

UBC WELLBEING

2016 Status Report



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Photo credit: Don Erhardt

2016 Highlights



UBC WELLBEING: A YEAR IN REVIEW

On October 31, UBC proudly became one of the first universities in the world to adopt the *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges*, signing alongside five other Canadian universities. In doing so, UBC signaled a formal commitment to becoming a health promoting university—integrating wellbeing into all aspects of campus culture and leading health promotion and collaboration globally and locally. This commitment sends a powerful message about the type of institution that UBC aspires to be—one that excels in teaching, learning and research and recognizes this excellence is supported by the wellbeing of our community members.

The signing of the *Okanagan Charter* is the culmination of a collective effort to make the wellbeing of our people and places a strategic priority at UBC. Back in early 2016, UBC Wellbeing held 'Leadership Workshops' on both the Okanagan and Vancouver campuses, bringing together senior leaders to discuss why wellbeing matters and how to better support it across the institution. There was a clear call from Interim President Martha Piper and senior leaders to support wellbeing both at the individual and institutional level.

Across UBC, wellbeing promotion work is flourishing—threaded throughout strategic plans, in research across diverse disciplines, and in a range of programs, service and initiatives. Both the Vancouver and Okanagan campuses have implemented numerous initiatives to support their specific campus communities and as wellbeing continues to shift from an initiative to a deeply-held value supported across the institution, a system-wide, holistic, and proactive approach is needed to champion wellbeing for all UBC's students, staff, faculty, indigenous peoples and university neighbours.

This Status Report highlights success and challenges over the 2016 year in each of the five priority areas identified through conversations with our community: **Built & Natural Environments, Food & Nutrition, Inclusion & Connection, Increasing Physical Activity & Reducing Sedentary Behaviour, and Mental Health & Resiliency.** Departments, units and faculties are collaborating to enact meaningful change in each.

The University has made strides towards becoming a health promoting university, but we have much work to do to ensure that the wellbeing of our entire community truly becomes embedded and a deeply-held value for all.

Join UBC in building happier, healthier, and more sustainable campus communities.





Photo credit: Don Erhardt

BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

From public realm transformations that support social interaction and informal learning, to buildings designed as healthy learning spaces, to accessible pedestrian and cyclist friendly pathways, UBC’s campus environments—both built and natural—play an important role in facilitating physical, mental, social and ecological wellbeing for all community members.

Over the past 100 years, UBC has been transforming from a commuter campus to a complete, vibrant, sustainable campus community. With its large land assets and substantial operations in its neighbourhoods and academic lands, UBC is in a unique position to implement and test sustainability and wellbeing through the exploration of how spaces shape and influence those who use them. As part of the emerging *Green Building Plan* at the Vancouver campus, themes of social and ecological wellbeing related to buildings are being explored in order to improve existing policies.

Wellbeing is also a guiding principle for the *UBC Vancouver Athletics and Recreation Facilities Strategy*, ensuring that this important priority is considered in how facilities are planned. Principles of wellbeing can be found threaded throughout UBC’s strategic campus development plans, including the *Land Use Plan*, and *Vancouver and Okanagan Campus Plans*, which guide the physical planning of both campuses.

FAST FACTS

70% of trips to and from UBC’s Vancouver campus are via active and low/no emission modes of transportation.

12,713 student beds are available in UBC residences. 11,037 on the Vancouver campus and 1,676 on the Okanagan campus.

3 designated campus walking trails exist on UBC’s Okanagan campus.

53% of undergraduate students are satisfied with the number of spaces to socialize on campus.*

A SPACE FOR UBC WELLBEING

“We wanted to create a home for UBC Wellbeing with an innovative space which facilitates collaboration and contributes to happier, healthier and more sustainable working and learning environments,” says Matt Dolf, Director of Strategic Support, UBC Wellbeing.

This sentiment sparked conversations around how UBC could exemplify health and wellbeing in a new space, leading to the development of the UBC Wellbeing Design Lab—a collaborative space for student, faculty and staff leaders engaged in wellbeing work to share ideas and explore wellbeing together.

The space, located in the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS) will act as a “hub” for wellbeing programs, people and priorities from across campus, demonstrating research-informed best practices in wellbeing and sustainability. It will also fulfill one of the mandates of the CIRS building: to support the happiness, health, and productivity of its inhabitants.

