Vancouver Island University
Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Strategic Plan

"what is now proved was once only imagined"

William Blake

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

I am very pleased to share with you the Strategic Plan for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Vancouver Island University. Our plan builds on the strengths of faculty, staff, students, and alumni – past and present. It represents more than two years of work by our capable and committed Steering Committee, as well as interactive All-Faculty workshops. We look forward to working with our partners at VIU and in our community as we undertake the challenging task of carrying out the action items of our plan, which charts a progressive course for the next five years. I thank you for your ongoing support of our vision, mission, and goals – we continue to be inspired, engaged, and fulfilled by this vital activity.

Ross MacKay, Ph.D.
Dean, Arts and Humanities
Vancouver Island University
November 2015

The Art and Humanities
Strategic Plan Committee

Daniel Burgoyne	*Ross MacKay*
Terri Doughty	*Katharina Rout*
Jason Gress	*Alanna Williams*
John Hinde	*Annette Woolf*

Imagining Our Future

It is difficult to get the news from poems, yet men die miserably every day
for lack of what is found there – William Carlos Williams.

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities comprises 12 departments and 26 programs (7 Majors, 10 Minors, 3 Bachelor's degrees, 5 Diplomas, and 1 certificate). Delivering roughly 50% of all FTEs in Baccalaureate Degree Programs, the Faculty encompasses diverse programs in the humanities, the fine and performing arts, design, languages, and applied technologies. Approximately 60% of all Degree and Diploma students are in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (including 45% of Degree and Diploma Aboriginal students).

As such, the Arts and Humanities Faculty is well-positioned to fulfill Vancouver Island University's mandate as a special-purpose teaching university. We are committed to small class size, meaningful interaction between students and professors, student mentorship, and outstanding teaching.

Study in the arts and humanities inspires creativity and original intellectual inquiry and provides education that is relevant to the twenty-first century. To meet the challenges of the evolving knowledge economy, students must develop multi-modal literacies, technical and performative skills, and creativity, thereby strengthening their ability to participate in, and critique, culture and cultural narratives.

We will continue to foster interdisciplinary paths to create synergies among departments, giving students enhanced opportunities to design their own projects and portfolios within integrated programs. The imaginative and creative abilities of students in Arts and Humanities will continue to be complemented by methodological rigour and critical analysis.

We are committed to further develop intercultural competencies and to promote diversity by strengthening our First Nations Studies program and engaging with Indigenous communities, by increasing collaboration with International Education and

regional cultural groups, and by accommodating disability. We remain committed to building and maintaining positive spaces for all.

The Faculty will encourage community engagement by maintaining a commitment to initiatives such as the Arts and Humanities Colloquium series, exhibits and performances, by continuing to promote Love of Learning enrolments in courses, and by pursuing relationships with community organizations. We will also create more opportunities for student activity in our local communities and increase experiential learning possibilities. As an open-access institution, we especially will reach out to non-traditional learners in the mid-Island region.
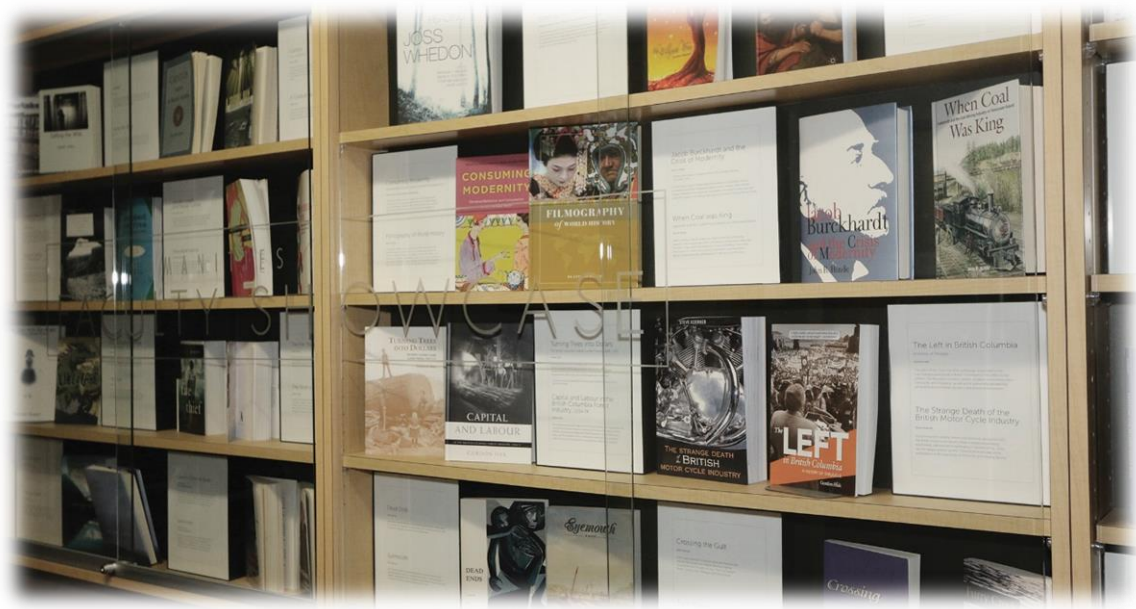
The arts and humanities provide a framework for understanding the complexities of the modern world. They are crucial in the formation of a socially-responsible citizenry and a prosperous and diverse economy. Our students are trained to formulate questions that need to be asked in a rapidly shifting society, and to disseminate information and ideas effectively in a variety of media.

