

Memorial University

Budget Consultations 2018-19

WHAT WE DID

February 2020

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The Integrated Planning Committee (IPC), established in 2016, is composed of faculty, staff and students and is chaired by the provost and vice-president (academic). The IPC's mandate is to advise the president on Memorial University of Newfoundland (Memorial University)'s budget planning. As part of this process, the committee has committed to gather input from faculty, staff, and students each year to inform the university's budget planning process. For each year, IPC publishes three reports:

- “What We Heard” – a summary of key priorities and issues heard in consultation with the University community.
- “What We Recommend” – a set of budget recommendations to the President, based on the community consultations.
- “What We Did” – an update to the community on initiatives undertaken across the institution that are aligned with the priorities identified in the first two reports.

What We Did

Update on 2018-19 Recommendations

Introduction

In November 2019, the IPC, through the Senior Academic Administrators Group (SAAG), solicited reports from academic and administrative units across Memorial University on initiatives and activities completed in the previous year to address the year's IPC recommendations to the President. Responses were received from deans, directors, faculty, and staff from all campuses across the province.

This report reflects the themes identified in the units' submissions and provides examples of initiatives that illustrate the measures, changes, and plans implemented across the university that support the [2019-20 recommendations](#) report. Given the volume of feedback received during this process, it is not possible to present all initiatives submitted. Rather, the results of a thematic analysis are presented under each primary themes, as noted in the table of contents.

Below are the guiding principles and institutional priorities, followed by a summary of recommendations for 2019-20, and a report on related initiatives.

Guiding Principles

- Protect the quality and integrity of programs
- Maintain Memorial's special obligation to the province
- Maintain academic comprehensiveness
- Maintain enrolment and program quality
- Ensure access to programs
- Ensure a high-quality student experience

Institutional Priorities

Presented alphabetically rather than by priority or rank.

- Academic experience (student support, wellness, advising)
- Advocacy
- Faculty and staff wellness and renewal

- Graduate fellowships
- Increased efficiency (reduce duplication, align processes, outsourcing)
- Increased revenue
- Indigenization
- Infrastructure and technology renewal
- The library collection
- Research

Recommendations from 2018-19

Recommendations arising from strategic issues

1. Increase the deferred maintenance budget to a level that is sustainable.
2. Increase undergraduate tuition revenue
3. Allocate funds to support a progressive funding model
4. Increase budget for student funding initiatives: MUCEP, ISWEP, Fellowships, Bursaries
5. Establish a tuition policy that builds in an annual inflationary factor tied to the Consumer Price Index.
6. Develop a tuition policy that encourages the development of differential tuition for professional programs.
7. Consider tuition-based budget allocation models
8. Support for the Indigenization Strategy
9. Addressing the 2019-20 Budget Gap
10. Survey of administrative staff

Recommendations carried forward from 2017-18

1. Accountability
2. Review of commitments to separately incorporated entities (SIEs)
3. Administrative efficiency
4. Academic efficiencies
5. Research Overhead Policy

Initiatives

Theme: Infrastructure

How can Memorial University improve the quality of our physical and technological infrastructure? Seven themes related to infrastructure emerged:

Data security: Efforts have been made to improve data security at Memorial University. ITS and the Office of the Chief Information Officer participated in a university-wide review of data centres with the goal of reducing the number of these at Memorial. Data centre redundancy has also been increased with the goal of reducing downtime for units.

Technological infrastructure: Several respondents indicated initiatives taken to improve technological infrastructure at Memorial University. This has included upgrades to computers in teaching labs; technological enhancements to meeting spaces to enable teleconferencing and improve collaboration; enhancements to Wi-Fi across campuses; continued expansion of smart classroom technologies, and; pan-campus support from CITL to enable units to more effectively use flexible learning spaces.

