

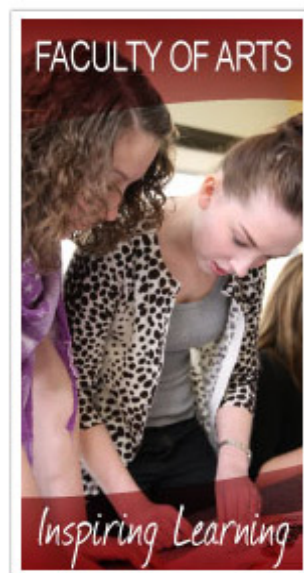


**MOUNT ROYAL**  
UNIVERSITY  
1910

---

## **Strategic Plan**

**2013-2018**



## Table of Contents

<b>1. Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
2.1. Operationalizing and Reporting .....	4
2.2. Identity, Values and the Importance of Arts .....	5
2.3. Planning Process .....	6
2.4. Institutional Context.....	7
<b>3. Reallocating Resources</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>4. Teaching</b> .....	<b>10</b>
4.1. Holistic Assessment .....	10
4.2. Covering Introductory and Senior Courses .....	10
4.3. Pedagogical Innovation through List A.....	11
4.4. International Field Schools.....	11
4.5. Teaching Exchanges.....	11
<b>5. Research</b> .....	<b>12</b>
5.1. Tri-Council Funding .....	12
5.2. Faculty-Directed Student Research.....	14
5.3. Research Space .....	14
5.4. Conference Travel .....	14
5.5. Partnerships with the University of Calgary.....	14
5.6. IT support .....	14
5.7. Arts Research Committee .....	15
5.8. Celebrating Research .....	15
<b>6. Service</b> .....	<b>16</b>
6.1. Efficiencies .....	16
6.2. Service during Intersession .....	17
<b>7. Student Service &amp; Satisfaction</b> .....	<b>18</b>
7.1. Factors that Help or Hinder Student Success .....	18
7.2. Rewarding Success and Enhancing Support.....	18
7.3. Responding to Student Needs.....	19
<b>8. Program Review</b> .....	<b>20</b>
8.1. CAQC Requirements.....	21
<b>9. Program Development</b> .....	<b>22</b>
9.1. Open Studies and University Entrance Option .....	22
9.2. “Undeclared” Arts Students .....	22
9.3. Low Enrolled Programs .....	23
9.4. Enrolment Services and Marketing .....	23
9.5. Transfer Opportunities.....	23
9.6. Evaluating New Majors .....	23
<b>10. Funding</b> .....	<b>27</b>
10.1. Bachelor of Interior Design .....	27
10.2. Interdisciplinary Chair in Teaching and Research on Resource Management and Policy.....	27
10.3. Centre for Excellence on Teaching and Research on Aboriginal Issues .....	28
10.4. Psychology Innovation Lab.....	28
10.5. Writers in Residence Program and the <i>Centennial Reader</i> .....	28
10.6. Donations for Service Learning Opportunities.....	28
10.7. Language Labs .....	29
<b>11. Space Allocation and Future Expansion</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>12. Outreach</b> .....	<b>31</b>
12.1. Arts Advisory Board and Alumni Chapters .....	31
12.2. Publicizing Achievements .....	31
12.3. Web Presence .....	32
12.4. Awards and Events.....	33
12.5. Promotional Material.....	33
12.6. Outreach to Aboriginal Communities.....	33
<b>13. Recognition</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>14. Summary</b> .....	<b>36</b>

# 1. Executive Summary

---

The Faculty of Arts Strategic Plan covers the period from May 2013 to May 2018. It was achieved through a wide consultation process involving Arts Faculty Council and Dean's Advisory Group, town halls, department assemblies and subcommittees on "Outreach," "Teaching," "Research," and "Governance and Recognition." In part, it is devised to address an upcoming period of significant budget constraint.

At an institutional level, Arts will advocate for the devolution of resources from Central Administration to the Faculty and its departments, in the belief that individual units are better placed to implement focused and effective initiatives. Within the Faculty itself, Arts will ensure proper support for the successful review of its existing majors; lobby for a larger student intake into the Bachelor of Arts by converting Open Studies and University Entrance Option seats; reduce the number of undeclared students in Arts; pursue program restructuring where necessary; and improve marketing.

Areas for growth within the Faculty of Arts include converting the current three-year Bachelor of Applied Interior Design into a four-year Bachelor of Interior Design. Should resources allow, Arts will consider new majors. Some areas suggested as possible domains for expansion include Philosophy, Women's Studies, Religious Studies, Business and Economics, Design Studies, Environmental Humanities and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. Part of the strategy will be identification of funding for the BA in Interior Design, a Psychology Innovation Lab, a Centre of Excellence on Teaching and Research on Aboriginal Issues, an Interdisciplinary Chair on Teaching and Research on Resource Management and Policy, updated language labs, and to ensure the long-term viability of the Writers in Residence program and the *Centennial Reader*.

Community engagement is a priority. Initiatives here will include the creation of a Faculty advisory board; lobbying for a shared Communications Officer position; developing dynamic Faculty and department websites; and creating new promotional material. The goal of increased Aboriginal enrollment will involve coordination with the Iniskim Centre and enrollment services on outreach initiatives; attracting speakers; incorporating Aboriginal learning styles; and establishing awards to promote Aboriginal success.

Other goals include establishing an annual lecture and award ceremony; expanding work with alumni; creating a certificate in Service Learning; establishing a branch of Discovery University; and doubling student participation in Co-op. Emphasis will be placed on teaching innovation through support for nuanced approaches towards assessment and developing pedagogical initiatives with wide impact. Scholarship will be encouraged through efforts to improve seed funding, conference travel, faculty and student space, grant applications, faculty-supported

student research, and IT support for research. A partnership will be pursued with the University of Calgary Press for a MRU series. Additionally, a new Arts Research Committee will assess needs and monitor progress.

Service efficiencies will be undertaken through department audits to direct administrative release time to address greatest need, and, where possible, by reducing the frequency and intensity of committee work and reports. A strategy will be developed to increase student success by reducing dropout rates, polling senior students and improving links to high schools. This will be supported by exploring the creation of a fund to assist with student research and by establishing an interdisciplinary peer-reviewed undergraduate Arts journal.

By 2018, the Faculty of Arts wants to be widely known for its active, enthusiastic, and productive teacher-scholars; the quality and range of its academic programs; and the continued success of Arts students in becoming engaged citizens in their communities.

## 2. Introduction

---

This plan is a visioning document, setting out common aspirations for the 2013-18 period. Its overall goal is to position the Faculty of Arts as central to the transformation of Alberta's newest university into Canada's premiere undergraduate university. The key components to this goal are establishing a national reputation for excellence in teaching and scholarship grounded in a spirit of innovation.

In developing this plan, care was taken to ensure that it aligns with other key institutional documents, namely Mount Royal's guiding principles, its most current institutional plan, academic plan, student services plan, international plan, and research services plan.

