

MEMO

FROM: Dr. James Mandigo (he/him), Provost and VP Academic
DATE: April 2, 2025
SUBJECT: Senate Provost's Report

Ey Swáyel

For the past 19 years, UFV has been offering academic programming to students in Chandigarh, India. Throughout that time, over 1500 students have participated in courses within the BBA, BCIS, and BA programs. While there have been several iterations of this program over the years, today, students typically take UFV courses in these programs for their first two years in Chandigarh and then transfer to UFV in Canada to complete their degrees. I have recently returned from Chandigarh and participated in the annual Fraser Valley India (FVI) Awards night. This annual event celebrates the many accomplishments of the FVI students alongside their family and friends before they make the long journey to join us at UFV, typically in the fall semester. This was my third time attending the Awards night and each time I am so very impressed with the level of engagement of FVI students and how excited the parents are of what the future holds for their children.

Students at FVI have the opportunity to learn side-by-side with their instructors by applying their theoretical knowledge to real-world settings through projects, case studies, and internships with local employers. Some of this year's award winners included a group of students who created their own successful businesses rooted in social responsibility, launched the third edition of a student led magazine called Fraser Crônica dedicated to celebrating diversity and inclusion, and have volunteered in communities throughout India to support empowerment of girls and young women through educational opportunities.

As a result, students from FVI who join UFV in Canada are some of our most successful students. They are actively engaged in on campus and off campus activities that are making a positive impact on others and throughout our communities. For example, two recent students from FVI who have now joined UFV, Bilal Faisel Faheem and Taj Sharma, were recently elected President and Vice-President respectively for next year's Student Union Society at UFV.

The success of the FVI students would not be possible without the tremendous support they receive from the faculty, staff, and administration both at FVI and also here at UFV. This symbiotic relationship between UFV and Chandigarh has existed for decades and has been recognized by the Governments in both Canada and India as a success story of international

education collaboration. For all those who have been involved in the creation of FVI and its ongoing success, there is much to be proud of and my sincere gratitude to each of you for the positive impact you have made in engaging learners, transforming lives, and building communities around the world.

To align my report with the Integrated Strategic Plan, I have organized the activities across the Academic Units under the Mission and Goals of Engaging Learners, Transforming Lives, and Building Communities. Thank you to all those who contributed to providing these updates from the Faculties and Academic Units.

Engaging Learners: Yoystexw ye totilthet

Provide inclusive learning environments for everyone.

- Continuing Education secured over \$500,000 in funding from the Ministry Post-Secondary Programs Branch, Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills for the delivery of four sections of English language training at Clearbrook, Hope, Mission, and Chilliwack campuses. These programs will focus on English language training for Early Childhood Education and Education Assistants, Healthcare careers, and Agriculture and Trades and will be delivered in partnership with local community organizations.
- Trevana Spilchen, a transwoman and Delta educator, came to speak to all elementary and secondary BEd candidates on how to support 2LGBTQQIA+ students and staff in K to 12 schools so as to reduce bullying and suicides amongst this equity seeking population.
- Zubair Raja and Mark Breedveld organized an industry tour to Structure Craft. This tour connected students with leaders in timber-based construction and structural engineering.
- Jason Campbell represented the school at the RCMP National Meeting which strengthened the school's ties with law enforcement and public safety initiatives.
- Carl Janzen, Student Success Chair, presented "Code Green: Computing for a Sustainable Tomorrow" as part of UFV's March for Sustainability Month campaign. His talk explored the role of computing in advancing sustainability and highlighted innovative technologies and strategies for reducing environmental impact through responsible computing practices.
- Changemaking for Global Development and Social Justice held Student Presentations and Panel Event, where students in GDS 320, Decolonizing Aid and Development, shared their reflections on their role as 'changemakers', advocates, and allies. With speakers from the BC International Cooperation (BCCIC).
- The Food and Agriculture Institute has just launched the website for The Social Implications of Agri-Genomics research project. This four-year research project is funded by Genome Canada and Genome BC, focusing on ways to ensure a just transition to climate-resilient agricultural and food systems in Canada.
- On February 20, SASI hosted a successful Student Training Day for current Research Assistants and student research volunteers. The aim was to focus on professional

development, providing students with valuable insights into workplace standards, ethics, and practices that can be applied throughout their careers.

