporary concerns.
- Mental Health First Aid training is provided to all interested faculty and staff. To date, approximately 22% of faculty and staff received training, with a goal of 100% by 2023. Mental Health First Aid training participants are well prepared to interact confidently about mental health with their family, friends, communities and workplaces.
- In 2017, the Academic Administration initiated weekly Mindfulness Moments where faculty and staff engage in wellness practices, ranging from mindfulness, guided visualizations, and walks through the campus.
- In 2016, the Shaughn O'Brien Mental Health Fund was created to honour a former CUE student who died by suicide. The Fund supports campus mental health initiatives prioritized

by the CUE Mental Health Strategy. CUE's President holds an annual fundraiser breakfast to raise money for the Shaughn O'Brien Mental Health Fund.

- The CSA student health and dental plan provides students access to 'My Wellness,' a free mental health assessment, and the 'FeelingBetterNow' tool, a confidential, anonymous online tool which connects mental health issues to custom solutions.
- CUE employee assistance plan, LifeWorks, helps employees manage and prevent challenges, so they stay healthy at work and home with preventative and proactive services.

Learning and Working Environments

- In 2015, the Interdisciplinary Research Cluster on Wellness (IRCW), a group of scholars united in exploring issues related to wellness, was formed. IRCW understands "wellness" to have several dimensions; wellness not only relates to physical activity, physical literacy, healthy eating, and positively dealing with stressors, but also to other issues such as mental health, comprehensive health programming, financial issues, social decisions, etc. As an academic group, IRCW gathers and communicates regularly to disseminate research findings while engaging in deep discussions. With members representing many fields and institutions, IRCW fuses diverse approaches to wellness research.
 - Friends of the Research Cluster
 - Alberta Health Services
 - Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)
 - Ever Active Schools
 - Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada
 - Human Nutrition Research Unit (University of Alberta)
 - Physical & Health Education (PHE) Canada
- Since 2015, the IRCW co-chairs, along with other colleagues at CUE and other institutions, have disseminated research findings on a variety of wellness topic locally, nationally, and internationally (e.g., Ottawa, Canada; Athens, Greece; Bilbao, Spain).
- In 2016, CUE was recognized as a Healthy Workplace by the Psychologists' Association of Alberta (PAA). The PAA Healthy Workplace Initiatives Awards are designed to recognize organizations that are creating workplaces that foster employee health and well-being while enhancing organizational performance. Nominees are evaluated on their workplace practices in the areas of employee involvement, employee growth and development, work-life balance, employee recognition, and health and safety.
- In 2018, CUE's General Faculties Council approved learning outcomes that highlight the engagement of a community of learners in continuous and mutually supportive learning that recognizes the importance of academic knowledge, information literacy, engagement with



Indigenous peoples and perspectives, international awareness, and wellness. These learning outcomes support the 2018-2023 Academic Plan.

- CUE is a member of the Healthy Campus Alberta community of practice, engaging in the annual spring wellness summit, and participating in the planning advisory group for the first fall summit scheduled for November 2018.
- CUE is a member of the Coalition for Action on High Risk Drinking (CAHRD), a partnership between CUE, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), MacEwan University, University of Alberta, the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission and Alberta Health Services.
- CUE is co-hosting the National Forum on Wellness in Post-secondary Education with the University of Alberta (November 8 and 9, 2018) as an official kick-off to the *Teachers of Tomorrow: Advancing School Wellness through Teacher Preparation* project (aimed to explore the viability of implementing a system of pre-service teacher health and wellness education in BEd programming). As part of the *Teachers of Tomorrow: Advancing School Wellness through Teacher Preparation* grant, in partnership with Ever Active Schools, the Werklund School of Education (University of Calgary), and other universities across Canada, CUE's Faculty of Education will be engaging in research and program development in the area of Comprehensive School Health and Wellness.
- As of September 1, 2018, CUE is a smoke free campus.
- In 2015, CUE's Board of Governors approved the Sexual Violence Policy and Procedures. CUE recognizes that gender equity and a culture of consent are the best tools for eliminating sexual violence. The policy communicates CUE's commitment to eliminate sexual violence and informs the university community about behavioural expectations so that incidents of sexual violence are dealt with quickly, effectively and fairly.
- CUE was the first Canadian university to implement the Enhanced Assess, Acknowledge, Act (EAAA) Sexual Assault Resistance Education program. The EAAA is the first and only evidence-based curriculum proven to reduce a woman's personal risk of sexual assault.
- CUE is a member institution of the Alberta Sexual Violence Knowledge Exchange.
- CUE's President makes an annual proclamation of Respect Day to encourage the campus community to consider how they may become more respectful of one another.
- Concordia Talks aims to raise awareness around 'hot topics,' that are pertinent to CUE students. Through information and interaction, Concordia Talks addresses topics such as mental health, drug and alcohol consumption, sexual violence, gender identity and intersectionality. These include a Domestic Violence Awareness Day, Movies for Mental Health and CUE's annual Pride Day.
- CUE hosts a bi-annual potluck for the campus community: a summer and winter community gathering to celebrate and connect.



