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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

I am pleased to share with you the Faculty of Education’s new strategic plan “Strength Through Collaboration 2015-2020.”

This title was not selected by chance, and after considerable reflection, I am certain there is no better way of describing our role in the university, the province, and indeed the country. Our mission statement asserts that we are to “improve the human condition through education.” Our faculty and staff are committed to this mission in their teaching, actively and continuously modeling exemplary teaching strategies for their undergraduate and graduate students. While our graduate students are the leaders and motivators of today, our undergraduate students are the motivators of tomorrow. All are earnestly engaged in research endeavours to strengthen theory and practice, by defining best practices, and contributing important new scholarship to our field of study. At the same time, our scope of activities extends beyond our Faculty, bringing insights on effective and efficient teaching and learning, strengthening the educational outcomes of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and indeed Canada and the world.

Throughout my career, I have worked at four universities across Canada. Memorial University’s strong sense of place, community, purpose, and endless possibilities has no parallel. Our faculty also gives equal prominence to teaching, research, and community activities. I am so pleased to call the Faculty of Education and Memorial University of Newfoundland my home.

Our Faculty and the university have a number of strategic planning documents which have been recently complemented by our academic program review (2014). As such, this document is a singular planning document that includes ongoing elements of our previous plan, key recommendations from our academic program review, pending measures on human resource needs within the Faculty, and new goals and directions. It is time for a new five-year, more comprehensive strategic plan, a capstone document. In 2021 our Faculty will celebrate its 100th anniversary serving our province and this document will get us there.

I look forward to reporting to you on each of our seven priorities over the coming years.

Sincerely,

Kirk Anderson, PhD
Dean
ABOUT MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY’S FACULTY OF EDUCATION

As a Faculty of Education we know that our role, while rooted in teaching, extends into many other areas of education. We know that excellent educators are catalysts for a better future: for their students, for their parents/guardians and for their communities. That is why our admissions process attracts students with a genuine passion for learning. We then empower these students with remarkable resources: highly respected and knowledgeable faculty, evidence-based resources, and other students who share this passion. We also seek to model, implement and indeed shape 21st century teaching strategies, providing leading-edge research opportunities to foster pedagogy in a way that will allow our students to excel in diverse classrooms within the province and beyond. More than 29,000 learners to complete their programs – 23,500 at the bachelor’s level and 4,500 at the graduate level.

Today, there are more Memorial University graduates from the Faculty of Education than any other Faculty on campus. Our graduates are hired by every school across our province to unleash their students’ creativity, foster a dynamic, interactive and inclusive learning environment and, perhaps most importantly, to believe in the full potential of every learner. Our graduates continue to be ambassadors for Memorial University and for the benefits of education, leaders within their communities and advocates for personal and community development.

Reaching Towards a Century of Excellence

The origins of our Faculty trace back to nearly a century ago, when the Dominion of Newfoundland opened its first Normal School in 1921. It has grown and evolved over the years, becoming the Department of Teacher Training of Memorial University College in 1935 and the Faculty of Education of Memorial University of Newfoundland in 1949.

The first students to graduate from Memorial University’s Bachelor of Arts in Education program did so in 1950. Our growth continued with the launch of our Bachelor of Education program in 1965, our Masters of Education degree program in 1968 and our Doctor of Philosophy in Education program in 2004. Since the opening of our university, our Education Faculty has supported

Increasing Accessibility to Teacher Education

The Faculty of Education has long been recognized as an early innovator in making education accessible by offering programs beyond the St. John’s campus. We have become a leader in distance education and blended program delivery, and we continue to support our role as a multi-campus faculty by hosting programs and faculty members in St. John’s, Corner Brook, Labrador and Harlow (United Kingdom).

At Memorial University’s Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook, students can complete an undergraduate degree in primary and elementary teaching. We also have two graduate cohorts in Western Newfoundland and are seeking to form another one in Labrador. The Faculty of Education and the Labrador Institute are also hoping to launch
a Labrador-based cohort for the Masters in Education program. This would be the first time in history that an Aboriginal graduate program in education will be delivered on-site in Labrador for the benefit of teachers and communities.

