



STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2026





fauw

Faculty Association of
the University of Waterloo

Standing for academic freedom, equity, and collegial governance since 1957

Founded in 1957, the Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo (FAUW) is the official representative of the bargaining unit that includes all “regular faculty” at the University of Waterloo who hold definite term, probationary, tenured, permanent, or continuing appointments (as set out in Policy 76 – Faculty Appointments). We currently have approximately 1,380 members.

MISSION

Faculty Association of University of Waterloo (FAUW) members are diverse, engaged, and secure in their employment. In an environment of academic freedom, curiosity, and collegiality, they drive a culture of teaching, research, and community engagement that leaves lasting and positive impacts on society.

Our purpose is to represent and defend the interests of our members by negotiating working conditions, advocating for member rights, and connecting with faculty across all campuses of the University and the country.

VISION

All faculty feel heard, capable, inspired, and supported.

VALUES

- ◆ Academic excellence
- ◆ Academic freedom
- ◆ Collegial governance
- ◆ Curiosity
- ◆ Equity
- ◆ Inclusiveness
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Respect

OBJECTIVES

To ensure fairness for and equitable treatment of members by negotiating and defending sound policies, practices, and procedures.

To defend and promote academic freedom and tenure within the university.

To promote a climate of collegiality, and in other ways to promote the welfare of faculty within the university as a community of scholars.

To promote an environment that supports quality teaching and research.

To promote a diverse and inclusive university where the advancement of human rights is a priority.

To deal with matters considered to be in the interests of the Association and its members.

To communicate with the membership on a regular basis about priorities and actions.

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OPPORTUNITIES

The FAUW Board of Directors oversees FAUW governance and strategic direction. The current Board was formed in 2023 and will serve until 2025 or 2026. Directors are elected for two-year terms and can serve up to three consecutive terms.

As FAUW looks toward the coming years, we reflect on the internal and external challenges and opportunities ahead of us. Being deliberate in how we approach these challenges and opportunities allows us to prepare and respond to them more effectively. It also allows us to take advantage of opportunities that may be presented by these challenges. Approaching this with determination and tenacity will allow FAUW to be better prepared and more proactive, rather than reactive, to the challenges ahead.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS & ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

The development of this strategic plan was guided by the FAUW Board of Directors. All members of FAUW were given the opportunity to provide input on the development of this strategic plan at a FAUW-side Chat on November 8, 2024, during which the FAUW President, David Porreca outlined the strategic priorities and actions for the rest of the academic year and beyond.

The FAUW Strategic Plan will be communicated to all members, following small group consultations, at the 2024 Fall General Meeting. This plan will serve as a guide for FAUW's work into 2026 and will be used as a benchmark to track our progress toward these strategic priorities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This plan outlines five strategic priorities that will guide our work from 2023 through 2026. Each priority includes areas of focus and action items for operationalizing the plan. FAUW's strategic priorities are:

Support teaching and research

Membership engagement

Transparency with our membership

Working effectively

Advocate at Waterloo and beyond

Future focussed

SUPPORT TEACHING AND RESEARCH

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Establish FAUW as an academic freedom champion by defining and defending our position. We plan to:

- ◆ Invest in meaningful training for Academic Freedom and Tenure (AF&T) committee members and staff.
- ◆ Recruit additional volunteers to expand the capacity of the AFT&T Committee.
- ◆ Protect faculty's rights as laid out in the Memorandum of Agreement, University policies, guidelines and processes.

WORKLOAD EQUITY

FAUW is committed to exploring ways to improve equity between research and teaching faculty streams. FAUW recognizes the importance of all faculty ranks and will work to create an environment where they both thrive. We plan to:

- ◆ Undertake a workload review to determine if existing practices are suitable and equitable following the changes to Policies 76 & 77.
- ◆ Assess workloads across different types and formats of courses and other teaching-related activities (e.g., graduate student supervision), and determine suitable advocacy to improve equity.
- ◆ Explore how to achieve workload equity between teaching and research faculty, and within and across units and faculties.
- ◆ Enlist internal and external expertise (e.g., from associations such as the Ontario Council of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)) to answer the question "What is a course?" and then identify anomalies in course distribution and how to address those.
- ◆ Help our members understand their workload.
- ◆ Leverage internal expertise in the creation of polls and surveys to collect information and feedback from our membership.
- ◆ Assist members with strategies to reduce and/or address excessive workloads.