This document comes at a critical time in Mount Royal's history. The past decade has witnessed the institution galvanized around the goal of transforming from a college with applied degrees and university transfer credits into an AUCC-accredited baccalaureate university. Now that this is complete, and the first rollout of four-year degrees has occurred, the question is: "now what?"

Mount Royal's institutional principles advance the ideals of citizenship, putting students first, valuing experiential education, demonstrating outcomes, and advancing research. These are worthy goals, ones widely shared by universities across Canada. However, specific strategies are still required for achieving such aims. This document seeks to fill that gap by specifying goals and priorities – philosophical and administrative, as well as institution-wide and faculty and/or department-based – to attain these aspirations.

The Faculty office and individual departments will look to this plan to help set short, medium, and long-term priorities. Inevitably, the future will bring challenges and opportunities that require adjustments. The Faculty must position itself to meet these by becoming more innovative, nimble, and streamlined.

### **2.1. Operationalizing and Reporting**

This plan sets out strategies and goals. Over the summer and early fall of 2013, the Dean and Associate Dean, working with the Dean's Advisory Group (DAG), will produce an Action Plan, establishing a timeline, by year(s), to operationalize the items set forth in this document, and to identify those with primary responsibility for pursuing all the goals cited.

Each May, the Dean will present a report card to Arts Faculty Council (AFC) identifying successes and ongoing challenges with respect to this Strategic Plan. The report card will

be posted on the Faculty website as an appendix to this document. After two years, a mid-term assessment will be presented to AFC as to whether the priorities outlined in this document are still appropriate for the final three years or if adjustments are necessary.

## **2.2 Identity, Values and the Importance of Arts**

The Faculty of Arts is a community of teacher-scholars. With our Bachelor of Interior Design and a variety of majors and minors within a Bachelor of Arts, we challenge our students to be innovative and to think critically, to act as responsible citizens, and to appreciate diversity. We choose to focus on undergraduate education and maintain a highly respectful, collegial environment that is supportive of scholarship and service in a primarily teaching-focused university.

At a time of budget restraints and concomitant calls for more utilitarian education, it becomes more incumbent than ever upon those teaching and researching in the Liberal Arts to assert that they impart what is core to university education, namely: breadth of knowledge, critical analysis, sophisticated thinking, and advanced literacy. In the landmark study, *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), based upon an analysis of nearly 2500 students, Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa concluded that those majoring in disciplines connected to the Liberal Arts achieved “significantly higher gains in critical thinking, complex reasoning, and writing skills over time than students in other fields of study.”

Arts education underpins success in virtually every career, enriches society, and is essential preparation for life. Top professional schools and the most successful companies seek out and reward those who demonstrate adaptive, flexible, nuanced, and innovative thinking, qualities fundamental to an Arts education. Inevitably, specific skills become outdated while narrow thinking rarely produces the best strategies and solutions, especially in a world becoming ever more interconnected and complex. Indeed, by virtue of its applicability and foundation for success in practically every domain, Arts provides the ultimate utilitarian education.

As a Faculty, we encourage curiosity rather than having students defer to received wisdom. We equip students with fundamental core competencies, namely effective writing, analytical, research and communication skills; these represent the core of learning outcomes of any Arts program. We value research in its widest scope, both for advancing knowledge and because it enriches teaching. We assert that each professor’s career pattern is unique, and, in a spirit of collegiality, encourage, validate, and to the best of our ability, support and celebrate their strengths and help to address challenges. We view each colleague as a professional whose autonomy must be respected and encouraged as a means

of generating his or her best performance. Further, we believe that strength comes from embracing diversity, and that each department, supported by the Faculty, enjoys the programmatic, administrative, and intellectual latitude to fully harness its potential.

While we treasure professional autonomy and embrace diversity, we also believe it is essential to promote a strong sense of community and belonging, as this is fundamental to a healthy work environment. The Faculty of Arts wants to be recognized as an employer of choice where people look forward to coming to work, as they view the Faculty as valuing and encouraging mutual respect, positive relationships between co-workers, shared responsibility and commitment, opportunities for personal and professional growth, a work-life balance, fairness and transparency in decision-making, and recognition for contributions. To this end, the Dean will arrange short annual surveys to identify challenges and to initiate appropriate, positive, action to encourage collegiality and mutual support, and to track morale.

We believe it is essential to embrace innovative teaching and excellence in scholarship. The Faculty views these domains as inextricably linked, together forming the core of great institutions, especially one focused on providing an unparalleled undergraduate experience. We place great value on reaching out to the broader community – locally, nationally and internationally - through teaching, research and service. This brings greater awareness of the importance of what we do, enriches our programs, enables Arts to help build resilient communities, and better positions our students for success after graduation. We recognize the critical importance of service to the effective functioning of departments, the Faculty and the university. Still, we are committed to finding efficiencies, without compromising quality, so that colleagues can focus more on teaching and research and feel energized to pursue interesting, and innovative, service projects.

To elevate the importance of Arts, and the innumerable qualities it brings to students, the university, and the community, we believe it is essential to devolve more responsibilities and resources to the Faculty and its departments. They know best what will produce results in their domain in order to advance knowledge, enrich teaching, and achieve broader institutional goals. We are also convinced that providing agency to those at the grass roots will generate ownership over the results and spark them to work harder to see that the things they initiated are successful.

### **2.3 Planning Process**

At the first AFC of the 2012-13 academic year, the Dean announced the intent to establish a new strategic plan. Two town halls were held in October; those present supported the establishment of broad categories for generating recommendations. Later that month, AFC

approved the creation of four Strategic Plan subcommittees to make recommendations under the themes of “Outreach,” “Teaching,” “Research,” and “Governance and Recognition.” These subcommittees involved 35 professors and support staff. Their recommendations were presented to AFCs in December 2012 and January 2013 for feedback. Responses were also obtained through postings on a new AFC blackboard site and individual written submissions to the Dean from faculty, students and support staff. During February and March 2013, the Dean and Associate Dean visited each department to solicit further reactions and recommendations. The DAG considered a draft document and another town hall was held on 15 March. AFC passed this version of the plan on 5 April. The document will guide the Faculty until the end of the 2017-18 academic year.

## **2.4 Institutional Context**

This plan was devised under much different circumstances than those that existed during the 2007-12 Strategic Plan development. During that period, Mount Royal transformed from college to university and received more government funding, namely in the form of healthy annual increases for the rollout of its new degrees. Hundreds of faculty and support staff were hired institution-wide.

In 2010, the provincial government replaced annual increases in Mount Royal’s base grant with a one-time injection of \$6 million to complete new degree rollouts according to the size of Mount Royal’s 2008 cohort. However, based upon previous government commitments, the institution had planned to grow to 10,000 provincially funded full-time students. The new reality left Mount Royal with unfunded students, as an individual’s tuition by itself only covers approximately one-third the cost of post-secondary education, compared to 42% from the government grant. The differential is made up by internally generated revenue, such as from Continuing Education, the Conservatory, parking, the bookstore, and International Education.

