

# Student Affairs and Campus Life

2018-2019 Annual Report









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## **Message from the Vice-President**

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Dear Students, Faculty, Staff, and Friends:

The Vice-President's Advisory Committee in Student Affairs and Campus Life (SACL) at Mount Royal University (MRU) is proud to present our 2018-19 annual report. The report highlights strategic initiatives and departmental accomplishments. I would like to extend my thanks to the commitment and contributions from everyone who was involved in the accomplishments highlighted in this annual report.

We made significant progress on several strategic initiatives, completing fourteen in total since our plan was implemented. Year four of our five-year Divisional Strategic Plan is complete, and we are in the process of finalizing the remaining six strategic initiatives. Our strategies will continue to focus on enhancing the learning experiences of our students and ensuring our employees are equipped to meet the challenges of our ever-diversifying student population. To that end, our goals will address the supports students need to thrive and succeed academically and as individuals.

The academic year concluded on a high note with Mount Royal University being the host institutional partner for the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS) annual conference, MOH-KINS-TSIS, in Calgary, Alberta. MOH-KINS-TSIS is the traditional Blackfoot word for elbow. The Blackfoot People refer to Calgary as the location where the Elbow River meets the Bow River, a place where people meet to share knowledge. This is what the conference provided - a means to share knowledge and learn from one another. I would like to thank CACUSS, the host committee, and all our MRU volunteers for providing leadership in making this conference such a huge success.

I look forward to more cross-institutional collaborations and am confident we are well positioned as a division and as an institution for any challenges and opportunities that may lie ahead in the next academic year. Our current and future planning will guide us toward a common purpose: to support students on their academic journey as they experience, learn and grow.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Fitterer', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Steve Fitterer  
Vice-President, Student Affairs and Campus Life









## SACL Strategic Plan

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### **VISION**

An exceptional undergraduate educational experience.

### **MISSION**

Student Affairs and Campus Life promotes students' success in their academics, careers and lives. We foster well-rounded citizens by providing an inclusive and holistic learning environment.

### **GOALS**

#### **Academic Success**

- Empower students to achieve their academic goals.

#### **Community**

- Maximize the sense of belonging, meaningful inclusion and engagement of students and employees in a vibrant campus community while engaging our broader community.

#### **Citizenship**

- Foster holistic student development for engaged citizenship.

#### **Wellness**

- Promote a healthy environment to support individual and community well-being.

## Divisional Strategies

### Accomplishments

**Strategy:** Create an experiential learning recognition program to help students identify and articulate competencies acquired in SACL student development opportunities.

**Result:** Developed and facilitated a common training program based on a new leadership framework for student leaders across the division to help them identify student leadership competencies.

**Result:** Created a toolkit based on a new student leadership framework for coordinators to use with student leaders to help them articulate leadership competencies practiced during their student leadership experiences.

**Result:** Conducted focus groups to determine what students want regarding recognition in their specific student leadership role.

**Strategy:** Offer more (or expand on) programs and services to the public to increase their participation in SACL programs and services.

**Result:** Developed a procedural document outlining publicly available services to enhance current community engagement programming and to support internal/external communication of revenue generating activities.



**Strategy:** Offer programs and services that promote a positive sense of community amongst employees.

**Result:** Based on results from the 2017 CCDI Census and Inclusion Survey and employee focus groups, recommendations were developed that identify areas where educational awareness and training is needed to build community among employees in the division.

**Strategy:** Create more opportunities for students to stay on campus to increase the continuity of their university experience.

**Result:** Developed focus group protocol and have begun engaging commuter students to gather feedback to understand what contributes to their sense of belonging, their involvement on campus and whether there is a need for additional supports.

**Strategy:** Strategically partner with external organizations to impact individual and community well-being.

**Result:** Compiled inventory of external partnerships that affect individual and community well-being and developed recommendations for SACL to consider when starting new partnerships.

**Strategy:** Create programming to expose students to diverse perspectives.

**Result:** Engaged student leadership to educate them about Changemaking.

**Result:** Recognized current activities that expose students to diverse perspectives and identified gaps in current programming. Next stage is to leverage current programming to address these gaps.



# Accessibility Services

## Mission Statement

Accessibility Services facilitates reasonable academic accommodations for students experiencing disability related barriers. We encourage student development and partner with the Mount Royal community to become a more accessible, equitable and inclusive learning environment.

