



# Inspiring Learning



Academic Plan 2012—2017  
**Mount Royal University**



MOUNT ROYAL  
UNIVERSITY  
1910

# Inspiring Learning

Mount Royal University  
Academic Plan 2012-2017

# Contents

VISION

MISSION

INTRODUCTION

THE PLAN

1. Teaching and Learning
2. Programs
3. University and Student Profile
4. Student Supports and Development
5. Scholarship and Research
6. Communities—Internal/External
7. Resources
8. Evaluation, Assessment and Implementation

LOOKING FORWARD

APPENDIX 1: AIMS OF AN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION  
AT MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY

APPENDIX 2: MEMBERSHIP OF THE ACADEMIC  
PLANNING COMMITTEE

# Vision

*Inspiring learning for a world of possibilities.*

# Mission

*We are an undergraduate university focused on teaching and learning informed by scholarship. We are committed to personalized, experiential and outcome-based learning. We deliver high quality programs built on a foundation of General Education.*

*Recognizing that diversity strengthens us all, Mount Royal University welcomes, supports and celebrates all its communities. We are also dedicated to fostering an environment of respect and inclusion.*

*Dynamic, relevant and responsive to our students and communities, we are making Mount Royal Canada's premier undergraduate university.*

We want to provide the best possible undergraduate experience



# Introduction

What kind of university do we want Mount Royal to be? That is the question posed by this Academic Plan.

Our last Academic Plan was designed to make Mount Royal a university and we have achieved that outcome. In the fall of 2009 we were named a university by the government of Alberta and earned national recognition when we became a member of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC).

To become a university, we had to demonstrate that Mount Royal had most of the characteristics of other Canadian universities, but do we want Mount Royal to be basically the same as, or even similar to, other universities? Or do we want to take a somewhat different path?

In our minds and hearts we know the answer to this question. As we became a university, we were clear that we want to be Canada's best undergraduate university based particularly on measures related to student success and satisfaction. In the consultations leading up to this Academic Plan, it was clear that this view of Mount Royal's future is widely shared within the University. This Academic Plan is a design for the kind of university that we want Mount Royal to become over the next five years.

The shared vision for Mount Royal is strongly held, at least in part, because it is simply a continuation of our one-hundred-year history of putting students first. We at Mount Royal want to provide our students with the best possible undergraduate learning experience. This institutional priority is captured in our vision statement, "Inspiring learning for a world of possibilities," and our emphasis on personalized learning is reflected in our "Face to Face" brand.

We know that not all learning takes place in the classroom and so all of us in Mount Royal's communities contribute to student success. In particular it will be important to link and coordinate the implementation of the Academic Plan and the Student Services Plan.

At the same time, when it comes to developing high quality teaching and learning, the role of Academic Affairs, working with our partners, is paramount. Students are attracted to a university by rich, vibrant academic programs that will expand their minds, broaden their horizons and open pathways to future opportunities. Faculty members are instrumental to student success. We know, from research done with students, that a close working relationship with at least one faculty member is the single most important factor in student success.<sup>1</sup> We owe it to our students to be clear and intentional about the future academic direction of Mount Royal University. That is why we need a new Academic Plan.

In this objective we build on a firm foundation because Mount Royal is already a national leader in developing a high quality undergraduate education. We have been clear, as we moved towards university status, that teaching and learning is our first priority. We cannot, however, continue to lead if we merely rest our paddles and float with the current. Indeed the flow in the Canadian university system, as measured by action rather than rhetoric, is more in the direction of enhancing research rather than improving undergraduate education. So to go with that flow would not be in the interests of our students.

If Mount Royal is to remain distinctively an "undergraduate university focused on teaching and learning informed by scholarship," and thereby continue to lead by example, then we need to think and work hard to develop and follow a clear plan of action.

<sup>1</sup> Richard J Light, *Making the Most of College: Students Speak their Minds* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001) particularly pp.104-5.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

To make Mount Royal “Canada’s premier undergraduate university,” our Academic Plan should answer the following questions:

- » What does it mean to be Canada’s premier undergraduate university?
- » What are the steps that we need to take to reach that goal? And.
- » how do we measure and assess the success of these initiatives?

We will be Canada’s best undergraduate university if we measure our success by our students’ success, if we establish clear learning aims and outcomes and if, through good methods of assessment, we can be sure that graduating students have achieved those outcomes. In the pages that follow, the Academic Plan outlines how we will reach that goal.