The impact of this situation was felt during the final stages of the previous Strategic Plan. An initial projection of 46 growth positions in Arts was scaled back to 29. Unfunded students in Arts were covered by converting Open Studies seats into degree program seats. Still, as of 2012, the university had overshot its FLEs (provincially funded “Full Load Equivalent”) by more than 1000 and faced a budget deficit of nearly \$8 million. This resulted in the need to scale back student intake across the university and to find efficiencies. The March 2013 provincial budget exacerbated the situation by cutting operating grants by 7.3%, thus producing an unprecedented \$14 million deficit. For the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years, there will be no growth tenure-track positions; rather, the number of full-time faculty will decline, mainly by not replacing many of those



who retire or resign. As well, the number of part-time professors will decline, reflecting the same trend in the global number of courses.

In this new environment, the Faculty will work to streamline course offerings to correspond to what is required for degree completion and to maintain program integrity. The goal is to provide a more regular rotation of courses among faculty and maintain strong fill rates in order to reduce the number of cancelled classes. This should provide greater certainty for faculty, and lead to fewer cases of “bumping” and people having to make up courses, including during intercession.

It is true that this strategy carries risk. Students will have fewer classes to choose from each year within their major. This could conceivably prompt some to leave Mount Royal for larger and broader programs. However, besides meeting budget restraints this strategy also avoids the student disillusionment and program abandonment that results from students’ frustration when they register and then have several courses cancelled due to low enrollment. The Faculty believes that truth in advertising is the better route; in other words, it should reduce its offerings up front to a level reflecting its student base, and thus actually run a greater percentage of classes. Moreover, this strategy will not compromise the quality of the classroom experience, nor prevent students from obtaining their degree in the normal amount of time.

Although the current budget situation presents challenges, the coming years also offer tremendous opportunities. Simply maintaining a holding pattern to get through the crunch will produce drift, disengagement, and a declining reputation. Resources are available; and in a time of scarcity, it becomes especially important that they be used strategically to produce maximum impact.

### 3. Re-allocating Resources

---

To elevate the status of Arts and achieve greater impact during a period of university-wide budgetary restraint, Arts believes it is important that more resources be devolved from Central Administration so that a greater range of projects can be pursued and supported at the Faculty and department levels. The current structure is highly centralized; faculty seeking financial support typically approach the Vice-President, Academic. In this process, the factors considered in decision-making are not clear or transparent. This can create discord, especially as resources become tighter, and increases the likelihood of support for projects unrelated to strategic priorities agreed upon by the Faculty.

Arts endorses having its Dean lobby for more resources to establish an **Arts Innovation Fund**. Half the money would be devolved to departments, on an equal basis, and be used to support such projects as local experiential learning initiatives, subsidizing conference costs, paying honoraria to speakers, and hiring casual labour to enhance service.

The Faculty office would use its share of such a fund to support teaching innovation, research, and service initiatives with broad impact. This would include implementing an incentive program for faculty members to direct honours theses. While the scope of incentives will, of course, be dependent upon resources and the collective bargaining process, as a principle the Faculty believes it is important that such work be formally acknowledged in order to keep this essential aspect of honours programs sustainable and to enable future growth. For money administered by the Faculty, criteria, approved by AFC, will be established, and a committee, chaired by the Dean, will decide upon its distribution.

## 4. Support for Teaching

---

Quality teaching, based upon small classes and strong interaction between professors and students, is core to the Mount Royal experience. To lose this is to abandon a fundamental part of the university's identity, appeal, and value as it is the basis for outstanding student satisfaction ratings. Quality teaching also derives from risk-taking and innovation in areas such as course development, classroom approaches, and community-based learning - locally, nationally and internationally. Arts believes that colleagues must feel empowered to pursue these ends so that they can fully contribute towards making Mount Royal widely recognized as a place that fosters exceptional teaching, including through new pedagogical initiatives. Faculty, both tenurable and tenured, should not shy away from this challenge from fear over short-term lower SEI scores or other negative commentary.

Arts programs, with the exception of Interior Design, do not conform to the standards of professional accreditation bodies. As such, the Faculty asserts, in the context of Mount Royal's *Academic Plan*, that it will seek to provide guidelines on "learning outcomes" that accord with the goals of developing effective thinkers, writers, researchers, and communicators.

To enrich teaching, the Faculty supports the following principles and priorities:

### **4.1 Encourage holistic assessment of teaching**

In assessing teaching, TPCs and the Dean should adhere to a holistic approach that considers more than SEI scores. This includes, but is not limited to, the thoroughness/challenge of course content; level of instruction; whether the material is up to date; newness of the course; the number of students in the class; the use of new pedagogical approaches; whether revision of course materials is underway; and the degree of honours student supervision. In assessing teaching, the Faculty should give greater weight to longer-term patterns.

### **4.2 Encourage faculty to teach both introductory and senior courses**

As a principle, faculty should, as per regular rotations, teach both introductory and more specialized courses so that all students can benefit from faculty skill and expertise.

### **4.3 Prioritize and support pedagogical innovation through List A and other funding mechanisms**

The development of pedagogical projects with potentially wide impact should be a priority for reassigned time. Such projects may include (a) developing and marketing niche areas to create greater appeal for students and to better distinguish departments to a wider audience; (b) exploring the viability of offering on-line courses; and (c) developing pedagogical approaches for target groups such as Aboriginal peoples.

### **4.4 Develop a plan for teaching international field schools**

International field schools could be more strategically planned within the Faculty of Arts, with departments rotating international field schools so that all colleagues have this opportunity without saturating the market, adding to part-time costs, or detracting from delivering high quality MRU-based academic programs.

### **4.5 Teaching Exchanges**

Believing that teaching is enriched through experiences with a diversity of students, the Faculty support the Dean pursuing opportunities for exchanges with other institutions.

# 5. Support for Research

---

The Faculty of Arts views research and teaching as indivisible, as the former informs and enriches the latter. Colleagues on both the TS and TSS streams undertake research. However, the Faculty recognizes that those on the TSS stream face greater pressure to produce research results and, as such, often require support to carry out that mandate.

Within five years, the Faculty of Arts aims to achieve a 20% increase in research intensity, namely in total publications, conference presentations, successful grant applications, and engagement with undergraduate student researchers. It accepts this challenge based upon professional development and its own reputation, not formalized expectations relating to workload performance, either on TSS or TS streams that are governed by procedures under the Collective Agreement.

The Faculty asserts that the case of each professor with respect to research output is unique. It is dependent upon factors that include, but are not limited to, the norms of the discipline, particular challenges of the professor's project (such as ethics clearance, availability of participants, and access to information), and the scope of the undertaking (for example an article versus a book). As such, in assessing research, the Faculty supports a nuanced approach, and one that does not conflate quantity with quality, as, for example, some journals, as leaders in their field, are especially competitive.

To achieve more success with research, the Faculty of Arts recommends:

## **5.1 Create more opportunities for Tri-Council funding**

In making this recommendation, the Faculty asserts that it does not consider research supported by Tri-Council funding as being of greater value, such as in assessing applications for tenure and promotion. Some projects do not require large-scale funding. To support them, the Faculty endorses establishing an Arts Innovation Fund, as stated above.