The arts and humanities enrich our lives, both professionally and personally. By offering support to individuals in their search for meaning and their desire for self-actualization, the arts and humanities are an essential component of lifelong learning.

Our Vision

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities educates students to succeed in the knowledge and creative economy and to become leaders in our communities. By fostering knowledge of the self and others, the arts and humanities facilitate students' ability to imagine and shape their individual and our collective future. Through the practice of artistic expression, research, and scholarship, the arts and humanities provide students the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge to thrive intellectually, professionally, personally, and spiritually.

Our Mission

The Faculty of Art and Humanities is a community of students, scholars, artists, performers, and lifelong learners at the cultural and intellectual heart of Vancouver Island University and coastal British Columbia.

Within a global context, arts and humanities foster an appreciation of diversity and develop students' cultural and artistic literacy, critical thinking, communication skills, and knowledge of the past. We engage in personalized, student-centered, creative teaching and learning across a breadth of disciplines.

Core Values

Discovery

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities observes and studies how people have made and continue to make sense of the world through stories, images, music, and discourse. We support and encourage lifelong journeys of self-discovery and creative expression and explore how to address the challenges we face as individuals and communities.

Learning

We foster the development of diverse types of knowledge, creative expression, and communication skills among students, faculty, staff, and our broader coastal community through a combination of student-centred classes, professional development, and community engagement. We encourage creativity, historical understanding, critical thinking, and the exchange of ideas in an open, supportive environment that promotes lifelong learning.

Engagement

We are committed to small classes, open-door policies, one-on-one dialogue, mentorship, experiential learning, and student-centred learning. Our learning environments promote personal interactions between faculty, students, and community, open up the possibility of self-discovery and transformative learning, and create active producers and critical consumers of culture.

Achievement

We provide a welcoming and responsive learning environment that allows individuals to realize their intellectual and creative potential.

Diversity

We believe in equity, inclusiveness, and the recognition of cultural diversity. In our studies, we are attentive to gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, and disability. We explore different perspectives, and we foster inclusive dialogue. We treasure the voice of the individual and the infinite variety and range of human creativity.

Celebration

We celebrate the achievements of our faculty, staff, and students, and the nurturing of a collegial and supportive environment where individuals and communities can flourish.

Sustainability

We contribute to the growth of vibrant, living communities and to the creative, social, economic, and environmental sustainability of our region through the initiation and production of art and cultural events and our appreciation of cultural identities and literacies.

Objectives and Actions

1. Student Learning, Engagement, and Success

A. Promote student-faculty interaction

i. Support students pursuing post-graduate studies, scholarships, career development, and employment

ii. Create more research and other opportunities for faculty-student engagement

iii. Create additional opportunities to enhance student leadership through student involvement in Faculty governance and student organizations

