



ALLIANCE TO END
HOMELESSNESS
IN THE CAPITAL REGION

**CONTINUING
STUDIES** @UVIC

Fundamentals for the Homelessness Serving Sector Micro-credential

HOPE
has found a
HOME

Territorial acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect the ləkʷəŋən (Esquimalt, and Songhees) peoples on whose traditional, unceded territory the University of Victoria and the City of Victoria stands, as well as the Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke and WSÁNEĆ (Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout, Tseycum) peoples whose historical relationships with the land and water continues to this day.



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Acknowledgment

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This project is funded by
the Government of Canada.



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Fundamentals of the Homelessness Serving Sector Project

- Functional Zero Working Group recommendation
- Supported with funding from the Reaching Home program
- Aligned with sector and peer-identified needs
- Informed by ongoing feedback and collaboration
- Flexible, relevant, no-cost training



The Project

Fundamentals for the Homelessness Serving Sector (FHSS) project

- November 2022 through March 2024
- Shepherded by the Alliance to End Homelessness in the Capital Region (AEHCR) and the Division of Continuing Studies at the University of Victoria (the partners)
- Homelessness Serving Sector community members were brought together to design a Homeless Support Worker training curriculum
- A set of free, accessible, online training courses for workers in the homelessness response sector was co-developed
- The six-course program leads to a micro-certificate (professional development certificate) for individuals completing a six-course program
- FHSS micro-credential courses are free through April 2027



Who was this designed for?

- Outreach workers
- Peer support workers
- Mental health and addictions workers
- Anyone who works or volunteers in the sector



Homelessness Response Community Members

Members from the Homeless Response Community included:

- Anawim Companion Society
- Beacon Community Services
- Our Place Society
- Pacifica Housing
- Peers Victoria Resources Society
- PHS
- Sooke Shelter Society
- St. Vincent de Paul
- The Salvation Army
- Threshold Housing
- Victoria Cool Aid Society
- Victoria Native Friendship Centre



University of Victoria FHSS Micro-credential

The FHSS Micro-credential consists of six courses.

Participants receive a University of Victoria

- Certificate after completing each course
- Micro-credential after completing all six courses



FHSS Courses Offered

The six micro-credential courses are:

- Homelessness and Housing First Principles (FHSS301)
- Person-centered Procedures (FHSS302)
- Mental Health and Substance Use (FHSS303)
- Decolonization and Cultural Safety (FHSS304)
- Gender and Sexuality (FHSS305)
- Supporting Others, Caring for Yourself (FHSS306)



Homelessness and Housing First Principles (FHSS301)

Homelessness and Housing First Principles covers

- Different types of homelessness
- Housing First Principles
- Person-centered, trauma-informed support techniques using a decolonized and anti-stigma approach

Course Outcomes include knowledge of

- Different types of homelessness
- Contributing factors to homelessness
- Housing first principles



Person-centered Procedures (FHSS302)

Person-centered Procedures covers

- Best practices for record- keeping
- Resolving conflict
- Crisis management
- Critical incident debriefing

Course Outcomes include knowledge of

- Application of person-centered, trauma-informed, and decolonized best practices to roles and procedures within the homelessness serving sector



Mental Health and Substance Use (FHSS303)

Mental Health and Substance Use covers

- Foundational principles related to substance use, harm reduction, and mental health disorder
- De-escalation techniques
- Safety protocols

Course Outcomes include knowledge of

- Issues related to mental health and substance use within the context of the homelessness serving sector



Decolonization and Cultural Safety (FHSS304)

Decolonization and Cultural Safety covers

- Colonial ideologies
- The lasting impacts of colonization on Indigenous culture, communities, and individuals

Course Outcomes include knowledge of

- Thought-provoking, alternative approaches to working within the homelessness sector of society, where historical and institutional harms can be addressed using a decolonization lens



Gender and Sexuality (FHSS305)

Gender and Sexuality covers

- An introduction to gender based and LGBTQIA2S+ issues related to homelessness
- Best practices for supporting individuals experiencing gender- based violence and individuals engaged in sex work
- How to recognize signs of sex-trafficking

Course Outcomes include knowledge of

- Gender and sexuality-based issues within the context of the homelessness serving sector



Supporting Others, Caring for Yourself (FHSS306)

Supporting Others, Caring for Yourself covers

- Culturally safe, trauma-informed techniques for setting and maintaining professional boundaries
- Causes and symptoms of burnout, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue

Course Outcomes include knowledge of

- Developing a self-care plan to manage stressors related to working in the homelessness serving sector



FHSS Micro-credential Program Development

- Trainings provided on each course topic
- Focus group sessions
- Engagement sessions for persons with lived/living experience of homelessness
 - 77 distinct individuals
 - 20 organizations
- Feedback from pilot participants
- Individuals completed one or more courses
- Feedback from individuals completing one or more courses
- Feedback from service providers via the Best Practices Collective convened by the Alliance
- Online micro-credential course development based on feedback
- Rollout of the six micro-credential courses



FHSS Micro-credential Program – Workshop Training

Full-day in-person workshops on each topic

- 7 workshops hosted by the University of Victoria
- All 6 courses were covered
- 61 individuals participated in one or more workshops
- Total attendance of 102
- 17 organizations, students, retirees, and those seeking employment were represented



FHSS Micro-credential Program – Focus Groups

1.5-hour focus group sessions

- 6 x 1.5-hour online engagements hosted by the AEHCR
- 6 x 1.5-hour in-person engagements hosted by the AEHCR
- All 6 courses were covered
- 16 individuals participated in one or more focus group engagements
- Total attendance of 31¹
- 7 organizations were represented

