Women+ in Academia

Building Community and Shaping Change

Friday, October 16th

Core Science Facility, Whale Atrium, and rooms 1309A/1309B

Purpose:

To create a forum for women+ faculty and postdoctoral fellows to discuss challenges across career stages, learn about available supports, build networks and mentorship connections, and identify actionable recommendations to advance women's success at Memorial. This event is centered on the experiences of women in academia and welcomes participation from women, non-binary, and gender-diverse individuals.

Agenda:

8:30 – 9:00 AM

Registration and Networking

Opportunity for informal networking.

9:00 – 9:10 AM

Welcome: Jacqueline Blundell, Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Science

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9:10 – 9:20 AM

Opening Remarks and introduction of keynote: Dr. Janet Morrison, President and Vice-chancellor

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9:20 – 10:15 AM

Keynote Address: *Orienting to academic careers: Finding yourself in the institution*

Keynote Speaker: Aimée Morrison, Associate Professor, English Language and Literature, University of Waterloo https://uwaterloo.ca/english/profiles/aimee-morrison

Dr. Aimée Morrison is an Associate Professor in English at the University of Waterloo, where she specializes in digital media. She teaches courses in visual culture, critical social media and, academic writing. Her research examines social media practices by everyday users as

forms of life writing often turned to social justice, identity, or community goals. Dr. Morrison is a recipient of a Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Fellowship and well established in Canada as a go-to expert on impacts of social media and computer technologies.

10:15 – 10:30 AM

Break

10:30 – 11:45 AM

Panel 1: Career Journeys Across Academic Stages

Theme: Barriers and opportunities throughout the academic lifecycle.

Moderator: Amanda Bittner

Panelists:

- Natalia Ruiz Vargas, Postdoctoral Researcher, Biology
- Ruth Murambadoro – Assistant Professor, Gender Studies
- Jennifer Shea, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine
- Octavia Dobre, Professor, and Canada Research Chair (Tier-1) on Ubiquitous Connectivity, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

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11:45 – 11:50 AM

Introduction to Lunch Activity - Lindsay Cahill, Associate Professor, Chemistry

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11:50 AM – 12:45 PM

Lunch

Lunch Activity:

"Table Topics"

Participants choose tables focused on: (faculty members to act as leaders of table discussion)

- Research funding

- Work-life integration
- Mentorship
- Leadership
- Researchers working in Indigenous communities

12:45 – 12:50 PM

Afternoon Welcome and introduction of 2nd keynote: Jennifer Lokash, Provost and Vice-president (Academic)

12:50 – 1:30 PM

Virtual Keynote Address: *Closing the Gap: Why Women's Health Can't Wait*

Keynote Speaker: Jennifer Gillivan is President and CEO of the IWK Foundation. The Foundation is the primary fundraising and outreach partner of the IWK Health Centre in the East Coast of Canada. Jennifer is a passionate champion for the rights and wellbeing of Children and Women and is Co-Founder and Past Chair of the Board of Directors of Canada's Children's Hospital Foundations (CCHF), one of the largest funders of children's health in Canada. Jennifer has led her team to historic fundraising results and has also led the organization to become a member of The Women's Health Collective. Jennifer is a seasoned executive leader, passionate and motivational speaker and contributor to her community and country. In addition to being appointed to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Advisory Board on Gender and Health, Jennifer has received both regional and national recognition for her work, she was awarded by Waterstone Capital as the "Most Admired CEO in a Social Profit Organization" in Canada. Jennifer was inducted into the Atlantic Business Magazine Business Hall of Fame, and she was recognized as one of the most powerful Atlantic Canadian Businesswomen. Jennifer received the RBC Top 25 Canadian Immigrant award, Halifax Chamber Business Person of the Year and many other national and regional awards. Jennifer is a board member of the Frank H Sobey for Excellence in Business Awards Board of Trustees and is past Co-Chair of the Sobey national mental health partnership, a board member of the Women's Health Collective, and past Chair of Governance & Nominations for the CCHF Board of Directors. Jennifer was appointed in 2016 – 2018 by the Prime Minister of Canada to serve on the Independent Advisory Board for Senate appointments representing Nova Scotia and she has served on many local and national boards over the years.

1:30- 2:15 PM

Women's Health and Wellness in Academia –

Moderator: April Pike, Dean, Nursing

What are the health concerns that we face?

2:15 – 2:30 PM

Break

2:30 – 3:15 PM

Panel 2: Leadership and Administration –

Moderator: Kelly Hawboldt

Panelists:

- Angie Clarke, Acting Registrar and Associate Vice-President (Academic and Student Affairs) at the Marine Institute
- Natasha Hurley, Dean, Humanities and Social Sciences
- Kris Poduska, Professor, Physics and Physical Oceanography and Associate Scientific Director (TCA)
- Kelly Vodden, Professor, School of Science and the Environment
- Amy Warren, Deputy Provost and Dean

3:15 – 4:15 PM

Identifying Barriers and Building Solutions: A Facilitated Hybrid Discussion

Moderator: Sherri Christian, Professor, Department of Human Biosciences

A structured discussion with all participants, using live polling software.

Part 1: Identifying Barriers (20 minutes)

Participants respond anonymously to prompts such as:

- What is the greatest barrier facing women in academia today?

- What are the “systemic barriers” that women face at Memorial?
- What barriers are most significant at Memorial?
- What barriers are unique to women in leadership roles?
- What barriers affect research productivity and career progression?

Part 2: What Supports Matter Most? (20 min)

Participants rank or discuss:

- Mentorship opportunities
- Sponsorship and advocacy
- Leadership training
- Flexible work arrangements
- Research support programs
- Caregiving supports
- Wellness initiatives

Action Priorities for Memorial (20 min)

Participants vote on potential actions.

Examples:

- Formal mentorship network
- Women's leadership development program
- Workshops on promotion and tenure
- Support for caregivers
- Expanded wellness resources
- Sponsorship opportunities for emerging leaders

Closing Remarks and Next Steps (4:15-4:30) – Jacqueline Blundell