

**Faculty of Environment Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025  
Progress Report for fiscal year ended April 30, 2024**

The Faculty of Environment strategic plan for 2020-2025, [TOGETHER for a sustainable future](#) (the “Plan”) outlines the following vision for Environment:

To use our unique position as a leading teaching and research institute for the environment to create sustainable solutions needed to address complex challenges facing our world.

Environment will realize this vision through the pursuit of three goals:

1. Be Canada’s leader in environmental and sustainability education.
2. Achieve increased impact through national and global leadership in environmental and sustainability research.
3. Demonstrate an ethos of caring in all that we do.

Each of these goals has several commitments which are outlined in the Plan and restated below. Key accomplishments, progress and connections to the University’s Strategic Plan are summarized below.

**Goal 1: Be Canada’s leader in environmental and sustainability education.**

In 2023, Waterloo was ranked:

- 1<sup>st</sup> in Canada for Remote Sensing, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Canada for Water Resources Research, and 6<sup>th</sup> in Canada for Geography by the Academic Rankings of World Universities
- 5<sup>th</sup> in Canada for Geography and Environmental Science by QS World University Rankings

While these rankings almost certainly take into account work of other Faculties given the interdisciplinary nature of the subject matter, they also reflect the world-class research and programming in the Faculty of Environment.

Commitment	Pathways	Accomplishment & Progress in 2023-24	Connection to UW Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives
1. Extend environmental and sustainability education on campus in partnership with others.	Identify 3 priority areas where, working in partnership with other Faculties, new degrees, diplomas or specializations are introduced.  Develop at least two new Faculty-based academic programs to address emergent issues.	<p><a href="#">Type II GDip in Climate Change</a> was launched on Earth Day 2024 with significant media attention. The program has already enrolled 14 students.</p> <p><a href="#">Master of Future Cities</a> was approved in 2023. Engineering will be offering an engineering version of this program.</p> <p>Environment and Engineering successfully piloted an interdisciplinary capstone. The intention is to expand participation to other Faculties that are interested.</p>	<p><b>Educate global citizens for the future of work and learning to thrive in an age of rapid change ...</b></p> <p><b>Enhance graduate and post-doctoral studies ...</b></p> <p><i>Further enhance the “Business at Waterloo” programming model to inspire people to lead in a rapidly changing economy.</i></p> <p><i>Foster an interdisciplinary environment for graduate students and post-doctoral scholars to increase the impact of their work.</i></p> <p><i>Find new ways to work together and remove barriers to collaboration, interdisciplinarity and the integration of knowledge.</i></p>

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			<i>Become a societal role model of sustainability ...</i>
2. Increase our involvement in non-traditional educational activities.	Collaborate with other campus or community partners to develop three new professional/ executive training opportunities related to environment and sustainability.	Our partners at the <a href="#">Waterloo Climate Institute</a> have contracted with a large employer to develop lifelong learning modules, and are in discussions with governmental organizations and faculty members regarding other opportunities.	<b>Establish a unique Waterloo approach to support learning at various stages of individuals' professional lives.</b>
3. Ensure our graduates have the necessary leadership, collaborative, and technical skills to fully contribute to society and the economy.	<p>Pilot new delivery models that develop competencies in key areas that complement existing curriculum.</p> <p>Conduct a Faculty-wide curriculum review that (a) identifies opportunities to enhance technical training that addresses the rapidly evolving role of technology in the workplace; (b) addresses decolonization, Indigeneity, and inclusivity; and (c) reviews how students' co-op experiences integrate with their academics to support 'future-ready' learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Academic programs in the SEED, KI and GEM underwent cyclical reviews. Recommendations included delivery models, curriculum, and opportunities for Indigenization.</p> <p>As part of ENV2035, the ADUG and AD Grad formed working groups to discuss opportunities for curriculum and programs. They are presenting recommendations at the AGM.</p> <p><a href="#">Engineering, Environment and Math collaborated on an Interdisciplinary capstone and intended to expand to other Faculties in the future.</a></p> <p>Amanda St. Marie joined the Faculty in January in the new Environment Indigenous Initiatives Manager role. She has performed a scan of available programs and supports across campus, is currently reviewing recommendations in cyclical reviews regarding Indigenizing curriculum, and has connected with faculty interested in adding Indigenous content or perspectives. She is also working with the first-year communications curriculum working group to add Indigenous content to</p>	<p><b>Educate global citizens for the future of work and learning to thrive in an age of rapid change ...</b></p> <p><i>Promote quality and innovation in teaching and learning and support infrastructure, policy and practice that remove systemic barriers.</i></p> <p><i>Continue to advance an agile, technology-enabled learning ecosystem that supports high-quality, open content and digital learning options. Continue to lead the world in co-operative education and support the workforce of the future through fully integrated academic and experiential learning opportunities.</i></p>

