

## The Board of Governors of Mount Royal University Mandate and Roles Document

### Preamble

This Mandate and Roles Document for The Board of Governors of Mount Royal University ("Mount Royal University") has been developed collaboratively between the Minister of Advanced Education ("Minister") and Mount Royal University. This document is in furtherance of the parties' legal obligations under the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* (APAGA) to reflect a common understanding of respective roles and responsibilities in governance of Mount Royal University.

### 1. Mandate

Mount Royal University's mandate is set out in the Investment Management agreement entered into by Mount Royal University and the Minister.

#### 1. Type of Institution, Sector, and Governance

Mount Royal University is a board-governed public post-secondary institution operating in Alberta as an undergraduate university under the authority of the *Post-secondary Learning Act* (PSLA).

#### 2. Outcomes

Mount Royal University has built a reputation on being student-centered and offering a strong, liberal education foundation with an undergraduate focus. Mount Royal University is responsive to the needs of the community through its enduring commitment to providing knowledge and skills to students which, in turn, provide the knowledge, talent and resources necessary to sustain the local and regional economy, to advance the province and to sustain the socio-cultural tapestries of surrounding communities.

Mount Royal University is a vital part of Alberta's higher education system, and offers a rich program mix of undergraduate studies that provide direct pathways into the workforce or to further avenues in higher education such as graduate school. At Mount Royal University, students work directly with their professors, gain practical experience, take carefully constructed general education courses, participate in community-based learning and research and engage with and contribute to the broader community. At Mount Royal University, students' educational experiences are underpinned by the high-quality services needed to ensure their health, well-being, and success.

Mount Royal University also serves its communities by providing non-credit instruction in contract training, professional development, international programming and music instruction.

#### 3. Clients/Students

Mount Royal University serves undergraduate students, youth, adult and life-long learners. Undergraduate programs are primarily of interest to high school graduates and other students within the prime post-secondary demographic. Adults, families and life-long learners are served through youth education, professional development and contract training delivered through Continuing Education and

Extension. Students of all ages also benefit from the internationally recognized Conservatory music programming.

#### **4. Geographic Service Area and Type of Delivery**

Mount Royal University is located in Calgary, Alberta, Canada and delivers the majority of its programming at a main campus located in south-west Calgary, with an Aviation program delivered at the Springbank airport. The majority of Mount Royal University's students originate from Calgary and surrounding regions.

Mount Royal University also serves a wider learner population provincially, nationally and internationally through face-to-face and distance delivery and through partnerships with other post-secondary institutions in our province. Mount Royal University serves its communities by creating and communicating knowledge and by meeting the needs of the labour market in fields related to its program areas.

#### **5. Program Mandates and Credentials Offering**

Mount Royal University offers a wide range of programs in arts, business, communications, health, community, education, science and technology. The Mount Royal University's offerings align with the Alberta Credential Framework and include certificates, diplomas, post-diploma certificates, post-bachelor's certificates, bachelor's degrees and foundational learning.

Mount Royal University plays a pivotal role in the Campus Alberta system. As an undergraduate university, Mount Royal University is both a sending and receiving institution for student transfer and is committed to developing and maintaining partnerships with institutions within the Campus Alberta system.

#### **6. Special Program Areas/Areas of Specialization**

Mount Royal University supports scholarly activity that contributes to instructional excellence and to the cultural, social and economic well-being of communities.

Mount Royal University advances program offerings by building new undergraduate degrees and majors and by expanding a core suite of diplomas and certificates that are driven by student and labour market demands. General Education is a signature component of all Mount Royal University degree and diploma programs and serves as a launching pad for many minors. Unique to an institution of Mount Royal University's size in Canada, the General Education core is designed to equip students with a range of perspectives and skills to complement any specialization.

Mount Royal University offers specialized programs including the Bachelor of Interior Design, Bachelor of Midwifery, Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, Bachelor of Communication with distinct majors in Broadcast Media Studies, Information Design, Journalism and Public Relations, Aviation Diploma, Advanced Studies in Critical Care Nursing Certificate, Bridge to Canadian Nursing Certificate, Indigenous University Bridging Program, International Pathway Program, and Transitional Vocational Program.

#### **7. System Collaboration and Partnerships**

As an undergraduate university, Mount Royal University collaborates with other post-secondary institutions and Campus Alberta sectors to support regional access to undergraduate degree programming. Mount Royal University is committed to transfer and mobility within the Campus Alberta

system and maintains a focus on increasing the depth and breadth of transfer agreements available through the Alberta Council for Admissions and Transfer (ACAT).

