

# BROAD MINDS. BOLD FUTURES. LIFELONG CONNECTIONS.



**STRATEGIC  
PLAN**



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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that Mount Allison is located within the Siknikt District of Mi'kma'ki, the unceded, ancestral, and present territory of the Mi'kmaq. We also respectfully acknowledge the Nations whose territories border Mi'kma'ki and whom along with the Mi'kmaq comprise the Wabanaki (Dawnland Confederacy) — the Wolastoqiyik, the Peskotomuhkati, the N'dakina, and Penawapskewi. Mount Allison and its community's relationship and privilege to live, work, and play within this place were agreed upon in the Peace and Friendship Treaties between 1752 and 1779. Because of this treaty relationship, we are all Treaty people and have a responsibility to respect the territory, its people and more-than-human elements, and the sovereign and inherent rights of these Nations. We also acknowledge and pay respect to those Nations whose territories encompass Turtle Island and lands around the world, whom we welcome as part of the Mount Allison community, and who bring with them histories and ways of knowing that enhance the institution. Mount Allison recognizes its role as part of the historical and ongoing structures of settler colonialism and its responsibility to take meaningful and specific actions, including with this Strategic Plan, to engage Reconciliation, Decolonization, and Indigenization.

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF REGENTS



At the beginning of your Mount Allison journey, there's a moment when your heart flutters with excitement, curiosity, and the sense that you've just stepped into a place that is truly special. What you might not yet realize is just how far this experience can take you. You become part of a community that supports you — not only in your studies but throughout your life — offering connections and opportunities bigger than you can imagine.

At first, all of this might feel larger than life — and that's exactly the point. Mount Allison is about creating meaningful connections, moments of discovery, fostering growth, and building the confidence to dream bigger than you ever thought possible. Whether you are a student, faculty or staff member guiding the way, alumni reflecting on your journey, or a valued supporter investing in the future — you play a vital role in turning this vision into reality.

I'd like to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed thoughtful insights and energy to shape the strategic plan. Your belief in Mount Allison's potential, and each other, reminds me of our community's strength, heart, and vision to meet today's challenges and seize tomorrow's opportunities.

On behalf of the entire Board of Regents, thank you to our Strategic Planning co-leads, Dean of Libraries and Archives Dr. Rachel Rubin and Professor of Economics and Secretary of Senate Dr. Craig Brett ('91), along with the full Strategic Planning Facilitation Team, for their leadership throughout 2024–2025.

The Board of Regents fully endorses this plan and is committed to supporting the University community in its successful implementation. We are proud to share this plan with you and are excited for the future we will build together.

**Cheryl Hodder ('81), KC, ICD.D**

CHAIR, BOARD OF REGENTS

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & VICE-CHANCELLOR



**There is no place like Mount Allison.**

These are the first words of our new strategic plan and they could not be more on point. They contain the extraordinary legacy of our university — nearly two centuries of impact in learning, research, and positive change grown by generations of faculty, staff, students, and alumni. They describe the feeling of being home, held in the hearts of Allisonians everywhere. They speak to the magic and wonder that is Mount Allison, a small and mighty, deeply Canadian university sitting aside the Tantramar marshes in beautiful New Brunswick.

These words call us together...

celebrating legacy, home, and the magic we create;

focusing our aspirational gaze to the future, committed to the call:

there will always be no place like Mount Allison!

Throughout the planning journey, true to this call, the entire community has come through, bringing forward your voices, thoughts, concerns, ideas, and suggestions for an ever-greater Mount Allison.

This is your plan. This is our plan.

## TWO KEY MESSAGES

As I reflect on this journey, all the consultation sessions, survey submissions, emails, town halls, community cafés — two fundamental messages sing out.

The first is our foundation — we know who we are. Demonstrably, Mount Allison is one of the finest liberal arts and sciences institutions anywhere. We are an immersive undergraduate university, small and mighty in size, dedicated to an exceptional student experience, with an unshakeable commitment to academic excellence in learning, research, and creativity. So we are, so we will be.

The second is change — Mount Allison wants proactive change, to build our future together, charting waters rife in rapid transformation, increasing complexity, and ongoing uncertainty.

What our strategic plan does is articulate both our foundational commitments, who we are and who we will be, and the focal areas for change, development, and advancement.

## THE CHANGE WE BRING

The change we want is focused on being an ever more supportive community, an organisation of agility, a university proactively oriented to the future with student needs as our cornerstone. As a community, it means increased intentionality in well-being, equity and accessibility, professional development, and career orientation. As an agile organisation it means responsibly engaging technological solutions to boost human capacity and creativity, rigorously aligning structures and resources to need and demand, and building resiliency and sustainability. As a future-focused university, we proactively identify the resources and skills our students require to be global citizens, positively contributing to a better world in an ever-evolving and interconnected landscape. Rooted in academic excellence and freedom, committed to positive, values driven, ethical change, these insights serve as key design principles shaping the learning, research, and creative activities that define their academic journeys. The leitmotif running through all we will do, our core organizing principle, is students — delivering a student experience that is second-to-none. For students, we advance career and life skills, academic growth and guidance, health and wellness — all in an immersive, residential setting that enlivens the mind, spirit, and the hearts of every future Allisonian.

