

Alumni Affairs

Public Engagement

MUN

*Backgrounder for
Strategic Planning Process*

October 2017

Overview

- Memorial's External Relations Portfolio
- What is “Public Engagement” at Memorial?
- Why do universities have Alumni units?
- What is “Alumni Affairs” at Memorial?
- Current core activities of the Alumni office
- Mini-SWOT
- Memorial University Board Review (Lewis Report, 2017)
- Emerging opportunities and future directions

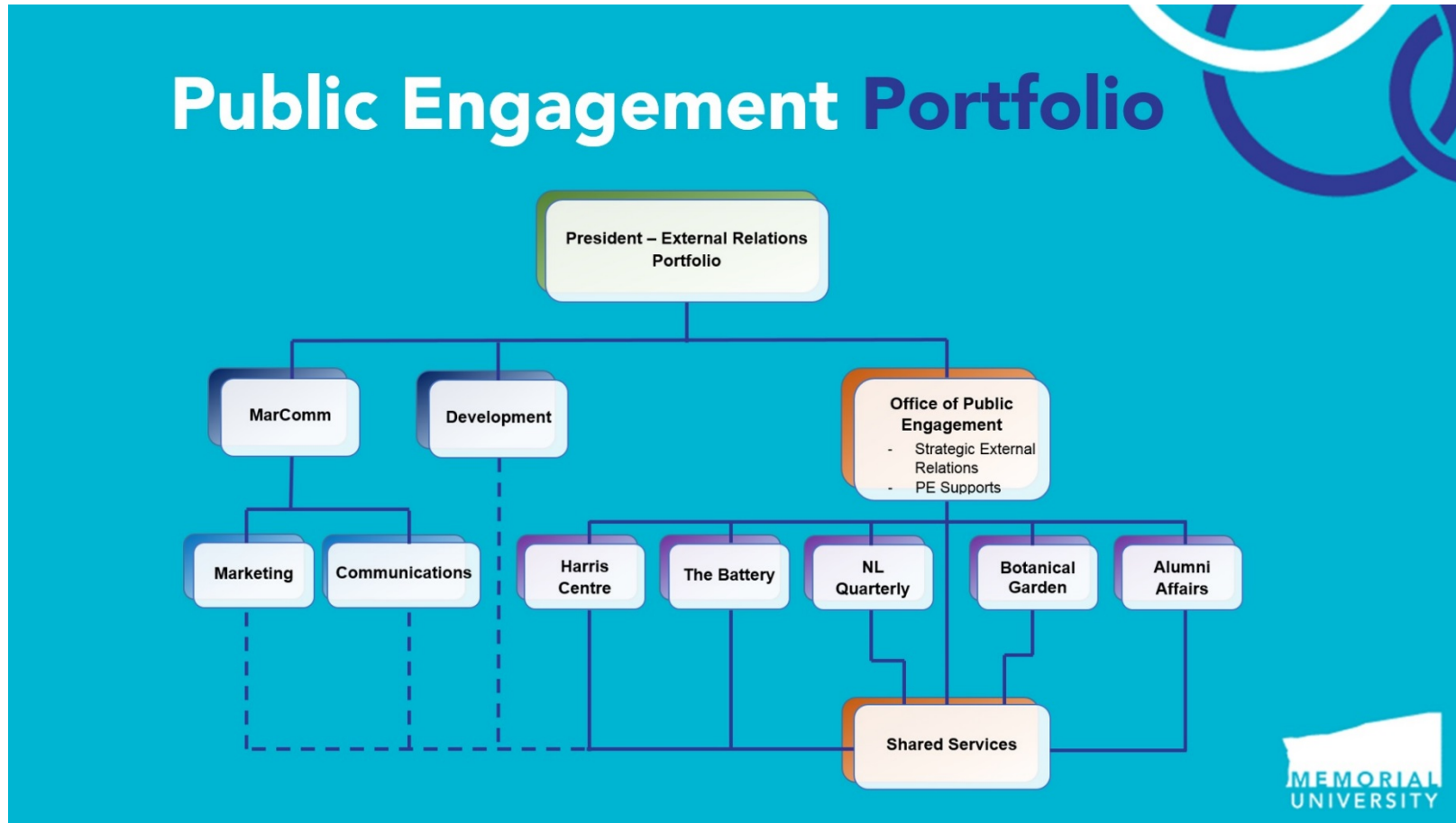
Memorial's External Relations Portfolio

- Public Engagement
- Development (formerly Alumni Affairs and Development)
- Marketing and Communications

External Relations (cont'd)

- Alumni Affairs moves into Public Engagement
- Rationale for change
 - Deeper/singular focus on Development
 - Enhance alumni PE opportunities
 - Contribute to NL and beyond
 - Connect to students, faculty, and staff
 - Explore ways to maximize alumni role in Memorial fulfilling its special obligation to the people of the province
 - Improve operational synergies and efficiencies

External Relations (cont'd)



