



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Faculty of Education

2020– 2022 RESEARCH REPORT

UBC Faculty of Education
Office of Research in Education

Credit: Martin Dee | UBC Brand & Marketing



The Faculty of Education respectfully acknowledges that it is located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam) and Syilx (Okanagan) peoples. These lands and **places** are steeped in the histories and knowledges of the original peoples of these territories. The Faculty's activities take place on Indigenous lands throughout British Columbia and beyond.

CONTENTS

- 4 Message from the Associate Dean, Research
- 5 Office of Research in Education
- 6 Research Highlights 2020-2022
- 7 Postdoctoral Fellows
- 8 Current Research Chairs and Professorships
- 10 Research Centres and Institutes
- 12 Research Metrics
- 16 Research Profiles





Message from the Associate Dean, Research

This research report presents an overview of the Faculty of Education's dynamic, interdisciplinary research and awards landscape at UBC, particularly since 2019. Our last report was published in 2015.

Our goal is to provide our Faculty, the UBC community and the wider public with information about some current research trends within the Faculty of Education. We first introduce the work of the Office of Research in Education (ORE), then list recent award-winners and current research centres, chairs, and professorships.

Next, we showcase the impressive research accomplishments of colleagues in

the Faculty by providing profiles of selected researchers from across our six academic units, comprising four departments and the School of Kinesiology on the Vancouver campus and the Okanagan School of Education on the Okanagan campus.

Their research demonstrates, both individually and collectively, the Faculty's and University's strategic research priorities, community engagement, and contributions to knowledge and social justice in relation to four broad themes:

- (1) Indigenous community-based research;
- (2) education as a social good;
- (3) social and physical sustainability; and
- (4) digital innovations in education and health.

We have intentionally included researchers at different stages of their careers, both emerging and well established, and representing different disciplines, to highlight the diversity of cutting-edge research emerging from the Faculty of Education. Naturally, each researcher also represents a larger, very vital community of fellow researchers, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows supporting their research and knowledge mobilization endeavours. We are very proud of these and other members of our research community!

Dr. Patsy Duff

Associate Dean, Research & Professor

Office of Research in Education

The Office of Research in Education (ORE) provides strategic and operational support for faculty and postdoctoral research.

In addition to the Associate Dean, Research (ADR), the ORE team comprises three full-time staff: the Director of Research Development (Robert Olaj), Research Grants Facilitator (Dr. Nandini Maharaj), and Assistant to both the ADR and Associate Dean, Academic, Graduate, and Innovation (Gokhan Basbug).

ORE's primary mission has been to increase high-impact research and scholarly activity, and enhance the Faculty's success in obtaining external and internal funding for research, particularly in areas of the [Faculty of Education Strategic Plan](#). We also convey to our community research trends and new opportunities across the university, nation, and global community. To that end, ORE is focused on the following:

- Building research capacity through outreach, individual consultation with faculty members, internal review of grant proposals, workshops, and web resources
- Identifying and promoting research funding opportunities for faculty in a weekly newsletter (*Research Funding Bulletin*)
- Coordinating searches, nominations, and renewals for Canada Research Chairs (CRCs), Endowed Chairs and Professorships, and other high-impact hires or appointments, and facilitating funding applications to the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI)
- Enhancing the Faculty's recruitment and support of postdoctoral fellows
- Developing and facilitating nominations for faculty research awards and prizes
- Enhancing communications and engaging in initiatives to increase the visibility of the Faculty's research through social media, recognition events, public lectures, and other avenues



Statement on Impacts of COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Faculty of Education, along with UBC and most other universities, needed to curtail many kinds of research from March 2020. This resulted in understandable delays in the completion of projects, decreased proposal submissions for new grants (e.g., 25% reduction in SSHRC Insight Grants from 2020 to 2021), and the suspension of many forms of in-person research and travel. However, innovations in instruction and research (using Zoom and other means) provided important new research opportunities—for example, examining the effects of pandemic constraints and interventions on teaching, learning, and other activities.



Research Highlights 2020-2022

A sample of recent recipients of honours and awards (select list):

Officer of the Order of Canada

Dr. Donald McKenzie (2022)

National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship

Dr. Harper Keenan (2022)

UBC Okanagan Researcher of the Year, Social Sciences and Humanities

Dr. Margaret Macintyre Latta (2022)

UBC Okanagan Tier 1 Principal's Research Chair in Leadership, Learning, and Wellbeing

Dr. Sabre Cherkowski (2022)

UBC Killam Faculty Research Fellowships

Dr. Jason Ellis, Junior Scholar Category, (2021)

Dr. Robinder Bedi, Senior Scholar Category, (2021)

Dr. Vanessa Andreotti, Junior Scholar Category (2020)

UBC Killam Faculty Research Prize in the Arts and Humanities

Dr. Mona Gleason, Senior Scholar Category (2020)

