NOVEMBER, 2025 VOL. 13

Newsletter





21st Biennial Symposium on Violence & Aggression

The Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies is organizing the 21st Biennial Symposium on Violence and Aggression. It is scheduled to take place on May 25-26, 2026, at the University of Saskatchewan. The Overarching theme of this year's offering will be "Advancing Responses to Violence."

The symposium will feature 4 plenary speakers and up to 12 concurrent sessions, involving more than 16 local, national and international presenters. Presenters will share their knowledge and experience on an array of topics, including:

- · Fontline Responses to Violence
- Indigenization of Justice Responses
- · Current Issues in Violence

Registration for the symposium will start soon, but if you wish to attend, email us at *forensic.centre@usask.ca*, and we will inform you when the registration is open so you can avail the early bird discount.

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Correctional Service Canada Signing MOA

Leah Cook (right), Lee Anne Skene (left) and Dr. Darcy Marciniuk (middle) signed a certificate commemorating the signing of the fourth MOA between the Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies (CFBSJS) and the Correctional Service Canada (CSC) which will provide CFBSJS with \$200,000 per year for 10 years (a total of \$2 million). Together, CSC and CFBSJS are celebrating a partnership that will help support Centre operations and sustainability and will go towards faculty and student awards, internships, post-doctoral fellowships, research, and the dissemination of research.



Leah Cook (A/Director of Professional Practice and Accreditation Management, Health Services), Lee Anne Skene (A/Assistant Deputy Commissioner Correctional Operations), Matthew Gee (A/Warden, Regional Psychiatric Centre), Travis Boone (District Director -Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Northwest Ontario Parole District), Dr. Olajide Adelugba (Psychiatrist and Clinical Director, Regional Psychiatric Centre) and Penny Martin (A/Executive Director – RPC) attended the ceremony representing CSC. Dr. Kim Audette (Executive Director, Research & Implementation Branch), Karlee Zbeetnoff (Director of Implementation), Dr. Ashley Hewitt (Director of Applied Research and Development), and Andrew Betker (Business and Implementation Specialist) attended the ceremony representing RIB. Dr. Louise Racine, Associate Dean Research and Graduate Studies (in place of Dr. Solina Richter) attended the event representing the College of Nursing, and Dr. Janet Tootoosis, Vice-Dean Indigenous Health (in place of Dr. Sarah Forgie) attended the event representing the College of Medicine. (Photos by David Stobbe)

The Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science & Justice Studies, in collaboration with the Colleges of Law, Medicine, Nursing and Arts and Science at the University of Saskatchewan, organized the MOA/CRA Signing Ceremony that was held on June 9, 2025, at the University of Saskatchewan. This signing ceremony was organized to commemorate the renewal of the Centre's funding agreements with Correctional Service Canada (CSC) and the Research and Implementation Branch (RIB), Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. The Signing Ceremony was supported by Dr. Darcy Marciniuk, the Associate Vice-President Research of the University of Saskatchewan.



Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety Signing CRA

Dr. Kim Audette and Dr. Darcy Marciniuk signed a certificate commemorating the signing of the third CRA between the Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies (CFBSJS) and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety (CPPS) which will provide the Centre with \$200,000 per year for 5 years (a total of \$1 million). Together, CPPS and CFBSJS are celebrating a partnership that will help support CFBSJS's collaborative research projects with the Ministry.



Assistant Professor BENJAMIN RALSTON College of Law

FACULTY RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT GRANT RECIPIENT 2023/24



Professor Benjamin Ralston is an Assistant Professor at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Law and an associate member of the School of Environment and Sustainability. He describes his primary teaching and research areas as focusing on Indigenous Peoples and the law, Environmental Law, and Administrative or Public Law. He notes being drawn to these fields because "it's hard to not feel passionate about the importance of addressing those kinds of issues…ones that force us to think differently."

His legal expertise has been instrumental in bridging the gap between social science and law: "It's the confidence of knowing how our legal system operates and how to elicit and synthesize accurate statements of the law." This background allows him to ensure that research accurately reflects the complexities of Canada's legal system. Reflecting on his transition from legal practice to academia, Professor Ralston shared that the shift happened gradually, driven by his growing engagement in research and the opportunities for deeper, more reflective thinking that academia allows.