We should also bear in mind that teaching and learning in a university should be as much about transformation as it is about preparation for the workplace. Students will learn content to be sure, but content is transitory. Our teaching will only have succeeded if our students leave Mount Royal having learned how to think, learned how to communicate and, most of all, learned how to learn. For through our teaching and learning we are preparing the whole student for life as well as work, and for a life that can realise a world of possibilities.

We also need to work to educate our students, communities and governments that, as a university, Mount Royal has a role to play in society beyond producing well-educated workers who serve a developing economy. We will educate and graduate thinking citizens and leaders who will enhance the quality of life and we will be clear that, as a university, our role is to create new ideas and new knowledge and thereby contribute to our communities.

Always highly committed to teaching and learning, Mount Royal has certainly put much time and effort into developing excellent scholarly teaching. It is logical that we should enhance our efforts to assess the level of learning.

We need to look more closely at what, to what extent, and how well students are learning. There is evidence from some segments of the North American post-secondary system that many students are learning very little in the first two years of college degree programs,<sup>2</sup> and there is growing concern in Canada about the state of undergraduate education in our universities.<sup>3</sup> Mount Royal clearly offers a high quality undergraduate education and we assume that, because we work hard at excellent teaching, our students are therefore learning a great deal. But, like other Canadian universities, we are better at measuring inputs into education than we are at measuring outcomes.

It would be even better if we could actually demonstrate the level of student learning and be able to assure ourselves, our students, our communities and government that our excellent teaching is indeed inspiring great learning.

This thinking takes us to the consideration of learning outcomes and the assessment of outcomes. We need, over the next five years, to establish clear learning outcomes at both the institutional and the program level and then develop ways to assess whether those outcomes are being achieved. (Assessment is addressed in section 8 of this Academic Plan.)

<sup>2</sup> See Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa, *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> See Clark, Ian D, Trick, David, Van Loon, Richard, *Academic Reform: Policy Options for Improving the Quality and Cost-Effectiveness of Undergraduate Education in Ontario* (Montreal Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2011).



We are also responsible to the Campus Alberta Quality Council to be clear about learning outcomes and the assessment of outcomes when our degrees are reviewed beginning in 2013. Then, as we learn more about learning, we should complete the circle and think about how to adjust our teaching practices, curriculum and assessment to make the student experience even better. One way of achieving this end would be to increase our repertoire of high impact teaching practices that have been proven to be associated with the achievement of learning outcomes and student success.<sup>4</sup>

#### Recommended priorities:

- » Affirm the importance of smaller average class sizes to Mount Royal's success as an undergraduate university.
  - » Propose a set of institutional learning aims (see Attachment 1) that will provide a general framework for the development of learning outcomes at the program level.
  - » Ask departments to develop or review learning outcomes for programs, particularly degree programs, during the first two years of the implementation of this Academic Plan.
- » Review these program learning outcomes with a view to making adjustments to the institutional learning aims.
  - » Expect all areas of the university to review the learning aims and consider whether these aims would apply to their work.
  - » Find opportunities to further the development of such high impact teaching practices as first year seminars and experiences, learning communities, service learning, and capstone courses and projects.
  - » Develop and assess our own high impact teaching practices.
  - » Continue the development of co-curricular experiences that will foster the realisation of the institutional learning outcomes.
  - » Finally, we will emphasise and enhance faculty development of the practice of teaching informed by scholarship by, for example, revising the Academic Development Centre's Instructional Support Program for new full-time faculty.

<sup>4</sup> See Kuh, *High-Impact Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter* (Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2008).



## 2 PROGRAMS

Mount Royal's academic future lies in the offering of baccalaureate degrees to an increasing proportion of our students. We will retain existing diploma, certificate and university transfer programs as long as there is student demand for them. There will be limited opportunities to implement new degree programs over the next few years, particularly if we require new funding from the government. A slowing down in the pace of developing new degree programs does afford us the opportunity to think about the areas in which we will develop new degrees in the future.

In particular we need to think about the balance between our foundational Arts and Science degrees and the degrees that we offer in other areas. Partly as a result of our history as a college, Arts and Science degree programs have fewer student places (as a proportion of the whole) than most Canadian universities. Over time and with incremental money, we need to adjust that balance. There is heavy student demand for Arts and Science degrees and we need to have the student numbers to develop and sustain further majors in those areas. These degrees also provide gateways to other degrees and programs and, of course, they lead to the employment of graduates in a variety of fields.