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		<p>required communications course. In the Fall, Amanda will conduct a survey to assess where the Faculty is with respect to awareness and readiness to move on Indigenous initiatives (including curriculum), and develop an action plan.</p> <p>Related news stories:  <a href="#">Community Wealth Lab gave students the opportunity to work with Waterloo Region community members on solutions to local systemic issues.</a></p>	
<p>4. Expand both experiential learning opportunities and international education, being sensitive to the need for accessible and affordable options.</p>	<p>Conduct a program and course review to better coordinate, scaffold and enhance experiential learning opportunities.</p> <p>Work with the non-profit sector to create new opportunities for co-op and internship terms.</p> <p>Ensure that every student has an opportunity to participate in an international exchange, field school, co-op placement, or conference.</p>	<p>Several field course were offered in 2023-24, including Bali field trip, India annual field course, ongoing KI museum course, and new South Africa field course.</p> <p>The Faculty is developing a database of international partnerships/research contacts to assist with identifying opportunities.</p> <p>Waterloo International has appointed a Faculty liaison to Environment to facilitate international opportunities.</p> <p>The Faculty signed an MOU with the Rekhi Foundation for Happiness, which outlines intentions around curriculum and other partnerships.</p> <p>Related news stories:  <a href="#">Undergraduate presenters discuss navigating international conferences.</a></p> <p><a href="#">MDP student participates in MENA Climate Week</a></p>	<p><b>Continue to lead the world in co-operative education and support the workforce of the future through fully integrated academic and experiential learning opportunities.</b></p>

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		<a href="#">Libro Credit Union contributes to the Global Citizen Internship program to support student placements at housing non-profits.</a>	
<p>5. Be a culture that supports educators and celebrates educational excellence.</p>	<p>Introduce a program of supportive peer review to improve course design and program delivery.</p> <p>Provide more opportunities for teaching experience among doctoral candidates and postdoctoral fellows.</p> <p>Implement a program to recognize outstanding contributions to teaching</p>	<p>Faculty of Environment, Teaching Fellow, Christy Barbeau, accepted the newly created Associate Dean, Teaching role.</p> <p>Over the past year, Christy has represented Environment in discussions regarding the proposed University-level Peer Review of Teaching program.</p> <p>The Faculty continues to engage graduate students in teaching roles.</p> <p>New awards were introduced by the Faculty to celebrate, among other things, excellence in teaching.</p>	<p><b>Educate global citizens for the future of work and learning to thrive in an age of rapid change ...</b></p> <p><i>Promote quality and innovation in teaching and learning and support infrastructure, policy and practice that remove systemic barriers.</i></p>
<p>6. Improve our students' capacity to succeed in entrepreneurial and social enterprise activities.</p>	<p>Double the number of students exposed to or participating in entrepreneur-related events.</p> <p>Increase leadership and social innovation training</p>	<p>Environment through <a href="#">E@E</a> continues to look for ways to expose students to entrepreneurial and social enterprise activities. UWaterloo is also increasing support and activities centrally.</p> <p>Some examples:  Hosted annual Jack Rosen Virtual Pitch Competition.  <a href="#">Students awarded second place in Esri Canada App Competition.</a>  <a href="#">Students win \$5,000 in funding at the Velocity Pitch Competition.</a>  <a href="#">Students come in second place in the Quantum4Environment design competition.</a></p>	<p><b>Propel Waterloo's global leadership in innovation, entrepreneurship and social impact.</b></p>
<p>7. Achieve ambitious reductions in the</p>	<p>Reduce our carbon footprint on campus through initiatives</p>	<p>Environment continues to work with Plant</p>	<p><b>Continue to leverage our resources to engage, develop</b></p>

