



KMCURA

Knowledge Mobilisation & Community
University Research Alliances

A knowledge exchange within our Waterloo community

Faculty, students, and community service leaders are invited to participate in KMCURA, a forum for increasing the usefulness of research in addressing social issues in everyday life. KMCURA is a network of individuals and organisations committed to advancing knowledge mobilisation (KM) and community-university research alliances (CURAs). Created by the UW Faculty of Arts, community organisations such as the United Way, and the Canadian Centre for Knowledge Mobilisation, KMCURA is an opportunity to exchange ideas and resources and to identify research needs.

KMCURA unites the interests of the Waterloo Region community with the research resources of the University. “We can increase the impact of our work by conducting research and mobilising scholarly knowledge together to serve the public good” said Kathleen Bloom, Coordinator of KMCURA and Director of the [Canadian Centre for Knowledge Mobilisation \(CCKM\)](#).

“A perfect example of what we hope to achieve with KMCURA emerged from the work of two students in the Arts 600 graduate seminar called, Knowledge Mobilisation to Serve Society”, said Bloom. Building on their graduate studies with Prof. Steve Manske who directs the [School Health Action, Planning and Evaluation System or SHAPES](#) in AHS, Erin Hobin and Melissa Roth brought together university researchers, teachers, and public health staff to incorporate the SHAPES survey data in the standard school curricula. The team developed lesson plans designed to increase teacher and student awareness and critical thinking around physical activity and tobacco use in their school and region. The lesson plans were posted on the SHAPES website as teacher resources (<http://www.shapes.uwaterloo.ca/teacher%5Fresources/>). “The point is, when community and university work together, great things can happen to improve the lives of others. KMCURA creates a critical mass, a hub, a neighbourhood, for sharing ideas, enthusiasm, problems, tools, and resources to address the issues important to our thriving community,” Bloom added.

Ken Coates, Dean of Arts, described the background and motivation for KMCURA. “The Faculty of Arts understands that the ideas and research developed in the humanities, social sciences and fine arts contribute significantly to the betterment of society. As we seek to work our way through a complex, rapidly-changing and integrated world, we are increasingly aware of the need to draw for direction and inspiration on the very best insights, ideas and research available to us. We know, too, that the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, advocating a shift from a granting council to a knowledge council, is ever more supportive of initiatives that mobilize the work of the academy in the effort to address pressing social, economic, cultural and political challenges in Canada and around the world. The University of Waterloo has long understood the benefits -- and the responsibilities -- of engagement with our communities and has a superb track record for working closely with community, regional, national and international groups. KMCURA seeks to build on the strengths of our Departments and our scholars, to support and encourage collaboration across disciplines and to help UW students and faculty find ways to extend the impact of their scholarship and their understanding beyond the boundaries of the university campus.”

KMCURA emerged from the success of the Faculty’s first interdisciplinary graduate course, Arts 600, Knowledge Mobilisation to Serve Society. Participating in the seminar were

- 14 graduate students from 6 disciplines
- faculty guest speakers representing 9 departments
- SSHRC senior policy officer, Deputy Minister of Education, and Ottawa-based journalist

This Fall, Arts 600 will include Waterloo region community leaders as guest speakers. Their knowledge and expertise will help students learn to make research matter more.

How can you be part of KMCURA?

- Add your name to KMCURA by contacting Kathleen Bloom - kbloom@cckm.ca
- Read the first issue of the KMCURA Newsletter (<http://www.cckm.ca/capacity.htm>)
- Contribute to online discussions on:
 - Bringing research findings to policy and practice
 - Developing university-community partnerships that work
 - Linking practical knowledge to community organisations
 - Measuring and creating impact of knowledge mobilisation
 - Finding funding for community research
 - Connecting student research to community issues

Meet Face2Face at the  KMCURA social hour!

“KMCURA is a timely initiative for it promises to complement and support many new initiatives underway in the Faculty of Arts and at the University of Waterloo,” said Dean Coates. “The establishment of such units as the Social Innovation Generations @ Waterloo and the Jim Balsillie School of International Affairs demonstrate the University’s strong commitment to community engagement. Faculty members in all disciplines are building impressive new partnerships and re-enforcing existing connections with various communities and organizations. Students, particularly at the graduate level, are demonstrating strong interest in working across disciplines and in consort with community groups to address pressing public policy and social justice issues. KMCURA does not seek to replace or supplant any of their research initiatives or disciplinary-based activities. Rather, by providing a forum for the ongoing discussion of knowledge mobilization and community engagement, KMCURA provides the University of Waterloo with enhanced ability to respond constructively and pro-actively to the major issues and needs of our generation.”