“Research shows that when people are well, they are more productive, better able to learn, more engaged with work, and more likely to be retained,” says Dolf. “Work is where we spend most of our day and our environment plays a significant role in our wellbeing. We have a duty as a health and wellbeing promoting university to engage our whole community and test innovative ways to make our teaching, learning and research environments support this.”



Photo credit: Don Erhardt



Photo credit: Martin Dee/UBC Communications & Marketing

FOOD AND NUTRITION

“A nutritionally sound campus increases intake of safe, healthy and sustainable food; supports development of nutrition skills and knowledge; and promotes health and wellbeing for all members of the UBC community.”

A well-balanced, nourishing diet helps us all to thrive. The foods that we eat fuel our academic and professional endeavours and affect our productivity. Ensuring our communities have access to diverse, nutritious, safe and culturally acceptable food on our campuses is crucial to supporting their success and wellbeing.

However, students, faculty and staff report high levels of unhealthy food intake and food insecurity is prevalent—not only on our own campuses, but across the country. In 2016, a Food and Nutrition Working Group comprised of student, faculty and staff stakeholders, formed to guide food and nutrition strategies for the UBC Vancouver campus, with plans to explore opportunities on the Okanagan campus. An action framework with the following goals was developed:

1. UBC community members consume at least three different vegetables daily.
2. UBC community members choose water to quench their thirst most often.
3. UBC community members learn to prepare five UBC signature dishes.
4. No member of our community experiences hunger due to severe food insecurity.*

The framework guides strategies to make nutritious food more accessible and available to the UBC community, helping to achieve our vision for a nutritionally sound campus. Actions include the development and implementation of *UBC Food Services Food Vision and Values, Leading Practice Guidelines for Food Provision and Procurement*, more cooking classes, healthier options at campus-wide events, and exploring ways to reduce food waste and increase food donations.

FAST FACTS

80,000 pounds of food is produced at the UBC Farm annually.

100% of fresh seafood used on UBC’s Vancouver campus is Ocean Wise certified.

1,150 students accessed the AMS Food Bank services in 2015-2016, compared to 830 the previous year.

45% of students surveyed in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems are food insecure.**

* According to the Provincial Health Services Authority, households are considered to have severe food insecurity if they report disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake among any household members.

** Findings from a March 2016 survey conducted in LFS of food insecurity status among their students.

UBC FARM GOES ORGANIC

Since the early 2000’s the UBC Farm has been modeling organic practices. Now they’ve made it official—becoming certified organic as of May, 2016!

At the UBC Farm, organic agriculture means a number of things: rotating crops to balance soil nutrients and discourage pests, using compost cover crop to add nitrogen and organics to soil, using beneficial insects or mechanical and manual methods to control pests and weeds, and ensuring that animals have access to the outdoors.

The decision to become certified organic was a significant one. As Vancouver’s last working farm and home to the Faculty of Land and Food Systems Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, the UBC Farm has an important role to play in encouraging and supporting teaching, learning and research about organic agriculture. The UBC Farm also provides much of the produce that is served on campus, meaning community members are being fueled by fruits and veggies that are healthy, nutritious and organic.

By becoming certified and contributing to more research on organic agriculture, the UBC Farm can help grow the organic community and continue to lead in shaping organic food systems both locally and globally, supporting UBC’s vision to become a nutritionally sound campus, and enriching the wellbeing of our campus community.

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Photo credit: Paul Joseph/ UBC Communications & Marketing

INCLUSION AND CONNECTION

With over 60,000 students and 15,000 faculty and staff on our campuses, UBC is a highly diverse community. Diversity, equity, inclusion and respect for all of our constituents are key values in building and sustaining campus environments where we can thrive and be well.

As one of the five priority areas for action, a framework for inclusion and connection is currently in development to identify commitments and initiatives aimed at building connection and inclusion across faculties, units and departments on both campuses.

Recent examples include Collegia, originally implemented at the Okanagan campus, as a “home away from home” for commuter students; these communal spaces are now in residence halls across both campuses. UBC has also installed a bright yellow Friendship Bench on the Vancouver campus, part of a national campaign to provide a welcoming space where students can simply receive a friendly ‘hello,’ or where those who are struggling can ask for support and seek connections and conversation. The new UBC Aquatic Centre is working towards promoting inclusivity by adding universal change rooms and developing a new signage system.

Fostering a culture of inclusion and connection supports meaningful engagement in campus life for all of our communities. It is not only about increasing the rate of engagement by the overall community, but the frequency and quality of engagement for individuals as well. Creating the best possible environment for everyone to live, work, learn and play leads to a stronger sense of belonging and connection and a happier, healthier, more inclusive campus community for all.