INSTITUTIONAL NEUTRALITY

FAUW will establish our position on, and definition of, institutional neutrality and use that to inform our actions and communications. We plan to:

- ◆ Define institutional neutrality for FAUW and communicate that definition and the reasoning behind it to our membership.

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION

Our members guide the work of FAUW, and FAUW works for our members. Clear and transparent two-way communication with FAUW members is of paramount importance. FAUW resolves to increase the ways in which it engages with, and solicits feedback from, our members.

We plan to:

- ◆ Establish regular town hall-type forums and other topic-focused conversations to enhance member engagement and provide opportunities for members to share their ideas and concerns.
- ◆ Set a predictable schedule and format for newsletters.
- ◆ Set a predictable annual schedule for Spring and Fall General Meetings.
- ◆ Establish a predictable schedule of the Council of Representatives meetings.
- ◆ Develop channels, establish expectations and encourage engagement between FAUW committees, representatives, and the Board to share information, trends and overlaps and collaborate on strategies.
- ◆ Establish a consistent and thorough onboarding process for all FAUW volunteers and representatives.
- ◆ Ensure that the representation of members on FAUW and University committees, task forces, and working groups is meaningful. Representation must connect to FAUW's objectives and strategic plan to benefit our membership.

TRANSPARENCY WITH OUR MEMBERSHIP

FAUW OPERATIONS

As a representative organization, FAUW must be transparent and accountable to its members. FAUW resolves to develop clear and transparent processes where our President, Board of Directors, committee chairs, and volunteers are accountable for their actions. We plan to:

- ◆ Develop a role description for all FAUW positions, including: the president, vice president, treasurer, Executive Committee members, and standing committee chairs.
- ◆ Publish a clear decision-making process chart to define when the Board will decide as an elected representative body, and when the Board will call for a vote of the membership.

- ◆ Publish General Meeting recaps and documents on our website.
- ◆ Develop and share information on the scope of FAUW's mandate with our members.
- ◆ Review FAUW internal procedures and guidelines.
- ◆ Ensure that action items and new proposals are measurable in terms of effectiveness.

COMMUNICATIONS

To be transparent and accountable to our members, FAUW resolves to develop a comprehensive communications strategy that includes frequent, meaningful, and transparent communication processes. We plan to:

- ◆ Publish monthly members newsletters to increase awareness of FAUW's actions, policies, items of interest, progress, supports, and benefits.
- ◆ Deploy branded, consistent and regular communications, on appropriate platforms, tailored to our audiences.
- ◆ Increase awareness of FAUW's feedback channels, including: fauw@uwaterloo.ca, fauwaft@uwaterloo.ca and fauwpres@uwaterloo.ca
- ◆ Use appropriate social media platforms to deliver and receive information from our members and other stakeholders.
- ◆ Provide increased information to members on the context of decisions made by the FAUW Board and representatives.
- ◆ Establish communication processes that allow all sides to be heard.
- ◆ Establish a dedicated email account to effectively host member meetings.

WORKING EFFECTIVELY

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

FAUW wants our members to know that we are committed to continuously improving our governance, operations and engagement. We plan to:

- ◆ Modernize FAUW's existing Board member onboarding process.
- ◆ Improve succession planning and mentorship within FAUW to support a consistently strong and enduring association.
- ◆ Undergo a governance review to revise and update FAUW's Constitution, bylaws, policies, procedures, and guidelines for congruity and effectiveness.

- ◆ Modernize and update all Terms of Reference for all our standing committees.
- ◆ Create a Strategic Plan as a framework to assist in developing future strategic plans.

