THIS IS...
the Faculty of ARTS
Agents of Change

Founded in 1908, the University of Alberta is one of Canada’s foremost research-intensive institutions of higher learning. It was recently rated by the QS World University Rankings* as number 94 in the world and number four in Canada.

As one of the university’s founding faculties, the Faculty of Arts boasts one of the most diverse Arts faculties in Canada, offering top quality programs in the social sciences, humanities and fine arts.

We prepare our students for successful careers in every sector of society by providing outstanding experiential learning, teaching and research opportunities. Not only do they develop the ability to think critically, but through educational opportunities beyond the classroom they develop widely applicable skills that are valued by employers around the world.

A UAlberta Arts education is especially powerful because it is informed by the robust research conducted by our faculty members. The complex problems of the 21st century can only be addressed effectively with the understanding that comes through studying humanities, social sciences and fine arts. Our researchers contribute to the public good by deepening the conversation around key social issues, offering unique insights and acting as the driving force behind societal change.

*2016 rankings

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Areas of Study

Social Sciences
Social sciences examine institutions and the functioning of human society in areas such as politics, economics, social interactions and psychology.
- Anthropology
- Economics
- History
- Linguistics
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Women’s & Gender Studies

Humanities
Humanities courses explore human-constructed concepts such as language, philosophy and religion. They look at everything from the ancient world to the modern representation of human culture.
- Classics
- East Asian Studies
- English & Film Studies
- Modern Languages & Cultural Studies
- Philosophy

Fine Arts
Fine arts delve into the visual and performing arts with courses that deal with everything from art history and acting to printmaking and world music.
- Art & Design
- Drama
- Music

Interdisciplinary Studies
The Faculty of Arts greatly values an interdisciplinary approach to our research and teaching. Our work often crosses traditional boundaries between disciplines, helping to form new ways of understanding and developing new methods for achieving that understanding in areas such as Religious Studies, Environmental Studies, Peace & Post-Conflict Studies, and Science, Technology & Society.
Experiential Learning

Community Service-Learning (CSL), Study Abroad, Arts Work Experience (AWE) and other Faculty of Arts outreach initiatives ensure that students are given hands-on opportunities beyond the classroom to practice skills, enhance knowledge and reflect on their experiences while making meaningful contributions to their communities.
Rhodes Scholar gives voice to marginalized communities

Advocacy and activism within the LGBTQ+ and Indigenous communities are the foundation for Billy-Ray Belcourt’s (’16 BA) academic and personal life. Throughout his undergraduate program in comparative literature, Belcourt shaped his academic career by making the most of his time outside of the classroom. He served as youth leader with the Native Youth Sexual Health Network, was president of the Aboriginal Student Council and received a 2015 Faculty of Arts Roger S. Smith Undergraduate Researcher Award, which provides for a 15 week summer project that partners budding undergraduate researchers with faculty members.

In 2016, Belcourt was selected as the first-ever First Nations student in Canada to win the Rhodes Scholarship, and was named one of CBC’s Six Indigenous Writers to Watch. His intellectual curiosity and determination to give a voice to marginalized communities assures Belcourt’s place as an emerging leader in human rights activism.

Building communities through creative engagement

Canada Research Chair and Centennial Professor Sean Caulfield oversees a number of formal and informal internships for his students, as well as various community-based projects with Edmonton’s artist-run centres.

As an internationally-recognized printmaker and frequent cross-disciplinary collaborator, Caulfield guides his students as they negotiate their own journeys and explorations. From practicum placements with arts organizations and professional art studios to fundraising efforts in the community, Caulfield’s students are taking their creative practice outside of the classroom, contributing to the social, political and artistic life of their communities.
Teaching and Learning

The Faculty of Arts educates students to think critically and act globally. Through experiences with world-class teachers and researchers, as well as experiential learning and creative practice opportunities, students develop foundational skills to succeed as they forge a path of lifelong learning and good citizenship.
Breaking new ground on 200 years of Métis settlement

Material artifacts such as beads can tell a different story than what is typically found in the historical record of a community. These artifacts often give voice to those who are marginalized or excluded, particularly women and children.

Anthropologist Kisha Supernant, a recipient of the Provost’s Award for Early Achievement of Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, is researching 200 years of Métis culture in Western Canada. In her field school, she and her students excavate and gather data on Métis overwintering settlements in Alberta. Inside and outside of the classroom, Supernant uses GIS (Geographic Information System) technology to interpret and digitally map each site—identifying and connecting the material and human relationships to the spaces they occupy.

Ethnomusicologist uses the fine arts to transform lives

The fine arts can change lives. Just ask Daya Madhur (16 MA), whose early immersion in music and theatre took her from paralyzing shyness to community leader. Now, the ethnomusicologist and teacher uses music, visual arts, dramatic performance and personal narrative to create meaningful, inclusive classroom environments where difficult subjects like racism and bullying are openly addressed.

It’s a pedagogical approach she explored in depth while working on her thesis, “Fostering a Sense of Community Among Middle-Year Students Through Song and Dance Practices,” and a practice she continues as a compassionate and collaborative arts educator. She was recently certified as a Smithsonian World Music Educator.
Research

The Faculty of Arts boasts world-class researchers who are exploring and advancing the human experience in the social sciences, humanities and fine arts. Our researchers embody the diverse, creative, collaborative and interdisciplinary practices the global community of the 21st century demands.