UBC Killam Professorship

Dr. Bonny Norton (2021)

UBC Sam Black Award for Education and Development in the Visual and Performing Arts

Dr. Dónal O'Donoghue (2020)

Reading Hall of Fame

Dr. Lee Gunderson (2021)

American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) Distinguished Scholarship and Service Award

Dr. Ryuko Kubota (2020)

Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC) Ehor Boyanowsky Academic of the Year Award

Dr. Bonny Norton (2020)

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Postdoctoral Fellows

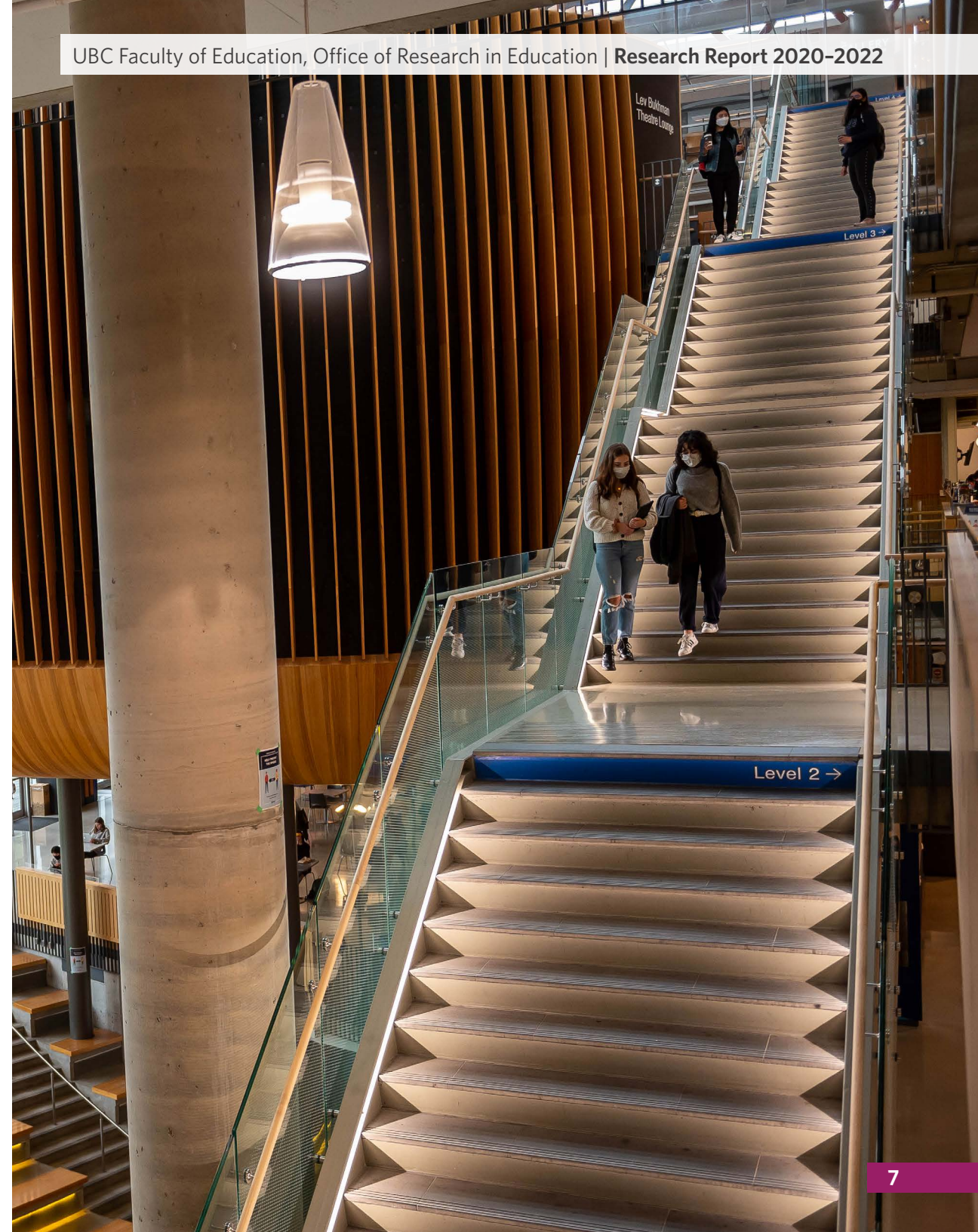
Postdoctoral fellows typically begin their appointments within three years of obtaining their PhDs and are seeking additional research training under the general supervision of a faculty member.

Postdoctoral fellows may assist with supervising graduate students on research projects and other activities as well as advancing their own research. They help raise the profile of UBC and the research community, becoming established scholars in their respective fields.

The Office of Research in Education provides strategic advice and proposal development support to approximately 16 postdoctoral fellows in a given year.