- Dr. Mark Kersten, Assistant Professor, Criminology & Criminal Justice, recently featured on the BBC's The Inquiry, alongside Gerry Simpson, Rachel Kerr, and Viviane Dittrich to discuss "Do we need the International Criminal Court?".
- On March 19, 2025, 14 graduating UFV Kinesiology students participated in a trades tour led by Chloe and Jennifer, where they were guided through the Trades programs. The goal of the tour was to help the KIN students understand the dangers and injuries faced by tradespeople, with shop room demonstrations.
- Mary Stewart, Upriver Halq'eméylem Associate Professor, Modern Languages, and graduate students welcomed a visitor: Rose Ann Bernal from Taos, New Mexico, USA/ Stó:lō. The Taos Tribe has chosen not to create a writing system, with most members fluent in their Indigenous language. However, they have noticed a decline among younger adults. Rose shared how the Stó:lō people's language is considered endangered and discussed ongoing efforts in revitalization and reclamation.
- Political Science faculty Dr. Edward Akuffo, Associate Professor, and Dr. Noah Schwartz, Assistant Professor, led the event Politalk – “Pandemic Preparedness & Response: Health Security or Health Equity in a Divided World?” The guest speaker Dr. Suzanne Hindmarch from the University of New Brunswick discussed health equity in Canada in the post-pandemic context, addressing UFV faculty, students, and community members.
- KIN 488 student Nic Shain presented for Elder College as part of CERA on implementation of peer led hiking programs for older adults (Iris Lesser and Cynthia Thomson).
- Goin’: UFV international is currently recruiting students to act as ambassadors on this social platform. This will support conversion, settlement, and transition, leading to an increased sense of belonging for incoming international students. The app allows for pre-departure and post-arrival connections for students. [<https://www.goinconnect.com>]
- University Librarian Camille Callison opened UFV Library’s second annual Freedom to Read event on February 26, held in the Student Union Building.
- Scholarly Communications and Copyright Librarian, Janelle Sztuhar coordinated activities for Open Education Week 2025 (March 3–7), supported by a \$600 grant from BCcampus.

Transforming Lives: Ayeqet kw’e shxwaylexws

Provide opportunities for people to discover, develop, and share their gifts while also recognizing and celebrating the gifts of others.

- Dr. Rita Dhungel was invited to present on Engaging with Trafficking Survivors through an Art-Based Approach at the Human Trafficking Committee's monthly meeting organized by Pearl Life Renewal in Chilliwack in February.

- "Build Your Future" Open House was held at Canada Education Park on February 27, 2025. This three-hour event offered the public tours, hands-on activities, and a chance to meet faculty and staff in Health Sciences, Agriculture, and Applied & Technical Studies programs.
- Dr. Prabhjot Parmar, Associate Professor of English, was an invited speaker at Decolonial Conversations at Western University. Her paper explored interconnectedness through Indigenous philosophy and Sufi/Saint traditions in North India. The conference examined decolonial thought and the role of cultural sites in challenging colonial power. Dr. Parmar also chaired the panel Dress, Bodies, Hair, Speech, and Activism.
- Scholarly Communications and Copyright Librarian, Janelle Sztuhar presented Involving Students in OER Development at University of the Fraser Valley as part of the Open Education Talks series—a collection of lightning talks held online each Wednesday in March. Her presentation shared UFV's approach to incorporating student voices in the creation and adaptation of open educational resources (OER), contributing to a broader conversation on inclusive pedagogy and equitable access.
- The Teaching and Learning Centre hosted Unveiling Brightspace: A UFV Community-Centered Transition, an interactive event introducing UFV's new learning management system. Fizza, Sabine, and Michelle led the unveiling, highlighting Brightspace's user-friendly interface and enhanced grading tools. Faculty members from the Winter Pilot—Dr. Luisa Giles (Kinesiology), Patrick Watchorn (Carpentry), and Maya Grant (Nursing)—shared their experiences, offering insights into challenges, successes, and best practices. The event reinforced UFV's commitment to a smooth transition through ongoing support and training. There were 62 participants online via Zoom, 5 in-person in Chilliwack, and about 6 in-person in Abbotsford (total about 72). A recording of the event was posted and shared.