It is all about broad minds, bold futures, lifelong connections — a university where:

- The life of every student is engaged and enriched, prepared for the futures they forge.
- The life of every employee is valued, meaningful, and contributes to shared success.
- The lives of alumni are fulfilling, prosperous, and always connected back home to Mount Allison.

## IMMENSE GRATITUDE

At the start of our journey, I sat down with Dr. Rachel Rubin and Dr. Craig Brett and asked if they would lead the creation of our new strategic plan. They did just that — and they did it exceptionally well. They brought together a remarkable team of faculty, staff, students, and alumni — the Strategic Planning Facilitation Team. This team was assisted by the wonderful Trudy Hicks and Alex Montana and supported by Bonnie Crocker and her colleagues from the Academica Group. To Craig, Rachel, the whole team, Trudy, Alex, and Bonnie, thank you! Mount Allison owes you a debt of gratitude for the countless hours of work, creativity, collaboration, and the generosity of spirit and belief in our university that you brought to the table every step of the way.

Finally, to the whole Mount Allison community — thank you! Your engagement through dozens of consultation sessions, hundreds of survey responses, myriad email submissions, engaged community cafés, and town halls. We couldn't have done it without your voices, your support, your participation. This is your plan. This is our plan.

**There is no place like Mount Allison.**

**Dr. Ian Sutherland**

PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR



## OVERVIEW

When students and alumni speak of Mount Allison, they describe it as home, no matter the distance or the years gone by. This strategic plan charts the future, beginning with an affirmation of Mount Allison's foundations: the best of what already exists. Mount Allison is, and will continue to be recognized as, Canada's premier undergraduate liberal arts and sciences university, preparing students for meaningful lives, and sustaining lifelong connections to the community.

Mount Allison is in the highest echelon of Canadian universities, offering an immersive undergraduate experience steeped in the traditions of the liberal arts and sciences. We are a tight-knit community of approximately 2,500 students, situated within the interconnected lands of Tantramar, in Mi'kma'ki, where Indigenous and settler histories continue to shape our shared future. This small, rural, and diverse collection of communities provides and receives resources, values, and learning experiences in a continuous exchange. It is a place of dynamic learning and research, where faculty and students engage at the frontiers of knowledge and creativity. These foundations are our defining strengths. Looking ahead, the commitment remains clear: to continue as one of the world's finest undergraduate liberal arts and sciences universities — small, mighty, and unwavering in our dedication to academic excellence and rigour, achievement, and an extraordinary student experience.

A liberal arts and sciences education at Mount Allison is about broad minds and bold futures. It supports students in building successful, meaningful, connected, and fulfilling lives. Interactive class sizes, caring community, rural setting, outstanding faculty, and dedicated staff combine to provide a truly distinctive student experience. Mount Allison faculty and staff are award-winning researchers, educators, and practitioners, fostering an environment in which learners pursue personalized courses of study, undertake independent research projects, and discover interdisciplinary connections. The integration of academics and student life is deeply valued, creating accessible support systems that nurture student success. Students build enriching relationships with faculty, form lifelong friendships with peers, and develop an enduring connection to this remarkable place.

This is a legacy shaped by shared commitment carried forward through relations and intention. Upon these distinct strengths, a future takes shape, grounded in purpose.



## PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

Informed by extensive input from across the diverse Mount Allison community, this plan reflects a commitment to development and adaptability, responding to dynamic and evolving realities. Here at the outset, we provide a sample of key directions and actions featured throughout the plan.

### DELIVER STUDENT EXPERIENCE THAT IS SECOND-TO-NONE

Elevating the student experience from exceptional to extraordinary, Mount Allison expands pathways for learners to strengthen the knowledge, creativity, and leadership skills that will equip them for the future. The plan calls us to:

- Strengthen accessible and integrated ecosystems that foster student success in four areas:
  - » career and life-skills
  - » academic success
  - » student wellness
  - » extracurricular engagement
- Deepen students' capacity to work critically, ethically, and responsibly with emerging technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) by offering dynamic pathways toward digital literacy, fluency, and mastery.
- Build transformative, sector-leading, first-year programs that support student readiness for life and studies at Mount Allison.

### FOSTER A COMMUNITY OF CARE, WELL-BEING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mount Allison's future success depends on nurturing a culture of care and well-being, grounded in transparency, respect, and trust: principles that foster growth and a sense of belonging. These steps will help achieve this goal:

- Co-create equitable systems and relationships that honour the knowledge, leadership, and rights of diverse communities, fostering a safe, inclusive environment through effective practices, policies, systems, and training.
- Expand opportunities for high impact professional, career, and leadership development.
- Forge greater opportunities for alumni to be active participants emphasizing lifelong learning, volunteerism, and philanthropy.

### OFFER A LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES EDUCATION FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

Rooted in Mount Allison's exceptional liberal arts and sciences tradition, forward-looking programming prepares students to thrive in a rapidly changing world. The following actions will guide this work:

- Expand on the University's proven success in facilitating complementary professional programs and credentials.
- Engage collaboratively in examining and integrating the tools, resources, and supports for the responsible adoption, critical evaluation, and ethical use of digital technologies and AI in our programs, pedagogy, and research, equipping students for success.
- Promote and enhance in-demand lifelong and continuing education opportunities for alumni, early- and mid-career professionals, and community members.