FAST FACTS

2,630 Community members participated in social programs at the Old Barn Community Centre and Wesbrook Community Centre.

52% of undergraduate students surveyed feel a strong sense of connection to UBC.*

27 UTown@UBC Community Grants were awarded last year to faculty, staff and students to fund community-building initiatives.

30% of students at UBCO accessed the B.A.R.K. program (Building Academic Retention through K9’s), with many reporting an increased sense of “campus affinity” and connection.

SHARING CULTURES, CREATING COMMUNITY

“We wanted to create an event specifically around asking people to participate in one another’s cultures,” says Aida Mwanzia, Global Lounge Community Animator.

With this goal in mind, Aida and fellow Community Animator Michael Leff created Global Café—allowing students to engage with different cultures by “hosting” guests with refreshments and conversation, much like they would in their own homes.

“We see a lot of opportunities for cultures to be displayed but it’s not always representative,” explains Michael. “Through Global Café, rather than just displaying their cultures, students get to share them and there are more chances to ask questions you might not ask at a cultural event.”

Global Café offered more opportunity for deeper and more meaningful connection and inclusion between the hosts and their guests, giving them the chance to tackle conversations about world views, shared experiences and memories of their home countries. “We look at it as a way to get below the tip of the iceberg in terms of what you see in cultural stereotypes,” says Aida.

The first Global Café was so popular that several more are being planned throughout the year to enhance collaboration and community building.



Photo credit: Global Lounge



Photo credit: Justin Lee/ UBC Communications and Marketing

INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND REDUCING SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR

“A physically active campus enables all members of our community to move more and sit less in order to support their wellbeing, help them achieve their full potential and create a thriving UBC community.”

On average, we are sedentary for more than half of our waking day but even small bouts of movement such as standing breaks in classes or walking meetings, can make a difference. Small changes can add up to big impacts—moving more and sitting less can improve health in meaningful ways and contribute to wellbeing. UBC aims to create environments and opportunities where this is supported and encouraged.

Over the past year, a Physical Activity Working Group developed a framework to increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour on both campuses. This framework guides physical activity strategies and priorities across UBC and sets out the following goals focused on getting community members to move more and sit less as a result of:

1. Recreational facilities/programs/spaces on campus that meet their needs.
2. Being able to easily find, access and understand the physical activity options available to them on campus.
3. Being supported and encouraged to incorporate physical activity into their day.

To support these goals, campus service providers are collaborating on a campaign to encourage physical activity breaks in fun, low barrier ways, both inside and outside of traditional recreation spaces. *UBC GamePlan* was launched as a long-range recreation and athletics facilities strategy to meet a growing need for recreational fitness and gymnasium space and guide future investments. On the Okanagan campus, faculty and staff are exploring policies to incorporate physical fitness breaks into lectures and offices.

FAST FACTS

- 40%** of undergraduate students are satisfied/very satisfied with the availability and quality of recreation space on campus.*
- 60%** of students surveyed self-reported meeting the recommended physical activity guidelines.
- 500** faculty and staff members participated in the *Pick Your Peak* stair challenge at UBC Vancouver.
- 30,000** Square feet of recreation space is available at the Wesbrook Community Centre on South Campus.

TAKING A BREAK WITH RECESS

UBC Recreation is getting students to move more and sit less with a fun throwback to everybody’s favourite part of the day: recess!

With snacks, games and a “choose your own adventure” format, UBC Recreation’s Recess was reminiscent of the beloved elementary school break, but with a bigger goal in mind.

“Aside from getting people moving in fun and unconventional ways, we wanted to reduce barriers to participation. No registration fees or the need to form a team. We wanted to create a fun opportunity for students to connect with the campus and with one another,” says Alyssa Reyes, Intramural Events Coordinator with Athletics and Recreation.

Recess transformed the entire campus into a “playground” by creating pop-up fitness spaces along Main Mall. Students could participate in as many or as few activities as they liked. “Physical activity can happen anywhere,” says Reyes. “Recess was a great way to not only introduce students to the services UBC Recreation provides but also to looking at other ways they can squeeze activity into their day.”

Justin Lee/UBC Communications & Marketing





Photo credit: JoJo Das

MENTAL HEALTH AND RESILIENCE

Building positive mental health and resilience is an important step towards living, learning and working well. UBC aims to equip community members with supports and resources to help them understand mental health issues, thrive when faced with challenges and improve resiliency and coping skills.

