

ARTS 20/20

PASSED BY ARTS FACULTY COUNCIL | MAY 14, 2014

i. Mission Statement

The Faculty of Arts offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs that examine cultural processes, ethical and philosophical thought, prehistory and history, human interactions and the social and natural forces that constantly transform our society. Students gain the critical-thinking, research, analytical and communication skills needed to engage with a complex and changing world — leading to exciting, productive careers. Members of our faculty make discoveries and work with communities to foster our understanding of the past, present and future. Our alumni work in a wide variety of fields not only in Newfoundland and Labrador, but also in Canada and the rest of the world. They are in demand because they have learned to define and analyze complex problems, to think creatively, communicate well with others and to help raise awareness of significant issues relevant to the well-being of people.

ii. Vision Statement

Attuned to the values underlying Memorial University's goals,¹ the Faculty of Arts embodies a knowledge community comprised of students, faculty and staff dedicated to the development of innovative, creative and reflective understandings of the world. We aim to maintain our significant place in the university, educating students from Faculties across the campus. Through our teaching, scholarship and public engagement, we will advance critical-thinking skills, promote inter-disciplinary and disciplinary conversations, develop deep insight, and endorse informed and ethical decision-making about the challenges facing communities in the past, present and future.

iii. Action Items

ACTION 1: In 2020 we will be known for our excellence in teaching, research and public engagement in the areas of:

a) Text, Language and Cultural Identities: The written and spoken word reflects human innovation, creativity and identity, often embracing issues of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class, age and religious affiliation. This scholarship cluster includes research-creation activities such as creative writing; translation work; text interpretation; capturing oral languages into a written form; first- and second-language acquisition; the social and political use of language and texts; historical research on identities; and the changes effected by digital communication. This research — strengthened by our Arts archives — helps to locate who we have been, who we are, and what we might be in the future.

¹ See Appendix

b) Sustainable Communities — Past, Present and Future: This scholarship cluster interrogates what communities are, why and how they are created and the barriers to their sustainability. It encompasses the diversity of issues that shape how and if communities survive — including displacement, colonialism, immigration, economic development, aging, gender, and overall wellbeing. This cluster also retains a focus on the features that come to define communities, such as rural, urban, coastal, aboriginal, national and/or international. It raises questions as to the sustainability and dynamics of place, and the differential impacts of global changes on demography, the environment, the workplace and ways of life in both short- and long-term time scales. What have been the key threats to and opportunities for community development and how are viable communities and cultures to be maintained or created today and in the future?

c) Governance, Ethics, Rights and Security: Arts scholarship must be able to address the political, economic and legal changes occurring in the world today and focus on issues often not dealt with in the dominant media, such as inequality, racism and social injustice. What is ethical, accountable and fair governance and what are the circumstances or mechanisms that prevent it? What should be done when human rights and security or sustainability collide? How should we evaluate democracy in the 21st century?

d) The North Atlantic in Global Perspective: This research cluster is rooted in our current multi-disciplinary research strength in Newfoundland and Labrador Studies, a research theme that will continue, but with a broadened lens to encompass new connections and interactions. This research cluster will also include our growing research interest in human interactions with oceans and both renewable and non-renewable resources, and how they shape our lives. The North Atlantic research cluster is supported by the new mandate of ISER Books to focus on publishing research on the North Atlantic region.

ACTION 2: Drawing on MUN's Teaching and Learning Framework, we aim to develop curricula and pedagogies that will enable us to graduate Arts students who: are knowledgeable and competent in their field(s); are critical and practical thinkers; are responsible citizens; can demonstrate ethical, moral and intellectual integrity; can appreciate diversity and promote equity; are creative and responsive problem solvers; have enthusiasm for learning; are supportive collaborators with particular regard to diversity of interests; and can communicate effectively with others.

ACTION 3: Develop a *Faculty of Arts Student Recruitment and Retention Plan* to attract excellent students to the Arts, and to ensure the academic success of all. In addition to other sub-actions, this plan will include:

- working with existing facilities to develop guidelines and faculty support to ensure the success of international students and students with disabilities
- identifying ways to address the resourcing and overview of interdisciplinary programs, graduate and undergraduate
- creating a Faculty of Arts Graduate Council that will, among other things, help to develop the plan for graduate student enrolment and retention
- setting up a mechanism to hear student feedback on an annual basis

ACTION 4: Devise a *Faculty of Arts Research Plan* to strengthen scholarship and creative activity in the Faculty of Arts. In addition to other sub-actions, this plan will include:

- pooling resources and ideas to develop more opportunities for research exchange and interaction, including Chairs, faculty and students
- developing models for working toward a 4-course load with the aim of increasing research and creative activity
- annually profiling departmental research strengths using the success indicators in the report *Capturing Research Success in the Arts*
- continuing financial support of our grantscrafter; the Branch Research Data Centre; SafetyNet; the Digital Learning Centre; ISER publications and research grants; Maritime History Archive; MUNFLA; ELRC; ESL; the NL Heritage Website; Sparks; the Galbraith and George Story lectures; Writer-in-Residence; the Irish scholar exchange, and other select Arts initiatives (budget permitting)

ACTION 5: Create an Arts Staff Council to encourage communication of non-academic staff with faculty and the office of the Dean.

ACTION 6: Develop a communication plan to highlight the strategic place of Arts in the university, to generate awareness and interest in Arts scholarship and to raise the profile of our graduate and undergraduate programs.

ACTION 7: Create an alumni advisory group to develop a proposal for strengthening relations with Arts alumni and donors.

ACTION 8: Renew our infrastructural base by:

- finding a new home for and effective management of our Arts archives
- supporting a renovated Reid Theater
- renovating and expanding into new sections of the old Science building with the construction of the new Science building
- finding appropriate research spaces for faculty and students
- creating common social spaces to provide an intellectually rich environment for faculty, students and staff
- developing a plan to physically unite Arts instructors and departments
- working toward an asbestos-free and mold-free university.

ACTION 9: This document will be annually reviewed by Faculty Council, and revised if needed.



Faculty of Arts

Appendix: Values (drawn from Memorial's 2013 Mission and Vision)

- Excellence:* Encouraging and promoting excellence through innovation and creativity, rigour and pragmatism.
- Integrity:* Being honest and ethical in all interactions, maintaining the highest ethical standards in teaching, research, public engagement and service.
- Collegiality:* Engaging others with respect, openness and trust in pursuit of a common purpose, having regard for individuals, ideals and the institution as a whole.
- Inclusiveness and diversity:* Embracing and acting on responsibility to guarantee diversity and equity.
- Responsiveness:* Being receptive to individuals and communities.
- Accountability:* Accepting responsibility for achievement of common goals and objectives.
- Freedom and Discovery:* Supporting the freedom to pursue knowledge that is based on individual and collective intelligence, curiosity, ingenuity and creativity.
- Recognition:* Acknowledging, tangibly, all aspects of university enterprise including teaching and learning, research, scholarship, creative activity and public engagement.
- Responsibility to place:* Valuing and fulfilling the special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador by supporting and building capacity for excellence that: addresses needs and opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador; engages the university community on matters of national and international significance; produces and delivers academic programs of national and international calibre; and recognizes the dynamic opportunities presented by a multi-campus institution.
- Responsibility to learners:* Recognizing students as a first priority and providing the environment and support to ensure their academic and personal success.
- Interdisciplinary collaboration:* Supporting overarching themes in all pursuits that cut across academic units and address significant opportunities and challenges for which Memorial is particularly well positioned to build nationally and internationally recognized capacity.
- Sustainability:* Acting in a manner that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable in administration, academic and research programs.