### POWER A SUSTAINABLE, AGILE, AND DIGITALLY-HONED ORGANISATION

A sustainable and vibrant future for Mount Allison depends on systems, structures, and resources that strengthen the capacity of the campus community. The following actions will support this goal:

- Foster a transparent, evidence-informed culture at all levels to ensure effective and responsive decision-making.
- Develop an integrated enrolment strategy coordinating marketing, recruitment, retention, and university planning.
- Build a campus masterplan embodying accessibility and net-zero goals.

Achieving success across these initiatives — and throughout the entire scope of this plan — will not only uphold Mount Allison's enduring legacy of excellence, but propel the University to new heights, inspiring transformative impact and distinction for generations to come.





## MOUNT ALLISON STANDS APART

Mount Allison is synonymous with academic excellence and rigour. We have been named the #1 undergraduate university in Canada more than any other. With 57 Rhodes Scholars and counting, on a per capita basis we produce more Rhodes Scholars than any other Canadian university. We are a university of firsts, a place of higher learning whose academic mission has been positively changing the future since 1839.

### Mount Allison:

- was the first university in the British Commonwealth in which a woman earned a university degree, Grace Annie Lockhart, BSc (1875)
- welcomed the Owens Art Gallery, the first university art gallery in Canada (1895)
- was the first university in Canada to create a Canadian Studies program (1969)
- pioneered the provision of academic support for students with learning disabilities with the launch of the Meighen Centre (1994)
- was the first fully internet-connected campus in Canada (1993)

Generations of graduates have made, and continue to make, meaningful contributions to communities around the globe, guided by values of reciprocity, respect, and collective well-being. Allisonians walk many paths, as caregivers, scientists, entrepreneurs, business leaders, surgeons, educators, advocates, and much more. They contribute with humility and strength across communities, organizations, and Nations, supporting shared well-being. Rooted in Sackville, many carry their connections outward, fostering relationships across the world and generations. Others stay close to home, deepening their connections to place and people.

This plan celebrates the journeys taken and guides us in enabling the diverse journeys to come, fostering curiosity, care, and a commitment to contribute to a better world.



## THE PLAN

### BROAD MINDS. BOLD FUTURES. LIFELONG CONNECTIONS.

This plan reflects Mount Allison's strategic priorities, shared responsibilities, and provides a framework for strengthening the University as a place to live, study, and work. The plan brings focus to key efforts and aspirations, charting a sustainable and thriving future for the University. It embraces adaptation and growth as a values driven, fiscally responsible institution, collaborating with one another and the broader communities of which we are a part and where we reside. In doing so, we remain grounded in Mount Allison's core identity as an immersive undergraduate liberal arts and sciences university uniquely dedicated to an extraordinary student experience.

Across all areas of the University, there is a clear call for creative, collaborative, and responsible change, to pursue new approaches, and reimagine existing ones. The plan, therefore, centres on purposeful change, not change for its own sake. Not every ongoing effort is detailed here; effective practices will continue to be sustained. This plan highlights what will be done differently, what needs to begin, what needs to conclude, and what requires a new approach.

This plan is shaped by fast-changing, challenging contexts. Resources are finite and with multiple demands upon them. The University must choose among competing actions. Taking into consideration the most pressing needs and opportunities, organisational capacity, and Mount Allison's aspirations for the future, the plan provides clear direction for those choices. Guided by responsibilities to each other and to future generations, this plan reflects choices made with care, grounded in ethical stewardship and community.



# PLAN COMPONENTS

The plan consists of four vision components, four guiding commitments, and four strategic directions. For each strategic direction, there is an imperative and a set of strategies for action. While conceptually distinct, these components capture the goals espoused by this plan and articulate ways to achieve them. By carrying out the imperatives, grounded in our commitments, we move toward realizing the vision for Mount Allison’s future.



The outer ring represents strategic directions, defining areas of focus. The strategies and tactics that arise out of this plan fall into these four pan-university domain areas. When put into practice, these strategies must advance at least one of the four commitments in the middle ring and move the University toward at least one of the four outcomes defined in the vision.

The interconnections in the plan components can be illustrated by an example strategy under the Student Life and Success direction.

