

**Red Deer Polytechnic**  
**Research and Scholarship Plan**  
**June 2021**

**Message from the President**

Red Deer Polytechnic's mandate states:

Encouragement of scholarly and creative activity amongst its staff and support for applied research and innovation enable the Institution to enhance student learning, to continue the growth of expertise of its faculty, and to contribute to the economic and social development of the region.

Over its 56-year history Red Deer Polytechnic has encouraged and supported research, scholarly activity, and scholarship. Faculty and students have actively engaged in research and scholarly activities leading to scholarship as part of and in support of their teaching and learning over these years. As Red Deer Polytechnic begins to offer its own degrees, our commitment to scholarly and creative activity as defined in our evolving mandate, is being strengthened and supported through this plan. Scholarship, the product of research and scholarly activity, is an essential part of the teaching and learning experience.

This two-year plan supports the evolution of Red Deer Polytechnic's mandate and programming, laying a further foundation for research and scholarship at the institution. This Plan spans two years as Red Deer Polytechnic is currently renewing its Strategic Plan and subsequently it's Academic Plan. A five-year Research, Scholarly Activity, and Scholarship Plan will be established in support of the renewed Strategic and Academic Plans.

I support the strategic priorities identified in this plan and the work of faculty as they develop and maintain research profiles, involve students in research projects, and contribute to the furtherance of knowledge.

**Message from the Vice President Academic and Research**

As the academic and research leader for Red Deer Polytechnic I understand the value of research, scholarly activity, and scholarship to the teaching and learning environment and support the directions identified in this plan. Red Deer Polytechnic's mandate to serve communities through applied research provides an excellent opportunity for faculty and students to engage in research, scholarly activity, and scholarship that meets the learning needs of students while contributing to the community through applied research.

Red Deer Polytechnic students, particularly those in degree programs, will have unique opportunities to participate with faculty in research, scholarly activity, and scholarship projects and outcomes that align with community engagement and experiential learning. The strategic priorities identified in the plan support the institution and its learners while building on our history of research, scholarly activity, and scholarship and strengthening applied research profile into the future.

## **Introduction:**

The Research, Scholarly Activity and Scholarship Plan serves to establish a renewed research focus for Red Deer Polytechnic. It aligns with Red Deer Polytechnic's mandate as a Polytechnic Institute and addresses research, scholarly activity, and scholarship in response to the March 1, 2018 announcement that Red Deer Polytechnic is authorized to offer undergraduate degrees.

In the [Research, Scholarly Activity, and Scholarship Policy](#), Red Deer Polytechnic defines scholarship as the product of research and scholarly activity (Appendix 1.0).

**Scholarship** is at the core of postsecondary education and Red Deer Polytechnic views all faculty members as both instructors and scholars. To qualify as scholarship, the scholarly activity/research will require a high level of expertise, achieve clear goals with adequate preparation, and use methodology that is consistent with the norms of individual disciplines. The results of the activity must be disseminated and make a contribution to a field of knowledge. Dissemination, in a disciplinary appropriate manner, is understood to be the defining element of Scholarship and the distinguishing characteristic between it and Scholarly Activity/Research.

**Scholarly Activity / Research:** Scholarly Activity is a comprehensive term that is understood to be an intellectual, creative, or investigative process that may or may not lead to the production of disseminated scholarship, as defined above. Research is a type of scholarly activity that seeks to establish facts, principles, or increase knowledge. While all scholarship is the result of scholarly activity/research, not all scholarly activity/research will produce scholarship.

This plan builds from the Red Deer College Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity Framework, (Appendix 2.0), approved November 2018 by Red Deer College Academic Council. This framework, developed by the Research and Scholarship Committee of Academic Council, identified next steps toward the development of a Research, Scholarly Activity, and Scholarship Plan. It positioned research and scholarship within the Institution's context, mission, and roles within the Post-Secondary Learning Act. Key themes identified in this framework are:

- Understanding, promoting, and celebrating
- Support for faculty research, scholarly, and creative activity
- Support for student research
- Develop research services infrastructure

Since 2018, Red Deer Polytechnic has worked to address the areas identified in the framework through the work of the Research and Scholarship Committee, development of an Office of Research and Scholarship, development and renewal of policy and procedure, and preparation of degree proposals and an institutional self-study.