Over the past year, Human Resources and Student Development & Services have partnered to build the capacity of faculty, staff and students to recognize and respond to signs of distress. New initiatives include distributing the 'green' and 'orange' folders, which contain resources for assisting students and faculty in distress, and coordinating *Mental Health First Aid* sessions. Collaboration is also happening across faculties and programs. In the fall, UBC Health hosted a *Symposium on the Teaching and Learning of Resilience* that brought together senior educators across all health programs to discuss how to help students improve resiliency both in the classroom and in their future roles as health care providers.

Events such as *Thrive Week*—focused on building positive mental health for all—continue to gain support and help embed more consistent health behaviours across campus communities, while reducing stigma and creating opportunities for more open conversations about mental health.

As a next step, the University will develop a mental health and resilience framework, building on work that has already been done, and will identify upcoming priorities for faculty, staff and student mental health. There are plans to increase resourcing to assist departments and units to create supportive and respectful work environments, while expanding the availability of mental health literacy and crisis intervention training.

FAST FACTS

68%

of undergraduate students surveyed have experienced depression, anxiety and stress that has affected their academic performance over the past 12 months.*

\$2.5 million

in funding was recently invested into student mental health services on the UBC Vancouver campus.

60,000

community members were reached through 107 events from 80 campus partners during Thrive 2016.

1st

place was awarded to UBC's Thrive program in the Canadian Association of University Business Officers Quality and Productivity Awards.

CREATING WELLBEING IN CLASSROOMS

At UBC Okanagan, wellbeing in the classroom is a way to help both faculty and students thrive. For over 10 years, VOICE has collaborated with faculty to support student wellbeing by providing students with opportunities to engage in community-based participatory action research.

Outreach includes inviting faculty members to bring Thrive messaging into their classrooms with slides that provide tips and mental health promotion skills, as well as a list of events and campus resources. "Engaging faculty is an important way to create wellbeing in the classroom," says Melissa Feddersen, Project Lead, Central Okanagan Local Action Team. "Faculty have been great champions and have shown keen interest in participating in the future."

An exciting new initiative for 2016 is the Golden Apple Award, which allows students to show their appreciation by nominating faculty members who help create healthy classrooms. In its first year, 54 individual faculty members were nominated for a Golden Apple, which comes complete with a personalized letter with quotes from students in the class. VOICE is compiling all the feedback to look closely at what is most impactful for student wellbeing in the classroom.

"We look forward to continuing to build a community of faculty champions to help us develop our evidence base, momentum and research capacity," says Feddersen. "Together, we can create the healthiest campus possible!"

Photo credit: Martin Dee/UBC Communications & Marketing





Photo credit: Martin Dee/UBC Communications & Marketing

WELLBEING IN FACULTIES

UBC is taking a holistic, integrated approach to wellbeing—creating a cultural shift that makes the University a better place to live, work and learn by embedding it across the institution. Faculties have a particularly important role to play in championing wellbeing and exploring its impact on academic excellence.

Faculties at UBC have shown remarkable leadership in integrating wellbeing in their classrooms, lecture halls and research spaces, through a variety of initiatives—from hosting workshops, to collaboration between professors, to strategic planning. A few highlights are provided below:

Faculty of Science Hosted a *First-Year Experience Science Education Symposium* that brought faculty together to collaborate on integrating wellbeing into teaching practices and learning experiences.

Faculty of Education Created a wellbeing week dedicated specifically to graduate students; has a 'Teacher Education for All' program to champion the importance of inclusion; and expanded their annual Walkabout to all faculties and departments.

Postdoctoral & Graduate Studies Participated in the annual Live Well to Learn Well campaign, with communications targeted to wellbeing concerns of grad students.

Faculty of Medicine Has a designated Resident Wellness Office to support UBC Postgraduate Medical Education Residents with counselling, workshops and more. Curricular time is assigned to wellness; financial support is provided to students to develop wellbeing initiatives; and the BASICS survey is administered to students, with suggestions on fostering resilience.

Faculty of Health & Social Development Adopted policies to incorporate physical activity breaks and standing into classrooms and lectures on the UBC Okanagan campus.

Peter A. Allard School of Law Has prioritized wellbeing in their strategic plan and held consultation sessions on wellbeing, including targeted focus groups for Indigenous students. Growth mindset and resiliency training are featured at the Re-Orientation Day for first-year law students, with a focus on practical application to academic success and future careers in law.