**Strategic Direction:** Student Life and Success

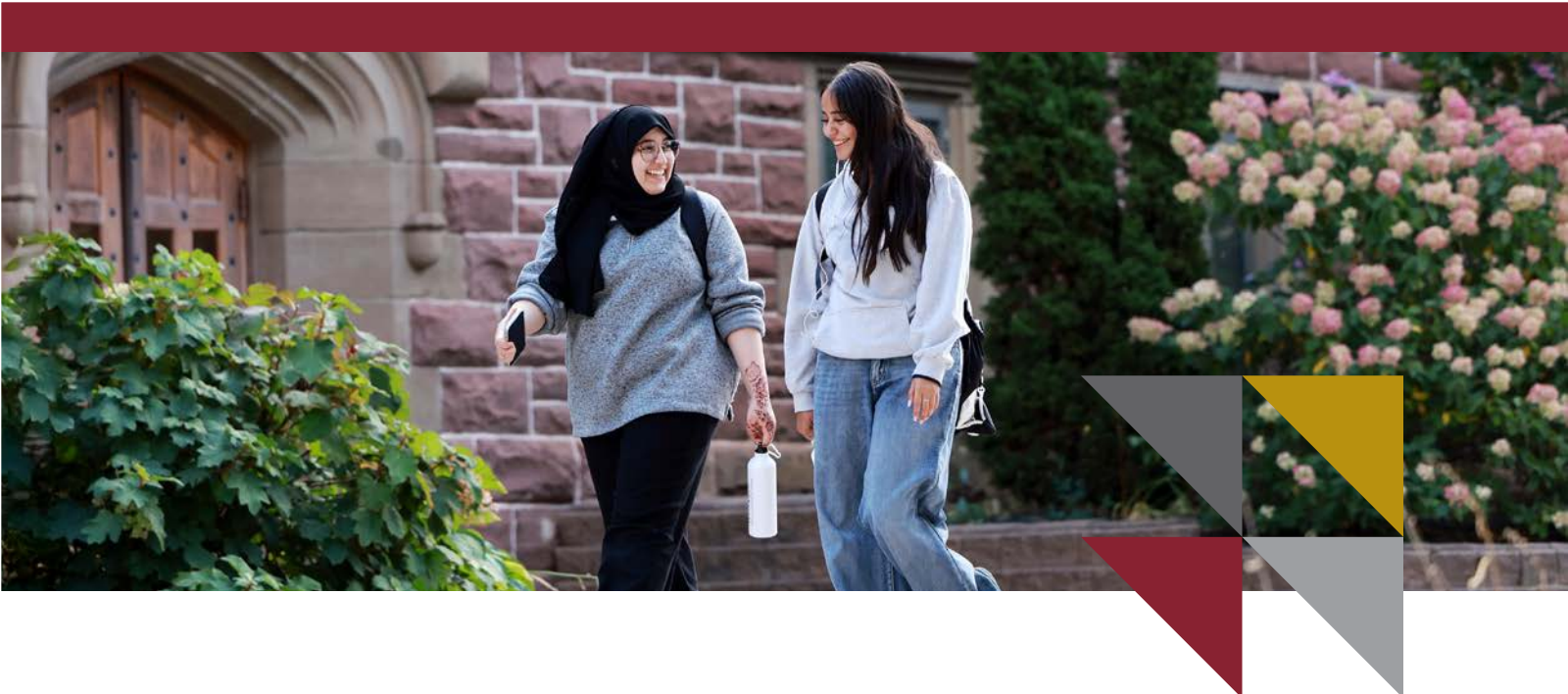
**Strategy:** Elevate accessible and integrated ecosystems that foster student success in four areas: 1) career and life-skills, 2) academic success, 3) student wellness, 4) extracurricular engagement.

**Commitments Advanced:** A Transformative Student Experience; Reconciliation, Equity, and Accessibility; Organisational Excellence

**Vision/Outcomes Addressed:** Future Readiness; Student Thriving







# OUR VISION

The “why” of this plan is encapsulated in the vision: a future-ready institution where students and employees thrive and lifelong relationships flourish. Mount Allison enhances people’s lives; it is a place where meaningful connections are established and maintained. As a University, we create prosperity for people, community, province, country, and beyond.



## FUTURE READINESS

Our vision starts with a holistic academic experience focused on the future readiness of students. A Mount Allison education strives to develop the skills learners need to succeed and, as leaders, shape a better future. The liberal arts and sciences serve as a cornerstone for the cultivation of critical, creative, and collaborative thinking and doing. They provide students with the capabilities needed to analyse complex issues with integrity, supported by comprehensive knowledge and a commitment to lifelong learning, personal growth, and enduring values. These academic foundations enrich the educational experiences of our students, equipping them for future professional pursuits and the meaningful contributions they will make throughout their lives.

In an era of global uncertainty and polarization, increasingly influenced by digital and artificial intelligence, the human-centred competencies fostered through the liberal arts and sciences have never been more important than at this very time in human history. Because of our liberal arts and sciences core, Mount Allison uniquely positions our alumni as leaders and contributors in all walks of life, enhancing our region, province, country, and world. Much like our approach to developing our students, it is equally vital that Mount Allison be future ready, with the tools, supports, and mindset to forge our future prosperity.



## STUDENT THRIVING

At Mount Allison, student thriving is approached holistically. This encompasses accessible opportunities in study, research, field work, internships, as well as social, artistic, and recreational pursuits, all within a residential environment that offers comprehensive academic and well-being supports to facilitate success. Mount Allison stands apart in the connections that students make with faculty, peers, alumni, and in the richness of the undergraduate experience: our academic rigour and excellence are fundamental, our extracurriculars are diverse and varied, and the student experience is at the core of all we do.



## EMPLOYEE THRIVING

Mount Allison is energized by its people. We are at our best when all work together in meaningful ways with the support, tools, training, systems, and connections they need. Employee thriving is enhanced when people can focus their time and attention on what matters most, ensuring the best possible experience for our students and each other. This requires efficient and intentional ways of doing day-to-day business and effective communication across the University. Staff and faculty are motivated to strive for excellence when their mental and physical well-being are nourished.



## LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

Thriving students and employees are nurtured by a thriving campus community with connections among students, professors, staff, alumni, the wider Municipality of Tantramar, and local and regional Indigenous communities. These relationships foster our sense of belonging and lifelong connection. Alumni are a vital part of the University, offering support networks and mentoring to current students. They exude generosity, giving back to the University that helped shape their lives. Through continuing education, Mount Allison sustains connections with alumni and invites new members into our community of lifelong learners. Mount Allison enriches life beyond its walls and grounds; our faculty, students, and alumni change the world.

# COMMITMENTS

As we move from vision to action, four commitments guide all we do and decide. Every action we take as a result of this plan will demonstrably strengthen at least one of these commitments.

## A TRANSFORMATIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our students are our raison d'être: we place students, student life, and student experience at the heart of all we do. When we make choices that enable our students to have a transformative experience, it benefits every aspect of our community. Mount Allison enhances students' abilities in critical and creative thinking and hones their ability to solve problems using interdisciplinary perspectives. We fuel their curiosity and challenge them to reflect critically and thoughtfully as they build essential skills for life and work. Our transformative student experience is sustained by an immersive, dynamic campus and residential community that provides opportunities for personal discovery, exploration, and growth inside and outside the classroom.



## RECONCILIATION, ACCESSIBILITY, AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ANTI-RACISM

Mount Allison is a campus and community where Reconciliation, accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism are lived values. Acknowledging the presence of systemic barriers, the plan affirms the commitment to addressing them through deliberate ongoing initiatives and relationship-building. These efforts include enhancing representation throughout the University, collaboratively creating university services that effectively respond to the varied needs of the community, and integrating these principles and relationships into curricula, culture, and campus programming.

This includes acting with the knowledge that Reconciliation, Indigenization, and Decolonization are distinct yet interwoven obligations. Mount Allison is committed to Reconciliation, actively working to grow, nurture, and sustain respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples, acknowledging the harmful history and presence of colonialism, building trust, and acting for societal change. As it works toward Indigenization, Mount Allison intentionally encourages the interweaving of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing in our learning, research, and work. Working toward decolonization means Mount Allison will critically engage around colonial structures and assumptions, collaboratively creating positive change through listening, learning, and accountability.

## ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Mount Allison is committed to organisational and operational excellence that is adaptable and proactive. This excellence includes: enriching human capacity and creativity; responsibly, ethically, and critically streamlining processes through technological and digital transformation; utilizing data-informed and timely decision-making; and identifying and responding effectively to emerging trends. Operational excellence underpins frictionless university experiences that are user-centred, efficient, responsive, and sustainable.

## FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Mount Allison is committed to fiscal sustainability so that we always thrive, serving students and our academic mission for generations to come. Long term sustainability requires us to enhance revenue generation, robustly (re)align resources to needs and strategic priorities, transparently engage in data-informed budget processes and decision-making, focus on strategic enrolment management and marketing, and pursue intrepid advancement and fundraising.

Environmental sustainability is also critical to our approach. We must make informed decisions that support the air, land, and waters that surround us, and adjust our practices to nurture environmental longevity and climate health. This commitment extends to supporting students, staff, and faculty in identifying and carrying out sustainable practices and initiatives.







# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & IMPERATIVES

Driven by the University's emphasis on a student-centred and thriving community, anchored in our four commitments, the plan lays out four strategic directions along with corresponding imperatives and strategies for the institution. These will guide our work as we come together to enact transformative change, allowing us to intentionally channel our time, resources, and energy. Each strategic direction delineates a unique component of our collective experience and each imperative demands disciplined focus on the areas identified by our community as being of greatest need, greatest potential for positive impact, and requiring the greatest organisational attention:



## 1. DIRECTION: STUDENT LIFE & SUCCESS

**Imperative:** Deliver the best student experience in Canada: inspiring learning, nurturing well-being, and supporting personal growth.

## 2. DIRECTION: COMMUNITY, CULTURE, & WELL-BEING

**Imperative:** Nurture a culture grounded in belonging, transparency, trust, and pride in our community such that Mount Allison is known as an outstanding place to work and live.

## 3. DIRECTION: FUTURE-FOCUSED LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES

**Imperative:** Provide a liberal arts & sciences education oriented toward the future, rich in creativity, research, and exploration, empowering students to thoughtfully navigate complex realities as outstanding contributors in the world.

## 4. DIRECTION: OPERATIONAL & DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

**Imperative:** Engage in fiscally and environmentally responsible transformation that complements and enhances the capacity of our people and ensures a sustainable, vibrant future for Mount Allison.

Importantly, the elements of this plan are designed to inspire collaboration and synergy across our community. Many initiatives will propel the University forward on multiple fronts — an exciting prospect that amplifies our collective impact. Some strategic imperatives will spark a vibrant array of new actions, fueling innovation and growth. These imperatives present unique opportunities to adapt organisational structures and ways of doing, to think creatively, and embrace positive change together.







► **OUR IMPERATIVE:**

Deliver the best student experience in Canada: inspiring learning, nurturing well-being, and supporting personal growth.