Our next new degree, subject to approval by the Campus Alberta Quality Council and the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology, will be a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. We are further committed to moving forward on some degrees in the Faculty of Health and Community Studies. At the same time we should look at new degrees in the Arts and Sciences and we need to resolve the impasse on the three-year

BA General. Having implemented a suite of degrees mostly based in particular disciplines we can now look at the possibility of developing more interdisciplinary degrees. And we should also build on our initial developments and enhance academic programming about and for Aboriginal people.

We at Mount Royal are committed to the value of General Education as a fundamental part of all our degree programs. General Education is a big part of Mount Royal's identity as it signals the importance of breadth and generic skills in a university education: outcomes that, in world of utility, were never more needed than now. Thanks to a great deal of hard work and thought by many people, we have implemented a very effective General Education program over the last three years along with our new degrees. Yet, here too, we cannot rest on our laurels. Because of our commitment to General Education, and because it is an important vehicle for achieving our institutional learning aims, we need to work to improve it. We know from student surveys and from the first year results of the Mount Royal Assessment Seminar that we can improve General Education. Most students see the value of General Education but they also tell us that some courses work better than others, and there is still work to do on the range of course offerings. General Education is already a good program so let us work to make it great.

Following a recommendation in our last Academic Plan, work has been done to develop a strategic eLearning plan. This planning is positive and is taking Mount Royal in a good direction but there will be limited resources for eLearning development in the near future and so we need to think carefully about the use of those resources. We should be clear that eLearning



approaches that augment and enhance face-to-face delivery (for example blended learning; technology-supported course redesign) remain Mount Royal's priority and that new distance learning initiatives will be limited to strategic opportunities where there is clear value added for the university.

The Faculty of Continuing Education and Extension is an important source of academic programming involving both credit free and, increasingly, credit delivery. Continuing Education now includes the Mount Royal Conservatory and Open Studies. We value the entrepreneurial and experimental approach in Continuing Education and its role as a bridge to our external communities and we will continue to develop creative connections between credit free and credit programs.

#### Recommended priorities:

- » We will continue to pursue the planned degrees in Child and Community Studies and in Health and Physical Education and continue the discussion of developing a proposal for a Social Work degree. We will also work on developing and implementing new majors and funding more student places in Arts and Science.
- » We will re-engage in the discussion of the three-year BA General with officials at the Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology.
- » We will develop proposals for interdisciplinary degrees such as the Business Economics and the Bachelor of Science in Psychology that are already under discussion.
- » We will build on the two new courses in Indigenous Studies to implement a minor in and then a major in Indigenous Studies.
- » We will support the Department of General Education to continue to work with others across the institution to improve and enhance the General education program.
- » We will develop eLearning initiatives that emphasize blended learning and technology-supported course redesign. New online or distance initiatives will be limited to complete programs in strategic areas where there is clear value added for Mount Royal, and select high-demand courses that are unique to Mount Royal and required for program completion by large numbers of students.
- » We will work to fully integrate the Conservatory and Open Studies into the Faculty of Continuing Education and Extension and continue to develop connections between credit-free and credit programs.

“ We will grow in a careful and planned way ”





## UNIVERSITY AND STUDENT PROFILE

In order to make Mount Royal the kind of university that we want it to be, we have thought carefully both about the overall student numbers and the composition of the student population. Our current budget assumptions and enrollment forecasts indicate that student numbers will not increase in the next two years and, indeed, will decline slightly. In due course there will again be pressure to increase student numbers. In the meantime, we need to decide how large Mount Royal can become and still maintain those qualities that have been important to our history and that will define our future.

Mount Royal is already a mid-sized university with (in round numbers) 8,700 Full Learning Equivalents (FLEs) for a headcount of 14,000. We believe that the larger Mount Royal becomes, the more difficult it will be to maintain smaller class sizes, personalized learning and the quality of undergraduate education. We will need to have the discipline to resist pressures to grow beyond a certain size in the interest of maintaining the institutional characteristics that we value.