- CUE hosts an annual Lighting up the Boulevard event for the Highlands community (local neighbourhood), complete with children's crafts (lead by the Education Students' Society), sleigh rides, music and carols.
- CUE faculty teach elementary school physical education teacher education at Blue Quills University in the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP).

Built and Natural Environments

- Campus physical spaces were designed and furnished with consideration for air quality, fresh air flow, and ventilation; adaptable furniture for customizable spaces; exposure to natural daylight and sufficient indoor lighting; connection to nature; incorporating art and color; accessibility; and space design and configuration that supports social connection.
- In 2018, CUE built the Centre for Science, Research and Innovation (CSRI). Within the CSRI is the Indigenous Knowledge and Research Centre. It is a space grounded in nature and good relations. More than a physical space, it is a resource and repository of Indigenous knowledge, ways of learning, and a gathering space of ceremony, culture and bridging between traditional and modern worlds.
- CUE is built on the edge of Edmonton river valley, and the campus community is encouraged to access this world class green space for physical, mental, spiritual, and social wellness.

Food and Nutrition

- CUE's Food Services User Group, comprised of the food services manager, students, staff and administrators provides an open forum where diverse user groups communicate concerns and suggestions for campus food services.
- A newly created Food Services Task Force is focused on engaging the campus community in a comprehensive review of campus food services and provide the President a report with recommendations for improvements to food services.

Social Inclusion

- In 2018, CUE's Board of Governors approved the Discrimination, Harassment and Accommodation Policy and Procedures. CUE is committed to fostering a respectful environment for work, study and living that supports the dignity and equality of all members of the CUE community. A respectful environment is characterized by a shared commitment to civility and human dignity, and the welcoming of a diversity of perspectives.



- Through Learning Accommodation Services, CUE provides opportunities for academically qualified persons with documented disabilities to achieve their full potential as individuals and in terms of their educational and career objectives.
- Inclusive Post-secondary Education is a service that gives students with developmental disabilities an opportunity to experience post-secondary education through participation in CUE courses, programs of study and campus life, enhancing the learning environment for all.
- The safety and comfort of transgender and gender diverse CUE community members is supported with the following signage in all campus washrooms: “Concordia University of Edmonton is a community of people from diverse backgrounds, experiences and gender identities. Access to safe and accessible washrooms is a human right. All are welcome to use the restroom that best fits their gender identity.”
- Starting in the Fall 2018 term, CUE is delivering Respect in the Workplace training to faculty and staff, and Respect in Sport training to student athletes.
- CUE takes the TRC and UNDRIP calls to action seriously, and seeks to weave Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledge into the fabric of the CUE campus. This involves genuine decolonization and indigenization to integrate Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing into strategic plans, governance roles, academics, research, student services and recruitment. In addition to the new Indigenous Knowledge and Research Centre, CUE facilitates regular traditional practices, such as sharing circles and ceremonies, and the annual CUE Round Dance.

Physical Activity and Recreation

- The School of Physical Education and Wellness is dedicated to increasing the physical activity of everyone at CUE, while promoting a reduction in sedentary behaviours. All CUE members can benefit physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and mentally from activities offered through our Wellness initiatives.
- CUE’s Ralph King Athletic Centre features:
 - a fully equipped fitness centre for fitness and weight training activities
 - a gymnasium
 - athletic equipment for use by community members
 - a regulation-sized soccer field
 - and serves as a gathering spot for community members interested in cross-country running or skiing, either individually or as a group.
- CUE competes in one of the strongest athletic conferences in Canada, the Alberta Colleges’ Athletic Conference (ACAC). ACAC team sports include women’s and men’s soccer, basketball, and volleyball, and men’s hockey. ACAC mixed gender tournament sports include



badminton, cross-country running, golf and curling. CUE Athletics continually punches above its weight, winning provincial and national titles in team and individual sports.

- CUE's Physical Education and Sport Studies suite of courses promote physical literacy through Physical Activity Courses, Physical Activity Team Courses, Dance Courses, and other comprehensive health, wellness and active living courses.
- CUE's Campus Recreation includes intramurals for all CUE students, and Fitness Friday classes for the campus community.
- Fitness experts provide mentorship to students, faculty and staff seeking to gain experience with exercise execution.
- CUE promotes alternative means of transportation, including cycling. Multiple bicycle racks provide safe places for cyclists to park bikes, and encourages community members to cycle.
- In 2017, CUE and the CSA contributed funds to invest in new equipment and improvements to the Fitness Centre.
- CUE's Athletics Director was named ACAC Athletics Director of the Year 2018. He exemplifies sporting spirit, and mentors athletes and coaches.
- CUE students, staff and faculty regularly walk during breaks.
- CUE is partnering with the Native Friendship Centre of Edmonton to offer Powwow Fitness Classes starting in September 2018.
- CUE's President and Board Chair bench pressed qualifying weights for powerlifting national championships, and the Board Chair won a gold medal, setting a new provincial record in his weight category. CUE's leadership lead by example.