To help deal with the aging research instrumentation in the Core Research Equipment & Instrument Training (CREAIT) Network, Strategic Institutional Research Initiatives has partnered with the Dean of Science on two separate multiyear infrastructure rejuvenation projects: (a) the refurbishment of sample preparation, ICP-MS, and XRF facilities in TERRA (Earth Sciences), and (b) the repair and relocation of donated chromatography and mass spectrometry equipment from a third-party donor to C-CART (Chemistry). These projects should be fully offset by increased cost recovery from the expansion of services and the resultant increase in use of these rejuvenated facilities; in the event of a revenue shortfall, the Dean of Science has agreed to underwrite the cost of these projects.

Reducing the footprint: Memorial has reduced its physical footprint through initiatives such as the removal of underused temporary buildings and relocation of offices.

Grenfell Campus recently completed the demolition of a 2,500 square foot temporary building linked to the Arts and Science building gymnasium. The building was constructed in the early 1980's, had exceeded its useful life and was plagued with leaks, inadequate ventilation, and most recently had a rodent infestation. The area was reinstated as a green space with flowers, shrubs and picnic tables. The office of Student Recruitment was resituated on campus.

Deferred maintenance: Facilities Management has made a strategic decision to carry out certain deferred maintenance projects in-house instead of tendering the work, such as some electrical upgrade work, resulting in savings.

Improving quality of space: While there are resource constraints, efforts have been made to improve quality of space where possible. This has involved re-purposing of existing space to better serve the university community; removal of outdated decoration and materials, such as carpeting, and replacement with more modern, sustainable materials; and renovations to teaching and learning spaces to enhance the student experience.

The Faculty of Education offers an example in its Teaching & Learning Commons (TLC), where Education students, instructors and researchers can work collaboratively on projects of current interest. This air-conditioned space, measuring approximately 20 metres by 10 metres, contains numerous areas that are conducive to both group work and individual study. It welcomes users with an atmosphere that is bright, comfortable and well-suited to a variety of activities.

Safety and security: The Office of the Chief Risk Officer has undertaken several initiatives to improve safety and security at Memorial University. Some of these initiatives included: fire alarm and fire damper improvements; work on grounds to reduce risk of slips and falls; upgrades to high voltage electrical distribution to avoid unplanned power outages which could result in loss of use for weeks if not months.

At Grenfell Campus, work was completed in the Fine Arts Theatre to raise the height of the balcony railings to allow safe use of these areas. A sprung stage, placed over the original wooden one, was removed to improve safety and to reduce the scope of sprinkler upgrade work.

Accessibility: Memorial University continues its commitment to inclusion and accessibility through improving the accessibility of spaces.

For example, the Accessibility Centre and Education Support (ACES) Relocation & Renovation initiative at Grenfell Campus saw the centre's relocation from the main corridor of the Arts & Science building to a larger space providing a quieter area to facilitate student learning and exam writing for those with learning accommodations. The new ACES space has a viewing window from the supervisor's office overlooking a common area and provides two private rooms for exam writing.

Theme: Revenue Generation

How Memorial University can reduce our reliance on the provincial government by diversifying our revenue base? Units across Memorial University continue to seek alternative sources of funding to support priority areas. These include: ongoing acquisition of new grants and leveraging of existing grants; revenue from events and programs with external community members; expansion of revenue-generating professional development programming; and leverage of Memorial University buildings and space. Two key themes emerged from the submissions:

Student fees: The Board of Regents has approved the increase of certain student fees, including: increases to tuition for medicine students, graduate students, and Canadian and International undergraduate students, and application fees; and user fees for certain documents from the Office of the Registrar.

The Board of Regents also approved other new fees and increases to certain fees, such as increases to parking fees at St. John's and Grenfell Campus, and special fees to recover cost of administering certain programs.

