

For immediate release — Friday, March 13, 2026

PUBLIC Professor Series talk to examine the winners and losers of legalized gambling

People who gamble are always quick to tell the world when they've experienced a big win, but who's really cashing in on gambling and who's in the red?

Dr. Robert Williams is a research coordinator with the Alberta Gambling Research Institute and professor in the University of Lethbridge's Faculty of Health Sciences. He will explore the many facets of the exploding gambling world in his PUBLIC Professor Series talk, [*Legalized Gambling in Canada: Winners and Losers*](#), on Thursday, March 26, 2026, 7 to 9 p.m., at the Sandman Signature Lethbridge Lodge.



Who really benefits from gambling, who is left behind and how are emerging technologies like AI shaping the future of gambling?

“Gambling seems to be everywhere these days, on television, in the news, at the corner store, and increasingly online, yet gambling itself is not new. It's been part of human culture for 1000s of years, from dice games in ancient Greece to chariot races in Rome and even lotteries used to help finance projects such as the Great Wall of China,” says Williams. “What is new is the scale and structure of modern gambling today. It's no longer primarily a social pastime. Instead, it has become a sophisticated global industry designed for generating profit.”

Williams will delve into how modern gambling works and why it is so compelling.

“In this talk I will look at the psychology that drives gambling behaviour, including the powerful reinforcement patterns embedded in electronic gambling machines and other games,” he says in this [preview video](#). “I'll also examine the cognitive biases that lead people to believe they can beat games that are mathematically designed for the House to win.”

Williams is a clinical psychologist and professor in the ULethbridge Addictions Counselling program. He frequently provides consultation to government, industry, the media and public

interest groups, and regularly gives expert witness testimony on the impacts of gambling. He is widely published and is considered one of the world's leading authorities on the prevention and causes of problem gambling, online gambling, the socioeconomic impacts of gambling, the proportion of gambling revenue derived from problem gamblers, Indigenous gambling and the population assessment of problem gambling.

The 2025-26 PUBLIC Professor Series is presented by the University of Lethbridge Senate. We gratefully acknowledge the additional generous support of Dr. Dennis Connolly (LLD '17), Knud Petersen, Dave and Kathy Greenwood, Dr. Michelle Helstein, Dr. Digvir and Manju Jayas, Deborah Lucas and Dr. Dena McMartin.

The annual PUBLIC Professor Series lectures spark thought-provoking discussions on the most relevant topics of the day, bringing together a diverse group of experts and researchers from across campus and into the community. Every talk is free of charge. This is the final event of the 2025-26 season.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/public-professor-series-talk-examine-winners-and-losers-legalized-gambling>

-- 30 --

Contact:

Trevor Kenney, Manager of Public Affairs
403-329-2710
403-360-7639 (cell)
trevor.kenney@uleth.ca
@ULethbridge

Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.