Professor Ralston's involvement with the Forensic Centre began through shared interests in addressing Indigenous overincarceration in Canada. Over time, this collaboration evolved into several research initiatives, including a notable Delphi study, funded by a Faculty Development Grant. Culture as Healing: Synthesizing Expert Knowledge on the Relationship between Access to Culture and Justice Involvement for Indigenous Persons explored expert consensus on the relationship between access to culture and criminal involvement for Indigenous Peoples. This study identified areas of consensus among experts-both frontline and academic-across multiple disciplines of this broad relationship between access to culture and justice involvement. Reflecting on this study, Professor Ralston noted how it was "an opportunity to think through how social scientific research could be more responsive to the legal framework by really attending to limitations of the evidence that could be considered in that context." He also acknowledges his colleague Dr. Christie Tetreault (CFBSJS) and research assistants Lucie Blackburn and Ayyah Ismail in collaboration with this project.



(Photo by David Stobbe - From left to right, Dr. Lisa Jewell, Dr. Mansfield Mela, Lucie Blackburn, Prof. Ben Ralston and Dr. Christie Tetreault -marking the project's completion)

Outside of work, Prof. Ralston is a father to two young children — a 16-month-old and a 4-year-old. He spoke candidly about balancing academic life with parenthood, noting that "you inevitably become better at time management" as a parent. Despite the challenges, he finds joy in the way fatherhood encourages him to be more present and engaged with his surroundings.

Please see the infographic produced form Culture as Healing project on Page 4.

Infographic

Culture as Healing: Synthesizing Expert Knowledge on the Relationship between Access to Culture and Justice Involvement for Indigenous Persons is a study funded by the Faculty Development Grant. Through a Delphi study, the authors of this study, Professor Benjamin Ralston (College of Law), Dr. Christie Tetreault (CFBSJS), Lucie Blackburn, and Ayyah Ismail, explored expert consensus on the relationship between access to culture and criminal involvement for Indigenous Peoples.

We've been expanding our outreach by creating infographics to highlight the impactful research being conducted at the Centre. The infographics we have created to provide a condense version of the research summary

Please visit our Reports Page for more infographics: <u>https://cfbsjs.usask.ca/research/r</u> <u>eports.php</u>

Culture as Healing

Addressing Indigenous Over-Incarceration through Access to Culture



Asst. Prof. Benjamin Ralston (BA, JD, LLM), Dr. Christie Tetreault (PhD), Lucie Blackburn (BSc), Ayyah Ismail

Background

This study aimed to gather and synthesize expert knowledge on the relationship between access to culture and justice involvement for Indigenous persons to make this knowledge more readily available to key decision-makers in Canada's criminal legal system. In particular, we sought to determine if consensus exists among leading experts, whether academics or front-line workers.

Delphi Study Method

R2

R3

Create Expert List → Invited 80+ Subject Matter Experts

Thematic Analysis of Answers

3 Rounds for Consensus

Synthesis of Consensus Experts' Opinions Reformulation of Questionnaire

Results

Participants were asked their understanding of how access to culture relates to: justice involvement, substance use, and mental health for Indigenous persons; factors shaping culture's effectiveness in reducing risk factors; gender-based R1 barriers; and key intervention priorities. They rated importance of culture in reducing justice involvement for Indigenous persons at an average of 8.82/10.

36 propositions from RI were presented back to participants. 34 achieved consensus (≥75% agreement). For example, there was consensus that access to culture can: strengthen an Indigenous person's (1) support network and (2) ties to an Indigenous value system; help them build (3) a positive self-identity and (4) pro-social skills and behaviours; (5) support the development of a positive, pro-social environment beyond the individual participant; (6) help them gain greater insight into the impacts of colonialism; and (7) protect them from anti-social influences.

Consensus was not reached on two propositions as prison and awareness of anti-Indigenous discrimination affect individuals differently. Some gain cultural access in prison, while others lose it. Learning about injustices can lead to hopelessness for some but empower others to better navigate systemic barriers. Accessing culture can be prioritized based on what is practically available.

Implications

Front-line and academic experts reached consensus on many key aspects of the relationship between cultural access and justice involvement. This provides a clearer starting point for decision-makers across the criminal legal system.

Upcoming Event



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies



Come join us to learn about career opportunities at the Forensic Centre and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

Who should attend?

- Students (undergraduate and/or graduate) in the Colleges of Art & Science, Law, and Nursing; Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy; and School of Public Health
- · Anybody with interest or relevant background

Why you should attend?