## **8. Research and Scholarly Activities**

The Mount Royal University learning community strives for excellence through the nexus of scholarly teaching and diverse research with a strong emphasis on liberal education in an undergraduate context. Our faculty pursue research and scholarship to advance and apply knowledge as well as to enhance the quality of teaching through thoughtful integration of research and scholarship into the tenure of all students. Mount Royal University values research and scholarship across the full spectrum of creative, disciplinary, interdisciplinary, professional and applied realms. Mount Royal is committed to community-based research and strongly values partnerships with Indigenous communities.

Research and scholarship at Mount Royal University is enhanced through the leadership of its institutes and centres. The research capacity is augmented through the acquisition of external grants, scholarly partnerships and the growth of research chairs. Mount Royal University values the quality and impact of scholarly activity over purely quantitative counts of output.

## **9. System Mandate**

Mount Royal University is committed to doing its part to rebuild the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Calgary and across the country by fostering student success and focusing on activities that respond to the Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Addressing the prevalence of sexual violence experienced by students who attend post-secondary institutions is a priority for Mount Royal University, through delivery of impactful and effective prevention, education and awareness initiatives, provision of support to victims and survivors of sexual violence, policies, and procedures that take a trauma-informed and survivor-centered approach.

At Mount Royal University, student mental health issues are addressed through a whole campus approach that seeks to impact health and well-being at both the individual and the environmental level.

Mount Royal University emphasizes crisis management, accessible services, self-management competencies and coping skills, community capacity to respond to early indicators of concern, mental health awareness, a supportive and inclusive campus climate and environment and supportive institutional structures.

At Mount Royal University, international opportunities include field schools, study abroad exchanges and international work experiences to expand students' skills and experiences and boost their future employability. Mount Royal University will increase its international focus to enable a greater number of students from all over the world to experience a Mount Royal education, enabling domestic students to interact with international students resulting in a greater exposure to diversity on campus.

Mount Royal University students are supported by a range of services that contribute to academic, social and personal development. Student supports include transitional and experiential learning, student leadership and development, learning support and health and wellness.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

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### **The Board**

The Board manages and operates the institution in accordance with its mandate and carries out the other duties and responsibilities legislated by the PSLA.

The Board sets strategic direction and monitors implementation.

The Board participates with the Minister in setting its long-term objectives and short-term targets, if any.

### **Board Members**

All board members, regardless of the manner of their appointment, have the fiduciary duty to act in the best interest of the institution.

### **Board Chair**

The Chair is the interface between Mount Royal University and the Minister and provides leadership to the Board.

### **President**

The President has general supervision over the direction of the operation of the institution and has other powers, duties, and functions that are assigned to the President by the Board.

### **Minister of Advanced Education**

The Minister is responsible for the performance of all public agencies under Advanced Education, including Mount Royal University.

The Minister's responsibilities are legislated by the PSLA and includes:

- appointing, or recommending the appointment of, the Board members and the Chair;
- monitoring whether the institution is acting within its mandate and achieving its long-term objectives and short-term targets;
- advising the institution respecting any government policies applicable to the institution or its activities or operations; and
- reviewing the mandate and operations of the institution at least every seven years.

### **Department of Advanced Education**

The Department supports the Minister and Mount Royal University in meeting their legislated responsibilities.

### **Subsidiaries**

The University has one subsidiary, the **Mount Royal University Foundation**

#### **1. Roles and responsibilities in respect of recruitment**

The Mount Royal University Foundation Board has two Committees: Governance and Finance. The Governance Committee is responsible for the recruitment of new Foundation Board members. Recruitment is informed by a biannual assessment of existing skill sets and networks of current Foundation Board members, and a gap analysis identifies the strengths needed at any given time. This enables the Governance Committee to ensure the right balance is achieved on the Foundation Board of Directors.

## **2. Orientation and training of members**

Each new Foundation Board member is required to participate in a half-day (or so) orientation session, which includes an overview of the work of the Foundation, presented by the Executive Director of the Foundation, and the University's Vice-President University Advancement.

Included with this orientation session is a tour of campus with particular emphasis on various funding priorities as identified by the Foundation staff and reviewed by the Foundation Board.

The entire Foundation Board also participates in an annual planning retreat, at which Mount Royal University priorities are presented.

## **3. Communication with the public**

Only the Executive Director, working with the University and MRU Executives, would make or send formal communications to the public (donors or prospects).