However, the Faculty recognizes that external funding is essential for advancing certain types of research projects, such as those requiring extensive travel or the purchase of equipment. The Faculty also appreciates that competition for such grants is intense, and that commitments of support, commensurate to what other universities of a similar institutional profile are offering, increases the likelihood of success.

Currently, for its size, Mount Royal is among the lowest-rated universities in Canada for receiving Tri-Council grants. While this is in part a reflection of Mount Royal's very recent transition to becoming a university, still it is an area that must be targeted for

improvement, not only to support colleagues whose research requires such funding, but also because this affects the Faculty's and the institution's overall reputation. All universities, even those that are teaching and undergraduate focused, are, in part, ranked on their success in grant applications, for example in the widely read and influential annual *Maclean's* survey. Moreover, Tri-Council grants bring indirect funding to the institution, such as for research space. Research funds enable faculty members to hire undergraduate research assistants, which reflect a key pillar of the Mount Royal "face-to-face" brand. Increasing Tri-Council funding qualifies the institution to nominate more students for Tri-Council graduate scholarships, and to apply for major programs such as Canada Foundation for Innovation grants, and any potential reallocation of Canada Research Chairs.

We can improve the Faculty's chances of obtaining Tri-Council funding through the following strategies:

- a. Have the Dean lobby the Vice-President, Academic, to transfer money to faculties or to Research Services to start a specific program to provide seed funding for research trips, including in those cases when the purpose is to put together a Tri-Council grant application.
- b. Have the Dean work with Research Services to help devise ways of providing greater assistance to faculty to apply for grants in order to make their applications more competitive.
- c. Provide three hours reassigned time for a Tri-Council grant of 2-3 years duration worth at least \$10,000 per annum for the MRU researcher, and 6 hours of reassigned time for a five-year grant with the same annual minimum funding. In making this recommendation, the Faculty asserts that such reassigned time be sequenced to ensure that other projects – research, teaching, and service-related – are also supported in an equitable manner.
- d. Provide three hours of reassigned time to a full-time colleague who takes the lead in organizing a conference with at least \$20,000 in Tri-Council funding. In making this recommendation, the Dean must adhere to the same principle on sequencing as stated in section 5.1 (c).
- e. Create a mechanism to partner external grant recipients with those considering or in the process of applying for such funding.
- f. Partner with Research Services to review the use of indirect funding received from Tri-Council agencies and other sources.

## **5.2 Increase recognition and support for faculty-directed student research**

Faculty-directed student research both reflects and reinforces the quality of the undergraduate experience and Mount Royal's commitment to delivering a personalized, enriched, education. Given the fact that Mount Royal is not mandated to pursue graduate programs, enabling faculty to support/employ undergraduates, especially at the senior level, is critical for their research, as well as in preparing students for graduate studies and careers in their field. As such, the Dean will lobby Research Services for more support for undergraduate research assistants, and ensure that a portion of an Arts Innovation Fund be used for such activity.

## **5.3 Create more space for research projects**

The Dean and Associate Dean will endeavour to locate more space, preferably in the EA building, for faculty-supervised student research, especially if linked to obligations under Tri-Council funding. To this end, they will coordinate with scheduling services to undertake an inventory of all rooms in the EA building to maximize the use of space, including for teaching and service-related activities. They will also work with Physical Resources to explore the repurposing of space (such as EA 3101), and coordinate with Research Services to locate space in other areas.

## **5.4 Lobby for greater support for conference travel**

The Dean will lobby for more support for travel to conferences by demonstrating, both qualitatively and quantitatively, that the gatherings to which faculty apply to present their work are fundamental to their professional development, both as scholars and as teachers, and that attendance at such events raises the institution's profile.

## **5.5 Pursue partnerships with the University of Calgary**

The Dean will work with the Vice-President, Academic, and others on Deans' Council, to pursue an agreement with the University of Calgary Press to start a Mount Royal series to support the publication of at least three peer-reviewed books per year written or edited by MRU faculty.

## **5.6 Obtain better IT support for research**

The Dean and Department Chairs will work more closely with IT to obtain better technical support for research needs. This is especially crucial for Psychology and Sociology-Anthropology.

## **5.7 Create a research committee to evaluate the Faculty's success in research initiatives**

The Faculty of Arts should establish an Arts Research Committee that meets annually to systematically gather feedback on what is working well, where there is the greatest need for improvements, and to recommend on strategies.

## **5.8 Celebrate research within the Faculty of Arts**

The Associate Dean should arrange an annual display of publications by Arts faculty.



# 6 Service

---

Service is fundamental to the effective running of all universities, and especially so at Mount Royal because of its relatively small size and emphasis upon collaborative governance. Service can also encourage a greater sense of belonging and engagement. Colleagues who assume hefty service responsibilities should be acknowledged by the Dean and TPCs for such contributions in order to adjust expectations in other areas. The Faculty endorses the following:

## 6.1 Create efficiencies for service

The Faculty believes it is important to strive for service efficiencies, not only to create additional time for teaching and research, but also to pursue innovative service-related projects that can improve the university. Suggestions for creating service efficiencies include the following:

- a. That departments undertake an annual audit of their service work and report briefly to the Dean with recommendations on creating efficiencies. An example would be rearranging administratively related reassigned time to target areas requiring the most support.
- b. That department meetings and faculty assemblies be scheduled, so far as possible, at times that respect standard working hours (8.00 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- c. That departments look to reduce the number of required committee memberships.
- d. That committees, disciplines, and departments try to reduce the frequency of meetings.
- e. That the number of annual AFCs be reduced from 8 to 6 unless extra business is required.
- f. That tenurable colleagues be permitted to serve on more committees within a more streamlined and efficient service structure. This will better spread responsibilities among faculty, and facilitate newer colleagues immersing themselves in and contributing to the university.
- g. That committees delegate tasks prior to meetings so that colleagues come with completed proposals.

## **6.2 Decrease service responsibilities during the intersession**

The period between May 1 and June 15 is currently meeting-heavy, and this sometimes results in faculty having less concentrated time to work on teaching and research. The Faculty therefore recommends that

- a. As far as it is possible, meetings be kept out of the spring intersession period to permit colleagues to have more time to pursue teaching and research-related activities.
- b. That the Dean endorses the principal of faculty providing more precise, and less lengthy, reports, including individual annual reports.