## Strategic Initiatives

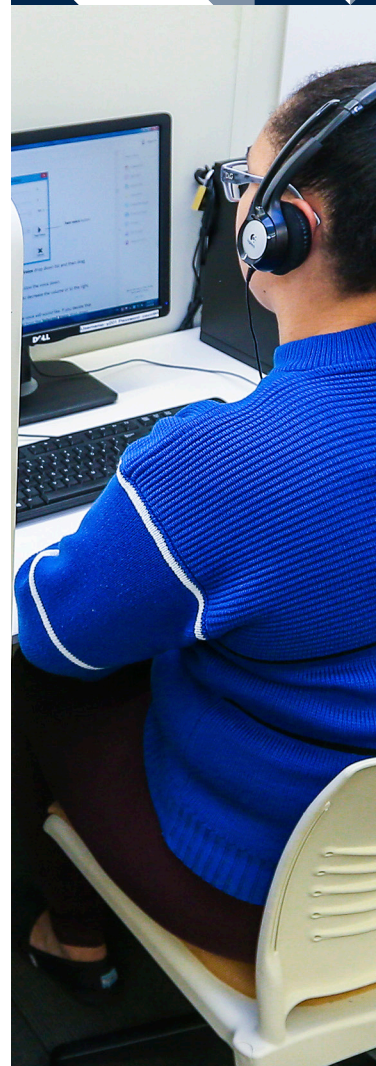
- Designed and delivered Universal Design professional development workshops and presentations to Student Affairs and Campus Life staff and the University Leadership Group.
- Designed and delivered Faculty Rights and Responsibilities workshop at Mount Royal Faculty Association (MRFA) 2019 Spring Retreat.
- Analyzed and presented Accessibility Services research project findings (presented at CACUSS and Celebrate! conferences).
- Reviewed and prioritized recommendations outlined in EAB “Exam Accommodation and Invigilation Services at Canadian Universities” report.

## Highlights

- 7,739 accommodated exams written, a 5% increase from the previous year.
- Implemented permanent Academic Strategist program that resulted in a 10% increase in students served.
- Implemented Accommodate database software.
- Piloted NetSupport invigilation software.
- Developed and facilitated all 2018/19 Employee Development Committee professional development sessions.
- Developed and facilitated numerous presentations on Accessibility Services research project.

75% of students who responded to our Front Desk Customer Survey described the front desk and exam service as “friendly” and “helpful”.

100% of students who attended “Talking to Your Professors” workshops indicated that attending the workshop made them feel much more confident talking to their professors about their academic accommodations.







"My mentor helped me find the right resources to transition into university smoothly, resources that are not only beneficial to my academic habits and success but to my mental health and growth as an individual. The MAPS program had a very positive and profound impact on my life and I will always be grateful for that."

- MAPS Mentee

## Student Learning Services

### Mission Statement

Student Learning Services is a dynamic, relevant and student-centred department focused on creating integral learning experiences to develop self-directed learners. The skills, competencies and strategies students acquire by participating in our programs are contributing directly to their academic success and sense of community at MRU.

### Strategic Initiatives

- Embedded foundational skills and success factors for students in first and second year degree programs.
- Implemented more peer-to-peer programming to promote student success and increase student confidence, leadership and experiential learning.
- Offered programs and services that increase students' and employees' sense of belonging and participation.

### Highlights

- Research by MRU Associate Professor Leah Hamilton et al. on the Harry G. Schaefer Mentorship Program was published in the International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education in March 2019 and highlights students' gains in job search self-efficacy and mentees' psychological sense of community.
- Math Learning Strategist designed and delivered two new open workshops "Get Ready for Math" and "Problem-Solving for Math"; and collaborated with faculty from GNED 1101 to deliver workshops for logic, number systems, personal finance, and statistics sections of the course.
- Academic Success Workshops attendance increased 32% from 1,732 students in Fall 2017 to 2,278 in Fall 2018 and 29% from 683 students in Winter 2017 to 880 students in Winter 2019.
- 30 faculty members from a wide range of departments offered students course credit to attend workshops, demonstrating their support for Student Learning Services.
- Writing and Learning Strategists collaborated with faculty in BIOL 3203, NURS 2216, and UGST 1001, designing new models of service, increasing support for group writing assignments, and moving us towards achieving the goals of our Integrated Model of Service.
- 121 students volunteered as Learning Peers this past year. We expanded our options for ongoing training to include topics in three main areas: Lead, Learn, and Leverage.
- 64 peer mentors volunteered this past year for Mentors: Academic & Personal Success (MAPS) Peer Mentorship Program and were matched with 134 mentees.
- 95% of MAPS mentees and mentors strongly agreed or agree that the MAPS Peer Mentorship Program increased their sense of belonging at MRU.