Building Community: Thayt kw'e st'elt'elawtexw

Collaborate and partner in pursuits that enrich the lives of all people on our campuses, in our local communities, and beyond.

- Dr. Rita Dhungel, along with Shelley Liemburk (SoCA) organized a Community Gathering with international students, held on February 26 and March 12 at UFV.
- CYC students in CYC402 have worked on two applied community projects: 1) Abbotsford Youth Council Research – a series of videos with slides on critical youth issues in Abbotsford; and 2) Breakfast Club of Canada – reports related to ideas for weekend food support for children/youth in the Fraser Valley.
- For the third consecutive year, Dr. Inaam Charaf has been appointed as a Councillor for the Bibliographical Society of Canada/La Société bibliographique du Canada (BSC-SBC), a bilingual (English/French) organization dedicated to the scholarly study of the history, description, and transmission of texts in all media and formats, with a primary emphasis on Canada.

- Dr. Sheryl MacMath joined Jill Steacy of Langley School District to present an information session on Early Childhood Education's dual credit program which enables grade 12 students to take four university courses, getting both university and high school credits. This enables students to learn what it is like to work in early childhood education, learn what it is like to take classes at university, and start their post-secondary journey.
- Director Opeyemi Adesina attended the Black Entrepreneurship Research Symposium at the University of British Columbia. The Symposium brought together researchers, industry leaders, and entrepreneurs to discuss challenges, opportunities, and policy solutions for Black entrepreneurs. The event featured keynote speakers, panel discussions, and networking sessions. It also emphasized the need for inclusive economic growth and continued research.
- On March 3, the School of Computing welcomed 22 Girl Guides and their leaders for an engaging session on Computer Science. The session introduced the girls to the pioneering women who shaped the field through foundational concepts and theories. Participants also took part in an interactive activity, giving them hands-on experience and a glimpse into the exciting possibilities within Computer Science.
- Pancakes & Painting, Atrium, CEP campus | In collaboration with UFV Student Experience Office, CERA hosted their first Pancakes & Painting event! An intergenerational event bringing together older adults in our community and UFV students. Expertly prepared pancakes, followed by an artistic journey through painting lead by two of our talented UFV Visual Arts students.
- SASI is proud to present Mehfil-e-Sukoon: A Celebration of Sufi & Punjabi Folk Music as part of the City of Abbotsford's Culture City Program Series on April 5, 2025, at the Matsqui Centennial Auditorium in Abbotsford. Join this intimate evening of soul-stirring melodies and poetic expressions at Mehfil-e-Sukoon, presented by SASI and the City of Abbotsford.
- Upper Fraser Valley Regional Skills Canada competitions took place on February 27, 2025. Competitions were held in Welding, Electrical Installations, Carpentry, Cabinetmaking, Culinary Arts, Automotive Service, Architectural and Mechanical CAD. Winners of these competitions are now eligible to compete at the Skills Canada BC Provincials to be held at TradeX in Abbotsford on April 16.
- Trades & Technology Centre welcomed over 650 Grade 9 students for our annual "Try-a-Trade" event. This year also included the BC RoadShow and "Try-Technology" demonstrations as well.
- Kinesiology student Iris Lesser provided a postpartum workshop in Punjabi to new South Asian mothers through the Best for Babies Program on February 25.
- There are 63 countries represented among the international students applications for the fall semester. The top 5 countries overall are India, Nigeria, China, Vietnam, and USA.

- As part of the UFV50, the Library celebrates the launch of the University Archives in a digital profile as this long-anticipated development narrates and underscores the Library's ongoing commitment to safeguarding institutional memory and making UFV's rich history accessible to the broader community.
- The 9th Annual Math Match in February this year was very successful. We had 10 eager participants! Students joined teams and competed solving math problems. Hosted by Anna Kuczynska in the Math and Stats Centre.

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