ORE hosts workshops that provide information on the types of postdoctoral fellow appointments, funding opportunities, and the responsibilities of postdoctoral fellows and their faculty supervisors, such as the workshop titled “Sponsoring Postdoctoral Fellows in Education: Pathways, Pitfalls and Possibilities” held November 2021.

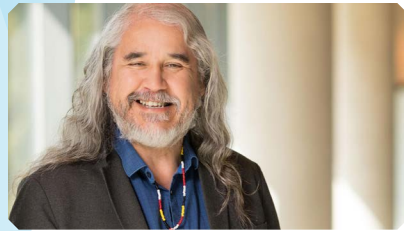
The office also promotes and facilitates opportunities through MITACS, a national non-profit that links graduate students and postdoctoral fellows with community and industry partners.



Current Research Chairs and Professorships

Our research chairs, professors, and distinguished scholars are harnessing the power of education to address society's most critical challenges. Our Canada Research Chairs and internal chairs and professorships have served as a magnet

for graduate student recruitment, have produced significant research in their areas of focus, and achieved impactful engagement with schools and communities.



Dr. Cash Ahenakew

Tier II Canada Research Chair in Indigenous People's Wellbeing

[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. Vanessa Andreotti

Tier II Canada Research Chair in Race, Inequalities and Global Change

David Lam Chair in Multicultural Education

[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. Daniel Cox

Myrne B. Nevison Professor in Counselling Psychology

[Learn more](#)



Dr. Guy Faulkner

Canadian Institutes of Health Research-Public Health Agency of Canada (CIHR-PHAC) Chair in Applied Public Health

[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. Jan Hare

Tier I Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Pedagogy

[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. Harper Keenan

Robert Quartermain Professor of Gender and Sexuality Research in Education

[Learn more](#)



Dr. Kenneth Miller

Edith Lando Professor in Counselling for Refugee and Immigrant Youth and Families

[Learn more](#)



Dr. Guofang Li

Tier I Canada Research Chair in Transnational/Global Perspectives on Language and Literacy Education of Children and Youth

[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. Sterett Mercer
Chris Spencer Foundation Professor in Dyslexia
[Learn more](#)



Dr. Cynthia Nicol
David F. Robitaille Professor in Mathematics and Science Education
[Learn more](#)



Dr. Bonny Norton, FRSC
University Killam Professor
[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. Nancy Perry
Dorothy Lam Chair in Special Education
[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. William Pinar
Tetsuo Aoki Professor in Curriculum Studies
[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. Eli Puterman
Tier II Canada Research Chair in Physical Activity and Health
[Watch to learn more](#)



Dr. Leyton Schnellert
Eleanor Rix Professor in Rural Teacher Education
[Learn more](#)



Dr. Bruno Zumbo
Tier I Canada Research Chair in Psychometrics and Measurement
Paragon UBC Professor of Psychometrics and Measurement
[Watch to learn more](#)



Research Centres and Institutes

Centres and Institutes within the Faculty of Education support the pursuit of thematically focused research, knowledge mobilization, and community engagement.

Each is distinct in character, focus, and history, with some holding Faculty-wide standing and others being located within departments.

In addition to these long-established research centres, various newer research clusters and interdisciplinary collaborations, many with significant university funding, promote such topics as research-based theatre, climate and sustainability, and reconciliation in healthcare settings.

Centre for Culture, Identity and Education (CCIE)

CCIE is a cultural studies research centre focused on exploring various facets of and developments in the complex issue of identity and its educational implications in local and international cultural contexts. [Learn more.](#)

Institute for Veterans Education and Transition (IVET)

IVET provides a point of entry to UBC for military-connected individuals transitioning from military service as they explore new academic and career opportunities. By providing counselling services, training, and educational opportunities, IVET connects veterans with resources and services to help ensure their success in the civilian world. [Learn more.](#)

Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Collaboration in Autism (CIRCA)

CIRCA draws together faculty, students, provincial service providers, policy makers, and both fundamental and applied researchers from BC post-secondary institutions to address issues relevant to improving the lives of individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families. [Learn more.](#)

Centre for Mindful Engagement (CME)

Respect for the past, awareness of the present, discernment for the future—the Centre for Mindful Engagement is a gathering place for researchers from all disciplines and interests to explore the significance of mindful community engagement. [Learn more.](#)

Centre for Sport and Sustainability (CSS)

CSS is a global resource to capture and transfer knowledge on how sport can create sustainable benefits locally, regionally, and internationally. The Centre dedicates its resources to improving our understanding of how sport can help advance the themes of health, economy and infrastructure, social development and impacts, public policy and planning, urban renewal, and ecological change. [Learn more.](#)

Centre for the Study of Teacher Education (CSTE)

CSTE conducts programmatic research in pre-service teacher education and teacher development. It focuses on researching teaching practices, teacher learning, and collaborative inquiry. [Learn more.](#)

Centre for Early Childhood Education & Research (CECER)

CECER is an interdisciplinary unit that promotes dialogue around professional development, research, and policy in the area of early childhood development and education. [Learn more.](#)



Research Metrics

This section provides data on the professoriate breakdown in the Faculty by rank and academic stream and our research grant activity and success.