iv. Continue to develop constructive relationships with student organizations

B. Advocate for instructional and technological resources to improve student success

i. Increase course offering where necessary

ii. Refine and develop new modes of delivery

iii. Develop policy on online and blended delivery models

iv. Develop strategies for improving student completion times

C. Improve and strengthen curriculum	i. Institute cyclical curriculum review in all departments, assessing breadth, learning outcomes, laddering opportunities, core curriculum, and the structure of undergraduate and graduate programs (coordinated with Program Review and Summative Program Assessment)
	ii. Develop program-specific learning outcomes that articulate with VIU's institutional Learning Outcomes
	iii. Review and/or develop course-specific learning outcomes
	iv. Broaden variety in course delivery, including online and blended instruction
	v. Consider the development of additional Badges, Certificates, Diplomas, Associate Degrees, and post-Baccalaureate degrees with a focus on enhanced career development
	vi. Collaborate across disciplines and with other Faculties to develop course clusters, specializations, cross-listing, and interdisciplinary paths
	vii. Promote co- and team-teaching
	viii. Initiate dialogue with Administration and VIUFA in order to better clarify advantages and challenges, create incentives, and remove barriers to co- and team-teaching
	ix. Encourage student awareness of the value of an education in the arts and humanities
D. Focus on student-centered teaching	i. Identify and promote best teaching and learning practices within the Faculty
	ii. Develop faculty workshops on student-centered pedagogy relevant to Arts and Humanities programs
	iii. Promote resources outside the classroom intended to facilitate student success: Writing Centre, Counseling, Student Union, Student Services

E. Foster and develop multimodal literacies and diverse ways of knowing in all programs

    i.   Enhance interpretive and communication skills involving multimodal literacies in all degree programs

    ii. Share knowledge about cultural identities and literacies, and teach intercultural competencies

    iii. Seek ways to increase Indigenization of the curriculum and enhance collaboration with Aboriginal communities

    iv. Seek ways to increase Internationalization of the curriculum by inviting international students to share individual cultural experiences with our classes

F. Foster experiential learning opportunities

    i.   Define "experiential learning" to guide discussion and action

    ii. Ensure that all Arts and Humanities graduates have some experiential education or learning component in their studies, through coursework, community-based learning, or internships

    iii. Publicize experiential learning opportunities

    iv. Enhance partnerships with the Campus Career Centre

    v. Create a Faculty position dedicated to developing experiential learning opportunities and liaising with the Campus Career Centre
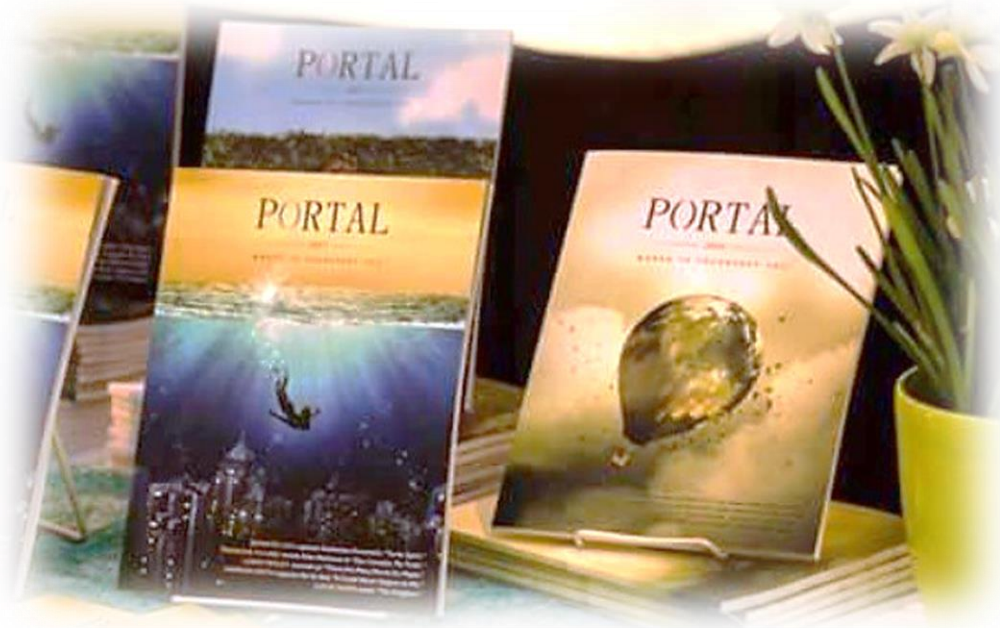
	vi. Establish campus career fairs to enable student networking with industries
	vii. Develop policy to coordinate and support field schools
	viii. Broaden awareness about cultural industries
	ix. Involve students in community-based projects and research
	x. Foster and develop socially-responsible citizenry
	xi. Facilitate a student colloquium in coordination with the Scholarship and Community Engagement office
G. Create opportunities for student-to-student interaction	
H. Work with Disability Services to devise ways to adapt our teaching to accommodate disabilities	