Through the work carried out in our many departments, programs, centres and institutes, we are contributing to the public good through research excellence in areas as diverse as Indigenous language revitalization; northern history, archeology and culture; gender and sexuality; social justice and human rights; digital media; ethnomusicology; and energy transitions.
Separating truth from fiction: Radicalization in Canada’s prisons

The 21st century is seeing a growth in radicalization — the movement toward extreme views or beliefs — and Canada’s prisons are not immune. Sociologists Sandra Bucerius and Kevin Haggerty are collaborators on an innovative research project that has given them unprecedented access to Canada’s correctional facilities.

Drawing from combined expertise in urban culture, surveillance, criminality and criminal justice, Bucerius and Haggerty are engaged in a first-of-its-kind Canadian study that will advance the global conversation around radicalized and potentially violent extremism.

Redefining feminist activism in the digital age

Digital tools are changing how feminists communicate, reconfiguring everything from protest to policy in new, and often confounding, ways. Carrie Smith-Prei, associate professor of Modern Languages & Cultural Studies, is exploring the ways in which feminist activists are taking to digital platforms.

Smith-Prei’s research is being used to shed light on the complicated meanings behind the online interactions of 21st century activists. Ultimately, her work will ensure that the public understands how such activity is being shaped by new media.
The University of Alberta's Faculty of Arts undertakes groundbreaking research, teaching and creative activity, examining all aspects of the human experience for the public good.

50,000+ alumni worldwide

1 Governor General of Canada
   The Right Honourable Roland Michener, PC, CC, CMM, CD, QC, FRSC (’26 BA, ’57 LLD [Hon])

1 Prime Minister
   The Right Honourable Joe Clark, PC, CC (’73 MA, ’85 LLD [Hon])

3 Premiers of Alberta
   Mr. Dave Hancock, QC (’75 BA, ’79 LLB, ’86 LLB [Hon]), The Honourable Peter Lougheed, PC, CC, QC (’51 BA, ’52 LLB, ’86 LLD [Hon]), and The Honourable Rachel Notley, MLA (’87 BA)

2 Edmonton Mayors
   His Worship Don Iveson (’01 BA) and Ms. Ian Reimer (’73 BA)

1 Chief Justice of Canada
   The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, PC (’68 LLB, ’68 MA, ’71 LLB [Hon])

1 NHL Hockey team owner
   Daryl Katz (’82 BA, ’85 LLB)

1 Designer of the Canadian flag
   George Stanley (’29 BA)

Teaching Excellence

The U of A has earned 41 National 3M Teaching Fellowships, Canada's highest award for excellence in undergraduate university teaching. This is more than any other university in Canada. Eight of these 41 are Arts faculty members.

Our People

Diverse, talented, and creative

330 Faculty Members
250 Contract Instructors
230 Staff
5,800 Undergraduate Students
60+ Undergraduate Degree Programs
750 Graduate Students
45+ Graduate Programs

Arts graduate students win $6 million in awards and scholarships annually.

International students comprise approximately 20% of undergraduate students and 30% of graduate students.

By the numbers

Operating Budget
Endowments*
$77 million
$93 million

* Market value, as of August 2016.
World-class Subject Areas

In the 2015/16 QS World University Rankings for academic reputation, employer reputation and research impact, Arts had 5 subject areas in the top 60 (Archeology, Communication & Media Studies, English Language & Literature, Philosophy and Psychology).

Arts Work Experience

60-70 work terms and 40,000+ hours completed by AWE students annually...

and the program continues to grow!

A major role in Alberta's cultural scene

MUSIC
12 concerts annually in its Mainstage Concert season
More than 100 concerts, student recitals, masterclasses, visiting artists and lectures every year
Alumna Fun Fact: Leela Gilday (97 BMus), Dene musician, won a Juno and two Western Canadian Music Awards, and was named Aboriginal Female Entertainer of the Year by the Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards.

ART & DESIGN
~15 exhibitions per year
8,000 exhibition attendance per year
Alumnus Fun Fact: Todd Cherniawsky (’93 BFA), production designer, worked as supervising art director or set designer on blockbusters such as Jurassic World, Terminator Genisys, The Great and Powerful Oz, and Avatar.

DRAMA
5 plays produced per season, including 1 new play commission
55 performances per season
15 artistic directors of theatre companies in Edmonton are Drama alumni
Alumnus Fun Fact: For 17 years, Bob Baker (74 BFA) was artistic director of the Citadel Theatre, one of Canada's renowned theatre companies.

Community Service-Learning

CSL links academic coursework to community-based experiences.
On an annual basis:
1,000+ students work with
50+ instructors, contributing
20,000+ hours to
150+ community partners

Arts Abroad

300+ students go abroad through Faculty of Arts programs annually.
Approximately 100 students study at our School in Cortona, Italy.
More than 50% of Arts students who went abroad in 2015/16 received an award or scholarship!
International Partners include:
- Nankai University, China
- Franz-Schubert Institut, Austria
- Ritsumeikan University, Japan
- Ludwig-Maximilians Universität München, Germany
- Fulbright Foundation, USA
- Government of Spain, Ministry of Education Culture & Sport

$9.5 Million Research Funding

8 Canada Research Chairs – recognized by the Government of Canada as "the world's most accomplished and promising minds"
6 Killam Research Fellows – one of Canada's top research awards
1 Trudeau Fellow – recognizing researchers committed to addressing major issues facing society