Overall size is one thing to plan for, but we also need to think about the make-up of the Mount Royal student population. The current high level of demand for our degree programs is in some ways very gratifying. At the same time, high demand will inevitably push up admission averages so that, if we do not address this consequence, Mount Royal will become a much more “elitist” university. Maintaining our historic commitment in this context to students who are less advantaged will require us to be deliberate and conscious about programs and policies designed to open opportunities for success to students from diverse backgrounds. We will continue to attract students with high GPAs on admission while also serving students who will have a much improved GPA upon graduation.

While we are committed to access for students from many diverse backgrounds, we have established programs and supports for both Aboriginal and International students that place us in a good position to add to the numbers of these students. In this time and place, we have a particular responsibility to provide opportunities to Aboriginal students while International students enhance our community and also produce International opportunities for Mount Royal’s domestic students.

### Recommended priorities:

- » When the opportunity arises to increase the student numbers at Mount Royal we will grow in a careful and planned way. Over the next five years, Mount Royal will not grow beyond 10,000 total FLEs in credit programs.
- » We will continue to enable access for students who should be given the opportunity to be successful at Mount Royal but who will have difficulty registering in our degree programs through the usual channels by maintaining an appropriate number of seats in Open Studies, the University Entrance Program, Academic Upgrading and the Aboriginal Education Program.
- » Working through the Inskim Centre and the development of academic programs that will attract more Aboriginal students, we will increase the number of Aboriginal students at Mount Royal to seven per cent of the total student population.
- » With International Education taking the lead, we will increase the number of international students at Mount Royal to five per cent of the total student population.
- » As the number of students from diverse backgrounds increases, we will work on enhancing the supports for those students.



## 4 STUDENT SUPPORTS AND DEVELOPMENT

At Mount Royal we understand that not all learning takes place in the classroom, that everyone in the Mount Royal community contributes to teaching and learning, and that we are all involved in providing a holistic learning experience for our students that will set them on a course for life.

Research shows that students who are engaged in a full range of campus activities are more likely to be successful.<sup>5</sup> Many of the student services at Mount Royal that supplement the teaching and learning in Academic Affairs are delivered throughout the Mount Royal community. The Academic Plan will inform student services across the university and we in Academic Affairs need to support other divisions as they develop their plans to develop student services.

Mount Royal's Student Services Plan which was developed in concert with the Academic Plan is also being implemented in co-ordination with the implementation of the Academic Plan. Some of the student service areas within Academic Affairs also need to be strengthened.

We have heard from students that academic advising is a concern for many. It is important that students have the right assistance to navigate the complexities of university programs as efficiently as possible. Academic advice therefore needs to be clear, accurate, consistent, and readily available. We also need to establish the best balance between general centralized advising and the advising provided by academic programs and then make sure that there is good communication between the two.

Students can also benefit from advice and assistance on aspects of student life beyond their progression through academic programs. Mentorship, which enables students to benefit from the experience of others, is a proven means of enhancing levels of student success. We recognize that retention is sometimes more of a challenge for less advantaged and diverse students, and we still need to develop better analysis and strategies around retention of all students.

### Recommended priorities:

- » Academic Affairs will work closely with other areas in the University, especially Student Affairs and Campus Life, to coordinate the implementation of plans to improve and enhance student services.
- » We will establish a task force to develop and implement an improved system of academic advising.
- » We will provide more mentoring to students by faculty, staff, fellow students, alumni and by members of our external communities.
- » We recommend that the student services providers also find ways to measure student success against the University's learning aims.
- » As we increase the number of international students, we will also enhance the supports for those students.
- » We will step up our work on analyzing the levels of student retention and developing the mechanisms, including supports for students at risk, to improve those levels.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, E.T. Pascarella and P.T. Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: Findings from Twenty Years of Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991).



## SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH

As at other universities, individual faculty decide on the focus of their own research at the same time as we collectively select areas of scholarship that are in the strategic institutional interest. We also affirm, in concert with the wider university community, that peer review is the touchstone for what constitutes scholarship and how it is evaluated.

At the same time, since Mount Royal is a student-focused university, it follows that students would be a major consideration in the development of our institutional scholarly directions. There is certainly a sense in which all scholarship benefits students, as faculty engaged in scholarship bring new knowledge into the classroom. But our institutional research strategies need to be more explicitly related to students if we are to set ourselves apart in our scholarly interests, as we do in other things. It follows then, from an institutional point of view, that we would encourage and foster scholarship about students and involving students. Indeed, providing research opportunities for undergraduate students will be a major differentiator for Mount Royal.