## **Situating the Plan:**

Red Deer Polytechnic is currently mandated through the Post Secondary Learning Act as a Polytechnic Institute. Subsequent to the March 1, 2018 announcement that Red Deer Polytechnic is authorized to begin to offer degrees and to transition to a polytechnic institute, the institution intends to align

research and scholarly activity with statements for both sectors as indicated in the Post Secondary Learning Act. The Research, Scholarly Activity, and Scholarship Plan establishes goals for research, scholarly activity, and scholarship for Red Deer Polytechnic.

The Post Secondary Learning Act includes the following statement for the Comprehensive Community Colleges: such institutions *may*

“[102.4(3)] (c) undertake research and scholarly activities

(i) that align with the credentials offered, or

(ii) that are focused on industry or community needs and that support economic and social development in the region in which the institution is located”.

The addition of “community needs” and “social development” are welcome revisions in the new legislation as they align with the goals of this institutional Plan.

For the Polytechnic Institution, the following statement is included in the Post Secondary Learning Act: such institutions *may*

“[102.6 (3)] (b) undertake research and scholarly activities

(i) that align with the credentials offered, or

(ii) that are focused on strengthening economic development in the Province”.

### **Strategic Priorities:**

- Promote an institution-wide culture of research, scholarly activity, and scholarship
  - Facilitate collaboration internally and externally through the Office of Research and Scholarship and the Research Common
  - Increase transdisciplinary research opportunities
  - Create research opportunities for faculty and students through the Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing and the Alternative Energy Lab
  - Seek and solidify community research opportunities and partnerships with industry, community stakeholders, and other post secondary institutions
- Strengthen resources and supports for research
  - Office of Research and Scholarship – establish the Office as a hub for research, scholarly activity, and scholarship at Red Deer Polytechnic, including responsibility for Tri-Agency compliance and grant administration
  - Grant Funding – increase the number of Tri-Agency and other grants received to support faculty and student research
  - Research Grant Management – implement a framework for research grant management
  - Research Policy, Procedure, and Process
    - Implement research ethics policy and procedure for faculty and student research involving animals. Discussions are currently underway with the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) and Olds College to develop an Animal Care Policy and associated procedures and committees
    - Develop a model for vetting and approving research proposals

- Focus on areas of research strength while enhancing opportunities for faculty and student research
  - Faculty Performance Policy – address gap in identifying expectations for scholarship necessary for faculty teaching at the baccalaureate degree level
  - Degree Programs – develop research programs supporting student research, including establishing research profiles within Schools
- Celebrate research, scholarly activity, and scholarship
  - Support and highlight student research through Agora, Science Student Conference, and other disciplinary presentation opportunities
  - Develop Research Colloquia to engage the Red Deer Polytechnic community and celebrate all Red Deer Polytechnic researchers

### **Scholarship Expectations of Faculty and Students**

Research, scholarly activity, and scholarship opportunities enhance the teaching and learning processes of the Institution, engage faculty, staff, and students, provide opportunities for experiential learning, contribute to program relevance, and contribute to the economic, social, and cultural well-being of communities. Red Deer Polytechnic supports the Academic Freedom of its faculty and students.

In support of this mandate, while the institution recognizes and encourages all forms of research, scholarly activity, and scholarship, as defined in the Research, Scholarly Activity, and Scholarship policy, the Institutions emphasis is on research, scholarly activities, and scholarship that enrich undergraduate education and support economic and social development in the region. Red Deer Polytechnic is committed to and encourages Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in research, scholarly activity, and scholarship.

Students at Red Deer Polytechnic may have a significant role in research and scholarly activity. Faculty members are encouraged to include relevant research and research skills in their classes and to include students in their scholarly activity programs. Opportunities for students to be involved in research and scholarly activity include independent study projects, community service learning projects, and capstone courses.

### **Roles, Responsibilities and Standards for Faculty Scholarship**

While the current Faculty Association, Red Deer College collective agreement does not specifically address research, scholarly activity, and scholarship as defined in this Plan, there is recognition that faculty teaching within degree programs or as defined through accreditation are required to have active research portfolios. In addition to the responsibilities identified in article 8.2.4 of the collective agreement, faculty teaching in degree programs will have access to course release through their School in order to maintain their research profile and support student research. Course release will be assigned flexibly and in alignment with the School Council Terms of Reference.

### **Faculty Association of Red Deer College Collective Agreement**

The Faculty Association of Red Deer College collective agreement (2016-2019), article 8.2.4 “Non- teaching Responsibilities for Full-Time Instructors”, indicates:

Instructors are required and expected to engage in a variety of non-teaching activities that contribute towards their own ongoing professional development and towards the college community. These activities will occur over the academic year excluding approved vacation periods, and shall be determined in consultation with the member's Chair and the School leader.