In partnership with Aboriginal communities, the Faculty will explore new options for advancing education programming and delivery. For example, in partnership with the Nunatsiavut Government and the Labrador Institute, the Faculty will be offering a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) degree with an Inuktitut language component, and coastal community practicums, supported by a recently completed First Year Success component to Nunatsiavut beneficiaries. Other mutually exciting partnerships with other groups in the province are also being explored.

Today and Tomorrow: Initial and Continuing Education
The classroom, just like the wider world, is continuously changing, and our faculty members constantly use their skills to adapt and strengthen our teacher preparation and professional learning offerings to meet the current and relevant methods of educating students in an inclusive and socially just environment. Our faculty members have hundreds of years of lived experience in the classroom, providing our students with a steady blend of theory and practice. The Faculty has worked closely to support the development of our students: roughly 600 mostly full-time students are enrolled at the undergraduate level and 900 mostly part-time students are registered in a graduate program each year.1

The study of education is about helping students connect to the world outside the classroom, using pedagogy to transform information into knowledge and wisdom, facilitate the learning process, and help students’ curiosity develop into lifelong learning. Students who enrol in one of our undergraduate programs will learn how to apply these newly acquired skills at the primary, elementary, intermediate, secondary or post-secondary level, or in specialized music, technology or adult education classrooms. Many of our graduates return to further enhance their skills, as they aim to become administrative leaders, content or counselling experts, information technology specialists or post-secondary educators.

For many education students, the dream of influencing a new generation of learners is the passion that motivates their studies. Many will find employment within schools across the province, which currently hire more than 8,000 teachers and administrators to educate our youth, the vast majority of whom are graduates of our university. For others, an education degree is the most portable of degrees, as teaching and pedagogical skills can be transferred to many occupations, such as, but not limited to: human resources, computer programming and instructional design, popular and technical writing, and team and project management.

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1 Enrolment numbers are as of end of registration period in the Fall semester and include all campuses and programs.
Supporting University Priorities
The Faculty of Education has supported the university’s articulation of strategic frameworks in support of core objectives: improving teaching and learning, furthering research activities, bolstering enrolment, and increasing internationalization. As such, delivering on the priorities and goals of each of these frameworks is a shared responsibility between the university and its faculties, and the Faculty of Education is committed to supporting these initiatives.

A) Teaching and Learning
The Faculty of Education played an integral part in the development of the university’s Teaching and Learning Framework, a document that reflects best practices in adult education, student engagement and student retention. These tried and tested strategies, applied regularly within the Faculty of Education, are being implemented across the university, within its faculties and its campuses. These strategies aim to: provide resources to support educators with instructional design and innovative delivery support that reflect a variety of learning preferences; better integrate and coordinate proactive, rather than reactive, student support services; and offer orientation for all students and new faculty and staff members. These inclusive strategies will strengthen the ability of our university to reach higher, and to meet the increasingly diverse needs of our domestic and international students.

B) Strategic Research Framework
Memorial University has developed a comprehensive framework with input from across the university to identify strategic research themes that reflect provincial, community and industry priorities. Many of these strategic themes focus on the human dimension, a key outcome of education and educational studies. The Strategic Research Framework aims to foster an environment to attract and retain new researchers and to create, share and apply research with community partners and collaborators, provincially and beyond.
Our Faculty is actively engaged in many strategic research themes, notably Aboriginal Peoples, Arctic and Northern Regions, Governance and Public Policy, Information and Communication Technology, and Social Justice, and works extensively with community partners throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Our faculty members’ research projects touch on every aspect of teaching and learning, administration, technology, social justice and more. Through our continuous focus on research and on improving teaching through research, the Faculty of Education has become one of the most research-intensive units at Memorial University.