# Career Services

## Mission Statement

Career Services provides opportunities for students to clarify, experience and achieve their career and employment goals. Career Services values diversity in academic and workplace settings and strives toward reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities.

## Strategic Initiatives

- Provided our students with an opportunity to become deeply engaged in their educational experience, preparing them for personal and career success.
- Students will participate in at least one high impact or capstone work integrated learning experience during their time at Mount Royal.

## Highlights

- Secured 725 student work term placements, a 15% increase from last year.
- Created a drop-in service called the Career Doctor, which served 76 students in its first year.
- Created 148 new employer partnerships.
- Added a new Volunteer and Recruitment Fair with 55 organizations in attendance.
- Secured funding in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts to extend the pilot project for the Arts with a Career Development Coordinator providing support to arts students for an additional year.
- Enhanced employer engagement on campus by hosting 5 recruitment fairs with a total attendance of 6,200 students and 165 partner companies.
- 843 students and graduates received personalized 1-on-1 appointments with career coordinators.
- Completed over 668 resume, cover letter and portfolio critiques for students and graduates.
- Facilitated 99 career-focused workshops reaching 2,503 students.
- 490 students successfully completed the Work Term Preparation Course.

"I believe all students should participate in the Co-op program because the skills you learn are incredibly useful and will help you for the rest of your working life."

- Co-op Student

"I want to share that the Policy Studies internship at MRU makes the program very competitive.

I can easily say that MRU students have an advantage in practical skills and quantitative analysis."

- Policy Studies employer partner







## The Iniskim Centre

### Mission Statement

The Iniskim Centre offers programs and services to increase the engagement and success of Indigenous students while raising awareness of Indigenous peoples and cultures. Mount Royal University is located on the traditional lands of the Blackfoot people, the Niitsitapi. The centre recognizes and respects the diversity of all Indigenous peoples of Canada. The centre also increases the awareness of distinct Indigenous cultures, history and protocols across the University.

### Strategic Initiatives

- Sponsored the 2019 Indspire Awards and Gala, as well as Soaring, the associated conference for students.
- Medicine Trail Coordinator provided leadership with CACUSS 2019 on the opening reception and ceremonies, designed the travelling acknowledgement, connected with elders, drummers and dancers, and painted the artwork used for the lanyards.
- Indigenous Housing Program received a generous donation from David and Leslie Bisset to expand to eight family friendly units and provide housing bursaries for families.
- Received grant from Imperial Oil Resources for the Medicine Trail Program to support work with community elders, ceremonies, and cultural activities sponsored by the Iniskim Centre.

### Highlights

- Held Blackfoot Naming Ceremony for MRU alumni and former professional wrestler Bret Hart.
- Offered Indigenous professional development to the University Strategic Council (USC) in partnership with the Office of Academic Indigenization (OAI) at Brown Bear Memorial Park in T'suutina lead by Bruce Starlight.
- Celebrated the 141st anniversary of the signing of Treaty 7 (iinistsi 141) with the opening of the new installation at MRU called Inni Awatto (Buffalo on the Move) and a Wellness Centre Mural.
- Prairie Child Welfare Consortium, Indigenous Scholars and Allies Gathered at the Future of Child Welfare Conference in Calgary, which included a ceremony provided by a partnership with MRU Social Work and the University of Calgary.
- Partnered with Richard Foggo's Child Studies Capstone Course for Orange shirt day where student volunteers distributed Every Child Matters buttons, streamed the story of Phyllis Webstad to educate students, staff, and community members, hosted a screening of the movie Indian Horse, and held a recognition and honouring of the Fallen Feathers Memorial.
- Partnered with Child Studies, Social Work, OAI, and Student Association of MRU (SAMRU) to host Dr. Raven Sinclair, who presented "Enlightenment from a History of Trauma".
- Partnered with OAI, SAMRU, Campus Equity and Meaningful Inclusion (CEMI), and the Office of the Provost for the Decolonize event held for students and staff to engage with Indigenous scholars along with information booths on campus.
- Steve Kootenay-Jobin honoured as the recipient of the 2019 Chief David Crowchild Memorial Award on June 20, 2019 and profiled on CTV Calgary in the segment Inspiring Calgarians.

"I was always encouraging my mentee to try hard, and reminded them to be kind to themselves so they could be to others.