# 7 Student Success and Satisfaction

---

Mount Royal scores exceptionally well on institution-wide student surveys, particularly in areas corresponding to strengths typical of smaller universities, such as the “classroom experience” and the level of “student-faculty interaction.” However, data also reveals significant challenges, such as poor student retention. To address this issue, and to provide an even more exceptional undergraduate experience – that distinguishes Mount Royal among other primarily undergraduate universities - the Faculty must better understand what engages its students, the challenges they face, and address their impediments to success. To achieve these goals, the Faculty will undertake the following measures:

## **7.1 Analyze and identify factors which help or hinder student success**

Better and more complete data may help Arts identify potential areas of concern and promote student success. The following initiatives are considered useful in this regard:

- a. DAG will work with Institutional Analysis and Planning to better comprehend the dropout pattern among Arts students and report on a strategy to ameliorate this pattern.
- b. The Associate Dean will arrange an annual survey of senior students to identify what aspects of Arts programs they consider strongest and areas or approaches that require improvement. Based upon two years’ feedback, and relevant data from other comparable universities, the Associate Dean will produce a report summarizing the findings and recommending strategies to build upon strengths and to address weaknesses.

## **7.2 Reward student success and provide financial support**

Strategies can be created to enhance recognition for exceptional work and to provide financial support to students so they can concentrate more fully on their studies. The following initiatives will be pursued:

- a. The Dean will seek to create a fund to assist with student travel to present at conferences and to support student-led academic events.
- b. The Dean will coordinate with Research Services and the Vice-President, Academic, to help fund the production of an annual, substantive, interdisciplinary undergraduate peer-reviewed Arts journal.

- c. The Dean and Associate Dean will work with Department Chairs to propose new awards for outstanding student achievements and contributions at the department and Faculty level.

### **7.3 Create mechanisms to identify and respond to student needs**

The best people to give feedback on what engages, challenges and frustrates students are often the students themselves. Arts will create or pursue the following initiatives so that the Faculty is aware of these issues.

- a. The Faculty will coordinate more closely with MRU's enrollment services to build stronger connections to high school guidance counsellors and to section heads/teachers responsible for areas that link to Arts programs. The Faculty hopes to build awareness of what future students are looking for and what concerns them in order to create an exceptional university experience.
- b. The Dean will establish regular meetings with the leaders of Arts student clubs to enhance communication and to identify concerns and needs.
- c. The Associate Dean will work with Department Chairs to increase the frequency of courses that have high student demand, so long as this does not compromise program quality or negatively impact upon faculty workload.
- d. The Dean, Associate Dean and Department Chairs will work with the International Office and the Office of Risk Management to ensure that Canadian-based field school opportunities enjoy the same institutional support and safeguards as international ventures.

## 8 Program Review

---

As a Faculty, we recognize our existing strengths in teaching. With small classes and a commitment to personalized learning, Mount Royal consistently scores near the top in many categories on key surveys such as the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC), the National Survey on Student Engagement, and the *Globe and Mail* Survey on Student Satisfaction. In 2012, CUSC reported that 92% of first-year respondents and 94% of graduating students rated their Mount Royal experience as “excellent” or “good,” figures that surpassed the national average by nearly 15%. Such outcomes are excellent, but several other universities with a similar institutional profile attain comparable results.

We also recognize that we face significant challenges. Compared to other Canadian universities, including those in Alberta, Mount Royal has one of the lowest student retention rates according to the latest figures (2010) released by the Center for Institutional Data Exchange and Analysis, located at the University of Oklahoma, but also used for benchmarking by Canadian universities. From the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of study, Mount Royal lost 18.5% of its students compared to a Canadian average of 14.6% and an Alberta average of 17%. Moreover, whereas 35.8% of Mount Royal students who entered degree programs completed their requirements in four years, the Canadian average stood at 40.45%. The situation is far worse in MRU Arts where only 19.9% of BA students finished in four years.

In part, this pattern reflects the fact that a large proportion of students who started in 2008 entered Mount Royal when it was a college with no intention of completing a Baccalaureate degree; responses collected in the 2009 *Mount Royal University Early Leaver Study* reflects this. It is also the case that Mount Royal’s figures mirror a generally poorer performance across Alberta, where the four-year graduation rate, at 22.5%, is actually worse than the MRU average. However, it is important to bear in mind that many students take longer than four years to complete their degree. After six years, the latest figures place the Alberta completion rate at 62.2%, whereas the Canadian average after five years – based on available data – places the undergraduate graduation rate at 64.1%. Mount Royal has yet to produce statistics for the six-year mark because of the newness of its degrees. Yet, based upon attrition that has already occurred, even if every remaining student from the 2008 Arts cohort graduated in 2013, it would still only amount to a six-year completion rate of 42.4%.

It is reasonable to expect that Mount Royal’s retention rate will rise as students are making the clear choice to enter a university. Some data indicates this trend; for example, comparing 2008-2009 to 2011-2012, the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> year retention rate increased from 76.8% to 81.5%. Yet, Mount Royal’s leaving rate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> years remains notably higher than at

other Canadian and Alberta universities. This indicates that many people still look upon Mount Royal—because of its smaller classes and history as a transfer institution—as a place to adjust to the university experience before heading off to larger institutions with more program choice, better facilities, and often perceived as more prestigious due to higher entrance requirements. While the 2009 *Early Leaver Study* indicated many reasons for degree incompleteness – such as financial challenges, excessive paid work outside of class time, and dissatisfaction with facilities and teaching – others issues highlighted were inadequate program choice, programs considered as barebones or only offered as minors.

Currently, over 80% of Mount Royal students come from the metropolitan Calgary area, and nearly all the rest from southern Alberta. The Faculty believes that becoming a premiere undergraduate university must include establishing Mount Royal as a destination point for students from across Canada, as well as internationally.

Major transformation is a long-term project, requiring vision, ongoing consultation, detailed planning, and vast resources. Mount Royal may have just celebrated its centennial, but it has been a university for only four years. There are many areas for development: for instance, more scholarships, a new library, and a far greater range of student services. Much of what is required is beyond the means of Arts to establish.

Still, continued pursuit of exceptional programmes and an enriched university experience are essential in addressing negative perceptions, challenges and unsatisfactory results.

## **8.1 Fulfil the CAQC requirements for program review**

In keeping with the requirements of the Campus Alberta Quality Council, over the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years, each BA major in the Faculty of Arts will be required to undertake an extensive self-study as the basis for an external program assessment. Those tasked with leading this process will have templates from which to work, and Mount Royal's Office of Institutional Analysis and Planning will provide extensive background material. Still, it is recognized that the amount of work required to produce the report will be considerable, falling well outside the parameters of reasonably expected service. To produce high quality reports according to deadlines, the Faculty recommends that the person leading the department's self-study receive three hours of reassigned time.

# 9 Program Development

---

Over the coming years, Mount Royal will witness a decrease in the student population to align enrollment with government-funded FLEs. Although Arts will not experience the same magnitude of decrease as other areas that more significantly exceeded their FLE allotment, the Faculty will be impacted by cuts to other majors, especially since General Education courses are mainly taught by Arts professors.

Still, over the course of this plan, Arts aims to not only ensure the health and improvement of its existing degrees, but also to develop new areas. It views this as essential to its continued evolution into becoming a more appealing and dynamic faculty, especially since the number of majors it currently offers is modest when compared to other small-to mid-sized institutions.