It also provides an overview of the grants awarded to faculty researchers in Education. As of July 31, 2022, there are 165 tenure-stream or tenured faculty members, including

80 professors, 55 associate professors, and 30 assistant professors.

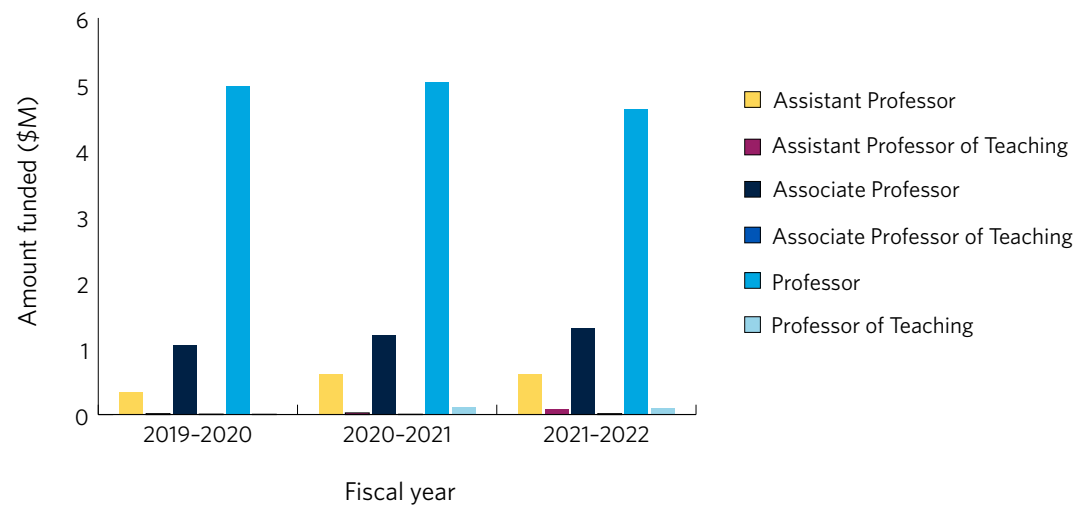
Funding by rank

Over the last three fiscal years ending March 2022, professors have held the largest amount of research funding (\$15.3M for professors, \$3.7M for associate

professors, and \$1.7M for assistant professors). However, research funding for assistant professors has almost doubled since 2019. Although our

educational leadership colleagues are not expected to do research, many do—in particular, in relation to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Funding by rank



Credit: Dr. Mark Carpenter

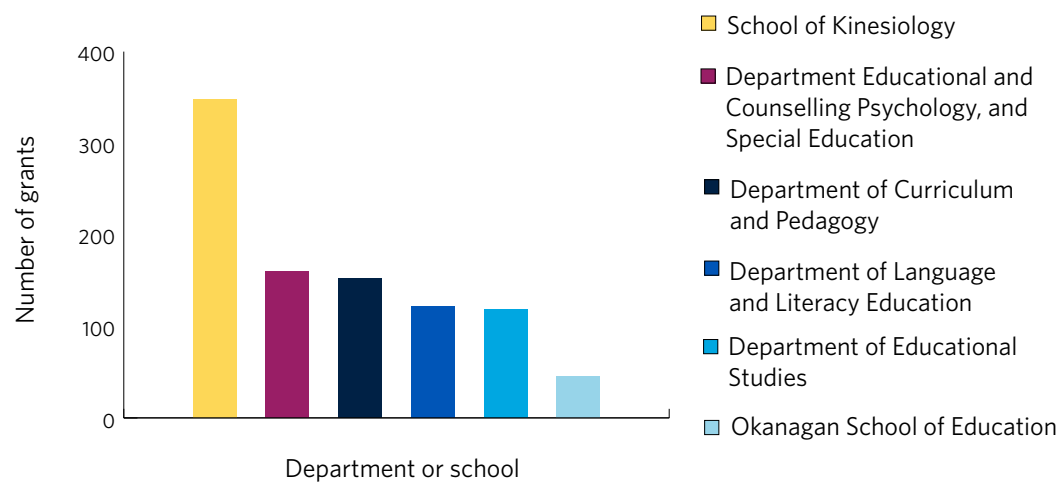
Funding by department and school

Research funding plays a fundamental role in advancing leading-edge research and scholarship in the Faculty of Education in diverse areas:

- K-12 and higher education
- Adult education
- Anti-racism education
- Autism
- Critical media and digital literacy
- Counselling psychology
- Environmental literacy
- Indigenous studies
- Neuromechanical kinesiology
- Population health
- Psychometrics
- Rural and remote learning
- Sport and exercise psychology
- Transnational education
- Transformational curriculum design
- Virtual education, and more

The chart below highlights the number of internal and external grants held by faculty over the last three fiscal years.