## **4. Evaluation of the public agency's and its Board members' performance**

The Foundation Board Chair, in coordination with the Governance Committee, meets annually one-on-one with each member of the Foundation Board. This meeting includes a review of the position profile for Foundation Board members and an assessment of each member's interest and contribution to the efforts of the Foundation.

Foundation Board terms are three years each with a maximum appointment of two terms. At the end of each member's first term, a review takes place with that member and a discussion takes place to consider reappointment for a second term.

## **3. Accountability Relationships of the Public Agency**

The flow of accountability relationships at the agency is as follows:

- The President is accountable to the Board.
- The Board is accountable to the Minister through the Chair.
- The Chair is accountable to the Minister for the mandate and conduct of the public agency.

## **4. Process for Administering the Code of Conduct**

Mount Royal University's Code of Conduct is reviewed and approved by the Ethics Commissioner, and the Board ratifies and makes public the Code of Conduct. Updates to the Code of Conduct are submitted to the Ethics Commissioner for review. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee administers the Code of Conduct for the Board Chair.

## **5. Mutual Expectations – Communication, Collaboration, and Consultation**

The relationship between Mount Royal University and the provincial government is an important one. Boards are accountable to the Minister, who has primary responsibility for the PSLA.

The Minister oversees strategic planning and direction setting for Alberta's advanced learning system, policy development, funding for general operations and specific purposes, and the promotion of transparency and accountability. The Minister is responsible for providing clear mandate direction to boards, establishing clear expectations for oversight and accountability, and for participating in an ongoing dialogue with boards on important issues.

The board has a governance oversight role in relation to the institution it governs. Because the chair serves as the voice of the board, and is directly accountable to the Minister, the relationship between the Minister and the chair is critical.

Other officials, such as the Deputy Minister who oversees the operations of Advanced Education, will typically be in closer contact with institution presidents and vice-presidents. Similarly, department staff may be in regular contact with staff of the institutions on areas of mutual interests.

## **6. Committee Structure**

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Committees of the Board include:

- Audit and Risk Committee – Assists the Board in fulfilling its fiduciary oversight responsibilities relating to accounting and control, reporting, and risk management practices.
- Campus Development Committee – Provides oversight of the University's buildings, facilities and infrastructure to meet the educational, environmental, social, cultural and economic needs of Mount Royal University.
- Finance Committee – Assists the Board in fulfilling its fiduciary oversight responsibilities with respect to the financial resources of the University.
- Governance and Nominating Committee – Assists the Board to improve its effectiveness, advising the Board regarding governance matters, assisting the Board in developing policies, nominating and recommending potential members for vacancies on the Board, and recommending Board Committee appointments to the Board.
- Human Resources Committee - Provides oversight of matters pertaining to personnel.

## **7. Financial, Staffing, and Administrative Arrangements**

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Mount Royal University receives funding from the Government of Alberta via its Operating and Program Support Grant.

The Auditor General is the auditor of Mount Royal University.

Mount Royal University is subject to sections 1, 2(5), 5, 6, 7, 13(3), 57.1, 80, and 81 of the *Financial Administration Act*.

While the PSLA gives the Board of Governors broad authority to appoint employees, the President is the only employee that reports to and is directly accountable to the Board.

Compensation of senior executives is determined by the Board in accordance with any legislation, policies or guidelines governing compensation applicable to the institution as a public agency.

## **8. Planning and Reporting Requirements**

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The Board is required to enter into an Investment Management Agreement with the Minister that includes

- the mandate of the institution,
- performance metrics for the institution, and
- anything else determined by the Minister.

Annually, Mount Royal University provides the Department with a Capital Plan and a Budget Plan.

Each year the Board must prepare and submit to the Minister a report that includes the audited financial statements for the preceding year.

The Board is also required under the PSLA to submit to the Minister any reports or other information required by the Minister.

## **9. Administration**

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### **Three Year Renewal or Revision**

The Mandate and Roles Document must be reviewed and renewed, amended or replaced within three years after the day on which the document or the most recent amendment to the document was signed.

### **Transparency**

Copies of the Mandate and Roles Document will be filed with the Minister and the Public Agency Secretariat. This document will also be made publicly available on the Board's website and the Government of Alberta's website.

His Majesty in right of Alberta, as represented by the Minister of Advanced Education

The Board of Governors of Mount Royal University

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The Honourable Rajan Sawhney  
Minister of Advanced Education

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Chris Lee  
Board Chair

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Date

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Date