## **9.1 Lobby for the allocation of Open Studies and University Entrance Option seats to the Faculty of Arts**

While access to higher education is important, the Open Studies and University Entrance Option cohort, which consists of less academically qualified applicants who are allowed to take a maximum of 10 courses to meet university-entry requirements, is, at just over 1000 FLEs, viewed as being too high (as it exceeds the Arts intake by 25%). These students have relatively high DFW rates, thus effectively reducing the numbers moving beyond introductory courses. The Open Studies program was established at a time when Mount Royal College needed students. This is no longer the case. For the 2012-13 academic year, Mount Royal denied entry to more than 50% of applicants.

## **9.2 Reduce the cohort of Arts students remaining as “undeclared” and encourage students to declare their major earlier**

The Faculty believes that undeclared students have a higher probability of drift and, as such, a lower retention rate. For the purposes of planning and student retention, therefore, Arts supports capping the number of undeclared students at a lower figure than the current 236 (out of its 2012 total of 655). Students should also be encouraged to declare their majors earlier. The following strategies will be pursued:

- a. Require students to declare their major at 15 rather than 20 courses. The Dean and Associate Dean will also work with enrollment services to establish a separate, and smaller, cohort for the “undeclared” category.

- b. For this approach to be successful, Arts must become more vigilant about monitoring students switching majors, especially in cases when they are shadowing another program, often outside the Faculty, for which they did not qualify and then demand the degree. While the Faculty recognizes that there are legitimate cases for switching majors, it endorses the Associate Dean managing this practice more stringently.

### **9.3 Restructure low enrolled programs**

In recent years, some majors have struggled with low enrollment. This situation must be addressed, particularly in light of budgetary considerations. The need to maintain satisfactory course fill rates is essential, especially since the coming years may see an increase from the current generally accepted minimum of 50%. In particular, the majors in Spanish and Policy Studies are low enrolled and this puts a strain on faculty resources. Arts would like to explore means of making these programs more successful, though in ways that accord to widely accepted disciplinary norms for ensuring high quality.

### **9.4 Work with Enrolment Services to create effective marketing**

Some activities, as listed elsewhere in this document, include the development of a new Arts brochure and increased coordination in outreach to secondary schools.

### **9.5 Pursue transfer opportunities**

Transfer and partnership agreements with other universities may potentially benefit Arts and increase our reputation. However, transfer arrangements should be carefully considered and adopted only in cases that provide something unique and appealing that the Faculty cannot offer on its own.

### **9.6 Evaluate the creation of new majors**

Despite this being a time of budget restraint, creating new majors will make the Faculty more dynamic and appealing, qualities that will attract and retain students. By lobbying to reduce the undeclared, Open Studies and University Entrance Option pool, Arts hopes to free up FLEs to pursue several new areas that are possible to mount with minimal or no extra faculty. The majors listed below have been highlighted within Arts as possible areas for B.A. expansion. Over the next five years, under the direction of the Dean, Associate Dean and Department Chairs, the Faculty of Arts will explore the feasibility of offering these, and potentially other, majors.



- a. **Bachelor of Interior Design** - To meet standards set by the Council of Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA), it is essential that Mount Royal's current three-year Bachelor of Applied Interior Design degree be upgraded to a four-year Baccalaureate. This will require one new faculty position, and funding to improve physical resources. This development offers great potential for the Faculty because Mount Royal's Interior Design program is the only one in Alberta that grants a university degree. The program is immensely popular, receiving some 150 applications annually for 42 places. Many of its graduates work in leading design and architectural firms across North America, Europe, and the Middle East, and have received international awards. At the time that this Strategic Plan is being finalized the proposal for the new four-year degree has successfully passed through Mount Royal's Institutional Program and Priorities Committee. The coming year will see the completion of a full proposal to the provincial government requesting required funding for this program development.
- b. **Major in Philosophy** - The number of philosophy professors in the Department of Humanities, and in other areas, including General Education, makes the transformation of this minor into a major eminently possible with few extra resources. Philosophy is a key area in Arts faculties across North America. Building upon work already started, faculty teaching Philosophy will present a report to the Dean, Associate Dean, and the Humanities Chair on what is required to establish a new major.
- c. **Major in Women's Studies** - This interdisciplinary field has proven extremely popular at Mount Royal, where students take it as a minor. Students work with highly sophisticated theory, and gain a deep understanding of women's experiences and key social issues, both historical and contemporary, as they relate to not only gender, but also to categories that include race, class, age, ethnicity, religion, occupation, nationality and sexual orientation. Established at universities worldwide – with nomenclature that also typically includes Feminist Studies and Gender Studies – still, this remains a relatively new field. As such, its development into a major would underline the Faculty of Arts' commitment to embrace change and cutting-edge areas. Building upon work already started, professors in Women's Studies will explore collaborations and present a report to the Dean, Associate Dean, and the Humanities Department Chair on what is required to establish a new interdisciplinary major.
- d. **Major in Religious Studies** – Religious Studies is an established interdisciplinary component of Liberal Arts curricula at post-secondary institutions around the world.

Students in Religious Studies at Mount Royal use a variety of disciplinary approaches to better understand ways of being religious and to interrogate the roles of religion in contemporary society through courses examining such themes as violence, diaspora, popular culture, death, film, gender, sexuality, and material culture. In contrast to the historical and textual focus of most programs, Religious Studies at Mount Royal distinguishes itself by focusing on lived religion in contemporary and local contexts, an emphasis that explicitly draws on the strengths of full-time faculty members. With three full-time tenured members, Religious Studies will be in a position to move forward towards developing a major with the addition of a fourth position.

- e. **Major in Business and Economics** - This is an outgrowth of an earlier proposal mentioned in the 2007-12 Strategic Plan. Further consultation and analysis indicates that an international component would have considerable appeal among students, prepare them for a wider array of job prospects, and strengthen enrollment in Languages and Cultures. Although an Arts degree, the new major would be offered in conjunction with and utilize resources from the Bissett School of Business. It would significantly redress the persistent problem of Arts students shadowing the BBA. Exploratory work has started through an interdisciplinary task force involving, from Arts, the Associate Dean, the Policy Studies Chair, and full-time faculty who teach Economics. The task force will make specific recommendations over the course of the 2013-14 academic year.
- f. **Interdisciplinary degree in Design Studies** - This proposed interdisciplinary BA will complement the four-year degree in Interior Design, by providing an option for the 70% of applicants who do not receive an offer of admission. Utilizing existing resources, it will establish a non-studio program for students interested in design in its wider scope. Its goal is not to train experts in particular areas such as residential or commercial design, but to produce generalists who understand the broad range of technical and conceptual issues that must inform the creative process. This would include areas like business planning, community engagement/collaboration, communications, project management, and critical thinking. Students would take courses from areas that include Art History, Interior Design, Business, Sociology, Anthropology and Psychology. Building upon work already started, the core professorial group in the Department of Interior Design and Art History will explore collaborations and present a report to the Dean and Associate Dean on what is required to establish a new interdisciplinary major.

