



Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

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To: ASMs, Administrative Staff, and Heads in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
From: Jennifer S. Simpson, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Re: Faculty Complement Planning
Date: 31 March 2020

The below addresses faculty complement planning in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Complement planning refers to the process by which Faculties at MUN identify needs and then make requests to the Provost's Office for permanent faculty positions. Generally, the Provost's Office annually allocates a certain number of positions to each Faculty. Following this allocation, ASMs and heads discuss the possibility of submitting a request for a position. HSS requests from departments are typically reviewed annually at a heads meeting, at which heads discuss and rank the requests. Per the number of positions allocated to HSS, I then forward specific requests to the Provost's Office, based on the discussion and results of the ranking at the Heads meeting as well as attention to the considerations noted below.

The current context for faculty position requests at Memorial University is significantly informed by the reality of budget constraints and reductions. These reductions began impacting possibilities for faculty renewal as early as 2015. It is anticipated that the university will see further budget cuts at least through 2022 and perhaps longer. Likewise, it is increasingly important for faculty position requests to have robust rationales firmly linked to the teaching, research and creative work, and service performed by ASMs. Even as the expectation that retirements will result in 1:1 renewal persists in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, this has in fact not been the case since at least 2014. In sum, in the context of realizing faculty renewal, this Faculty will be well served by linking requests for positions to teaching, research, and creative activity and related needs in and across departments in the Faculty.

Full time faculty members carry out their responsibilities at the university through teaching, research and creative work, and service. They teach courses so that students can make appropriate progress toward completion of their degrees; supervise graduate students; carry out research and creative work that results in contributions to professional, community, and university contexts; and serve in multiple administrative and service roles, ensuring self-governance and democratic decision-making. All of this work has value. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Dean's Office, and within a context of budget constraints and reductions, academic priorities in the areas of teaching and research are the primary consideration driving resource-related decisions.

Strong position requests will be closely aligned with teaching- and research-related needs in departments and in the Faculty as a whole. These requests will ideally ensure that students can make reasonable progress toward degree completion; that curriculum in each department has an appropriate fit with the faculty complement in that department; and that faculty members can conduct research and creative work and offer supervision to graduate students. In some cases, positions might be warranted within one department; in other cases, the Faculty and university are best served by positions that are shared across two (or perhaps three) departments. Likewise, while demonstrating need for faculty renewal has typically been done within departments, it will in some cases make sense to pursue a position across two or more departments.

It is particularly important to keep in mind three priorities as regards to position requests. A brief explanation of each of these priorities follows the below list.

1. Clear need in the department as related to courses and programming, based on rationales that rely on evidence pertaining to majors, graduate students, enrollments, and existing complement; as well as need in regard to strengthening research and creative work.
2. Alignment with the university's strategic priorities.
3. Attentiveness to the university's commitment to stronger representation from underrepresented groups (women, Indigenous and racialized individuals, and individuals with disabilities).

Fit of complement with curriculum, supervision, research/creative work. It is crucial that new faculty positions, whether housed in one department or more than one department, clearly and robustly support existing teaching and research activities in the department. While new faculty positions might ultimately lead to new curricula and areas of research, and possibly new majors and/or graduate students, they must first of all respond to a department's capacity to offer courses required for graduation and graduate supervision and to support faculty member research and creative work.

Additionally, curricular offerings must have an integrated relationship and fit with the current number of faculty complement in each department. This means that ideally, there will be a relationship between a) the number of faculty complement and the range of courses offered, and b) the number of faculty complement, registrations, majors, and number of courses offered in any given term. When considering position requests to forward to the Provost's Office, I review the fit of complement, curriculum, majors, enrollments, and graduate students. Maintaining a fit between faculty complement, registrations, majors, and curriculum need not lead to changes in programming that result in less rigorous or beneficial outcomes for students.

Strategic Priorities. In relation to faculty renewal, university strategic priorities include:

- Indigenization of the academy
- Digitization (materials, archives) etc.
- Superclusters
- CRC synergies
- Research plan strategic themes
- COASTS
- Cross- and multi-discipline potential
- Opportunities for increased collaboration

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The university is increasingly stressing the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion among faculty members and administrative staff. This is also a priority for myself and others in the Dean's Office. Position requests from one or more departments will include a) a statement regarding the value for your department(s) of increasing the representation of underrepresented groups and b) strategies to move toward higher levels of representation from underrepresented groups.

The Dean and others in the Dean's Office are committed to working with heads, ASMs, and administrative staff related to the above, and are glad to be in conversation about these issues. ASMs are welcome to forward questions about the above to their heads, who can forward your concerns onto me. Additionally, Faculty Council meetings are an optimal setting in which to discuss the above issues. Please do not hesitate to communicate specific questions, needs, or concerns regarding faculty complement planning, academic priorities, and attention to equity, diversity, and inclusion to your heads or at Faculty Council.