Members shall engage in relevant professional development activities (PD) that serve to strengthen pedagogic, academic, and professional currency and capability. Such activities shall be approved by their School Leader and may include discipline scholarship, scholarship of teaching, study, research, workshops, conferences, and other activities that may enhance professional or teaching capabilities.

In order to facilitate ongoing professional development, probationary and continuous instructors will normally receive time approval for four weeks of PD within each year. The School Leader, in collaboration with the Chair and the Instructor, will ensure that teaching assignments allow time for at least two months of professional development activities over a two year period.

This is a flexible framework that gives considerable scope for faculty members to have varying levels of engagement in research and scholarship depending on interests, opportunities, relevance, and the needs of the program in which they are teaching.

### **Faculty Performance Policy**

Red Deer Polytechnic's [Faculty Performance Policy](#) is the primary tool to guide assessment and improvement of teaching and learning at the institution and to assess whether faculty meet the standards to be granted Continuous Appointment. Within this policy, there is currently a gap in identifying expectations for scholarship necessary for faculty teaching at the baccalaureate degree level.

### **School Council**

In addition to other responsibilities, School Councils at Red Deer Polytechnic are responsible for recommending, defining, and supporting scholarly activity within the School in accordance with the policy Research and Scholarly Activity at Red Deer College. The [School Council Terms of Reference](#) identify the following responsibilities:

- Recommending authority to the Dean regarding the definition of scholarly activity for the School, in accordance with the policy Research and Scholarly Activity at Red Deer College.
- Recommending authority to the Dean for the support of scholarly activity as defined by the School and in accordance with the policy Research and Scholarly Activity at Red Deer College.

### **Program Quality Assurance**

Red Deer Polytechnic's [Program Quality Assurance](#) policy and procedures guide the development, redevelopment, and review of curriculum. The policy includes the following

language:

1. Program curriculum is documented using standards that meet institutional, provincial, national, and professional and/or accreditation standards.
2. Curriculum is approved and re-approved by the appropriate academic governance body to ensure ongoing quality assurance.
3. Curriculum is reviewed in full or in part during Program Review or when a need is identified.

Degree programs at Red Deer Polytechnic follow the guidelines established in the Campus Alberta Quality Council [Handbook: Quality Assessment and Quality Assurance](#) and the [National Degree Qualifications Framework](#). Faculty and student research are incorporated into planning and delivery of degree programs.

### **Institutional Support for Scholarship**

There are currently a number of committees, administrative units, and partners that contribute to the overall vitality of Red Deer Polytechnic's research activity. Institutional supports are outlined in the [Support for Research, Scholarship, and Scholarly Activity policy](#).

### **Office of Research and Scholarship**

The [Office of Research and Scholarship](#), established in 2019, provides administrative oversight for research, scholarly activity, and scholarship. It works with the Research Common and the Research Ethics Board to guide research, scholarly activity, and scholarship occurring across the institution, including offering administrative support and oversight for grant applications and grant management, and also provides leadership for research data grant management and Tri-Agency oversight.

### **Research Common**

The [Research Common](#) is a place where faculty, staff, students, and the community can connect with areas at Red Deer Polytechnic that assist with research and scholarly activities. The Research Common offers connections to resources that can assist with: getting started on a research project, connecting with other researchers and/or the community for a project, designing an ethical research project, conducting literature searches, writing a research grant or proposal, understanding grant requirements, and presenting or publishing research. The Research Common also sponsors workshops on grant formulation, research ethics, using new qualitative software, and a number of other topics. The Research Common promotes both interdisciplinary collaboration and student research.

### **Research Ethics Board**

The [Research Involving Humans Policy](#) endorses the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS2) and sets the mandate for Red Deer Polytechnic's [Research Ethics Board](#). The Research Ethics Board approves all

research projects that involve humans at the institution. The policy exists to ensure research involving human participants meets the highest ethical standards while simultaneously protecting the welfare, rights, and dignity of participants. The REB develops student and faculty competencies in research activities while promoting ethical conduct to ensure that the rights of human participants in research are respected and protected in accordance with the Research Involving Humans Policy.