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Faculty of Environment's carbon footprint.	<p>related to food, space heating and cooling and other office practices.</p> <p>Develop a plan to reduce and/or offset our work travel-related carbon footprint by 50% by 2025</p>	<p>Operations to assess the state of our infrastructure and gather data about user experience, needs and plans to inform maintenance, upgrades, and new projects to support our long-term strategy and enhance sustainability. With information, develop short, mid and long-term plans.</p> <p>The living wall in EV3, which helps remove carbon dioxide from the air, was replaced this year with plants that are more resilient.</p>	<p><b>and build our capacity and infrastructure to create a sustainable and effective institution.</b></p> <p><i>Leverage our entrepreneurial spirit and model organizational efficiency and sustainability in all domains of our service.</i></p>
8. Provide leadership on University initiatives related to environment and sustainability.	Engage with others to explore and expand opportunities to green the campus.	<p>Environment provides leadership in <a href="#">PACES</a> and in Senate-approved research centres under the "sustainable futures" umbrella.</p> <p>Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies is participating in a Teaching Innovation Incubator project regarding the integration of sustainability in curriculum across campus.</p> <p>Environment led the development and launch of new interdisciplinary GDip in climate change involving all six Faculties and WCI.</p>	<p><b>Continue to leverage our resources to engage, develop and build our capacity and infrastructure to create a sustainable and effective institution.</b></p>
9. Be at the forefront of defining and researching emergent environmental and sustainability problems that require an interdisciplinary approach.	<p>Lead on and/or collaborate in highly impactful national/international sustainability research.</p> <p>Attract support for large-scale projects and increase our overall annual research funding.</p> <p>Develop a 'future cities' hub/centre</p>	<p>Environment continues to partner across all disciplines and sectors, attracting well-deserved attention and research funding for its critical work.</p> <p>As part of ENV 2035, the AD, Research formed a working group to review research strengths, practices, and opportunities. The report</p>	<p><b>Waterloo will use its disciplinary and interdisciplinary strengths to solve increasingly complex, real-world problems.</b></p>

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	Strengthen knowledge mobilization	<p>will be presented at the AGM.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Future Cities Institute</a> was launched with a \$10 million investment from CAIVAN.</p> <p>Some highlights from 2023-24:</p> <p><a href="#">The Faculty signed an MOU with the Rekhi Foundation to explore collaborations on the science of happiness and sustainability.</a></p> <p><a href="#">New study published in Nature finds that tundra soils might release four times more carbon due to climate warming.</a></p> <p><a href="#">TD Walter Bean lecture raises awareness of ocean plastic pollution as global issue.</a></p> <p>Environment faculty and graduate students were recognised with awards and appointments including: Jonathan Li and Daniel Scott were named Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada; Navya Nair received a 2023 International Doctoral Research Award; Emma Wegener won a Social Impact Award; Ellsworth LeDrew received the Massey Medal from the Royal Canadian Geographical Society; Daniel Scott was named to Clarivate’s annual Highly Cited Researchers list; Cloe St-Hilaire was awarded a Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship; Simron Singh was named University Research Chair; Pierre Filion was inducted into the Prestigious College of Fellows by the Canadian Institute of Planners</p>	

**Goal 2: Achieve increased impact through national and global leadership in environmental and sustainability research.**

<p>10. Enhance inter-Faculty research collaborations, especially in areas that align with the University’s strategic priorities.</p>	<p>Participate in large University-level research proposals and projects with a technology focus.</p> <p>Provide leadership in three environmentally focused University Research Centres related to water, energy and climate</p>	<p>Environment faculty members serve as Executive Director of Waterloo Climate Institute, Founding Director of WISA, Director of WICI, Head of Intact Centre for Climate Adaptation, and board or planning committee members of WISE and the Water Institute. Through these research centres and institutes, faculty are collaborating with colleagues in other Faculties on interdisciplinary research.</p> <p>AD, Research works with colleagues to identify opportunities to work across Faculties on projects.</p> <p>Environment faculty members are partnering with Math faculty members on a CREATE grant: “Training for Novel Directions in Quantitative Climate Science.”</p>	<p><b>Achieve greater research impact by leveraging Waterloo’s partnerships.</b></p>
<p>11. Ensure a faculty and research staff complement that supports interdisciplinarity in research and teaching.</p>	<p>Develop a strategic plan that ensures an appropriate balance of natural science, social science, technology, business, health and humanities in faculty hires.</p> <p>Incorporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity in all hiring processes in order to increase representation of black, Indigenous and other under-represented groups</p>	<p>Job ads for new research chairs included requirements related to transdisciplinary research and EDI to enable the faculty to grow our diverse and interdisciplinary faculty complement.</p>	<p><b>Promote and support Indigenous initiatives and a culture of equity, diversity and inclusivity for all.</b></p> <p><i>Improve the representation, participation and engagement of equity-seeking groups within our community.</i></p>
<p>12. Collaborate with external partners in shaping our research agenda and in co-creating and mobilizing knowledge.</p>	<p>Develop a plan for better integrating alumni into the Faculty’s research and teaching.</p> <p>Develop strategic partnerships with corporations, non-profits and/or governments where the impact of our work can be transformative</p>	<p>Working strategically with faculty who are working on fundraising priorities, we have involved key alumni and industry partners to support research and teaching.</p> <p>Some relevant projects:</p> <p><a href="#">Future Cities Institute founded by Caivan</a></p> <p><a href="#">Partnership with Longpoint Biosphere Region</a></p>	<p><b>Achieve greater research impact by leveraging Waterloo’s partnerships.</b></p> <p><b>Propel Waterloo’s global leadership in innovation, entrepreneurship and social impact.</b></p> <p><i>Leverage alumni, research and industry networks to expand entrepreneurial opportunities for members of the Waterloo community.</i></p>