COMMITMENT TO CARE

FAUW is committed to demonstrating care for our members, our staff, and all employees at University of Waterloo. We plan to:

- ◆ Demonstrate care for our members by being more involved in providing support for new faculty.
- ◆ Demonstrate care for FAUW as an organization.
- ◆ Demonstrate care for FAUW staff.
- ◆ Demonstrate care for the ongoing relationship with the employer in a way that is collaborative and effective.
- ◆ Propose a Faculty Relations Committee retreat to develop plans for how to work together and establish goals for the coming year.
- ◆ Explore ways to support childcare on campus to support faculty members' ability to work while maintaining caregiving balance.

ADVOCATE AT WATERLOO AND BEYOND

PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL PARTNER

FAUW continues to support and engage with our Provincial and National partner organizations, including the Ontario Council of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA), Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM). We plan to:

- ◆ Continue to liaise with OCUFA and CAUT on equity and solidarity issues, including Provincial university funding, Bill 166 and the Bargaining Stronger Together campaign.
- ◆ Raise the needs and concerns of our members to our partner organizations through regular meetings, conferences and committee representation.
- ◆ Work collaboratively with CAUT as an outspoken defender of academic freedom.
- ◆ Amplify National and Provincial solidarity issues with our membership through labour media best practices.
- ◆ Work with OCUFA and CAUT to improve the quality and accessibility of post-secondary education in Canada.
- ◆ Support FAUW Board members, member representatives and staff to attend training and council meetings with our partner organization.

FUTURE FOCUSED

INSTITUTIONAL CONTINUITY

FAUW has and is re-building the Association to ensure longevity and stability as an institution. FAUW support staff are at the core of the stability, institutional knowledge, and operations of the Association. FAUW is building a strong support team and re-building a strong Board of Directors. We plan to:

- ◆ Update the executive manager job description and fill the vacant role.
- ◆ Update the academic freedom and tenure and policy officer job description and fill the vacant role.
- ◆ Fill the vacant communications and membership services officer position.
- ◆ Invest in meaningful training and professional development for staff.
- ◆ Assess the current staffing complement to determine if additional support is required and what this position would be.
- ◆ Foster a work environment that encourages creativity, excellence, and high morale in faculty and staff by responding to changing needs, embracing diversity, valuing communication and collaboration, and being respectful, trusting, fair, and collegial.
- ◆ Establish knowledge management systems that facilitate easy access to, and transmission of, information and historical records and developments as leadership evolves through elections.

A STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION

FAUW operates solely on membership dues, which fund our operations and FAUW staff salaries. We plan to:

- ◆ Ensure clear and accurate budget and expenditure reporting.
- ◆ Ensure the stability and sustainability of FAUW's financial position through safe investments.
- ◆ Ensure adequate funding for legal challenges and association grievances.
- ◆ Increase members' active approval of discretionary expenditures through information sharing at General Meetings.
- ◆ Create a policy on Course Buyouts for FAUW service.
- ◆ Create a travel and expense policy for FAUW volunteers.
- ◆ Create an investment policy for FAUW reserve funds that includes an Environment, social, and governance (ESG) strategy and aligns with FAUW values.
- ◆ Build a team/group to advise on FAUW investment policy.

- ◆ Establish a dedicated, standing Compensation Strategy Committee to focus on research and comparators to support the Negotiating Team during bargaining years.
- ◆ Investigate alternate banking for the best use of FAUW funds.
- ◆ Pilot a one-year trial Donation and Sponsorship policy to support faculty events and initiatives.



IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

FAUW will bring this Strategic Plan to life by developing and implementing operational plans for the coming three years. These operational plans will lay out clear actions to operationalize the goals identified in this strategic plan. Updates will be published on FAUW's website, at General Meetings, and in an Annual Report to share the progress that has been made toward our strategic directions. As appropriate, quantitative and qualitative data will also be captured and reported. This evaluation will support further strategic planning and will help inform dynamic operational plans.

CONCLUSION

If we have learned anything from the past few years, it is that circumstances can change quickly and dramatically. It is important that the FAUW Strategic Plan be adjusted as conditions warrant. The priorities, as set out in this strategic plan, should not change—but how we get there might. The FAUW Strategic Plan is a living document and will evolve as necessary. A webpage will be dedicated to the FAUW Strategic Plan, including transparent action items and clear metrics to report how we are meeting our priorities and how our activities and outputs have evolved to remain responsive to challenges and opportunities as they arise.