Funding by department and school

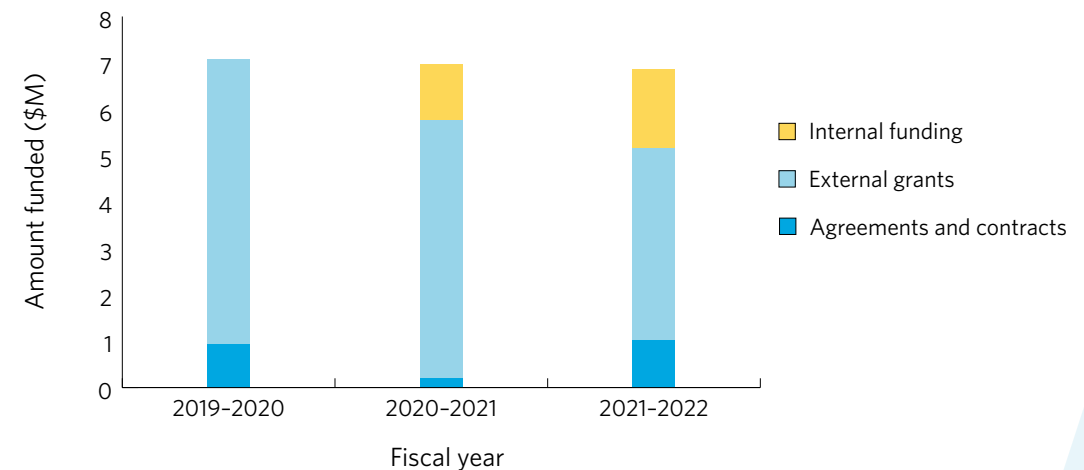


Funding by award type

Although the pandemic affected both new grant submissions and research activity, for a variety of reasons, we expect a return to pre-pandemic levels

in the coming years as we hire new research-stream faculty across the academic units.

Funding by award type



Funding by sponsor

The Faculty of Education has maintained an impressive track record in receiving funding from Canada's three major funding agencies:

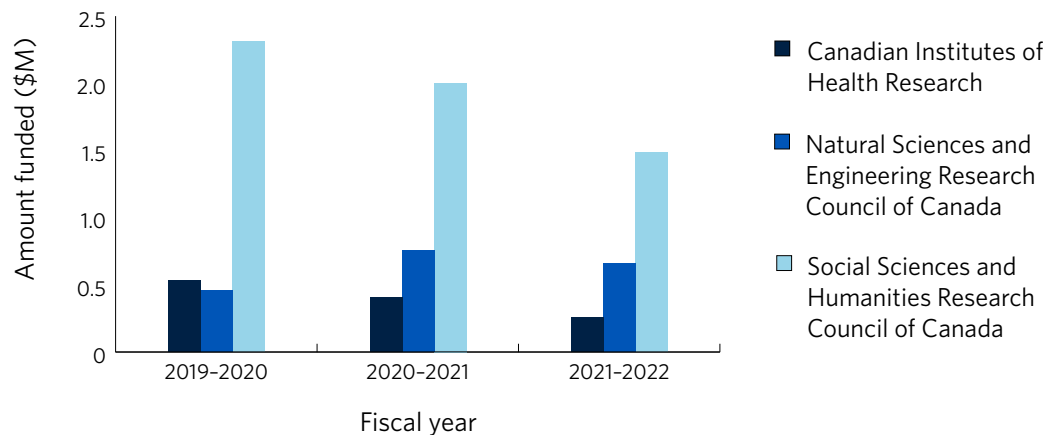
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

SSHRC grants

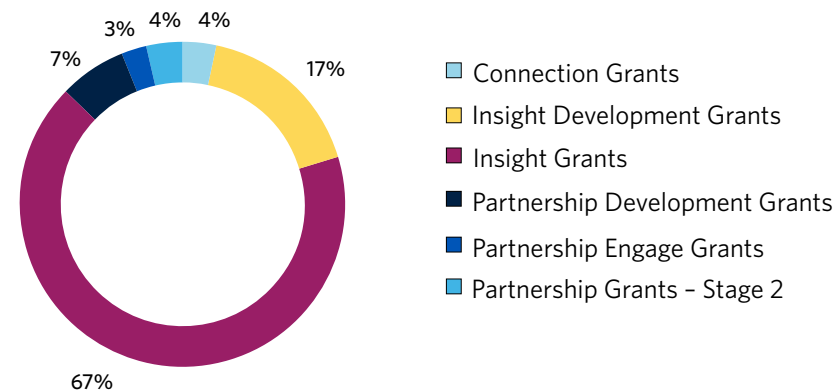
The Faculty has achieved success across SSHRC's research funding programs, which are open to both emerging and established scholars working as individuals or in teams.