Learn about opportunities for students at the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety, including:

- Student positions within the Research and Implementation Branch (RIB)
- Job opportunities upon graduation for Nursing, Psychology, Sociology, Law, and Public Administration students
- Examples of career paths into the provincial government

Learn about opportunities for students at the Forensic Centre (USask), including:

- Current research projects at the Forensic Centre
- Research assistant and volunteer positions
- Student funding opportunities

NOVEMBER 6, 2025 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM



ART 214



Presentations by RIB and the Forensic Centre followed by a panel discussion (Q/A) & networking

Refreshments will be provided

EMAIL US TODAY TO REGISTER!

Email: forensic.centre@usask.ca Tel: 306-966-2687 https://cfbsjs.usask.ca

Director's Corner



With the academic year in full swing, it is invigorating to see our university community come together once again to make our institution what 'The World Needs'. In appreciating President Stoicheff's support to the University, we are looking forward to the leadership of Prof. V. Bruni-Bossio as the new President and Chancellor of the University of Saskatchewan. The Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and Justice Studies (CFBSJS) continues to be a hub of collaboration and partnership at a time when change—economic, social, and geopolitical—is accelerating.

We are proud to announce renewed collaborations, including a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Correctional Service Canada and a Collaborative Research Agreement (CRA) with the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety in Saskatchewan.

These partnerships reaffirm the trust our interest holders place in the excellence and impact of our small but mighty team at the Centre.

Our second strategic planning process is underway, focused on priorities that strengthen our community impact. We have started by the most analog communication method of listening from our interest holders to frame our next steps. Our strategic plan will contemplate transformation because, with such changes, adaptation is required.

This issue highlights Professor Ralston's work with Indigenous communities, a cornerstone of our strategic initiatives. We also look forward to hosting the second in-person Violence and Aggression Symposium since the pandemic—a vital gathering for researchers, frontline workers, clinicians, and administrators.

Congratulations to Dr. Stoliker on his promotion, and gratitude to our team (Drs. Jewell and Tetreault, Lilani Samarakoon, our manager; the Executive Committee members and Prof. Steve Rayan our new Chair of the Advisory Board) for their dedication to reducing victimization and enhancing safety. Our Student Café plans to open doors for students to opportunities across ministries, advancing the mission and values of the University of Saskatchewan.

SIGN UP TO OUR MAILING LIST

Through our listsery, you will receive notifications about student funding opportunities, job opportunities and events organized by the Centre.



Suicide Prevention in the Criminal Justice Sector for the International Association for Suicide Prevention

Special Interest Group

Suicide Prevention In The Criminal Justice SUICIDE PREVENTION IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SECTOR Sector CO-CHAIRS Professor Tammi Walker Professor Rohan Borschmann

Through a longstanding international collaboration, Dr. Bryce Stoliker and colleagues from the United Kingdom and Australia co-led the development of a new Special Interest Group (SIG) on Suicide Prevention in the Criminal Justice Sector within the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP). With rates of suicide in criminal justice settings (across custody and community) being three to ten times higher than in general populations, and the complex combination of needs and risks among criminal justice populations, this new SIG was formed to advance suicide prevention and postvention for individuals within the criminal justice system. Broadly, the Suicide Prevention in the Criminal Justice Sector SIG aims to connect academics, practitioners, and those with lived experience to share knowledge, enhance research, inform policy, and promote evidence-based strategies to reduce suicide risk and support those affected. This initiative aligns with the broader policy and advocacy goals of the IASP, which is a non-profit organization that provides a worldwide forum for academics, mental health professionals, crisis workers, volunteers, and people with lived experience to collaborate and advance efforts on the prevention of suicide and suicidal behaviour—through its World Congress, support resources, SIGs, and other venues—with reach up to 79 countries. If you have an interest in this area or want to get involved:

Visit the IASP website: https://www.iasp.info/ Send an email to: iaspcissia@amail.com

Call for Proposals - Fall 2025

Our Centre is proud to offer funding opportunities to support groundbreaking research in crime, justice, and corrections. If you're a graduate student or faculty member passionate about advancing knowledge in these critical fields, now is the time to act!

Faculty Grants provide up to \$10,000 to support innovative research projects, while Student Awards offer up to \$6,000 to cover research-related expenses. These funding opportunities are designed to empower researchers with the resources they need to make a meaningful impact.

Applications for the 2025 funding cycle are now open, with a submission deadline of November 20, 2025. Don't miss this chance to elevate your research and contribute to transformative change in forensic sciences and justice studies.

Faculty Funding Page:

https://cfbsjs.usask.ca/funding/faculty-funding.php

Student Funding Page:



Funding Applications Open

Apply Now