► **OUR STRATEGIES:**

- Elevate accessible and integrated ecosystems that foster student success in four areas: 1) career and life-skills, 2) academic success, 3) student wellness, 4) extracurricular engagement.
- Create sector-leading first-year programs that recognize and develop students' diverse strengths, identities, and prior learning to ensure every new student is prepared for life and studies at Mount Allison.
- Develop students' capacity to engage critically, ethically, and responsibly with emerging technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) by offering dynamic pathways toward digital literacy, fluency, and mastery.
- Expand places, spaces, and opportunities for students to create meaningful peer connections outside the classroom.
- Co-create sector-leading community and educational programming through innovative residence life structures and practices.
- Invest in data-informed recruitment and retention initiatives, engaging future Allisonians from across the country and around the world.

## STUDENT LIFE & SUCCESS

Fostering student thriving is our shared responsibility — our reason for being. From outstanding faculty to exceptional staff, we understand that our purpose is to support students on their learning journeys, nurture their well-being and personal growth, and facilitate their evolution as capable, thoughtful, and successful people. We understand that student success includes academic achievement, co-curricular engagement, career and life preparedness, mental and physical well-being, and a strong sense of belonging and inclusion.

As an intentionally small institution that values personal relationships, we create a student-centred experience rooted in care, equity, and excellence. The Canadian higher education landscape reflects increasing pressure to improve retention, build career success, provide compassionate supports in an uncertain world, and ensure students from all backgrounds can succeed. We are excited to pursue even greater coordination among student support services, continually enrich our vibrant co-curricular learning environment, elevate the immersive residential experience, and champion the integration of DEIAR, accessibility, and Indigenization principles throughout our institution's practices. We see how our student's lived experiences shape their engagement on our campus and understand that our commitment to learning, listening, and collaborating across and beyond campus is ongoing as we strive to provide the best student experience in Canada.

Attending Mount Allison is transformative; in and out of the classroom our students discover who they are. When they come to Mount Allison, they become part of the community for life.







## COMMUNITY, CULTURE, & WELL-BEING

People are the heart of Mount Allison. Our teams are the foundation for our success and drive the pursuit of excellence. A thriving Mount Allison requires a thriving community and a culture grounded in transparency, respect, trust, professional development, and belonging.

To provide a transformative experience to our students, Mount Allison must invest in faculty and staff. In the current climate of global, political, and economic uncertainty, where the value of post-secondary education is increasingly scrutinized and achieving financial sustainability demands significant effort and adaptation, we depend more than ever on our colleagues to respond entrepreneurially, efficiently, and responsibly. The University must be prepared to meet challenges related to recruitment and retention of staff and students, shifting learner needs and expectations, and altered public perceptions of the role and value of the liberal arts and sciences.

These trends challenge the nature of working at a university and bring associated strains to employee experience. Mount Allison must take a fresh and critical look at its processes as well as the resulting impact on workloads and job roles. It must critically and responsibly engage technological solutions, AI, and new ways of doing that enhance human capacity and creativity. We want people to be able to focus on the most meaningful work. The University must collectively revisit its approaches to employee well-being, communication and leadership, cultivating our sense of shared community, increasing the diversity of our staff and faculty, and providing opportunities for professional growth.

We also understand that the health of our community includes recognizing its deep reciprocal connections with its environmental, cultural, and social context. We value and seek to nurture relationships with the diverse communities of Tantramar, with Indigenous communities, and beyond.

A thriving Mount Allison means being a place where everyone can flourish. We are small and mighty: our size differentiates us as an employer committed to nurturing our close-knit community of employees, learners, alumni, visitors, neighbors, and partners. Central to employee thriving is a commitment to building and sustaining a culture of care, connection, and collaboration.

### ► OUR IMPERATIVE:

Nurture a culture grounded in belonging, transparency, trust, and pride in our community such that Mount Allison is an outstanding place to work and live.

### ► OUR STRATEGIES:

- Co-create an Indigenization framework for Mount Allison with local and regional Indigenous communities and foster relationship-centred partnerships through Reconciliation-focused engagement.
- Partner and collaborate with the Municipality of Tantramar to enhance community engagement and shared prosperity.
- Develop enhanced communication channels focused on connection, engagement, and transparency for current and future members of our community.
- Collaboratively develop short- and long-range people and culture plans that position all units for sustainable success and future-readiness.
- Adapt organisational structures to eliminate siloes, foster collaboration, and bolster resilience.
- Grow high impact professional, career, and leadership development opportunities.
- Co-create equitable systems and relationships that honour the knowledge, leadership, and rights of diverse communities, fostering a safe, inclusive environment through effective practices, policies, systems, and training.
- Invest in evidence-based practices and accessible services that support employee mental and physical well-being.
- Forge greater opportunities for alumni to be active participants through lifelong learning, volunteerism, and philanthropy.







## FUTURE-FOCUSED LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES

Mount Allison University is synonymous with academic excellence and rigour. Outstanding faculty deliver a vibrant learning environment that prepares students to succeed in a time of rapid social, political, economic, and technological change. Mount Allison faculty engage in boundary-pushing research and creative activity, bringing students into the heart of academic exploration. Through dynamic and inclusive curricular and co-curricular opportunities, students engage with diverse perspectives and ways of knowing that enable them to think critically, solve problems, and fully engage with the complexities of our world — broad minds, bold futures.