The cornerstone of these funding programs is Insight Grants. Available for 2 to 5 years, Insight Grants enable scholars to address complex issues about individuals and societies to further our collective understanding and suggest avenues for action and transformation.

Funding by Sponsor



SSHRC Grants by program (number of grants 2019-2022)



SSHRC Insight Grants

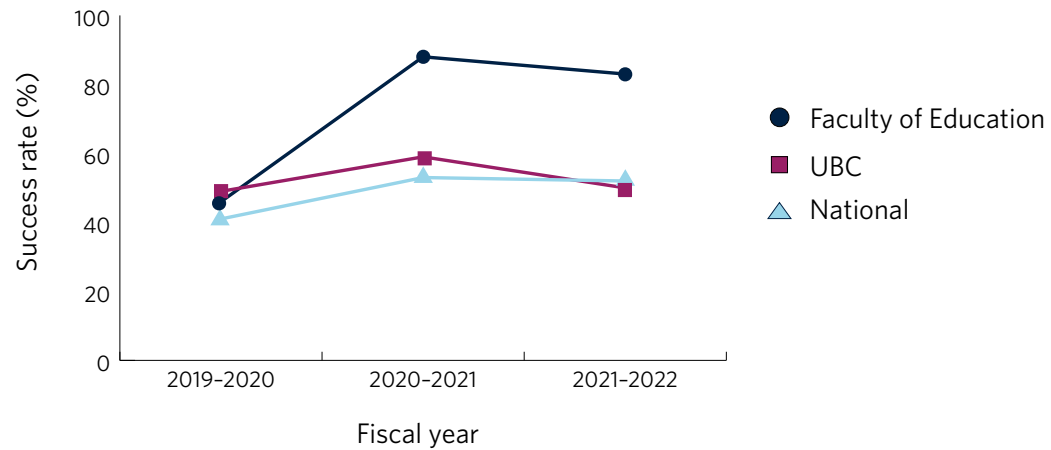
Because SSHRC Grants, and particularly SSHRC Insight Grants, represent the largest proportion of external grants obtained by faculty members in the Faculty of Education, these are a high priority for research grants facilitation.

Our Insight Grant success rate over the past three fiscal years (2020 to 2022) has ranged from 46 to 88 percent, while the national success rate for all disciplines and the UBC success rate have ranged from 41 to 53 percent and 49 to 59 percent, respectively, over the same time frame.

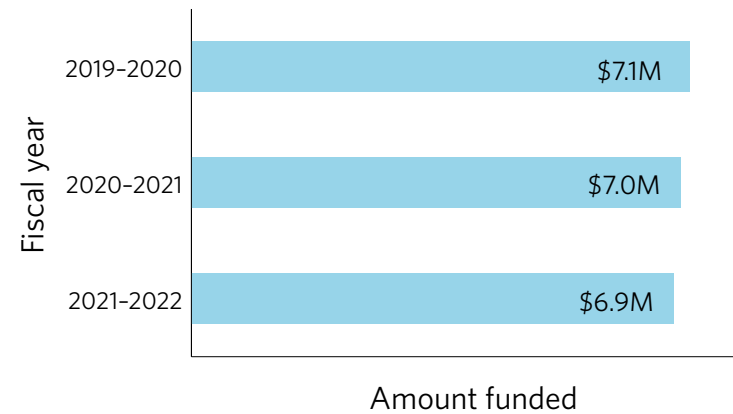
The total amount awarded in the Faculty of Education to SSHRC Insight Grant recipients from the Vancouver and Okanagan campuses saw an 80 percent increase from the 2019 to the 2020 competition years and a slight decrease (7%) from the 2020 to the 2021 competition years.

These data represent the total amount awarded to principal investigators for each competition year. While there was a drop in the number of applications, the total amount of funding awarded to grant recipients has remained high.

SSHRC Insight Grants success rate



SSHRC Insight Grant funding to the Faculty of Education by fiscal year





Research Profiles

Theme 1: Indigenous Community-based Research

Dr. Cash Ahenakew

Associate Professor
Department of Educational Studies

Dr. Ahenakew's (photo left) research is based on a [commitment to developing Indigenous theories](#), curriculum, pedagogies, and mixed methodologies. His work addresses the complexities at the interface between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges, education, methodology, ceremony, and well-being. Dr. Ahenakew seeks to address the colonial determinants of health inequalities by drawing on his experience in international interdisciplinary research and Indigenous healing practices.