### **Research and Scholarship Committee**

This committee is a Standing Committee of Academic Council, constituted by [Academic Council Constitution and Bylaws](#), and as such, it is part of the academic governance “path” for research, scholarly activity, and scholarship. It is primarily an oversight committee, promoting research and scholarship, providing advice to individuals, Schools, policy- and decision-makers (see Academic Council Constitution, Bylaw 6.1 for further detail). The Research and Scholarship Committee is responsible to Academic Council for the Research, Scholarly Activity, and Scholarship policy and processes.

### **Recognition of Scholarly Activity Committee (RoSA)**

In accordance with Article 10.5 (b) of the Faculty Association of Red Deer College Collective Agreement, Red Deer Polytechnic provides \$10,000 per year for awards to faculty members in recognition of outstanding scholarly contributions in any of the four domains of the Boyer Model of Scholarship. Recipients are recognized in a public event and on the [Research at Red Deer Polytechnic](#) website. The program is administered by the Recognition of Scholarly Activity Committee and is guided by the Research, Scholarly Activity, and Scholarship policy. Projects recognized range from publication of monographs to community-based research to professional contributions on behalf of national associations to the development of public policy recommendations.

### **Faculty Professional Development Committee (PD Committee)**

The Professional Development fund supports activities on the professional development/ scholarly activity/ scholarship/ research spectrum. The fund is allocated by the PD Committee, which has been in place for at least 40 years, and has a well-developed set of processes and practices.

Funding is generally spread across four types of support: 1) personal PD allotments – an amount for each faculty member to spend on approved professional development activities or purchases; 2) Extended Funding Grants (EFGs) – funding, often in the form of teaching release time, to support specific research projects; 3) PD events of various kinds that try to serve a wide number of faculty; and  
4) sabbaticals, currently 2 per year, typically at 75% or 80% of salary (depending on the faculty member’s years of service), and not to be more than 50% of the PD committee’s budget.

Article 14.1 of the FARDC Collective Agreement, entitled “Professional Development Allocation”, states that:

“[i]n any fiscal year, the College shall make provision in its budget for professional development in an amount equal to 5% of the total amount of faculty salaries for the

purpose of providing Members with viable short and long-term professional development programs, workshops, professional leaves and other projects deemed by the Faculty Professional Development Committee to be worthwhile. This fund shall be known as the ‘Professional Development Fund’. Only Continuous Members are eligible for Sabbatical leaves.”

### **Centre for Teaching and Learning**

The [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#) (CTL) is an academic area that inspires excellence and advances a teaching and learning culture for Red Deer Polytechnic. As educational innovators and change agents for the Institution, the CTL team demonstrates a commitment to our learners and focuses on all aspects of learner-centred practices at a post-secondary institution. This purpose aligns with the strong and intentional message found in Red Deer Polytechnic’s Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Institutional Plan, and Academic Plan - all which articulate a commitment to academic excellence and a learner-centred culture. The CTL collaborates with faculty and departments within the institution to showcase faculty excellence, to provide teaching and learning programming and activities, and to support research and scholarship events. Faculty in the CTL engage, primarily, in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; CTL faculty work with the Research Common and the Office of Research and Scholarship as a hub for SoTL projects and mentor individual faculty members involved in SoTL research projects.

### **Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing – Technology Access Centre (CIM-TAC)**

The [Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing – Technology Access Centre](#) (CIM-TAC) provides capacity in advanced design, design simulation, and prototype testing to further the competitiveness of Alberta’s manufacturing industry by providing a regionally unique, affordable alternative to in-house research and development. Through customized support that builds on Red Deer Polytechnic’s established Center for Innovation in Manufacturing (CIM), this TAC helps innovators design and test their creative solutions to advance their company’s profitability and capability. With the addition of a TAC, the region has access to increased applied research services, increased industrial services, a higher level of profile for entrepreneurial clients and access to a national network for collaboration. Prior to establishing itself as a TAC, Red Deer Polytechnic’s CIM operated for 10 years and completed 182 industry contracts – evidence of the Institution’s ability to leverage its broad capacities, network, technical capabilities, and multi-skilled technical experts to provide timely solutions to industry’s manufacturing and design problems. 90% of these contracts have been with companies that fit the entrepreneur, micro, small and medium enterprise definition. Rural clients, in particular, recognize CIM experts for their diverse skill sets, capabilities, and responsiveness to unique challenges associated with manufacturing outside of major urban centers.

As part of Red Deer Polytechnic’s larger Alternative Energy Initiative, the [Alternative Energy Lab](#), opened in 2019, creates opportunities for alternative energy education and research. The lab assists industry and research, while also providing Red Deer Polytechnic students with the skills necessary to install, operate, and maintain alternative energy systems. As a teaching and learning lab, students learn in and from the facility. The space is also used to engage and support central Alberta businesses wanting to explore alternative energy production options.