The Office of Research Services is finalizing a Strategic Research Plan that will take us in this direction. We know that we need to continue to develop sources of funding and new infrastructure to support scholarship, but perhaps the most important resource for the faculty member engaged in research is time. Through the Task Force on Faculty Leaves and the Academic Year, we also need to adjust the pattern of the academic year and provide more leaves to give colleagues the time and flexibility to engage in scholarship or the development of teaching practice.

### Recommended priorities:

- » We expect to endorse the draft Strategic Research Plan and in particular its four themes of undergraduate involvement in research, the scholarship of teaching and learning, community engaged scholarship and interdisciplinary research. We will support the continued development of these areas of scholarship.
- » We will continue to foster the development of the Institute for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as Mount Royal's flagship institute and work to find the level of funding that will ensure its future.
- » We will work with the Mount Royal University Foundation to secure funding for all of the Centres of Excellence in Mount Royal's centennial fundraising campaign, Changing the Face of Education case statement.
- » We will continue through the Office of Research Services to work with faculty colleagues to make increasingly successful applications for research funding particularly when the award of funding requires peer review and when students are to be involved in the project.
- » We will provide mentorship and support to faculty members as they develop new research projects.
- » We will adjust the schedule of the academic year to provide more flexibility in teaching patterns and to provide time for scholarship or professional development around teaching.
- » We will develop proposals to increase the number of sabbatical leaves available to faculty who are engaged in scholarship.



## COMMUNITIES - INTERNAL/EXTERNAL

Mount Royal is a university closely connected to its communities and highly committed to the stewardship of its communities. We foster collaboration and respect within our internal community and we recognize that support staff members play a crucial role in the success of the academic enterprise at Mount Royal.

We also strive to establish and maintain relationships with external communities. There is a reciprocal relationship between internal and external communities. Mount Royal, particularly our students, benefit from our relationship with external communities as they help us in many ways to reach our goals. Community connection is a dynamic characteristic of Mount Royal and we need to nurture these relationships and increase student involvement in community.

Our community also includes our partners in education, and we need to develop closer relationships with other parts of the system. For example, a student's transition from high school to university can be a difficult one and so it would, for example, be beneficial to develop more connections with high schools and to find ways to facilitate that transition.

Mount Royal is in a pivotal position within the Campus Alberta community. As a former college that is now a university, we are well placed to understand both types of institutions. Since we cannot increase the student capacity on our campus, we have the opportunity to provide learning opportunities to students in other communities through collaborative arrangements to deliver our degrees on other campuses. We already have a genuinely collaborative partnership agreement with Medicine Hat College to deliver Mount Royal's BBA in Medicine Hat. Having established this model, we are well placed to pursue similar arrangements with other Alberta colleges.

### Recommended priorities:

- » We understand that all Mount Royal community members (students, staff, faculty and alumni) contribute to learning and we will find ways to put that understanding into effect.
- » We support the work of the Implementation Team of the Transition Task Force that is addressing issues for support staff.
- » We will continue to develop student involvement in the wider community.
- » We will develop student exchanges at the national level.
- » We will continue to support community based learning and scholarship and affirm the value of workplace learning.
- » We will establish advisory committees for all degree programs.

- » We will work to increase the understanding of the value of a Mount Royal education in our external communities.
- » We will further develop relations with high schools and look at the possibility of, for example, dual credit programs.
- » Based on the partnership agreement with Medicine Hat College, we will explore similar agreements with other institutions for the delivery of other degree programs.
- » We will encourage faculty exchanges with colleagues at other institutions.

## RESOURCES

The availability and allocation of resources, starting with financial resources, is going to be challenging, probably for the next two years at least. We anticipate that there will be little or no new money from government, and we have already adjusted our enrollment plan to line up with reduced funding expectations. Any further movement of student places or implementation of new programs will therefore involve the reallocation of existing money.

Under these circumstances, it will be difficult to hire more people or enhance the space and technology needs of the university. We will, nevertheless, continue to develop plans in these areas, do what is possible in the meantime and be prepared for the time when funding begins to flow again. We know, for example, that support staffing levels in academic departments and faculties have not kept pace with recent growth in size and complexity of operations. We are working with Deloitte on an audit of staffing levels in Academic Affairs and investigating

ways to make procedures and practices more efficient. We have urgent space needs for a new library and for faculty research and there will be ongoing demands for enhanced technology that better serves academic needs.