Dr. Johanna Sam

Assistant Professor
Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education

Dr. Sam takes a community-based approach to exploring the relationships among cyber-aggression, resiliency, academic achievement, and mental wellness. She leads a team of researchers in the [Community-based Indigeneity, Resiliency and Cyberbullying Lab in Education \(C.I.R.C.L.E\)](#) that connects with teens, Indigenous communities, educators, and researchers to promote youth wellbeing. A current project, funded by SSHRC, explores how Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth cope with cyber-aggression by taking a "two-eyed seeing" approach that weaves together Indigenous and Western perspectives. [Learn more.](#)

Dr. Margaret Macintyre Latta

Professor
Okanagan School of Education

Dr. Macintyre Latta and her collaborators are pursuing pathways for designing co-curricular-making experiences with the aid of a 5-year [SSHRC Partnership Grant](#). The focus on knowledge of Syilx laws, customs, protocols and principles that define and inform Syilx rights and responsibilities to the land and to culture provides needed access to the co-curricular-making ways of being and practices for local educators and their students. This place-based approach holds potential for transforming the educational landscape not only locally, but also as a guiding model for other educational settings.

Theme 2: Education as a Social Good

Dr. Cynthia Nicol

Professor
Department of Curriculum and
Pedagogy

Dr. Nicol researches the pedagogical possibilities and challenges of culturally responsive mathematics education with/in Indigenous and rural communities. Rooted in place and community, this pedagogical approach values community cultural knowledge and language to expand and deepen ways of supporting students' mathematical flourishing. Her current research, funded by SSHRC, focuses on (re)imagining the mathematics in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education by turning to Earth as teacher to explore ways of being that contribute to learning to live well with the natural world.

Dr. Anusha Kassan

Associate Professor
Department of Educational and
Counselling Psychology, and Special
Education

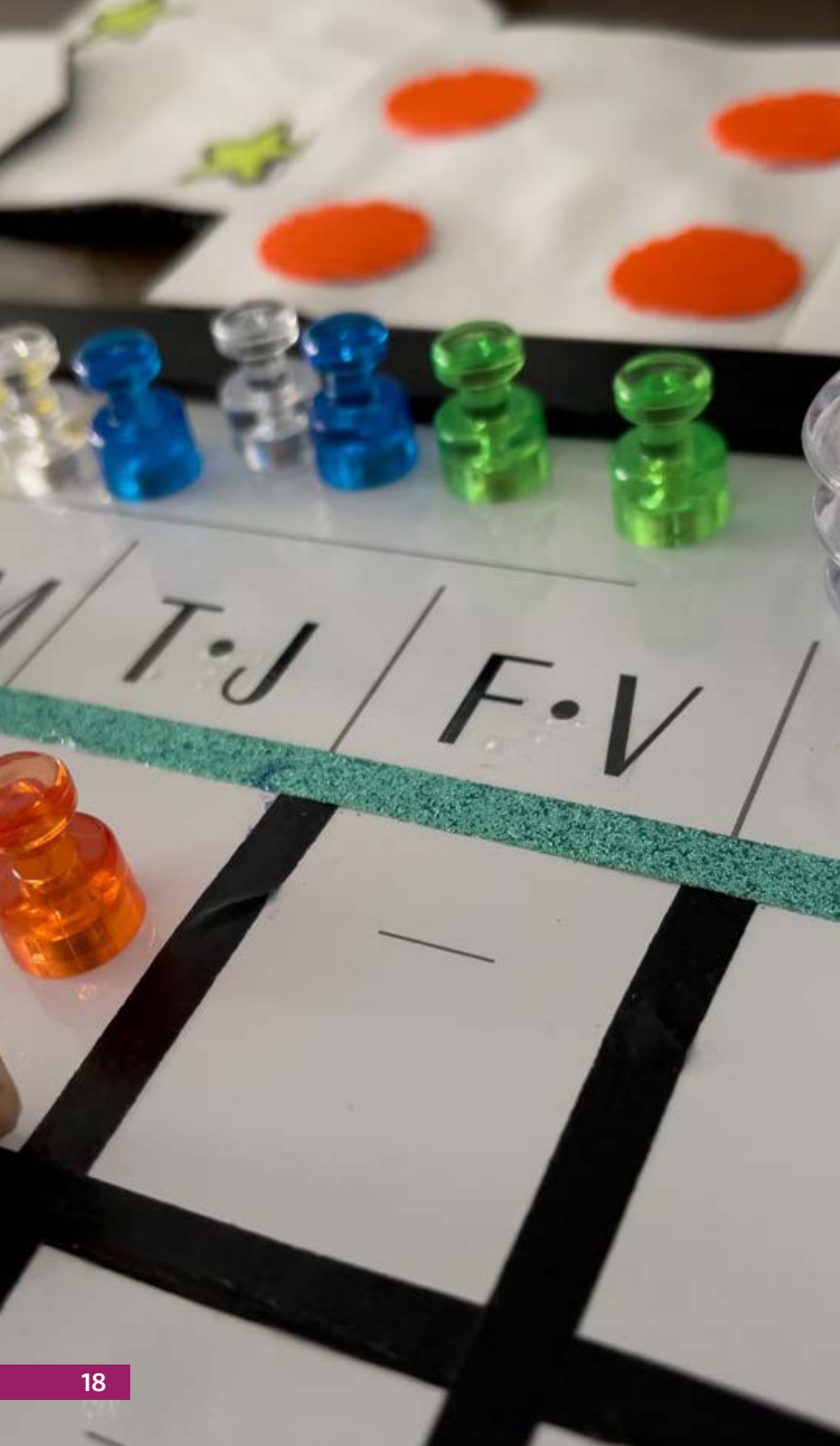
Dr. Kassan's recent SSHRC-funded project—Arts-Based Engagement Ethnography with Newcomer Students—employs a social justice framework, coupled with an arts-based engagement ethnography, to investigate the phenomenon of school integration among newcomer secondary school students enrolled in French and English public education systems in Vancouver. A social justice framework positions newcomer youth as experts on their own experiences, and arts-based engagement ethnography invites them to engage in the research process in new and creative ways. Preliminary results demonstrate the interconnected factors impacting school integration.