Faculty of Arts Has quadrupled its faculty Wellbeing Liaisons, providing important points of connection for students. Arts jointly undertook two TLEF projects with the Faculty of Science: one focused on identifying the influence of teaching practices on undergraduate mental health and wellbeing, and the other on building academic tenacity in students. In 2017, it will work with SD & S to develop a student wellbeing plan for faculty.

UNDERSTANDING STUDENT WELLBEING

Understanding the learning experiences of first year Science students is an important step towards creating classroom settings that support them.

That's why faculty members, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students and staff members in the Faculty of Science came together for the inaugural First-Year Experience Science Education Symposium at UBC, a day-long workshop focused on developing high quality teaching practices and learning environments.

"The Faculty of Science has shown incredible leadership in learning more about their first-year students, resources available to them on campus to help them thrive, and how to build student resiliency and wellbeing," says Patty Hambler, Director of Student Wellbeing Promotion.

The Symposium also gave attendees the opportunity to share best practices in first year instruction, network with colleagues from a variety of departments within the Faculty of Science and to collaborate on developing strategies to help students succeed in the classroom.

"It is wonderful to see just how passionate our faculty and staff are about setting students up for success," says Hambler. "Hopefully we will continue to see more opportunities for collaboration and engagement like this across the university!"

Photo credit: Martin Dee/UBC Communications & Marketing





Photo credit: Martin Dee/UBC Communications & Marketing

UBC WELLBEING ROADMAP

Our community and our leadership have recognized the important role wellbeing plays in UBC’s continued excellence in research, teaching, learning and engagement. Below are highlights from our Wellbeing Roadmap on the future direction of UBC Wellbeing:

Focus Area 1: Activate the Okanagan Charter

- Activate the *Okanagan Charter* within UBC through community dialogue and engagement.
- Build intercampus network around leveraging the *Okanagan Charter* beyond UBC.
- Develop frameworks for the five wellbeing priority areas:
 - Built & Natural Environments
 - Mental Health & Resilience
 - Food & Nutrition
 - Physical Activity & Sedentary Behaviour
 - Inclusion & Connection

Focus Area 2: Build Strategic Support and Resources

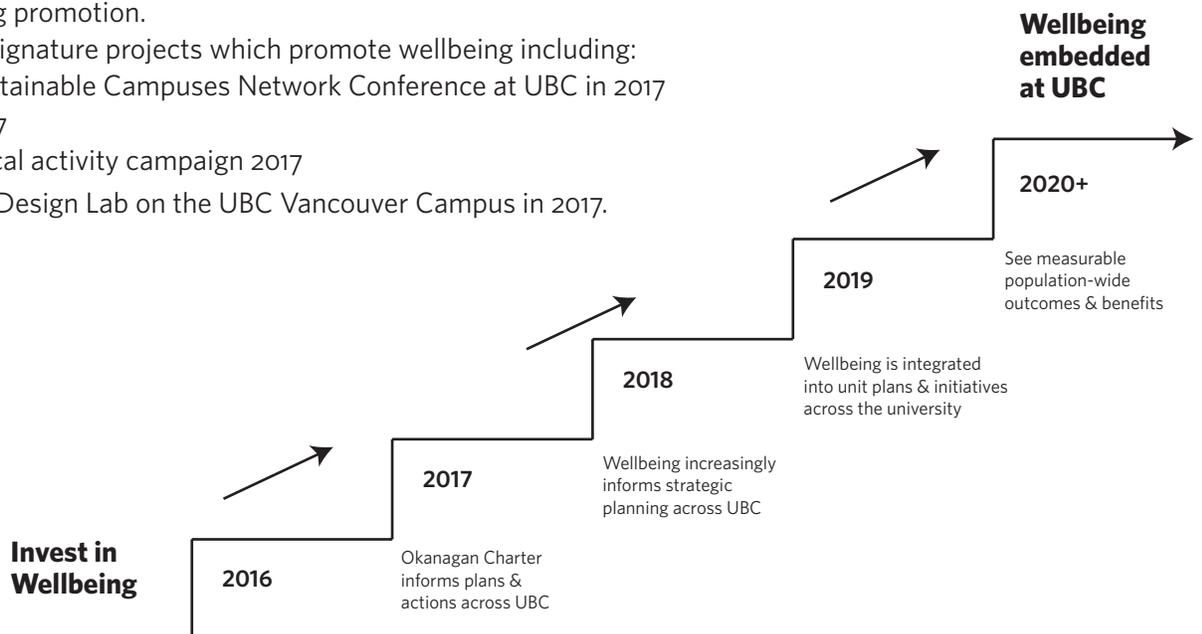
- Enhance data and evaluation processes and tools to incorporate wellbeing.
- Create institution-wide communication strategy and assets for wellbeing.
- Diversify and expand funding for faculty, staff, and student wellbeing initiatives.