¹ While 79 individuals signed up, only 31 attended the engagements



FHSS Micro-credential Program – Engagements

Engagement sessions

- 3 x 2-hour in-person engagement sessions were hosted by the AEHCR
- All 6 courses were covered
- 11 with lived or living experience of homelessness attended 1 or more engagement sessions



FHSS Micro-credential Program - Feedback

Feedback from pilot participants

Over 75% of workshop participants found

- information provided was relevant to their work
- techniques could be incorporated into their work
- new information was provided

Over 80% of focus group participants found the online course(s)

- easy to navigate
- videos supported learning
- video summaries supported learning
- learning materials provided were valuable and they plan on returning to review the materials



FHSS Micro-credential Program - Feedback

Feedback from participants completing courses

5 individuals with lived or living experience and 1 service provider completed one or more of the online courses

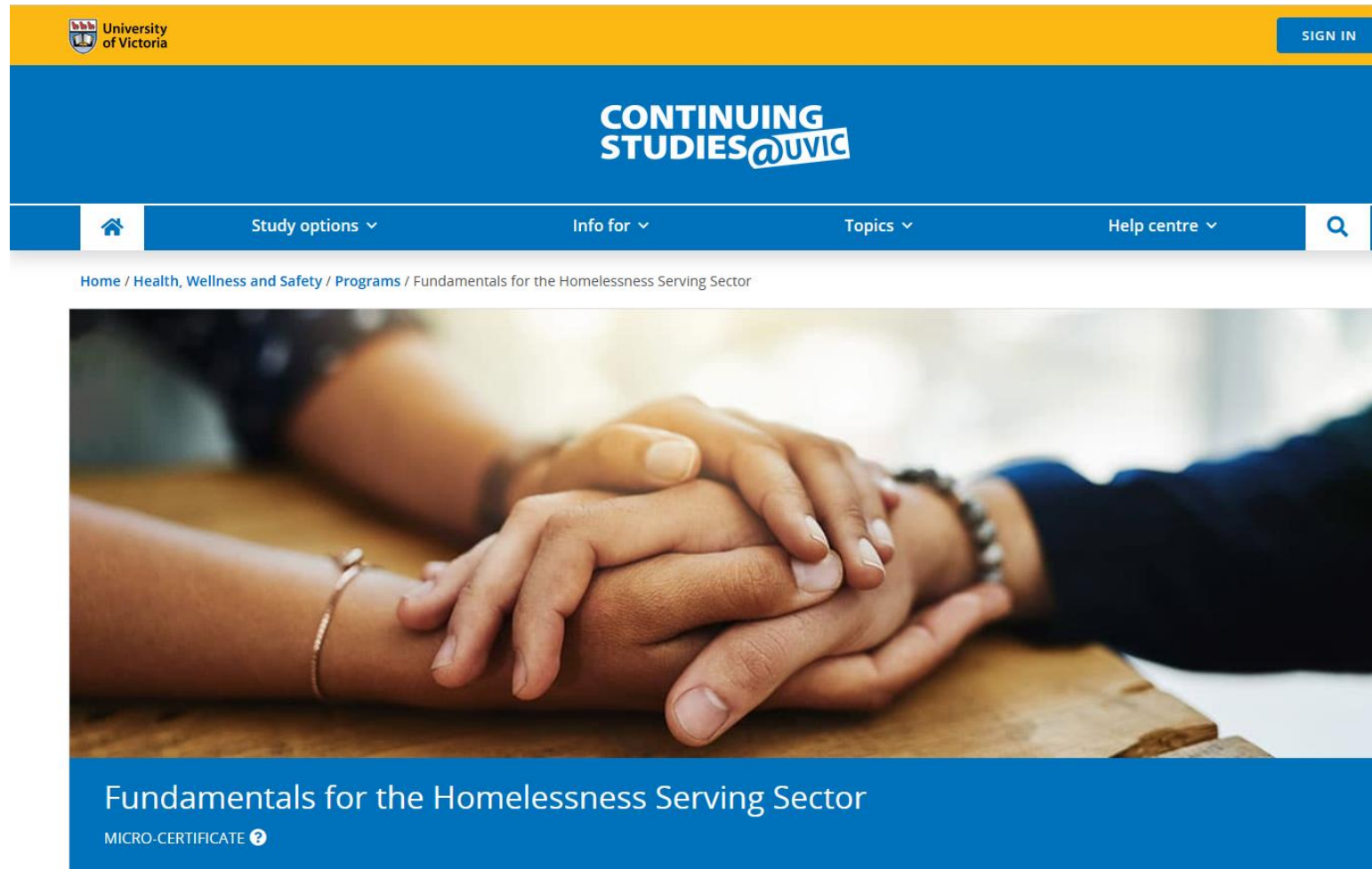
- Courses were engaging
- Courses were easy to navigate
- Don't like only having one type of self-reflection/self-care activity at the end of each course module → the courses were structured so that 'students' could select from a variety of self-reflection/self-care activities

Feedback from service providers via the Best Practices Collective convened by the Alliance

- courses were seen as a good way to retain staff
- content was seen as relevant for organizations in the homelessness serving sector and sector-adjacent organizations



FHSS Online Micro-credential Landing Page



<https://continuingstudies.uvic.ca/health-wellness-and-safety/programs/fundamentals-for-the-homelessness-serving-sector/>



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Thank you!