Dr. Maureen Kendrick

Professor
Department of Language and
Literacy Education

Dr. Kendrick's research, funded by SSHRC, explores the potential for multimodal meaning-making to draw from the fuller context of the lives and literacies of children and youth from refugee backgrounds to enhance language learning and identity affirmation. Her current [study's findings](#) show that using multiple representational resources can enable communication of complex, critical understandings; enhance development of literacy competencies; make visible the challenges of communicating in classroom spaces; and encourage investment and identity affirmation in language learning.





Theme 3: Social and Physical Sustainability

Dr. Kim Zebehazy

Professor
*Department of Educational and
 Counselling Psychology, and Special
 Education*

Dr. Zebehazy is interested in developing problem-solving abilities of students with visual impairments (VI). Her research investigates divergent thinking and executive functioning (EF) profiles of these students to provide teachers with instructional intervention ideas that target specific areas of need. Her research team has found a strong relationship among real-life problem-solving ability, academic ability, and divergent thinking. The team is currently testing adaptations to standard EF measures and newly created functional tasks to gather data on the EF profiles of students with VI.

Dr. John-Tyler Binfet

Associate Professor
Okanagan School of Education

Spearheaded by UBC Okanagan's dog therapy program, Building Academic Retention Through K9s (B.A.R.K.), and funded by a SSHRC Insight Grant, a new initiative—Virtual Canine Comfort to Support Student Well-Being—saw virtual modules created for students to spend time with therapy dogs as a means of reducing stress. Just [published in Anthrozoos](#), findings from a randomized controlled trial revealed significant reductions in pre-to-post self-reports of stress for students who spent time virtually with B.A.R.K. dogs compared to participants in the control group who did not.

Dr. Brian Wilson

Professor
School of Kinesiology

Dr. Wilson's research examines how members of the sport industry respond to environmental issues, the role of sport in peace-building and development, and how sport-related social and environmental issues are covered in the mainstream media, focusing especially on 'best practice' forms of media coverage. His research has contributed to improving strategies for assessing claims about the benefits of sport and visualizing ways to optimize sport's potential in relation to social and environmental issues.

Theme 4: Digital Innovations in Education and Health

Dr. Jennifer Jenson

Professor
Department of Language and
Literacy Education

Dr. Jenson's research interrupts longstanding patterns of inequitable access to and success in technological subjects and fields. Her current investigations focus on gender inequity in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, where over four decades of research confirm that girls are still being left far behind. Her current SSHRC study looks beyond schools and teachers to map out the landscape of informal STEM-learning opportunities, including the barriers and skills activated through designing digital games.

Dr. Jillianne Code

Assistant Professor
Department of Curriculum and
Pedagogy

Dr. Code's Agency for Learning in Immersive and Virtual Environments (ALIVE) research project examines how game-based assessments enable agency, self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning. Using evidence-centred game design, the ALIVE environment provides adaptable feedback, encouraging self-regulation as students engage in an ecological climate inquiry. The purpose of this research is to examine under what game design conditions agency is enabled, and how different modes of this gameplay impact learning.

Dr. Mark Carpenter

Professor
School of Kinesiology

Co-led by Drs. Jean-Sébastien Blouin and Mark Carpenter, the [Origins of Balance Deficits and Falls research cluster](#) unifies 60+ world-class researchers and their trainees in a trans-disciplinary network to understand and model mechanisms contributing to healthy and pathological balance; discover therapeutic interventions for balance deficits and falls; and innovate and advance technology for balance assessment, assistive-devices, and fall prevention. The network fosters inclusive collaboration, knowledge and technology transfer, and training.



As one of the leading Faculties of Education in the world, our research is diverse in scope and far-reaching in impact. Our research encompasses the arts and humanities, the health sciences and social sciences, the natural sciences and engineering, and so much more.

UBC Faculty of Education

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