C) Enrolment
Memorial University is dedicated not simply to adding additional students but to offering an exceptional student experience and improving academic outcomes as the core means of reaching enrolment targets. As a Faculty dedicated to strong pedagogy and improving academic outcomes, our enrolment planning must reflect not only our philosophy but also our desire for every student at Memorial University to reach his or her full potential. We aim to support the university in meeting its objectives.

As such, the Faculty of Education needs to continue adjusting its program admissions to support graduates in applying their skills to a diverse range of employment opportunities. While the demand for our Bachelor of Education program will always remain strong, our enrolment growth will be strongest at the graduate level, with teachers continuing their professional learning to further their skills and competencies. At present, our graduate students represent roughly 66% of our total enrolment, a higher percentage than any other faculty on campus.

D) Internationalization
Memorial University is a world-class post-secondary institution, attracting students from around the globe to our campuses. For many years, the Faculty of Education has welcomed both domestic and international students and faculty, thus fostering an environment in which differences in culture, language and education systems can be learned and appreciated. We will continue to focus on the complete scope of internationalization activities as a catalyst to think and act globally. Our historical ties to regions like Africa and Asia and to unique partnerships in Antigua are being expanded to new horizons for the Faculty in Norway, Ireland, Trinidad and Tobago, China and others. Therefore, promising international collaborations are contributing to a new international strategy for the Faculty.

Concluding Words
Our past successes have led to innovation, and the Faculty of Education remains committed to aiming even higher in preparing our students for the evolving 21st century realities of inclusive classroom teaching, in supporting the diverse needs of students, in strengthening their educational outcomes, and in collaborating with communities to better serve their educational needs through program delivery and research. Our strengths as a Faculty can only be fully realized through collaboration. This strategic plan will help us take the next significant steps on our journey. We hope that you will collaborate with us to make our priorities and goals a reality.
OUR MISSION

We are committed to improving the human condition through education. The Faculty of Education is dedicated to leadership, and exemplary practice in teaching and learning, research and scholarship, and public engagement in local and global communities.

OUR VISION

The Faculty of Education aspires to be a dynamic and caring teaching and learning community. Graduates of the Faculty will be recognized as exceptional educators who lead with integrity, passion and purpose. Our graduates will be valued for their skills, knowledge, creativity, commitment to social justice, and overall professional competence in this province and beyond. Faculty and student research and scholarship will be valued locally, nationally and internationally for their quality and relevance. We will engage in dialogue with local and global communities as we work together to shape ethical educational practices and public policy.
OUR VALUES

Service to our province
We are proud to serve the province of Newfoundland and Labrador by graduating educational leaders who can meet the needs of our communities’ diverse classrooms.

Service to the public
We actively support communities by fostering new partnerships for collaborative research and academic program development. Our Faculty places great importance on teaching, research and community engagement. We strive for excellence and innovation.

Collaboration
We are committed to true and meaningful collaboration, and we recognize and value the expertise of our partners.

Collegiality
We strive to create a sense of belonging in which faculty, staff and students feel engaged, included, encouraged and supported in a safe and respectful environment.

Learner-centered teaching
Our supportive and facilitative teaching strategies focus on the students, promoting experiential learning, encouraging them to actively participate in their learning process, accepting responsibility for their own learning, and supporting them to reach their full potential.

Global Citizenry
We strive to graduate adaptable and flexible students who have a commitment to social justice, ethical standards, an appreciation of cultural diversity and an understanding of global issues.

Diversity
We respect and value differences, embracing diversity in our faculty, staff and students, and integrate Aboriginal worldviews in our curricula.

Integrity and ethics
We act ethically, with complete honesty and integrity in our work as teachers, researchers, mentors, and collaborators.
OUR PRIORITIES AND GOALS

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING
   Ensure progressive, inspiring learner-centered and social justice-oriented teaching as a means of supporting vibrant, contextually rich and diversified learning experiences in conventional face-to-face as well as technology-enabled learning communities.

2. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE
   Foster a culture and create greater opportunities for collaborative, innovative, strategic and curiosity-driven research for both faculty and students to impact theory, policy, practice and pedagogy that make a difference in the world, locally and globally.

3. OUTSTANDING STUDENT EXPERIENCE
   Provide students with collaborative, experiential and diverse learning experiences that foster creative, critical, reflective and self-initiated thinkers, and develop leaders in 21st century teaching and learning strategies.

4. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
   Forge and support strategic engagement at home and abroad by partnering with community stakeholders in research, learning and public discussions to strengthen educational outcomes and to generate new ideas and approaches.
5. **ABORIGINAL COLLABORATION**
Promote respect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples; enable learning from each other by engaging, collaborating and partnering with Aboriginal communities in innovative and culturally relevant programs and research where Aboriginal worldviews and knowledge are included, respected and promoted.

6. **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**
Strengthen relationships among our communities of practice – the faculty and staff, current students, alumni, educators and ministry officials – to ensure a collaborative, dynamic, vibrant, supportive, culturally respectful and progressive educational environment.

7. **ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE**
Ensure that the Faculty of Education remains an employer of choice by ensuring effective structures and strong organizational processes, by fostering collaboration, open communication and by creating a respectful and caring workplace.
1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

Ensure progressive, inspiring learner-centered and social justice-oriented teaching as a means of supporting vibrant, contextually rich and diversified learning experiences in conventional face-to-face as well as technology-enabled learning communities.
**ACTIONS:**

1.1 Review academic programs to ensure continued content relevance: a balance of foundational, theoretical, critical, creative and reflective components; academic rigour; evolving learner needs; technology inclusion; experiential learning application; and principles of design.

1.2 Engage with community members to lead professional development opportunities to embrace creative and innovative approaches to teaching and learning in urban, rural and Northern contexts, and encourage collaborative planning and reflection within the Faculty regarding inquiry-based pedagogies.

1.3 Explore emerging issues and needs within our community of practice as a means of determining how best to serve the diverse needs of groups, including launching new programs, new certificates and new learning opportunities in rural, urban and Northern contexts.

1.4 Strengthen our role as a leader in distance education and learning technologies to:

   a. further integrate innovative technology within the curricula;
   
   b. enhance blended delivery for both courses and programs as a means of increasing accessibility and flexibility; and
   
   c. ensure access to and in-services for new resources and technologies which support innovative teaching and learning environments.

1.5 Continue to create designated teaching and learning spaces that are designed and equipped to model best and innovative practices.
2. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

Foster a culture and create greater opportunities for collaborative, innovative, strategic and curiosity-driven research for both faculty and students to impact theory, policy, practice and pedagogy that make a difference in the world, locally and globally.
2.1  Create a process to document, value and celebrate diverse research activities.

2.2  Organize regular public engagement and scholarly forums to share and promote faculty and student-led research projects as a means of supporting knowledge mobilization as well as forging new community and research partnerships.

2.3  Identify new opportunities to strengthen research activities within the Faculty of Education in support of local, national and international research initiatives.

2.4  Support faculty, staff, and students, both undergraduate and graduate, in initiating new research projects.

2.5  Identify opportunities for new research chairs within the Faculty.

2.6  Secure additional staff members within the Faculty of Education to support research, including seeking non-traditional funding sources, writing grants and supporting research mobilization.
3. OUTSTANDING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Provide students with collaborative, experiential and diverse learning experiences that foster creative, critical, reflective and self-initiated thinkers, and develop leaders in 21st century teaching and learning strategies.
ACTIONS:

3.1 Foster meaningful, relevant, engaged learning cultures that are co-created with students, allowing all learners to feel valued and to thrive. Engage students regarding their strengths, capacities and multiple facets of self to reach their full potential and goals.