- g. **Interdisciplinary degree in Environmental Humanities** - Under the direction of the Dean and the Associate Dean, the Faculty will explore the feasibility of a major in this area to prepare students for employment in the burgeoning field of environmental policy. Such a degree would be developed with the Faculty of Science and Technology, including close collaboration with its newly appointed Talisman Chair in Sustainability. A preliminary analysis indicates that we have more than 20 professors in the Faculty of Arts whose research and teaching could contribute to such a major.
- h. **Bachelor of Science, Psychology** – In keeping with the Mount Royal *Academic Plan*, preliminary work has begun on a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, to be taught by faculty in Psychology and Science and Technology. This degree would give more scientifically-oriented Psychology students a chance to study Biology, Chemistry, and Human Physiology in more depth than they do in the current Bachelor of Arts, Psychology.

# 10 Funding

---

Over the course of this plan, the Faculty, and particularly the Dean, will work closely with the Mount Royal Foundation and the office of the Vice-President, University Advancement, to pursue funding for several projects. In doing so, the Faculty stresses the importance of seeking out partnerships that reflect its values, namely a commitment to fairness, transparency, and ethical conduct. The Dean will consult with AFC in advance to demonstrate that potential partnerships accord with the principles enunciated above.

Although unanticipated opportunities may shift funding priorities over the life of this document, Arts has identified the following projects based upon continuing priorities from the previous Strategic Plan, faculty-wide consultation, and careful analysis of existing strengths in research and teaching.

## **10.1 Create a four-year Bachelor of Interior Design**

As mentioned above, it is essential that we transform the current three-year Bachelor of Applied Interior Design into a four-year BA. This will include costs for renovation and the purchase of equipment.

## **10.2 Establish an Interdisciplinary Chair on Teaching and Research in Resource Management and Policy**

Establishing an Interdisciplinary Chair on Teaching and Research in Resource Management and Policy in the Department of Policy Studies will build upon its current expertise in the oil, gas, and nuclear power sectors. The Chair will teach in this area, as well as critically examine and make recommendations with respect to resource management, conservation and regulation to guide development in a manner that effectively balances the needs of all stakeholders. What makes this different from other Chairs in this domain, and especially appropriate for Mount Royal and its Faculty of Arts, is its melding of teaching and research. The proposal will include support for senior undergraduate student researchers from disciplines that include, but are not limited to, Policy Studies, Sociology, Anthropology, Indigenous Studies, History and Psychology, so that reports produced are informed by multiple perspectives. This will better inform stakeholders, deepen student learning about a key element of the regional economy, and ultimately make for better policy.

### **10.3 Create a Centre for Excellence on Teaching and Research on Aboriginal Issues**

This would be separate from the Iniskim Centre, whose mandate does not include academic programs. Such a centre would be distinct from others in Canada because it would be teaching and research focused, such as by advancing service learning and community-based research in partnership with Aboriginal Peoples to help address community needs.

### **10.4 Establish a Psychology Innovation Lab**

The proposed Psychology Innovation Lab will become a research hub in which students and professors connect their expertise (such as in cognition, behaviour, learning, and development) to partners in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Projects will be facilitated through the Innovation Lab, tied to courses, senior capstone projects, paid co-op placements, and service learning opportunities. As of 2013, a needs assessment is being pursued through information gathered by senior Interior Design students as a course assignment. This information will better inform an architectural firm for which Central Administration has allotted \$25,000 for tenders to produce blueprints for a renovation of existing (and potentially adjacent) space, where there also exists a significant amount of unused equipment due to current space restrictions.

### **10.5 Ensure the long-term sustainability of the Writers in Residence Program and the *Centennial Reader***

Operational since 2007, but supported internally, the Department of English's Writers in Residence program brings a writer of renown to the university for one week each year to work with students and to provide a free public lecture. In the past, the Writers in Residence program has encompassed fiction, literary criticism, poetry and documentary film making. This significantly enriches the English program and markedly increases its public visibility. The Department of English's *Centennial Reader*, which was started to commemorate Mount Royal's 100th anniversary, contains peer-reviewed submissions from MRU professors and students. It is a valuable teaching tool used extensively in the classroom.

### **10.6 Attract donations for service learning opportunities**

The Faculty, and particularly the Dean, will coordinate with the Foundation and the office of the Vice-President, University Advancement, to locate corporate sponsors for specific outreach initiatives in the realm of service learning. This would include facilitating select Interior Design course-based community-building projects through to completion. One

example, initiated in 2012-13, was to have students provide concepts for the redesign of the emergency ward at the Calgary Children's Hospital.

### **10.7 Ensure institutional resources for the updating of the Language Labs**

The current facilities are badly outdated, as they are dependent upon the use of cassette tapes. Working with the Chair of the Department of Languages and Cultures, the Dean and Associate Dean will coordinate with Physical Resources and IT to ensure that needed updates and renovations are completed according to the current 10-year cycle, which requires action to commence in 2014-15.

# 11.0 Assess the Allocation of Space and Expand as Necessary

---

The Faculty of Arts is currently housed in three different buildings: the EA Building, the main campus, and the B-Wing expansion. As the Faculty continues to explore and pursue options to further enrich its undergraduate programs, it believes it is just as important to foster connections between departments. This not only contributes to a healthy work environment, but also to fostering the interchange of ideas and interdisciplinary synergies. Although recognizing that budget restraints and current space limitations present formidable challenges, still Arts would like its departments housed in the same building, though it accepts the exception of Interior Design and Art History due to its studio space requirements. As a long-term goal, and as space opens up with the eventual completion of the Conservatory and Library and Learning Centre, the Dean will pursue this goal. In addition, Arts should create a long-term projection of its space needs by 2018. This plan should take into account issues such as possible increased enrolment and numbers of faculty, the need for more student and faculty research space, and the allocation of program-specific classrooms, such as the studio space required by Interior Design. While Arts is not currently expanding, we should be prepared for possible expansion in the future.

# 12 Outreach

---

Among the challenges Arts faculties face is that those in the broader community are ill-informed about the range of issues Arts collectively addresses and the highly transferable skills developed among its students. Too often, students in the Arts face the perception of having taken an impractical degree. This has negative impact in several areas, including the ability to solicit donations and student prospects following graduation. It also affects program development and our ability to attract students. Contrary to this perception, statistics reveal that over the course of their career Arts graduates thrive in the workplace, as they bring the capacity for flexible thinking and competencies – effective writing, analysis, research and communication - essential in any setting. To raise awareness of its programs and their value, both within and outside the university, the Faculty proposes:

## **12.1 Establish an Arts Advisory Board and Alumni Chapters**

- a. The Faculty will work to establish an Arts Advisory Board comprised of up to twelve members. Four members will be internal to the Faculty, a number that includes the Dean, who will act as Chair. Other representatives will come from areas that include the artistic community, business, Aboriginal organizations, not-for-profit agencies, and those in marketing and recruitment. Appointments will be for two years, with the possibility of renewal. Board members will be asked to make recommendations on program development, means of better addressing community needs/appeal, generating new contacts and identifying fundraising opportunities. AFC will receive general criteria for Advisory Board members. Once approved, the Dean will solicit nominations, whose membership AFC will ratify.
- b. The Faculty of Arts, led by the Dean and Department Chairs, will work with Alumni Affairs to establish at least three new Arts chapters, and coordinate with all Arts chapters on organizing events. As well, the Faculty will endeavour to connect its alumni to the new Harry G. Schaefer mentoring program in which MRU graduates are linked with current students to offer advice and networking/recruitment possibilities.