Several new programs were developed with special fees and flexible offerings. These include: the MBA-SEE (Fall 2019), with a special domestic tuition fee of \$20,000 and international tuition fee of \$25,000; the proposed Masters of Management, offered online by Grenfell Campus; the Master of Applied Science in Energy Systems Engineering, for which revenues are projected to exceed program delivery costs, and; the Masters in Reading Development and Instruction, with the Faculty of Education, which supports the implementation of recommendations of the Premier's Task Force on Educational Outcomes.

Industry partnerships: Several respondents noted an increased focus on strategic partnerships, acquisition of new or leveraging of existing agency funding. This includes: growth and investment in strategic partnerships with private sector companies interested in program sponsorship, event support, and service growth for students within residences; increased ACOA funding through projects and partnerships; continued focus on acquisition of tri-agency funding for research initiatives; and research partnerships with government departments, such as Department of National Defense and Global Affairs Canada.

Theme: Student Success

How can Memorial University ensure high-quality student experiences throughout an academic career and post-graduation? Six themes related to student success emerged:

Healthy campus: Memorial University continues its commitment to student wellness (wellbeing and health) through a number of initiatives: the expansion of counselling services based on student

feedback; peer assistance programs; cultural supports; and partnerships between academic and student wellness units.

One exemplary initiative is demonstrated by a partnership between the Aboriginal Resource Office (ARO) and the Internationalization Office (IO) to offer sharing circles for students. These offices have been seeking a venue in which meaningful collaboration and conversations can take place between international and Indigenous students. Themes across cultural borders include colonization, identity formation, music, dance, travel, cuisine, language, settlement concerns and more.

Academic success: Several respondents reported initiatives aimed at strengthening academic success. These include: expansion of lecture capture availability and other learning technologies; expansion of learning abroad opportunities coordinated by the IO; proactive and holistic academic advising; supplemental instruction; regularized professional development and opportunities for knowledge sharing for academic advisors; continued implementation of technologies to support academic advising; and improved engagement with the Blundon Centre to ensure available supports are communicated proactively to students.

The Office of the Registrar provided an exemplary initiative involving supporting academic success through enabling collaboration and proactive advising. In October, an academic advising review report was produced which further expanded the definition of academic advising, highlighted the advising gaps at Memorial, and made key recommendations to enhance student advising experiences. The establishment of a campus-wide advising community of practice derived from this review.

Leadership development and career advising: Several initiatives at Memorial support professional skills development and provide career advising. These include: an increase in funding for on-campus employment initiatives through ISWEP and MUCEP; partnerships between Memorial and local start-ups to provide hands-on experience and develop expertise; greater integration of experiential learning components into academic programs; and programming offered by Career Development.

The new Student Services Fee (SSF) is used, in part, by Career Development towards expansion of professional skills development programming. This includes mentorship, networking and learning opportunities for students through initiatives such as the dining etiquette workshop and ten thousand coffees. A career learning series has also been developed through SSF funding and offers programming that includes Career Exploration Group, Campus to Career, Convocation Outreach, LinkedIn Profile Headshot Clinic, and Career Development resources.

Student funding: Several respondents indicated the expansion of funding for students through scholarships, bursaries, and employment opportunities. These initiatives include: development of new scholarships and bursaries through generous donors; increased funding for MUCEP and ISWEP programs; and improved supports for co-operative students and medical students to increase their chances of employment.

Theme: Academic Program Development and Renewal

How can Memorial University can evolve to meet the changing needs of students with limited or decreasing resources? Five themes emerged:

Partnerships and interdisciplinarity: Respondents identified exemplary partnerships and interdisciplinary activities both within the university and with external entities. Some examples include: collaboration between academic units to cross-list courses where there is complementarity; partnerships with the external organizations to develop articulation agreements recognizing professional training for advanced standing; and the development of articulation agreements with other institutions.

The Department of Archaeology, the Labrador Institute, and the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation are working together to deliver a field school focused on place-based learning and community relationships. This course provides students with the opportunity to work on an archaeological excavation conducting work for the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation, and to conduct analysis of recovered archaeological materials at the Laboratory for Applied Archaeological Research and Community Heritage in North West River. Students also interact with knowledge holders and heritage sites in these communities and throughout Upper Lake Melville to enhance their academic learning with cultural understanding and local experience.