Focus Area 3: Collaborate with Banner Faculties and Units

- Each year, collaborate with a few faculties, administrative units and student organizations willing to champion and pilot new initiatives.
- Create a portfolio of support materials, tools and resources for all units to use when engaging in wellbeing work.

Focus Area 4: Wellbeing in Action across UBC

- Integrate wellbeing in learning environments to promote academic success.
- Create supports for research engagement and translate this research into best practices in wellbeing promotion.
- Create and support signature projects which promote wellbeing including:
 - International Sustainable Campuses Network Conference at UBC in 2017
 - Thrive Week 2017
 - MoveUBC physical activity campaign 2017
- Open the Wellbeing Design Lab on the UBC Vancouver Campus in 2017.



WANT TO JOIN THE CONVERSATION?

"People who study, work and live in environments that make healthy living a priority are happier, more successful and better equipped to handle tough times. I am proud of UBC and our partner universities for taking steps to strengthen our communities."

- Santa J. Ono, UBC President and Vice-Chancellor

"At UBC, our students are the first priority; we are providing amazing academic programs for them to be contributors to our community; but we need to ensure they are healthy to be able to do so. Fostering their wellbeing as they go through their degree programs is critical to their success and happiness and ours. Let's nourish our students in many ways! I am so excited to be part of a university that is putting wellbeing on the forefront!"

- Sally Willis-Stewart, Director, Nutrition Education Center, School of Health and Exercise Sciences, UBCO

"Wellbeing to me is living a balanced life. It's not about trying to be perfect in every aspect of life, but more about making time for the things that are important to me."

- Kiran Pushpkiran, UBC Student

"Move more! Some is better than none, and more is better!"

- Guy Faulkner, Professor, School of Kinesiology

"It is up to us as leaders to create and nurture an environment that supports wellbeing."

- Lisa Castle, VP Human Resources

"What we know now from really solid research, is that...if you foster an environment that is healthy - if we look after each other and you look after yourself- you won't compromise excellence; in fact, you will be better."

- Martha Piper, Former UBC President

"The priority to support student mental health goes beyond the need to support students in crisis. As university prepares students to thrive in today's society, we all must learn how to build resilience and cope with the inevitable stress that life presents."

- Amika Shah, UBC Student

"It is a very beautiful environment; close to water and mountains. We are close to our cultural foods, fish and wildlife and berries. It has been our home for thousands of years. We have inclusivity just by being here, because this is where we have always been, since time immemorial."

- Musqueam community member

"The Gardening Club on the Okanagan Campus has been very therapeutic, promoting both mental and physical health while connecting with nature."

- Deborah Buszard, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal, UBC Okanagan

"As a public university we are members and ambassadors for change in our communities. UBC has an important role to play in championing wellbeing for everyone."

- Louise Nasmith, Associate Provost, Health

"It is important to look at the university in terms of its structures—what are the barriers and impediments to wellbeing and mental health? This is the focus of our Wellbeing Steering Committee, which is working at the highest level to make wellbeing a priority—for students, faculty and staff."

- Louise Cowin, VP Students

"Participation in one of our recreational programs is not only great for your personal health and wellbeing but connects you to the broader web of cultural diversity and community that inevitably connects us all."

- Andrew Clements, Program Manager University Neighbourhoods Association

"Wellbeing needs to be embedded in all that we do at UBC as students, staff, faculty and our leadership team. It is vital that we nourish, move, thrive, and connect with others in our environment and our communities."

- Tracey Hawthorn, UBC Wellbeing Coordinator, UBC Okanagan Campus

We see learning to take care of oneself in the context of a demanding academic program and being equipped with skills and strategies for resilience as part of professional training for a career in the law. There is no question that there are significant stress-related issues impacting wellness in the legal profession. The discussion of how to manage the high expectations placed on lawyers in a holistic and healthy way needs to start in law school.

- Catherine Dauvergne, Dean of Law, Allard School of Law

GET CONNECTED & INVOLVED

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