		<a href="#">Foundation to facilitate conservation efforts.</a>	<i>Increase the availability and depth of partnerships with external agencies to advance applied research ...</i>
13. Develop and implement an internationalization strategy that prioritizes partnerships and participation that increase the impact of our work.	<p>Identify three priority regions and invest in relationships and projects that will have long-term benefit for research and community impact.</p> <p>Develop an international student recruitment strategy that connects with research partnerships</p>	<p>The Faculty is developing a database of international partnerships/research contacts to assist with identifying opportunities.</p> <p>Waterloo International has appointed a Faculty liaison to Environment to facilitate international opportunities.</p> <p>Faculty leadership is strengthening relationships in Africa, India, Indonesia and Singapore. Other opportunities are being explored in South and Central America and the Netherlands.</p>	<p><b>Waterloo will use its disciplinary and interdisciplinary strengths to solve increasingly complex, real-world problems.</b></p> <p><i>Prioritize Waterloo's international partnerships to maximize impact for the global good.</i></p>
14. Contribute meaningfully to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Canada and globally.	<p>Grow the programming and impact of SDSN Canada.</p> <p>Expand programming related to the mobilization of youth for sustainability</p>	<p>Environment celebrates all the hard work that went into sustainability events last year by faculty, staff, students and partners, including: ENVigorate, Together Ensemble, SDG Week, and all the events hosted by the Ecology Lab.</p>	<p><b>Continue to leverage our resources to engage, develop and build our capacity and infrastructure to create a sustainable and effective institution.</b></p> <p><i>Leverage our entrepreneurial spirit and model organizational efficiency and sustainability in all domains of our service.</i></p>



**Goal 3: Demonstrate an ethos of caring in all that we do.**

<p>15. Create, model and support a culture of wellbeing for students, staff and faculty.</p>	<p>Lead/support, as appropriate, the implementation of the recommendations of the President’s Advisory Committee on student mental health.</p> <p>Ensure that 90% of faculty and staff have mental health training by 2025.</p>	<p>Prateep Nayak was appointed the inaugural Associate Dean, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice in 2022.</p> <p>The Dean’s Office sponsors termly community gatherings led by the AD, EDIJ. Other activities under the EDIJ portfolio, such as placemaking and ensuring recognition of months/days of observance.</p> <p>The Faculty hosted a lecture by Dr. Rekhi on Happiness and the Environment.</p>	<p><b>Be a people-centered institution committed to genuine care, concern, respect, inclusivity and well-being for all.</b></p>
<p>16. Offer varied learning environments to support students with different learning styles and backgrounds.</p>	<p>Align our activities with university priorities around individualized ‘learning pathways’.</p> <p>Support and encourage participation in thesis, capstone and independent studies courses</p>	<p>See activities and examples above of curriculum and program reviews underway and undertaken, as well as new opportunities created for capstones etc.</p> <p>The undergraduate recommendations from Phase 1 of Environment 2035 focus on more flexible learning pathways and experiential learning.</p>	<p><b>Be a people-centered institution committed to genuine care, concern, respect, inclusivity and well-being for all.</b></p> <p><i>Create a supportive environment for international students that also celebrates their contributions to our diverse community.</i></p> <p><i>Increase flexible curricula that stimulate reflective, deep learning and develop competencies to address global challenges and opportunities.</i></p>
<p>17. Focus on the student experience.</p>	<p>Focus on the transition to university through better coordination of first-year assignments and tests.</p> <p>Use the NSSE results to frame initiatives for improvement, especially in fourth year undergraduate programs</p>	<p>Several initiatives were undertaken in response to the most recent NSSE, including:</p> <p>Continued student leadership breakfast series</p> <p>Created a new position - Student Transitions and Engagement. This role provides essential support for students, and works with ESS on events and initiatives for student engagement and wellness.</p>	<p><b>Foster a connected and supportive community that inspires students, faculty, staff and alumni to achieve their personal, academic and professional goals while feeling valued.</b></p>