Seeking alternative funding sources: Alternative sources of funding, from new, external sources to support academic program development and renewal is a common theme.

One exemplary initiative is the recently announced Husky Centre for Excellence in Sales and Supply Chain Management. Through funding commitments from Husky Energy and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), the Faculty of Business Administration will be able to develop new, innovative undergraduate- and graduate-level courses and programs, support students and faculty members to conduct applied research projects to identify solutions to local challenges, and provide needs-based professional development in partnership with the Gardiner Centre.

New, innovative delivery models: New, innovative delivery models related to academic program development and renewal were also identified. Some examples include: encouraging the use of open educational resources; development and sharing of resources across disciplines and faculties; and development of online and flexible course and program options.

An exemplary initiative was provided by respondents from the Faculty of Nursing, who are enhancing the use of simulation in Nursing courses. Simulation is being used to better prepare students for complex care situations that they may encounter during their clinical rotations and/or future practice.

New streams and options within existing programs: Respondents also identified ways in which new streams and options are being developed within existing programs. Some examples include: micro-credentialing through development of diploma and certificate programs; development of new major and minor programs based on analysis of existing resources and interest from both students and faculty; and interdepartmental collaboration to develop programming.

This past year marked the introduction of a master's degree in the School of Fine Arts at Grenfell Campus. This unique program in visual arts is 'low-residency,' with students spending part of their time on campus, freeing them to complete studio work and online courses from anywhere in the world.

Theme: Indigenization

The President's Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Affairs is leading the development of a university-wide indigenization strategy. This strategy will provide a framework for integrating Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing within the university broadly and how this work can be supported by decolonization, and truth and reconciliation. A summary report of 26 engagement sessions, hosted by the Advisory Committee and held in 2018-2019, outlines three overarching themes: increasing knowledge of Indigenous peoples and places within the university; indigenizing the academy; and strengthening university-community Indigenous relationships.

Some of the initiatives submitted by respondents as supporting these themes are included below:

Increasing knowledge of Indigenous peoples and places within the university: Several initiatives are ongoing to foster and increase knowledge of Indigenous peoples and places at Memorial University.

One exemplary initiative can be found in the annual Grenfell Campus All-Nations Powwow. (Sept 2020 will be the fifth annual). This event connects the surrounding Mi'kmaw communities to Grenfell faculty, staff, and students, educates campus and visitors to campus about Indigenous cultures, and increases Indigenous visual presence on campus.

Indigenizing the academy: Memorial University continues its commitment to indigenizing the academy through a number of comprehensive initiatives, including focused infrastructure revitalization, new senior leadership positions and portfolios, and curriculum development.

One exemplary initiative is the extension of the Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Research) position. The AVPIR has three interconnected responsibilities: 1) Strengthen relationships between Memorial and Indigenous groups, including establishing methods to ensure appropriate consultation and engagement of Indigenous communities as well as increasing Memorial capacity to build major institutional research activities and applications with Indigenous communities and Indigenous researchers; 2) Identify and pursue emerging opportunities to establish new partnerships; 3) Connect with Indigenous communities and academic or research institutions from around the world to network and provoke creative discussions on Indigenous matters and research opportunities. For 2019-2020, the AVP(IR) goals and objectives also include establishing necessary training and policy to ensure appropriate consultation and engagement of Indigenous communities and government leaders.

Strengthening university-community Indigenous relationships: Several initiatives were highlighted that support the strengthening of university-community Indigenous relationships.