### Recommended priorities:

- » Academic Affairs will continue to manage budgets to ensure that there continues to be adequate funding for programs and student numbers, recognizing that Mount Royal's future lies in having a majority of our students in baccalaureate degree programs.
- » We will continue to work with the other divisions at Mount Royal to ensure that the University becomes an employer of choice to all its employees.
- » As resources permit, we will implement the recommendations of the Deloitte audit of staffing levels and business practices in Academic Affairs.
- » Academic Affairs will continue to work in collaboration with other areas to secure capital funding for a new Library and Learning building.
- » We will establish a task force to develop and analyze space needs for faculty scholarship and it will pay particular attention to those needs in the Faculty of Science and Technology.
- » We will examine the financial basis of distance learning at Mount Royal and develop recommendations to put it on a sounder footing.
- » We will update and enhance Mount Royal's Strategic Technology Plan and implement a strategic technology plan that will enable Mount Royal to be a leader in teaching, learning and scholarship and student success.



## EVALUATION, ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Academic Plan proposes a set of strategies directed towards making Mount Royal Canada's premier undergraduate university as measured by student success. Yet there is little point in taking all these initiatives unless we can also demonstrate to prospective students, communities and stakeholders that these efforts are effective in terms of results.

We need to constantly assess the outcome of the implementation of these recommended priorities and adjust what we do according to the results of assessment.

Mount Royal is already engaged in assessment at a number of levels and in a number of ways. We are involved in quantitative assessments such as NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement), CUSC (Canadian University Survey Consortium) and the *Globe and Mail* survey that are largely predicated on the assumption that student engagement is a measure of student success. The Mount Royal Assessment Seminar is a successful new form of assessment based on detailed, one-on-one interviews with students and it is already producing formative results. As we implement this Academic Plan, we will have new initiatives to assess and we should look at new ways to assess what we do.

New institutional learning aims are an important element in this Plan and there is no point in having these aims unless we assess whether students are achieving them. It makes sense to start this work at the institutional level and then, over time, move to the program level. At the program level, the place to start is General Education since it is the foundational part of all our degree programs.

We need to conduct careful analysis of the results of all assessment and, where appropriate, adjust practice on the basis of that analysis. We need to develop a culture of assessment that pervades the institution and leads to continuous improvement of the student experience. And, finally, it is important that, based on sound assessment, we report to all our communities on the progress that we have made towards reaching our goals.

### Recommended priorities:

- » We will continue with, and at the same time develop and refine, existing methods of quantitative assessment of student engagement.
- » We will continue qualitative assessment through the Mount Royal Assessment Seminar and to apply it to different areas of student learning each year.
- » We will review and evaluate the existing methods that we are using at the institutional level to assess learning aims and outcomes.
- » We will establish a learning outcomes review and assessment group to develop a set of assessment alternatives from which departments could select and apply at the program level.
- » We will begin the assessment process by reviewing and assessing the institutional aims in General Education.
- » We will find ways to assess student retention levels and time to completion of students.
- » We will apply existing and new assessment methods to new questions such as "What is the contribution of our graduates to the quality of life beyond their pursuit of a career?"



- » We will develop our program review policy to make it consistent with Campus Alberta Quality Council guidelines and prepare to work with the CAQC on the review of all our new degree programs, beginning in 2013.
  - » Because it is our keystone program, we will conduct five yearly reviews of General Education that will be similar to the reviews of degree programs.
  - » We will support the recommended priorities in the Student Services Plan on the evaluation and assessment of student services across the university.
  - » We will develop a record of all student papers given at conferences and published in scholarly venues as a basis for publicizing the work done in this area.
  - » We will develop and publish an annual report card to the community on the progress that we have made implementing the Academic Plan.
- » We will find ways to tell Mount Royal University's story as a leader in undergraduate education in Canada.
  - » We will assess community awareness and understanding of the nature and value of a Mount Royal education.
  - » We will establish an Academic Plan Implementation Committee that will determine the benchmarks of our progress towards becoming Canada's premier undergraduate university and make an annual report to General Faculties Council and the Board of Governors on the progress made on implementing the recommended priorities in this Plan.

# Looking Forward

What kind of University do we want Mount Royal to be? One thing is certain: the answer to that question lies in our hands. Mount Royal will be the university that we make it.