Our strengths as an institution uniquely position us at the intersection of liberal arts and sciences, complementary professional studies, and lifelong learning. Learners enter with varied and complex lived experiences and we are committed to fostering the intellectual, creative, and ethical growth of our students in an interdisciplinary and intersectional environment. A Mount Allison education must be inclusive and accessible to diverse learners, including mature, community and non-degree students. Our story includes providing the resources to regularly examine and adapt our academic programming, provide professional development opportunities, and maintain comprehensive resources to support the campus community. We also understand that many students require specific support with the transition to university, as well as with articulating the transferable skills they've learned. Focused university preparedness and orientation initiatives will help prepare students for success.

It is crucial that we articulate our defining values to prospective students, parents, employees, governments, and partners. Mount Allison's future-focused liberal arts and sciences education prepares graduates to meet the world as capable, thoughtful, inclusive, and engaged members of society, prepared for careers, entrepreneurial ventures, advanced studies, and wherever their lives may take them.

### ► OUR IMPERATIVE:

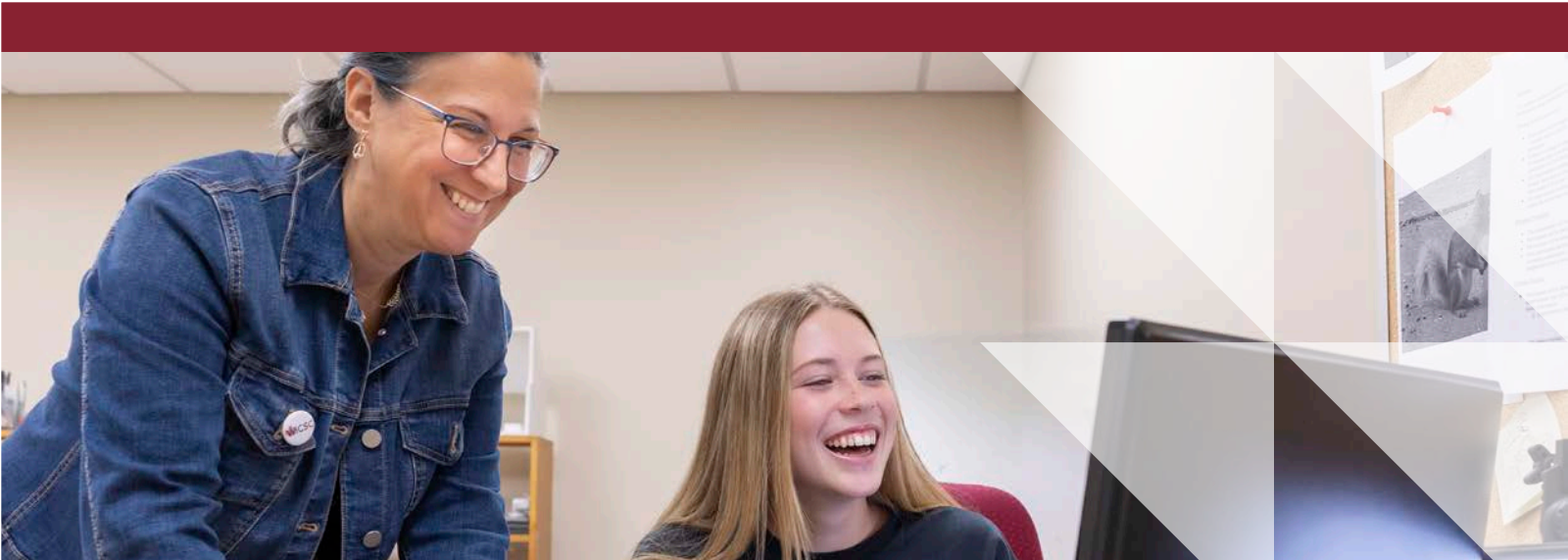
Provide a liberal arts & sciences education oriented toward the future, rich in creativity, research and exploration, empowering students to thoughtfully navigate complex realities as outstanding contributors in the world.

### ► OUR STRATEGIES:

- Advance excellence in faculty and student research and creative activities, supporting groundbreaking contributions to the community of scholars.
- Proactively design, adapt, and resource in-demand academic offerings, leveraging the excellence of our liberal arts and sciences tradition.
- Expand on the University's proven success in facilitating complementary professional programs and credentials.
- Strategically support opportunities to reimagine academic program delivery and organisation.
- Engage collaboratively in examining and integrating the tools, resources, and supports for the responsible adoption, critical evaluation, and ethical use of digital technologies and AI in our programs, pedagogy, and research, equipping students for success.
- Pursue digital innovations that advance our academic mission and accelerate research.
- Invest in curriculum development and pedagogical support, including Decolonization and Indigenization, accessible and inclusive practices, and instructional design support that facilitates continued excellence in teaching and learning.
- Develop adaptable pathways for students to navigate degree requirements and to design personalized learning journeys.
- Promote and enhance in-demand lifelong and continuing education opportunities for alumni, early- and mid-career professionals, and community members.
- Create opportunities to widen access to the Mount Allison community through life-long and extended learning.
- Invest in communications, marketing, and recruitment initiatives that articulate the essential value of, and generate demand for, a liberal arts and sciences education.