One exemplary initiative is the Labrador Lands and Waters Indigenous Youth Science Camp. Responding to requests for more science enrichment opportunities for Indigenous youth (grades 7-10) in Labrador, the Labrador Institute worked with the Innu Nation, the Nunatsiavut Government, the NunatuKavut Community Council, and the Torngat Wildlife, Plants, and Fisheries Secretariat to create a week-long science camp. Funded by NSERC PromoScience, this camp is led by Indigenous Elders/leaders in Two-Eyed Seeing, and each module integrates multiple ways of knowing, including Indigenous sciences. The science camp ran in the summers of 2018 and 2019, supporting over 30 Indigenous youth with the next iteration coming in summer 2020. All Labrador Institute staff provide support and provide content for this camp, as well as faculty and students of Memorial University.

Theme: Employee Engagement

How can Memorial University respond to pressures on employees resulting from concerns related to job security, greater workload, and loss of institutional knowledge through attrition? Five themes related to employee engagement emerged:

Understanding the employee experience: Memorial University has undertaken numerous initiatives to better understand the employee experience. These initiatives have included: the creation and promotion of an employee feedback email address by the Department of Human Resources; development of employee feedback surveys focused on employee experience and satisfaction; and continuous improvement of internal communication.

Professional development and training: Several participants noted professional development and training for staff to improve employee engagement. Some examples included: unit retreats encouraging engagement in planning, cross-training across roles, and team building and collaboration; and encouragement and support for staff to pursue credit- and non-credit-based training.

An exemplary initiative stems from the Office of Chief Risk Officer, which hosted its first Health and Safety Learning Symposium at the Signal Hill Conference Centre in June 2019. The symposium theme was “Building a Safer Campus”. The day-long event featured workshops aimed at increasing health and safety knowledge. Approximately 180 employees attended the symposium from various Memorial campuses. A survey of attendees indicated 95 per cent of respondents found the sessions informative and interesting.

Employee recognition: Memorial University has continued to support employee engagement through employee recognition initiatives such as internal awards and acknowledgment. Some examples include: awards for exceptional teaching, research, public engagement, and community service, and regular communication within units via newsletters or coffee breaks to celebrate extraprofessional accomplishments by employees.

An exemplary initiative supporting employee recognition is the annual Vice Presidents awards for teaching, research, and public engagement at Grenfell Campus. Recipients are celebrated in a public ceremony.

Employee wellness: Several respondents indicated a focus on employee wellness, supporting both physical and mental. These initiatives included physical exercise programming, in-office stretching, and mindfulness and meditation.

The Department of Human Resources has developed a proactive wellness program for employees focused on stretching in the workplace aimed at preventing musculoskeletal injuries, rather than treating injuries after they appear.

Employee participation in governance and strategy: Efforts have been taken to enable and empower employees to participate in governance and strategy development for Memorial University. These initiatives have included: team retreats to develop long-term plans; regular team meetings to encourage idea generation and collaboration; and opportunities for staff and faculty to come together to share work.

An exemplary initiative is the Grenfell Campus Council created in 2018. Each month, Grenfell Campus Council brings together all professors and staff to hear reports from the Vice-President and others on matters of campus-wide importance. This body is also charged with voting on issues of campus-wide implication, such as the forthcoming adoption of a new five-year strategic plan.

Theme: Administrative Efficiency

How can Memorial University maintain quality of student services and accountability to agencies and government with fewer staff and resources? Six themes emerged:

Automation of processes: Respondents identified steps taken to automate processes and reduce burden upon staff. Some examples include: changes to procurement practices; integration of complimentary information systems; and consolidation of services for students and staff via online self-service platforms.

Exemplary initiatives can be found in the work of Faculty Relations and Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) with the implementation of Faculty Load and Compensation (FLAC). Replacing a home-grown, customized system, a Banner module was launched, that has been operational for the past academic year, streamlines the appointment and compensation for all per-course instructors, overload teaching and non-standard teaching (such as graduate supervision, field placement supervision, etc.). This innovation approach has taken several, unconnected, manual processes being performed across four functional areas (Faculty Relations, HR/Payroll, Registrar's Office and ITS) and had created a unique technological solution with a single point of entry.

