

HEALTH & WELL-BEING STRATEGY 2022 - 2027



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

FACULTY OF
MATHEMATICS



OVERVIEW

Preamble: Addressing the [health](#) and [well-being](#) needs of our community is identified as being a key objective in the Faculty of Mathematics Strategic Plan and is instrumental to achieving our vision of becoming *a world leader in mathematics, statistics, and computer science*. To innovate for a better world tomorrow, we must begin with focusing on ourselves, today. We need to create new resources and services that promote [wellness](#), build a sense of community and belonging, address systemic wellness issues, and foster an inclusive community for all students, staff, and faculty. In doing this, we will successfully create the environmental conditions and culture that will allow for each of us to achieve our full potential.

Mission: To foster a culture of health and well-being and develop a community with a strong [sense of belonging](#) within the Faculty of Mathematics that supports, encourages, and empowers our students, staff, and faculty to live a wellness-focused lifestyle and attain a healthy state of well-being.

Our Strategy:

1. Examining and adjusting our Faculty's commitments, policies, practices, environmental conditions, and structures to meet the needs of our increasingly diverse community and to cultivate a culture of wellness.
2. Educating our community members on the benefits linked to living a wellness-focused lifestyle and raising awareness of the available supports, resources, and strategies for maintaining and addressing well-being.
3. Equipping our community members with the tools needed to live a wellness-focused lifestyle, attain a healthy state of well-being, and be able to support the health and well-being of other students, staff, and faculty.
4. Empowering our community members to set, pursue, and achieve individual wellness goals, to assess and prioritize their health and well-being, to advocate for systemic change, and to challenge our community to be proactive in addressing health and well-being issues.



FOSTERING WELLNESS, TOGETHER

The success of our health and well-being strategy will be determined by the path that we build, together. Every one of us shares in the responsibility of supporting the collective health and well-being of our community.

Through our actions and decisions, we have the power to build community, encourage one another to pursue wellness-focused lifestyles, set and achieve wellness goals, and attain a healthy state of well-being.

Each of us can contribute to the betterment of our collective health and well-being by actively participating in identifying and addressing concerns, proposing new ideas and creative solutions, and helping to build a sense of community and belonging.

Fostering a culture of health and well-being and developing a community that is centered on living a wellness-focused lifestyle begins with the construction of an inclusive and healthy environment and continues through encouraging our students, staff, and faculty to practice positive [health behaviours](#) and self-care.

[#LivingWellness](#)

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Health and well-being exist on a continuum that is impacted by the [nine dimensions of wellness](#).
2. Creating a path forward to improve health and well-being is a shared community responsibility.
3. Building a healthy, inclusive, and inviting environment is paramount to our students, staff, and faculty achieving their personal, academic, or professional ambitions.
4. Ensuring accessibility and maintaining accountability are imperative to building an inclusive culture of health and well-being.

OUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING TEAM

Our [Community Well-being & Engagement Officer](#) works in collaboration with community stakeholder groups to identify and address current health and well-being related issues, foster a sense of community and belonging, lead initiatives and programming that promote self-care and positive health behaviours, and build an environment and culture that support the personal, academic, or professional ambitions of our students, staff, and faculty members.



OUR COMMITMENT TO WELLNESS

The Faculty of Mathematics commits to supporting the holistic health and well-being of our students, staff, and faculty members by:

1. Working collaboratively with all members of our community to identify and address health and well-being concerns.
2. Fostering a culture of wellness that encourages our students, staff, and faculty to lead wellness-focused lifestyles and prioritize positive health behaviours and self-care.
3. Establishing measurable goals and objectives that will be evaluated regularly.
4. Implementing evidence-based resources and programming to support the health and well-being of our community.
5. Developing a positive and inclusive environment that contributes to building a strong sense of community and belonging.
6. Garnering community feedback to inform, guide and modify, or adjust our initiatives and programming to meet the changing priorities and needs of our students, staff, and faculty.

EVALUATING OUR STRATEGY

Applying an evaluation lens to this strategy enables us to implement tools and embed measures that will not only inform programmatic offerings, but also examine the effectiveness of our programming and initiatives in reaching their intended outcomes. This will involve developing process and outcome evaluations and corresponding key metrics to aid in the systematic collection of information and the subsequent assessment of initiatives offered to inform program improvements.

The strategy will be reviewed biannually to ensure alignment with the values and needs of our community.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

We believe that our strategy will successfully:

- Encourage positive health behaviours and self-care practices that will reduce health risks and prevent chronic disease in our students, staff, and faculty,
- Create a strong sense of community and belonging,
- Raise awareness for [mental health](#) supports, and
- Integrate health and well-being values and principles into the fabric of our community.



DEFINITION OF TERMS

Health:	A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (<i>WHO, 2022a, pg.1</i>).
Health Behaviour:	Actions taken by individuals that affect their health (<i>University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, n.d., para.1</i>).
Health Promotion:	The process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health (<i>WHO, 2022b, para.3</i>).
Mental Health:	A state of well-being in which an individual realizes their abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and can contribute to their community (<i>WHO, 2018, para. 2</i>).
Sense of Belonging:	The degree to which an individual feels respected, valued, accepted, and needed by a defined group (<i>Strayhorn, 2018, pg.87</i>).
Well-being:	The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture (<i>Canadian Index of Well-being, n.d., para.2</i>).
Wellness:	The active pursuit of activities, choices, and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health (<i>Global Wellness Institute, n.d., para.2</i>).

Nine Dimensions of Wellness

Wellness is the sum of many interconnected dimensions that work together to create a holistic sense of well-being and fulfillment in a person's life. Wellness goes beyond physical health to include an individual's ability to identify and achieve goals, satisfy needs, and the ability to change and cope with the demands of their environment. The nine dimensions we focus on in the Faculty of Mathematics are cultural, emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, physical, relational, spiritual, and vocational.

To maintain a balance between these nine dimensions of wellness, it is important to pay attention to each individual dimension. While no one dimension is any more important than another, if one dimension is out of balance, it will affect the others.



SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & FRAMEWORKS

POST-SECONDARY STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

CACUSS | Canadian Mental Health Association

A framework for addressing student mental health in post-secondary institutions, which can be used to create campus communities that foster well-being and transformative learning.

OKANAGAN CHARTER

Health Promoting Universities & Colleges Conference

Key principles for health-promoting universities and colleges to infuse into everyday operations, campus policies, business practices, learning environments, and academic mandates to promote the health and wellness of the campus community.

PRIORITY AREAS - PEOPLE

Faculty of Mathematics, Strategic Plan 2018

A Faculty-wide priority to enhance wellness and create a sense of belongingness by identifying and supporting the diverse health and well-being needs of the student, staff, and faculty.

STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABLE & DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

University of Waterloo, Strategic Plan 2020-25

An impact theme for the University of Waterloo that is focused on building an institution committed to genuine care, concern, respect, inclusivity, and well-being for all.

WELLNESS COLLABORATIVE - 5 PRIORITY AREAS

University of Waterloo, Campus Wellness

University-wide wellness priorities that are focused on supporting the well-being of students, staff, and faculty, enhancing the success of the institution, and fostering a culture of empathy, sustainability, and social justice.



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