2.   Community Engagement

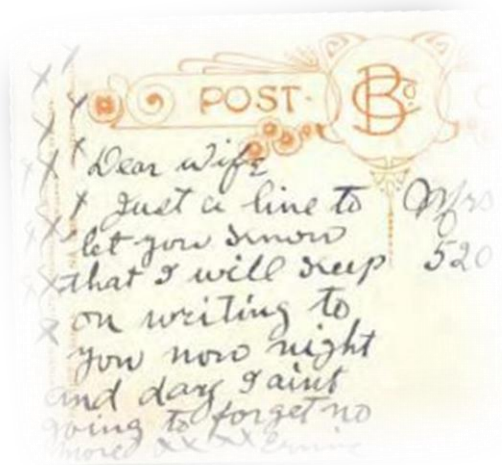| A. Promote the pursuit of lifelong learning	i. Build connections with Elder College to promote upper-level courses and Study Abroad opportunities ii. Create and promote more elective courses across the disciplines iii. Identify and use appropriate communication channels, including social media, to promote programs and courses iv. Explore opportunities for faculty to develop continuing education courses or programs for the community
B. Enhance our institutional and community profile	i. Support and enhance departmental and Faculty initiatives such as the Arts and Humanities Colloquium Series, the Gustafson Distinguished Poet Chair and chapbook publications, Portal Magazine, the Visiting Artist and Designer Series, the Canadian Letters and Images Project, the MeTA Digital Humanities Lab, the VIU@Cowichan Innovation Lab, Poets on Campus, Progressions, the Interior Design and Graphic Design year-end exhibitions, the Media Studies Student Showcase, Meridian, Incline Magazine, the Islands Short Fiction Contest, the Masters Series of Music, the Spanish Club film series, and the Theatre student productions.

	ii. Collaborate with the Regional Districts, the City of Nanaimo, Nanaimo Community Archives, the Nanaimo Culture and Heritage Commission, the Vancouver Island Regional Library, and local and regional arts groups and cultural institutions to create vibrant, culturally-rich communities iii. Foster relationships with related professional organizations
C. Create a Faculty Community Recruitment and Liaison Committee	i. Build connections with the School Districts and community groups ii. Continue to develop relationships with community educational stakeholders iii. Build connections with private schools iv. Continue to promote and enhance the dual credit program

FREE PUBLIC LECTURES

The Arts & Humanities Colloquium Series

Malaspina Theatre | Building 310 | Nanaimo campus
All Presentations 10 am – 11:30 am

3.   Creativity, Teaching, Research, and Scholarship

A.	**Foster a collegial and supportive work culture and community that includes respect for diverse ways of knowing, academic freedom, academic excellence, recognition, collegiality, ethics, and citizenship**	i. Establish student mentoring, whether through departmental advising or by partnering faculty with students ii. Encourage interdisciplinary mentorship of new and sessional faculty iii. Enhance professional development opportunities
B.	**Encourage discovery through the pursuit of free enquiry, and celebrate the variety and range of human creativity**	i. Create physical space(s) to enable dialogue, creative inquiry, and community engagement
C.	**Promote cultural and historical understanding, critical dialogue, and the exchange of ideas through publications, presentations, exhibitions and performances, and other public events**	i. Create a Faculty news feed

D.	**Create guidelines for best practices for informal, formative teaching evaluations**	i.	Identify faculty who have expertise in these best practices
		ii.	Set up workshops to encourage mentorship and consultation to build expertise across the faculty
E.	**Identify and put into practice ways to publicize faculty and staff achievement**	i.	Install a TV screen in building entrance to advertise events, celebrations, and other Faculty news
		ii.	Develop a Faculty "Twitter" strategy for each department
F.	**Recognize and celebrate excellence and innovation in teaching and scholarship**		
G.	**Develop a Faculty definition of scholarly activity in consultation with the Office of Scholarship and Community Engagement and the Vancouver Island University Faculty Association, and identify necessary and appropriate resources**	i.	Establish an ad hoc committee to develop this definition
		ii.	Develop a plan for faculty renewal and sustainability
		iii.	Advocate for more academic leaves to facilitate balanced workloads for faculty working on larger-scale projects

4.   Diversity and Accessibility

A. Celebrate human diversity in all its dimensions and maintain learning and working environments which are equitable, diverse, and inclusive

i.   Recognize cultural diversity in our curricular and pedagogical choices

ii. Model equity, inclusive dialogue, and mutual respect in the classroom and workplace, and consult with the Human Rights and Respectful Workplace office to accomplish this

iii. Work with Disability Services to increase pedagogical supports and faculty training opportunities to support students with identified disabilities

iv. Create a faculty handbook to identify existing resources (institutional, community, internal, external) to support teaching in a diverse context

v.   Ensure that all classroom spaces and resources are accessible

vi. Prioritize diversity in hiring

B. Invite self-discovery and transformative learning

i.   Recognize and encourage individual learning strategies and personal development

ii. Develop faculty workshops to assist faculty to remain current on diversity issues and to identify the learning opportunities in diverse classrooms

iii. Create self-reflection mechanisms, tools, and spaces to promote transformative learning for faculty, staff, and students