**Other**

- Library (journals, databases, digital repository)
- Bethany Care Society – a partner in many health-related collaborative projects
- Capstone experiences for students in several programs
- Events like Agora, Student Science Conference, Mini Maker Faire

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1.0

#### Definitions:

**Scholarship** is at the core of postsecondary education and Red Deer Polytechnic views all faculty members as both instructors and scholars. To qualify as scholarship, the scholarly activity/research will require a high level of expertise, achieve clear goals with adequate preparation, and use methodology that is consistent with the norms of individual disciplines. The results of the activity must be disseminated and make a contribution to a field of knowledge. Dissemination, in a disciplinary appropriate manner, is understood to be the defining element of Scholarship and the distinguishing characteristic between it and Scholarly Activity/Research.

**Scholarly Activity / Research:** Scholarly Activity is a comprehensive term that is understood to be an intellectual, creative, or investigative process that may or may not lead to the production of disseminated scholarship, as defined above. Research is a type of scholarly activity that seeks to establish facts, principles, or increase knowledge. While all scholarship is the result of scholarly activity/research, not all scholarly activity/research will produce scholarship.

**Scholarship of Discovery:** the creation of original knowledge that expands both the depth and the breadth of a discipline by working on the frontiers of that discipline to advance understanding of a particular subject. Scholars engaged in Discovery ask, “What is known, what is yet to be found?”

**Scholarship of Integration:** is related to the Scholarship of Discovery. Integration gives meaning, insight, and perspective to facts by using disciplinary methods to interpret the significance of those facts. It involves the communication of this understanding within a particular discipline and, ideally, across disciplines to create an integration of knowledge by situating specialized information into a larger context. Scholars engaged in Integration ask, “What do the findings [of Discovery] mean?”

**Scholarship of Application/Engagement:** recognizes the public usefulness of discipline-specific knowledge and explores the dynamic relationship between theory and practice. It describes ways in which scholars use their expertise to explore and address practical problems with the goal of offering solutions. This scholarship may occur in collaboration with community or industry partners. Scholars engaged in Application/Engagement ask, “How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems?”

**Scholarship of Teaching:** has as its focus the study of pedagogy and student learning. This scholarship may also refer to the development of both the theory and application of the ways that student learning can be enriched. It diverges from the practice of Scholarly Teaching in that it requires dissemination and the potential for application and evaluation by peers. This scholarship is most recognizable as the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). In the words of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Scholars engaged SoTL ask, how can a “systematic, and evidence-based study of student learning” lead to improved “student learning and enhanced educational quality.” <<https://www.stlhe.ca/sotl/what-is-sotl/>>

## **Appendix 2.0**

Framework can be found here:

[\*\*RED DEER COLLEGE RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY FRAMEWORK\*\*](#)

## Appendix 3.0

### Grant History:

Below is a select list of grants held by Red Deer College/Red Deer Polytechnic from 2015 until the present.

Term Year(s)	Funding Agency	Grant	Title of Proposal	Lead Researcher
2015-2018	SSHRC	Partnership Development Grant - Community College Social Innovation Fund	Making life easier: a participatory assessment of programs and services for immigrant women in central Alberta (CAIWA)	Dr. Choon-Lee Chai
2016-2019	Alberta Innovates	CARIN	Central Alberta Regional Innovation Network: Three Year Proposal	RDC co-lead with Olds College
2016-2017	NSERC	Engage	CIM / Mobismart: Integration of Micro-Wind Turbine to Hybrid Power Systems	RDC CIM
2016-2017	SSHRC	SSHRC Knowledge Synthesis Grants	OACAP Protocols in a College Setting	Dr. Krista Robson
2017-2018	Society for Teaching & Learning in Higher Education - Educational Developer's Caucus	Grants Program	The Canadian Context of Faculty Development Programs for Teaching Online in PSE: Recommendations and Resources	Dr. Alison Jeppesen
2018	Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada	Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund (SIF)	Alternative Energy Innovation Labs Infrastructure Project	RDC

2018-2022	Western Economic Diversification Canada	Regional Innovation Ecosystems	Red Deer Polytechnic Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing: advancing support for industry 4.0	Red Deer Polytechnic
2019-2021	Alberta Innovates	Regional Innovation Network (RIN)	Central Alberta Regional	RDC co-lead with Olds College