Implementation of paperless processes: Some examples include: implementation of paperless application process for undergraduate and graduate admissions; transition to digital format for communication with students, where possible; and implementation of an online work order system.

Exemplary initiatives can be found in the work of the Office of the Chief Information (OCIO) which continues to engage in large-scale admin efficiency projects with business units, including: paperless admissions, one student e-record; HR personnel efile and HR apply online; and OnBase for the academic recruitment process. The OCIO continues to drive the electronic forms initiative to improve administrative efficiency and reduce paper consumption. Online Document Management systems improve information sharing for groups, reduce email traffic and security risk, and reduce paper and printing costs.

Organizational redesign: Some examples include: co-location of complementary administrative units; realignment of duties in response to retirements and attrition; staff and resource sharing between units; and ongoing review of staffing and resource needs.

Exemplary initiatives related to organization redesign can be found in the work of the Office of the Vice-President (Research) which re-aligned staffing and physical space. In May 2019, the VPR, AVPR, and AVPIR were re-located to one office suite, along with the Manager of Planning and Operations and the Senior Communications Advisor for the VPR portfolio. Previously located in two separate buildings, this re-location has provided efficiencies through improved communications, reduced need for meetings, shared administrative resources, and file management.

Changes to salaries and benefits: In 2018-19, the university implemented changes to salaries and benefits which will improve administrative efficiency. Two key examples are the review and adjustment to the Senior Administrative Management scale and curtailment of severance benefits.

Negotiations with staff unions have resulted in the curtailment of severance benefits which will reduce liability as well as future administrative work for units and HR. Likewise, for these union groups, the eligibility criteria for post-employment benefits have been strengthened to curb the growth of future liabilities and more closely align eligibility within the broader NL public sector. In May 2019, a revised compensation model was approved for senior administrative management employees to ensure alignment with the 50th percentile as per Board Compensation policy. The revised structure is expected to generate long-term savings as the current cohort of management employees exits the workforce.

Reducing travel expenses through virtual meetings: Another area of administrative efficiency is the replacement of travel with virtual meetings. Several respondents noted the increased use of BlueJeans and other video conferencing technologies with the intention of reducing travel expenses while maintaining the level of collaboration with colleagues.

Theme: Academic Efficiency

How can Memorial University remain comprehensive and maintain quality of academic experience considering constraints on instructional resources? Five themes related to academic efficiency emerged:

Class size: A common theme of increased class sizes emerged from the submissions, with a recognition of the potential impact on academic experience. Among initiatives to support academic efficiency at Memorial, respondents identified cross-listing of courses, greater consideration of student demand for courses, and the “piggy-backing” of undergraduate and graduate courses. These approaches to course delivery help prioritize student experience while putting an emphasis on priority course offerings.

The Faculty of Business Administration (FBA) focuses on class size to improve academic efficiency while maintaining the student experience. Undergraduate courses with enrolments of fewer than 15 students and graduate courses with fewer than 10 students are cancelled. As such, when possible, graduate and undergraduate electives are cross-listed along with a more strategic approach to the rotation of program electives to ensure choice of courses and higher enrolments. A new 82-seat classroom allows for some larger enrolment courses.

Reduction of administrative remissions: Academic units are increasing teaching capacity by reducing the number of administrative remissions for faculty through amalgamation or elimination of associate dean positions.

Curriculum review/reform: Curriculum reform was identified as a method by which units are supporting academic efficiency while continuously improving the quality of the academic programs and student experience.

The Classics Department is in the early stages of developing a virtual classroom consortium for Latin and Ancient Greek language courses in collaboration with other universities in Atlantic Canada. This virtual classroom consortium will alternate responsibility for teaching intermediate/advanced level courses in Latin and Ancient Greek, allowing students from various institutions to take the course by participating virtually in an online classroom.