5.   Recruitment and Retention Strategies

A.	**Work across the Faculty, with the Office of University Planning and Analysis, and with the Office of Enrolment Management to combine efforts to recruit and retain students**	i. Liaise with the Office of Enrollment Management to identify key groups to target for recruitment and assist them with various recruitment needs and activities ii. Foster a sense of identity for Arts and Humanities students
B.	**Identify procedures to ensure that information on enrolment, retention, completion, graduates, costs, and student satisfaction inform enrolment planning.**	i. Obtain retention data to identify who is leaving and why
C.	**Work with the Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations to increase, enhance, and promote student awards and scholarships**	i. Create a repository of awards and scholarships available in the Faculty
D.	**Celebrate student success and community engagement through communal events and social media**	

E. Establish a Recruitment, Retention, and Events Coordinator position

i.   Work with University Relations to enhance the profile of Arts and Humanities

ii. Update and improve department home pages, and establish a system of ongoing maintenance

iii. Secure resources to aid departments in developing recruiting materials

iv. Update promotional brochures

v.   Exploit social media for recruitment and publicity, and for creating a sense of community among students

F. Enhance course offerings to attract and retain students

i.   Promote courses and programs across disciplines.

ii. Create first- and second-year interdisciplinary courses that establish points of contact between disciplines and that emphasize the relevance of the arts and humanities

iii. Review retention data, and solicit feedback from students, with an eye to curriculum development

6. Planning and Governance

A.	**Devise procedures for achieving Objectives and implementing Action Items**	i. Work with Office of University Planning and Analysis to gather data required for effective planning ii. Create a Strategic Plan Committee to review and revise the Arts and Humanities Strategic Plan regularly and as needed
B.	**Review governance policies and procedures to ensure consistency across the Faculty and within the institution**	i. Set deadlines for review of Policy and Procedure Manuals ii. Inform new faculty of Faculty policies iii. Review departmental policies to ensure consistency with Faculty bylaws, and with Faculty and institutional policies and procedures
C.	**Encourage and promote faculty involvement in governance both at the Faculty and the institutional level, and develop capacity for such**	i. Chairs should report to their departments on Faculty Council meetings ii. Initiate more social occasions that enable informal exchange of information iii. Advocate for more resources to support faculty involvement in governance iv. Create a flowchart that clearly outlines Faculty and institutional decision making processes

7.   Resources and Revenue

A. Improve facilities to meet or exceed best practices for high-quality learning environments	i. Build an inventory of required resources, infrastructure, and services ii. Set priorities and timelines for improvements iii. Advocate for information-technology upgrades and support to facilitate innovation in teaching and to build engagement in learning iv. Advocate for reprioritization of the new "Arts Centre"
B. Explore opportunities for revenue generation	i. Review existing institutional structures that may limit or enhance revenue-generating opportunities ii. Create an adequately-resourced revenue-generation committee that strategizes to develop marketable products or services iii. Develop a Faculty fundraising campaign that targets our community partners

Faculty of Arts and Humanities
PROGRAMS

English
BA Major in English

BA Minor in English

Visual Art
BA Major in Visual Art

BA Minor in Visual Art

Visual Art Diploma

History
BA Major in History

BA Minor in History

Graphic Design
Bachelor of Design
in Graphic Design

Interior Design
Bachelor of
Interior Design

First Nations Studies
BA Major in
First Nations Studies

BA Minor in
First Nations Studies

VANCOUVER ISLAND
U N I V E R S I T Y
ARTS & HUMANITIES

Women's Studies
BA Major in
Women's Studies

BA Minor in
Women's Studies

Theatre
Technical Theatre
Diploma

Theatre Diploma

Modern Languages Studies
BA Minor in
Languages and
Culture
(Romance Languages)

Post-degree Diploma
in Languages and
Culture
(Romance Languages)

Proficiency in
Language and Culture
Certificate

Music
Bachelor of Music in
Jazz Studies

Jazz Diploma

Creative Writing and Journalism
BA Major in
Creative Writing

BA Minor in
Creative Writing

BA Minor in
Journalism

Media Studies
BA Major in
Digital Media Studies

BA Minor in
Media Studies

BA Minor in
Digital Media