## **12.2 Publicize the achievements of the Faculty of Arts**

In order to publicize the achievements of the Faculty of Arts, the following actions will be taken:



- a. The Dean will lobby for the opportunity to present bi-annually to the MRU Board of Governors on Faculty initiatives, achievements, plans and priorities to improve communications as well as to solicit ideas or contacts that may be relevant to the Faculty's activities.
- b. The Dean will lobby for a Communications Officer position to be shared with another faculty. The priorities will be generation of publicity and marketing materials as well as the preparation of items for the web.
- c. The Faculty of Arts office will work with the Department of Interior Design and Art History to create an annual event where students will be able to sell their creations.
- d. The Faculty will work with organizations such as the Calgary Multicultural Centre, Alliance Française, Centre de Ressources Francothèque, Hola Calgary, Canadian Colombian Professional Association, Calgary's Chinese Cultural Centre, and Mount Royal's International Office to raise awareness of Arts programs in languages.
- e. The Faculty, led by the Dean, will lobby the university to create a MRU branch of Discovery University. This involves faculty and students providing talks on general interest topics related to their area of study, or teaching basic skills such as effective communication, to those in need. For students, such activities can constitute a service learning assignment.

### **12.3 Improve our presence on the web**

The Faculty will develop a more engaging website that highlights student, faculty, support staff, and alumni activities and accomplishments; local, national and international outreach projects; and includes social media and multimedia, such as video testimonials from students, professors, alumni and employers of MRU Arts students. In keeping with this initiative,

- a. Departments will be encouraged to create more user-friendly, informative and dynamic websites, such as by making it easier for students to learn about the different specializations of professors. The websites should also provide answers to FAQs, including in video format.
- b. In conjunction with Career Services, the Faculty will establish a webpage where students can market their skills to help with their career development.

## **12.4 Create awards and events which highlight the Faculty of Arts**

- a. The Dean and Associate Dean, working with departments, will seek to organize events, like talks and workshops, in the broader community, such as at cultural centres, the “Y” and other such places.
- b. Under the direction of the Associate Dean, and in coordination with the Registrar’s Office, the Faculty will seek to develop a Certificate in Service Learning for approval by AFC. This will involve students completing as part of their degree a minimum number of courses or field placements that provide an acceptable service learning component.
- c. The Faculty will establish an annual lecture and award ceremony to recognize a champion of the Arts and Social Sciences. Criteria will be developed and presented to AFC for approval. Nominations will go to an ad hoc committee who will present the preferred candidate to AFC for approval.

## **12.5 Create and distribute promotional materials**

The Faculty will produce a new promotional brochure for external communities. It will include key information and departmental highlights, career opportunities, and quotes from employers, alumni and students testifying to the exceptional quality of Faculty programmes and the skills that they help develop.

## **12.6 Find ways to encourage outreach to Aboriginal communities**

In November 2012, AFC voted to establish a goal of 7% Aboriginal enrollment in the Faculty of Arts within five years by increasing its Aboriginal student intake by 1% per annum. This involves reserving seats for Aboriginal students who meet minimum program admission requirements and who apply before the end of the third week of June prior to the intake for the next academic year.

To pursue this 7% target and to support Aboriginal success in university, the Faculty of Arts will:

- a. Have the Dean, Associate Dean and Department Chairs work with the Iniskim Centre, enrollment services, and student services to coordinate approaches to maximize support for and the retention of Aboriginal students.
- b. Have the Dean, Associate Dean and Department Chairs work with the Iniskim Centre to gain a better understanding of and, where appropriate, encourage the incorporation of Aboriginal learning styles, like oral tradition.

- c. Have the Dean, Associate Dean and Department Chairs coordinate with the Iniskim Centre to help attract prominent Aboriginal speakers to campus.
- d. Have the Dean, in coordination with Department Chairs, the Iniskim Centre and enrollment services, arrange outreach activities to Calgary Secondary and Middle schools with a high proportion of Aboriginal students, as well as to Aboriginal organizations, to build relationships and trust, to enhance awareness of Arts programs, and to spread knowledge about the Faculty's 7% commitment on Aboriginal enrollment.
- e. Have the Dean in coordination with Department Chairs, the Iniskim Centre and enrollment services, arrange an annual visit of Aboriginal youth to the Faculty of Arts to meet professors and students, and to tour MRU facilities.
- f. Have the Associate Dean explore the possibility of having Arts credit courses taught on native reserves.
- g. Attempt to arrange service learning placements on native reserves.
- h. Establish an award for an Aboriginal and a non-Aboriginal student who performs exemplary service in increasing understanding between the two communities and for promoting Aboriginal success.

# 13 Recognition

---

The Faculty of Arts is comprised of an incredibly talented group of teacher-scholars, support staff and students, all of whom contribute immeasurably to the success of their departments, the Faculty, and the university community. The Faculty believes that celebrating exceptional performance, both individual and team-based, builds pride, a spirit of mutual support, generosity and camaraderie. While it appreciates that hyper-competitiveness can be corrosive, it also feels that to downplay achievements carries the risk of inviting disengagement, disillusionment and fewer overall accomplishments. In this spirit, the Faculty recently established a wall of plaques commemorating students who have received prizes and scholarships, and installed a display case and acquired trophies to recognize outstanding performance by faculty and staff.

The Faculty proposes:

- a. That an ad hoc committee establish criteria for annual Faculty prizes in the following categories: (i) Teacher-Scholar; (ii) Academic Team; and (iii) Outstanding Service.
- b. That a committee with one member from each department and chaired by the Associate Dean, be established to assess nominations for these awards. Recipients of individual awards will receive \$300 and those associated with the team award will share \$600 to support professionally related expenses.
- c. That the Dean, Associate Dean and Department Chairs actively encourage nominations for Mount Royal awards as well as for external prizes for teaching and scholarship.

# 14 Summary

---

Through this five-year plan, the Faculty of Arts seeks to encourage teaching innovation and excellence, active research, service efficiencies, greater student engagement and success, and to embrace a university culture grounded in professional autonomy and the devolution of decision-making to domains most closely connected to colleagues. By 2018, the Faculty of Arts wants to be a place widely known for its active, enthusiastic, and productive teacher-scholars who welcome service as a means of further invigorating the institution. Furthermore, the recommendations in this plan aim to validate and to harness the unique talents of every colleague. By these measures, Arts aspires to lead Mount Royal in becoming a premiere undergraduate university marked by a national reputation for exceptional pedagogy, and world-class teacher-scholars renowned not only for their skills in the classroom but also for expanding knowledge in their field.