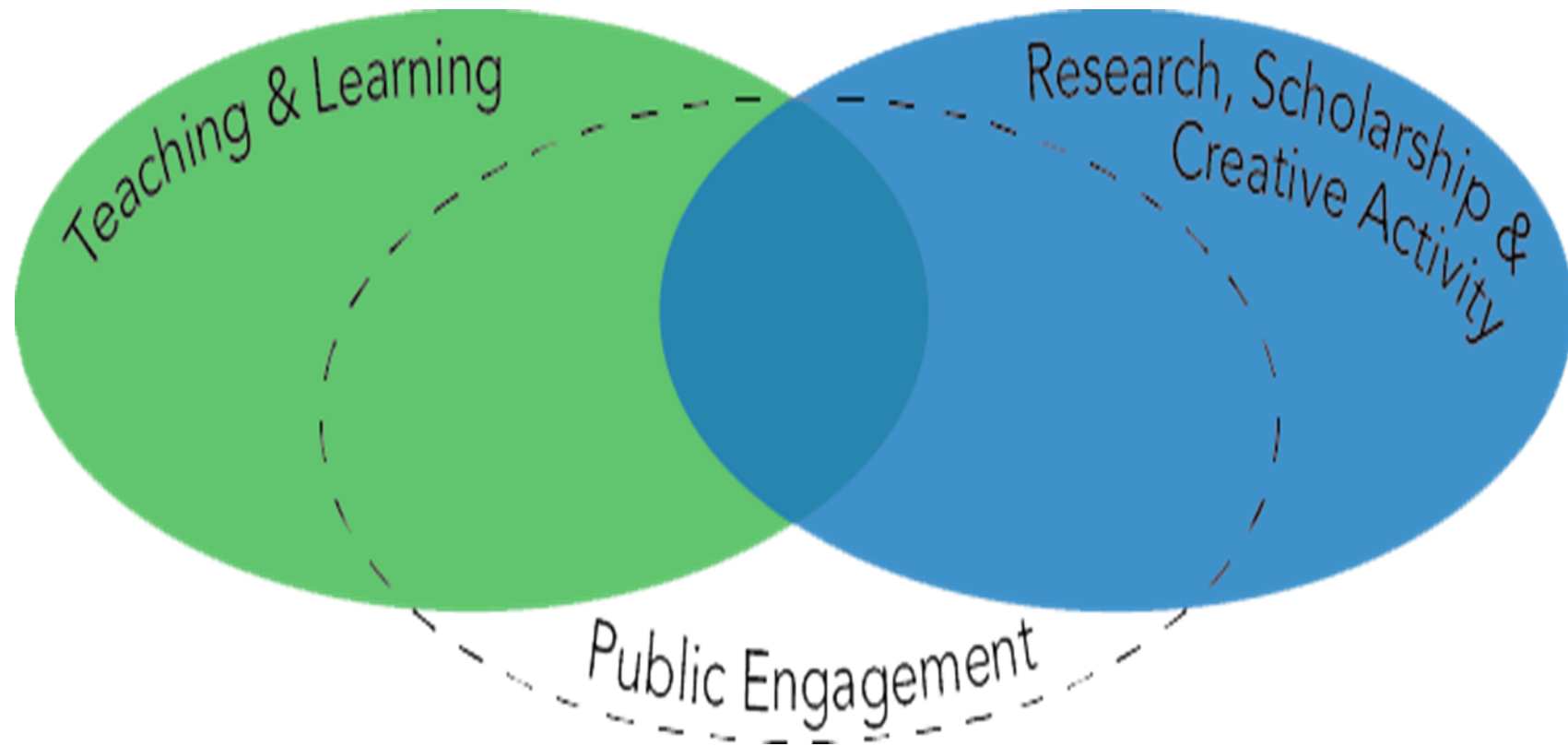
What is “Public Engagement” at Memorial?

- ...encompasses collaborations between people and groups within Memorial and people and groups external to the University (i.e., the ‘public’) that **further Memorial’s mission**.
- Drawing on the knowledge and resources brought by all involved, public engagement involves **mutual respect, mutual contributions and mutual benefits** for all participants.

Memorial's Mission

- Memorial University is an inclusive community dedicated to innovation and excellence in teaching and learning, research, scholarship, creative activity, service and **public engagement**.
- Memorial welcomes and supports students and scholars from all over the world and contributes knowledge and expertise locally, nationally, and internationally.

Memorial's Academic Mission



Memorial's Frameworks

- Teaching and Learning (2011)
- Strategic Research (2011)
- Public Engagement (2012)

Why do universities have Alumni units?

- Strategic support for Development
- Facilitate representation for university governance
- Connect students to the broader community (e.g. internships, mentorships)
- Maintain, support, and grow the institution's brand/reputation by creating ambassadors

Why do universities have Alumni units? (cont'd)

- Connect alumni to the institution to broker the gift of time and talent (i.e. alumni skills and expertise) in support of institution activities (i.e. student recruitment, co-op education, volunteerism, etc.)
- Generate revenue through Affinity programs
- Create a sense of community in support of the university

What is “Alumni Affairs” at Memorial?

Until current change:

“The Office of Alumni Affairs and Development exists to foster relationships between and among alumni, between alumni and the University, and to encourage giving in support of Memorial’s strategic priorities – which include our students, faculty and infrastructure. Our team works to develop services and benefits, manage events, bring you news about other alumni and the university, and create opportunities for alumni and friends of the University to give back to Memorial.”