Academic programs are the core of any university and an academic plan is a blueprint for the future of those programs. This Academic Plan proposes a set of recommended priorities that we believe, when implemented over the next five years, will secure Mount Royal's position as Canada's premier undergraduate university by many measures related to student success and satisfaction.

In particular, if we can establish learning aims and outcomes and establish that our graduates have achieved those outcomes, we will be the leader in undergraduate education in Canada. We need to be sure about what, and how much, Mount Royal students are learning. And we will know that we have succeeded if, indeed, our students are prepared to realise their full potential and leave Mount Royal having learned how to think, learned how to communicate and, most of all, learned how to learn.

# APPENDIX 1: AIMS OF AN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AT MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY

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## Aims of an Undergraduate Education at Mount Royal University<sup>1</sup>

Through all learning experiences, and continuing at successively higher levels across their university studies, we aim to provide students with the following:

### INTELLECTUAL AND PRACTICAL SKILLS

*Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance*

- » Inquiry and Analysis
- » Critical and Creative Thinking
- » Problem Solving
- » Teamwork and Independent Learning
- » Quantitative Reasoning
- » Technological Competence
- » Written and Oral Communication
- » Information Literacy
- » Critical Reading

### INTEGRATIVE AND APPLIED LEARNING

*Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems*

- » Synthesized and Advanced Accomplishment across General and Specialized Studies

### KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN CULTURES AND THE PHYSICAL, NATURAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD

*Focused by engagement with relevant questions*

- » General Education
- » Program-specific Knowledge

### PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

*Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges*

- » Integrity
- » Ethical Reasoning
- » Community Engagement
- » Awareness of and Respect for Diversity
- » Foundational Skills for Self-understanding and Wellness

The four aims above are meant to inform the development of program learning outcomes across the university. Program learning outcomes will be used to construct course learning outcomes for assessment of student learning.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *The Essential Learning Outcomes, Association of American Colleges & Universities, The LEAP Vision for Learning: Outcomes, Practices, Impact, and Employer's Views*, p.7. [http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/EssentialOutcomes\\_Chart.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/EssentialOutcomes_Chart.pdf).

## APPENDIX 2: MEMBERSHIP OF ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

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# Academic Planning Committee Membership: 2010 — 2011

<b>Robin Fisher</b> <i>Provost and Vice-President, Academic</i>	<b>Chair</b>
<b>Jim Zimmer</b> <i>Dean, Faculty of Teaching and Learning</i>	<b>Deans' Council Representative</b>
<b>Chad London</b> <i>Associate Dean, Faculty of Health and Community Studies</i>	<b>Deans' Council Representative</b>
<b>Kori Street</b> <i>Program Chair, Bissett School of Business</i>	<b>Designate of the Chair, General Faculties Council</b>
<b>Elaine Mullen</b> <i>Associate Professor, Academic Development Centre</i>	<b>Faculty member elected by the MRFA</b>
<b>Margy MacMillan</b> <i>Associate Professor, Library</i>	<b>Faculty member elected by General Faculties Council</b>
<b>Sandra Gordon</b> <i>Assistant Professor, School of Nursing</i>	<b>Faculty member elected by General Faculties Council</b>
<b>Evelyn Field</b> <i>Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology</i>	<b>Faculty member appointed by the Chair</b>
<b>Tracy O'Connor</b> <i>Chair, Department of Chemical and Biological Sciences</i>	<b>Faculty member appointed by the Chair</b>
<b>Brian Fleming</b> <i>Vice-President, Student Affairs and Campus Life</i>	<b>Student Affairs and Campus Life Representative</b>
<b>Duane Anderson</b> <i>Associate Vice-President, Finance, Planning and Risk Services</i>	<b>Administrative Services Representative</b>
<b>Lucille Gnanasihamany</b> <i>Director, Marketing</i>	<b>University Advancement, Marketing and Communications Representative</b>
<b>Suzanne Evans</b> <i>Writing and Learning Strategist, Student Learning Services</i>	<b>Staff Member appointed by the MRSSA</b>
<b>Meghan Melnyk</b> <i>President, SAMRU</i>	<b>Student Representative appointed by SAMRU</b>
<b>Jennifer Langille</b> <i>Vice-President, Academic, SAMRU</i>	<b>Student Representative appointed by SAMRU</b>



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