3.2 Improve access to and success in the Faculty of Education for underrepresented groups.

3.3 Create inviting common spaces for graduate students to collaborate with each other and with faculty.

3.4 Expand the teaching and learning commons (TLC) concept to classrooms, both with in-person and blended learning models.
4. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
Forge and support strategic engagement at home and abroad by partnering with community stakeholders in research, learning and public discussions to strengthen educational outcomes and to generate new ideas and approaches.
ACTIONS:

4.1 Establish ongoing partnerships that value community expertise, recognizing its significance to the identification of community strengths and challenges and to build respectful, mutual collaborations so that our communities thrive.

4.2 Strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration with other units within Memorial University to establish new partnerships and new joint initiatives.

4.3 Share the expertise of the Faculty of Education on important social issues, from poverty to prosperity, from early childhood to adult literacy, by working with government, educational partners, community groups and interested stakeholders to address current and emerging issues.

4.4 Develop partnerships with other Faculties of Education throughout Canada and internationally to create opportunities for a variety of exchanges, such as visiting scholars, faculty exchanges, internships and graduate student supervision.

4.5 Establish and enhance partnerships among the Faculty of Education and international communities that recognize expertise and benefit both faculty and students through an appreciation of diverse cultures and education systems, with the goal of preparing high-quality educators within other countries.
5. ABORIGINAL COLLABORATION

Promote respect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples; enable learning from each other by engaging, collaborating and partnering with Aboriginal communities in innovative and culturally relevant programs and research where Aboriginal worldviews and knowledge are included, respected and promoted.
ACTIONS:

5.1 Engage and partner with Aboriginal communities to ensure that the Faculty’s teacher education programs are culturally relevant, accessible, flexible and meaningful for Aboriginal learners and for educators who live and teach in Aboriginal communities.

5.2 Provide opportunities for non-Aboriginal learners and educators to foster an understanding of and appreciation for Aboriginal worldviews and support the inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives in our curricula.

5.3 Collaborate with Aboriginal community elders, governing bodies, community members, parents, and experts to develop a holistic learning framework and curricula that is culturally relevant and focused on the learning potential of all students.

5.4 Engage in collaborative research and scholarship with Aboriginal communities to inform policies and programs.

5.5 Explore new ways to include Aboriginal perspectives on learning and living in faculty programs and research.
6. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Strengthen relationships among our communities of practice – the faculty and staff, current students, alumni, educators and ministry officials – to ensure a collaborative, dynamic, vibrant, supportive, culturally respectful and progressive educational environment.
ACTIONS:

6.1 Ensure the development of a process whereby stakeholders can engage in discussion relating to curricula content and professional development needs.

6.2 Strengthen relationships with provincial partners to foster collaborative planning and build capacity in addressing professional learning needs of educators in both pre-service and in-service.

6.3 Strengthen relationships, communications and connectivity within the Faculty of Education (faculty, staff, students and alumni) to grow a dynamic and vibrant professional community.

6.4 Enhance relationships with alumni to support their ongoing professional learning, solicit their support in participating in research activities, becoming involved in student mentoring, and engaging in local and provincial professional learning communities.

6.5 Develop a mechanism to systematically communicate with stakeholders throughout the province as a means of continuously enhancing the design of teacher education programs.
7. ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Ensure that the Faculty of Education remains an employer of choice by ensuring effective structures and strong organizational processes, by fostering collaboration, open communication and by creating a respectful and caring workplace.
**ACTIONS:**

7.1 Review organizational structures, administrative positions and processes to ensure that the Faculty of Education can effectively and efficiently respond to its values, priorities, goals and actions.

7.2 Develop a sustainable human resources plan to attract new and retain existing faculty and staff who can continue to deliver our vibrant academic programs.

7.3 Work with the university’s senior administrators to increase the number of long-term and tenure-track faculty positions (converting term positions and consolidating sessional and contractual positions to permanent or multi-year positions) with the goal of increasing the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty members.

7.4 Increase support to sessional and contractual instructors by creating opportunities to engage with full-time faculty by establishing long-term contracts, by improving internal communications and by identifying space and resources on campus.

7.5 Develop a strategy for faculty and staff to ensure professional development plans support the Faculty’s Strategic Plan.