(From: <http://www.mun.ca/alumni/about/>)

What is Alumni Affairs? (cont'd)

A working definition of alumni engagement:

“Alumni engagement means activities and experiences designed to identify, cultivate, steward, solicit, and manage gifts of time, talent, and treasure from former students and graduates of a given institution or enterprise in service to the needs of both alumni and alma mater.”

<https://alumniframework.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/toward-a-definition-and-taxonomy-for-alumni-engagement-v1.pdf>

Current core activities

- “Friend-raising”
 - Organizing and hosting programs and events in NL, the rest of Canada, and beyond
- Providing services and benefits to Alumni Association members
 - Insurance, credit card, on-campus benefits, retail discounts, etc.
- Running election for Alumni seats on Board of Regents

Current core activities (cont'd)

- Administering Alumni Tribute Awards
- Organizing pan-university reunions, and establishing and supporting academic reunions
- Maintaining connections with alumni through communications such as Luminus, email, newsletters, and social media

Mini SWOT

Strengths

- Staff are well-connected with powerful networks
- Avenue for alumni to stay connected and develop new connections with each other and the university
- Bridge for alumni body globally
- Clear lines of communications both print and digital
- Well-developed programs with deep history
- Strongly engaged volunteers

Mini SWOT (cont'd)

Weaknesses

- Alumni Relations fairly new to MUN
- Connections based on individual relationships
- Centralized programs with few linking academic positions
- Inconsistent understanding of and support from academic units
- Decreasing academic budgets leaves Alumni Relations vulnerable
- Lack of student, faculty, staff engagement with alumni
- Only institution in NL leads to low 'school spirit'
- Most post-secondary alumni in NL are MUN grads, therefore engagement in NL is difficult

Mini SWOT (cont'd)

Opportunities

- Engage alumni with the university in new and exciting ways (connecting with the academy, in-kind contributions/programs)
- Enhance university governance
- Create more affiliations
- Strengthen capacity for positive change for members and the university
- Be on the forefront of alumni engagement
- Upcoming fundraising campaign

Mini SWOT (cont'd)

Threats

- Competition for resources (time and money)
- Current economic climate leading to decreased sponsorship support, resulting in decreased AR budgets
- Lack of understanding of university as a not-for-profit organization

Memorial University's Board Review

A special inquiry into Memorial University's Board governance practices and procedures, The Lewis Report, recommended:

1. Changes to the rhythm for appointing and electing Regents for better balance of incoming and incumbent members to ensure integrity in the governance with knowledge transfer and continuity
2. Hold elections every year or two years, staggered to address loss of continuity
3. Alumni election rules should be reviewed by the Executive and/or Governance Committee. The Board may wish to consider establishing some desirable skills for elected Regents in relation to the skills matrix and the specific needs of the Board. The call for nominations should include a statement about equality and diversity

Emerging opportunities & Future directions

Creation of Alumni Board

All graduates are members of Alumni Association (barring elective opt-out).

A new Alumni Board could potentially:

- Oversee matters of the Association
- Advance continuity of Alumni representatives on the Board of Regents, as suggested in Lewis Report
- Manage elections for the Advisory Board members and appointments to university governing bodies through a nominations committee
- Identify and respond to needs of the university and the province

Emerging opportunities (cont'd)

Lessons from elsewhere

- Deepen engagement through enhanced programming
- Help increase board diversity
- Deepen integration with other aspects of university business for unified Alumni strength and presence (e.g. co-op, mentoring, career, etc.)
- Reflect online sense of cohesion, added benefits (e.g. members only access)
- Deepen academic-based and student engagement
- Contribute to university governance

Additional opportunities (cont'd)

Connections with other elements of the External Relations Portfolio:

- Office of Development
- Marketing and Communications

Additional opportunities (cont'd)

Connections with other elements of PE Portfolio:

- Battery facility as PE/innovation platform
- Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development
 - Yaffle
- Strategic Government Relations
- Botanical Garden
- Newfoundland Quarterly

Additional opportunities (cont'd)

Enhance connections with other MUN units:

- The academy to support research, and teaching and learning
- Communications and publications (Luminus, Gazette, etc.)
- Other administrative units

Process

- Assessment – Where are we now? (Summer and early Fall 2017)
- Development of Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, Objectives (ongoing)
- Strategy Development (Fall 2017)
- Planning (Fall 2017)
- Documentation (ongoing)
- Approval of Draft Plan (Nov 2017)
- Communication and Implementation (Dec 2017 onward)

Consultation Stakeholders

- Steering Committee
- Alumni Affairs Staff
- Internal Working Group (faculty, staff, students)
- External Advisory Group (local)
- External Advisory Group (away)
- All alumni
 - Focus groups: Ottawa, Toronto, Halifax
 - Open sessions: St. John's, Corner Brook
 - Survey

Questions for discussion

- How can alumni engage with the university in new ways?
- What current activities should continue? Change? End?
- What role should alumni play in university governance?
- How should they be selected/elected to do so?
- What other emerging opportunities exist?