She was kinder to herself, but I also learned to follow my own advice."

- BMO Indigenous Peer Mentor

## Wellness Services

### Mission Statement

Wellness Services promotes individual and campus well-being by empowering the MRU community to create a place where people can learn, work, play, love, and live well.

### Strategic Initiatives

- Formed new collaborations and helped ensure appropriate inclusive supports for International, Indigenous, and LGBTQ2S+ students.
- Renewed focus on revenue generation for Optimal Therapy.
- Involved in regional and provincial initiatives: Calgary Post-Secondary Mental Health Regional Committee, Alberta Health Services' Health Advisory Council for Prairie Mountain, Alberta Health Services' Strategic Clinical Network on Indigenous Health, Alberta Post-Secondary Health Association, and Healthy Campus Alberta.
- Involved in national initiatives: 2019 Canadian NCHA Working Group, Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey Technical Advisory Committee, Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network, and Post-Secondary Education Partnership on Reducing Alcohol Harms.

### Highlights

- Stepping Up received the 2018 Inspiration Award for Leadership in Family Violence Prevention from the Government of Alberta. This award "recognizes individuals, organizations or businesses who are working to prevent sexual violence and/or promote healthy relationships."
- LGBTQ2S+ consultations led to a counsellor being in the Pride Centre each week, Wellness Services staff participating in specific professional development related to LGBTQ2S+ health, and pronouns being included on business cards, door placards, and in presentations.
- Implemented a centralized and streamlined department assessment database.
- Long-time Health Services' physician, Dr. Whitehead, retired, and Health Services welcomed new clinic physician Dr. Rittberg. Dr. Rittberg performs Intrauterine Device (IUD) insertions, which helps support sexual health, as IUDs are an increasingly popular birth control choice.
- Launched the Wellness Services Personal Skills Development and Building Capacity Certificate Program.
- Administered the 2019 National College Health Assessment survey with a response rate of 33%. The results help inform wellness programming and services throughout campus.
- Optimal Therapy established a preferred provider relationship with the Canadian Armed Forces - Calgary for physiotherapy services.
- Collaboratively created a mental health video on the value of seeking support on campus, presented it at the Crowchild Classic hockey games; it played to over 10,000 attendees and was widely shared on social media.
- The September launch of the Wellness Services Instagram account grew to 364 followers.

The implementation of walk-in blocks in Student Counselling Services resulted in a 40% reduction in the number of unused student counselling appointments due to cancellation or no-shows.

"I would like to thank every one of you that made this possible; it was something that made me feel less lonely and more welcome."

- Student participant in International Student Kitchen, provided in partnership with Residence Services and International Education.







## Residence Services

### Mission Statement

Residence Services is committed to be the place MRU students want to live, supported by our non-student guests and groups to keep student costs as low as possible. Centered on student success, we strive to be respectful and inclusive, provide authentic leadership, demonstrate professionalism and responsiveness, and collaborate with campus partners.

### Strategic Initiatives

- Increased collaboration with campus services to better support students, including increased presence of other services during student staff training.
- Reviewed and revised our lifecycle plan to better respond to maintenance needs.
- Continued to revise and implement the departmental assessment plan to allow for quicker responses to concerns and ensure budget funds go to areas in most need of attention.
- Engaged with our first strategic plan strategy (safe environment) by reviewing and revising the action plans associated with this goal.

### Highlights

- Increased satisfaction with Residence Advisor (RA) training as well as increased cross-programming with other campus departments, including Wellness Services and Career Services.
- Addressed several items within our lifecycle plan, including furnace replacements, roof repairs, elevator and server room AC, East door frame replacements, and office carpeting.
- Completed major renovations in East residence, including replacement of every furnace with higher efficiency models.
- Addressed several safety issues determined by past walkthroughs with Security and Risk Management; future walkthroughs planned to determine any other issues that need attention.
- Centralized move-in using Recreation entryway and concourse with other campus partners had 95% of students strongly agree/agree the move-in experience was easy and straightforward.
- Increased use of data to support marketing efforts.
- Approved plan to implement full gender-inclusive housing for Fall 2019.

85% of students responding to our exit surveys said they would recommend living in residence to others.

"It is a good experience as you have the opportunity to connect with people you would have otherwise not known."

- MRU Student Resident

# Cougars Athletics and Recreation

## Mission Statement

We actively create, promote and sustain an environment in which our community is challenged and supported in pursuit of personal growth in the areas of Athletics and Recreation.