		<p>Initiated a peer mentorship program between first and upper year students</p> <p>Organized/participated in a number of town hall and other meetings with grad student groups, both at the UW and ENV levels. Those events are ongoing.</p> <p>The EGSA and the units organize events on a regular basis. ENV grad administration participates in those.</p>	
18. Work with graduate students to create and steward communities of learning.	Provide opportunities for theme-based mentoring through our research clusters.	Environment 2035 graduate studies recommendations outline potential opportunities to create a greater sense of community and opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration through a new Environment School of Graduate Studies.	<b>Enhance graduate and post-doctoral studies ...</b> Strengthen academic, personal and professional supports for our graduate student community.
19. Continually review student-facing roles to ensure excellent academic support.	Evolve practices in order to improve the timeliness and quality of response	Participated in the “Enhancing UG Advising Project” with the SSO and committed to continual review of student-facing roles to ensure excellent academic support.	<b>Foster a connected and supportive community that inspires students, faculty, staff and alumni to achieve their personal, academic and professional goals while feeling valued.</b>
20. Provide staff with more opportunities for professional growth.	<p>Develop a culture of career-long training and development. Provide staff with more opportunities to engage in leadership and academic decision making.</p> <p>Ensure full-time research staff are integrated into career training</p>	<p>Dean’s Office conducting workforce planning exercise through HR, communicated results in Summer 2023, and continues to implement recommendations.</p> <p>Environment created new service awards for those who show leadership and engage in a diverse number of responsibilities with positive impact on those around them and demonstrating an ethos of caring.</p>	<b>Foster a connected and supportive community that inspires students, faculty, staff and alumni to achieve their personal, academic and professional goals while feeling valued.</b>
21. To better support research faculty.	Encourage academic units to adopt a teaching load of 4 courses and 3 courses in alternate years.	Faculty leadership reviewed the teaching load and course release policies this year to ensure consistency and	<b>Waterloo will use its disciplinary and interdisciplinary strengths to solve increasingly complex, real-world problems.</b>

	Provide more support for proposal development and research administration	support for both high quality research and teaching.  Dean's Office conducting workforce planning exercise through HR, communicated results in Summer 2023, and continues to implement recommendations.	
22. To thoughtfully and respectfully engage with members of Indigenous communities to forge a path whereby our activities are increasingly aligned with the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.	Develop an Indigenous advisory committee for the Faculty.  Provide faculty and staff with opportunities for Indigenous knowledge and teaching method integration, and language learning.  Develop an Indigenous student recruitment strategy.	Amanda St. Marie joined the Faculty in January in the new Environment Indigenous Initiatives Manager role. She has performed a scan of available programs and supports across campus and created a survey to be launched this Fall assessing ENV's needs and readiness to move on various initiatives. In the meantime, she is building positive relationships with Indigenous colleagues and community members both on and off campus, reviewing recommendations in cyclical reviews regarding Indigenizing curriculum, working with faculty members on adding Indigenous content to the required communications course, advising on an art project for ENV and wayfinding project for the University, working with the Indigenous Research Team in the Office of the Vice-President, Research and International on issues related to Environment research projects involving Indigenous communities, connecting with faculty interested in weaving Indigenous content or perspectives into their courses, and working with	<b>Promote and support Indigenous initiatives and a culture of equity, diversity and inclusivity for all.</b>  <i>Embrace and act upon the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations and calls to action and build stronger relationships with our local Indigenous community.</i>

		recruitment staff on an Environment-specific Indigenous student recruitment strategy.	
23. To increase our Faculty's capacity to offer informed opinion, analysis, and debate on local and global environmental policy issues.	Establish a structure to convene and coordinate environmental policy work on campus in order to offer informed opinion, analysis, and debate on global environmental policy issues	Environment faculty and members of our research centres and institutes are regularly engaged in these activities.  Communications working with University Relations actively promotes Environment faculty members' leadership on certain topics to the media.	<b>Achieve greater research impact by leveraging Waterloo's partnerships.</b>  <i>Increase partnerships with the public and not-for-profit sectors to catalyze important policy development.</i>