Collaborations between units: Respondents identified collaboration between academic units as supporting academic efficiency. This includes: sharing of resources and space; collaborating on course offerings; and interdisciplinary activities; professional development, research, and networking opportunities between units.

Departments in the Faculty of Science are encouraged to collaborate to identify subjects in which there is similar content. Where appropriate, departments work together to revise course offerings and cross-list courses to free up additional teaching capacity, while cultivating collegiality and interdisciplinary approaches.

Multi-Priority Initiatives

Some initiatives under individual priority areas above also had pan-institutional implications and connected to multiple priority areas and other initiatives. Examples of these multi-priority initiatives are outlined below.

Global Learning Centre: In April 2019, the Internationalization Office re-located its staff to the second floor of the Global Learning Centre (formerly Corte Real), enabling all staff to be in the same location after previously working in separate building across St. John's campus. To most effectively use the Global Learning Centre space, the Internationalization Office undertook significant renovations to improve the experience for both staff and students. These renovations included improvements to office space for employee wellbeing and collaboration, and a multipurpose shared space for students and families, including a work, kitchen and meeting space. This renovation represents an improvement to infrastructure while also supporting: academic and administrative efficiency through co-location and shared resources; employee engagement through the use of a collaborative and supportive space; student success through providing co-located and streamlined services while offering a community space; and an opportunity for revenue generation through renting out the Global Learning Centre to the community. The improvements to the Global Learning Centre also support the university's public engagement framework by offering space for community engagement and collaboration.

Marine Institute: In 2018-19, the Marine Institute acquired funds for the renovation and development of industry and learning spaces. This initiative included: \$8.5 million in funding from the federal and provincial governments for the construction of a new building and acquisition of new technology at the Holyrood Marine Base facility; a donation of a \$2.5 million simulator from Teekay for the Centre for Marine Simulation; \$1 million awarded from the Climate Change Challenge Fund to upgrade the fire simulation facilities at the Offshore Safety and Survival Centre to propane; and \$430,000 awarded to create an Underwater Exploration Lab (ROV simulation facilities) at the Ridge Road campus.

Faculty of Business Administration: During Winter Semester 2019, the Faculty of Business Administration opened its newest classroom with the support of a generous donation. Re-purposing the former general office space, this classroom seats 82 students, allowing for larger class sizes. It is equipped with the latest classroom technologies and the layout and equipment are fully accessible for all faculty and students. On the second floor, an older storage space was refurbished into a peer-tutoring student success center wherein business students seeking support in specific courses to receive assistance from both undergrad and PhD students.

Strategic Procurement: To streamline procurement for all units, improve internal controls for purchasing within the Vice President (Administration and Finance) portfolio, and to strengthen the University's compliance with the Public Procurement Act, the Vice President (Administration and Finance) established a Strategic Procurement unit within Financial and Administrative Services in 2019. An Associate Director, Strategic Procurement was hired in June 2019 (with the new position created through a repurposing of a vacant position), and supported by two existing positions in FAS, and a Manager of Strategic Procurement (repurposed from a vacated Procurement position in Facilities Management). The unit will review procurement practices to enable process and system improvements. In addition, procurement by the departments within the Vice President (Administration and Finance) portfolio is being centralized to the new unit.

Summary

The preceding report brings attention to a sampling of the initiatives being taken across Memorial University to support strategic priorities and address strategic issues in the 2018-19 academic year. Units on every campus are demonstrating a commitment to academic excellence and student success when presenting creative solutions to counter existing financial constraints.

In November 2018, the university community conveyed a desire to focus more on these areas: academic efficiency; academic program development and renewal; administrative efficiency; employee engagement; infrastructure; student success; and revenue generation. A "What We Heard" document was provided to the university community outlining the results of consultation and communicating the identified priority areas. From this input, recommendations were provided to the President. Through consultations with the university during the fall 2019 semester, numerous and diverse examples were provided from across our campuses as to how academic and administrative units are supporting these initiatives.