## Strategic Initiatives

- Implemented Parking with Membership program to encourage broader community engagement.
- Developed Student Program Coordinator (SPC) framework for all areas in Cougars Athletics and Recreation to increase the number of students in SACL leadership roles.
- Created meaningful collaborations with internal stakeholders to maximize the sense of belonging, meaningful inclusion and engagement.

## Highlights

- Recognized outstanding performances on and off the playing surface for the first time at our annual Cougars Night awards/celebration event.
- Continued to grow Student Program Coordinator program by intentionally providing transformation leadership opportunities that develop key competencies.
- Partnered with Business and Retail Services to remove parking constraints for annual and continuous members to increase revenue for both areas by providing a Parking with Membership program.
- Increased participation in staff drop-in sports over the noon hour by promoting staff sports schedule and designating facility space for these activities.
- Personal Fitness Trainer Diploma program worked closely with our Personal Training program to provide practicum opportunities for students during the Fall and Winter terms, which resulted in approximately 10 students completing their practicums with Cougars Athletics and Recreation, the most to date.
- Increased Indigenous students participating in Intramurals through a collaboration with the Iniskim Centre that provided Pow Wow Fit with discounted memberships to these students.
- 25 students were enrolled in the Steps to Wellbeing Program, with 22 successfully completing the program over the course of fall and winter semesters.
- Seven of the eight varsity programs qualified for Canada West playoff action, with the Men's Volleyball Team having qualified for USPORTS National Championship with a sixth-place finish.
- Executed Recreation Membership campaign in our surrounding communities with great success, resulting in three times a return on investment.
- 11,039 fans were entertained at 85 varsity games, 2,568 of which were members of the MRU Community.
- Seventh Annual Crowchild Classic event at the Scotiabank Saddledome sold 13,988 tickets and had 11,490 in attendance.

41% of our student-athlete body were honoured as USPORTS Academic All Canadians, one of the highest percentages in all of USPORTS. Criteria: 80% or better GPA in the previous academic year as a qualified USPORTS student-athlete

"I have been a member for 10+ years and think the facility and staff are great."

- Student Club Participant







## Campus Equity and Meaningful Inclusion

### Mission Statement

The Office of Campus Equity & Meaningful Inclusion supports Mount Royal's vision and mission by fostering an equitable and meaningfully inclusive campus for all members of the Mount Royal community. We recognize that inequities in opportunities and access to education caused by historical and ongoing oppression and marginalization exist. Being equitable means we work to address and correct the imbalances. Being meaningfully inclusive means we understand, identify and address barriers to full participation in the campus community.

### Strategic Initiatives

- Created and sustained a safe, supportive and welcoming learning, living and working environment for students and employees of all social identities.
- Integrated education and training for students and employees regarding equity issues within curriculum, pedagogy and the broader learning environment.
- Supported the recruitment, admission/hiring, retention, graduation/promotion of a diverse workforce and student body.

### Highlights

- Hired a new Inclusive Education Specialist, who worked with approximately 1,500 MRU students and employees in providing inclusive education workshops.
- 1,750 students, staff, faculty and members of the broader community have received face-to-face information in the form of workshops, presentations and training on dating, domestic and/or sexual violence.
- Provided new inclusive spaces: Ablution (Wudu) Stations, Parent Room and a new location for the Campus Equity and Meaningful Inclusion department.
- Pride Committee brought Calgary's first-ever permanent Pride crosswalk to MRU.
- Sexual Violence Response & Awareness Coordinator collaborated with an Advocate to facilitate First Responder to Sexual Assault and Sexual Abuse training.
- Inclusive Education Specialist provided training for the Vice-Provost and AVP Academic Search Committee and sat on 6 academic search committees.
- Hosted a Chitenge Story, an autobiographical stage performance of one woman's healing from the trauma of childhood sexual abuse from a New Canadian perspective, experienced by close to 200 audience members.
- Created Community of Newcomers programming in response to student needs.
- Implemented new case management system for human rights advising to better identify patterns and inform educational programming.
- Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination & Harassment in Higher Education (CAPDDHE) re-elected and elected two members from the CEMI team as executive members.

"Thank you for your amazing workshop [and] for blessing us with your brilliant presence. I have loved my time at MRU. However, I never really felt represented as a brown woman, until I met you and saw you doing outstanding work on campus. Thank you for sitting down with us and listening."

- Participant, Student leader

96% of surveyed participants reported an increase in confidence in responding to a disclosure of sexual violence after the Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Assault workshop.







**#WeAreTheCougars**

