CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thinking Care Together: Tensions, Practices, and Collective Responsibilities
A Forum on Care in University Life

Thursday, May 6, 2027, 8:30 am – 4 :30 pm
Louis Riel Room and Board Rooms A & B

What does it mean to care in university life? How do we experience, practice, negotiate, and sometimes struggle with care across our university community? Where does care become difficult? What forms of care remain unrecognized? And what might we imagine doing differently? *Thinking Care Together: Tensions, Practices, and Possibilities* invites BU faculty, staff, and students to come together for a day of conversation, listening, experimentation, and collective reflection on care in university life.

Rather than a conventional conference, the Forum is designed as a space for exchange across roles, experiences, disciplines, and forms of knowledge. The day will move between brief provocations, facilitated conversations, participatory workshops, and collaborative activities. Contributions may emerge from professional practice, teaching, creative work, community engagement, personal experience, scholarship, or simply a question that participants are still working through. What matters is not presenting a finished argument but bringing something into conversation with others.

We welcome contributions that engage with questions such as:

- Where do we encounter care in university life, and where does care break down?
- What does care look like in practice?
- Who is expected to provide care, and under what conditions?
- What forms of care are visible, and what forms remain unrecognized?
- How do workload, precarity, institutional structures, power, and competing responsibilities shape our capacity to care?
- What happens when institutional expectations come into tension with people's needs?
- What practices of care are already happening around us?
- What can we learn from practices that are working, as well as from those that are not?
- What might we imagine doing differently?
- What could a more caring university look like, and what would make such possibilities possible?

These questions are deliberately open. We welcome contributions that complicate, challenge, or unsettle our understandings of care rather than simply affirming its value.

Who is invited?

We welcome contributions from Brandon University faculty, staff, and students whose experiences, practices, or perspectives connect with the questions of the Forum. We particularly encourage contributions that bring different roles, perspectives, and forms of knowledge into conversation.

What can you contribute?

We are looking for contributions that can open a conversation rather than deliver a conventional presentation. Possible formats include:

Brief provocations (5-7 minutes)
Share a story, observation, question, practice, experience, tension, or idea that you would like to put into conversation with others.

Facilitated conversations (20 minutes)
Bring a question, experience, or area of practice to a small, mixed-role conversation with others. Conversations will be organized around themes emerging from the contributions received. Contributions might engage with:

- Care in Practice: pedagogy, mentorship, accessibility, relational teaching, student support, collegial relationships
- The Politics of Care: power, inequality, institutional responsibility, and the recognition of care labour
- Care Under Pressure: workload, burnout, precarity, boundaries, competing responsibilities, and sustainable academic life

Participatory workshops (15-20 minutes)
Propose a hands-on activity, creative practice, facilitated exercise, or method that allows participants to explore a question together.

A day built around conversation
Throughout the day, we will make room for uncertainty, disagreement, difficult experiences, and unfinished thinking. The goal is not to arrive at a single definition of care or a set of predetermined solutions, but to create the conditions for listening, dialogue, experimentation, and collective imagination.

What to submit
Your proposal does not need to provide a complete argument or polished presentation. We are interested in what you would like to put into conversation and what you hope others might help you think through. We also welcome storytelling, writing, visual practices, mapping, performance, and other forms that can invite reflection, connection, and dialogue. We welcome work in progress, emerging ideas, practical knowledge, questions without answers, and experiences that might help others see university life differently.

Please submit a proposal of approximately 200-250 words that includes:

- Your name and whether you are student, staff, or faculty member
- Proposed contribution title
- Preferred format (5–7 minute provocation, facilitated conversation, workshop, or creative/experimental contribution)
- A brief description of your contribution
- One or two questions you hope your contribution will open for conversation
- Submission deadline: **Friday, January 22nd, 2027**
- Submit to: CareCommunity@brandonu.ca
- Decisions will be communicated by the end of February 2027

Questions about the Forum or possible contributions can be directed to CareCommunity@Brandonu.ca

Organizing committee: Dominique Hétu, Mousumi Majumder, Gretta Sayers, and Laura Van Mulligen