## DIGITAL AND OPERATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Times are tumultuous. Global, political, and economic upheaval, skepticism about post-secondary education's value, climate crises, rapid technological change and adoption, and financial uncertainty inform and impact our daily lives. We must boldly meet the times to build our own future success. To support our exceptional faculty and staff, enable our curious and thoughtful students, and sustain our purpose as a liberal arts and sciences institution, the ways in which we work must evolve.

Our operations are connective tissue holding together all departments, units, programs, and community members. We strive to ensure that faculty, staff, students, visitors, and partners experience a seamless interaction with our university at every touchpoint. We must design our academic and administrative operations through a people-centred lens, maximizing sustainability and efficiency while prioritising user experience and inclusive engagement. By putting the right people, processes, technologies, and organisational relationships in place, we will enable our staff and faculty to focus on what matters most: facilitating student success, advancing scholarship and creativity, fostering professional satisfaction, inspiring organisational innovation, and creating meaningful community engagement.

Within this context, we must remain fiscally disciplined to ensure that the University remains vibrant for the next generations. Fiscal discipline requires finding efficiencies, making technology work for us, and prioritising what, and what not to do. The goal is to be agile and proactive — gathering and sharing resources collaboratively and supporting thoughtful, and inclusive decision-making through clear, evidence-informed insights. We must take a similar approach to the physical campus and capital assets. Long- and short-run planning around space utilization, infrastructure, and campus facilities must be undertaken with environmental sustainability and accessibility in mind.

Operational excellence is a foundational directive, necessary to ensure Mount Allison's strategic vision becomes a lived reality. Designing appropriate organisational structures, streamlining processes, and aligning resources will strengthen capacity to identify emerging trends, and to swiftly capture opportunities. This can only happen when we place people at the core of this vision — building an organisation where students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members thrive. When faculty and staff are freed from unduly complex and laborious administrative pressures, there is space for what truly matters: meaningful experiences, deep learning, and a vibrant campus environment.

### ► OUR IMPERATIVE:

Engage in responsible transformation that complements and enhances the capacity of our people and ensures a sustainable, vibrant future for Mount Allison.

### ► OUR STRATEGIES:

- Foster a transparent evidence-informed culture at all levels to ensure effective and responsive decision-making.
- Enhance and review accountability requirements and processes to track indicators of progress and allow for adaptation and growth.
- Optimise and coordinate student-centric program planning and scheduling processes to ensure a seamless and efficient experience.
- Provide tools, resources, and support for critical examination, responsible adoption, and ethical use of digital technologies and AI to help optimise university operations and workflows, accessibly enabling human creativity and capacity.
- Develop an integrated enrolment strategy coordinating marketing, recruitment, retention, and university planning.
- Grow non-tuition based revenue generating initiatives.
- Transparently align resources with institutional needs and demands, prioritising student experience.
- Support expansion of advancement capacity and activities.
- Advance environmental sustainability initiatives that reduce our environmental footprint and model climate leadership.
- Build a campus masterplan embodying accessibility and net-zero goals.
- Develop long- and short-range financial plans to deliver a future in which Mount Allison continues to thrive.





# IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

Over the last 12 months, you, the community of Mount Allison, have stepped up and shaped this plan. It is our plan. It provides a robust, ambitious, future-focused compass to guide the journeys forward. Our student-centred commitments, directions, imperatives, and strategies will shape the change we want and the decisions we take.

As Mount Allison’s guiding framework, it is now in our hands to operationalize all that is laid out. In the coming months, working collaboratively across the University, we turn our focus to action, to doing.



# STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

To support, guide, and report on strategic actions, Mount Allison will create a Strategic Plan Implementation Group. Similar to the Strategic Plan Facilitation Team, the group will draw representation from across the University and report to the President & Vice-Chancellor. Given the multi-year time span for this work, attention will be paid to renewing the group’s membership on an annual basis while ensuring continuity of knowledge and work.

## SUPPORTING AND GUIDING

In their supporting and guiding roles, the team will work with the President’s Cabinet and Council and each academic and administrative portfolio to help empower them to develop implementation plans that realize the strategies outlined in our plan. Implementation plans will identify and define key tactics, the specific initiatives and actions we will take to manifest the change we seek.

The group will provide support to units as they consider, plan, and carry out specific actions and initiatives. Importantly, they will provide guidance and a coordinating function in managing what will be a rich and interconnected tapestry of action.

To be sure, much material was gathered to inform this work. Across the myriad live sessions, surveys, emails, and community events that constituted our consultation phase, members of the Mount Allison community brought forward numerous tactical recommendations. Whether you recommended specific new learning programs, technological solutions, or ways and means to advance net-zero planning, the strategic planning team has diligently documented the breadth of possible tactics heard. These are promising approaches, a portfolio of growing options upon which to build strategic implementation.



## REPORTING

Reporting will also be a critical part of the group’s work. It will be essential to understand what progress is being made, what is working and what is not, and it will be critical that we communicate on our progress. Regular updates will be brought to the community, to Senate, and quarterly progress reports will be submitted to the Board of Regents. Moreover, working with our Marketing & Communications team, the strategic implementation group will ensure wider communication of progress to the campus community, alumni, external constituents, and partners.

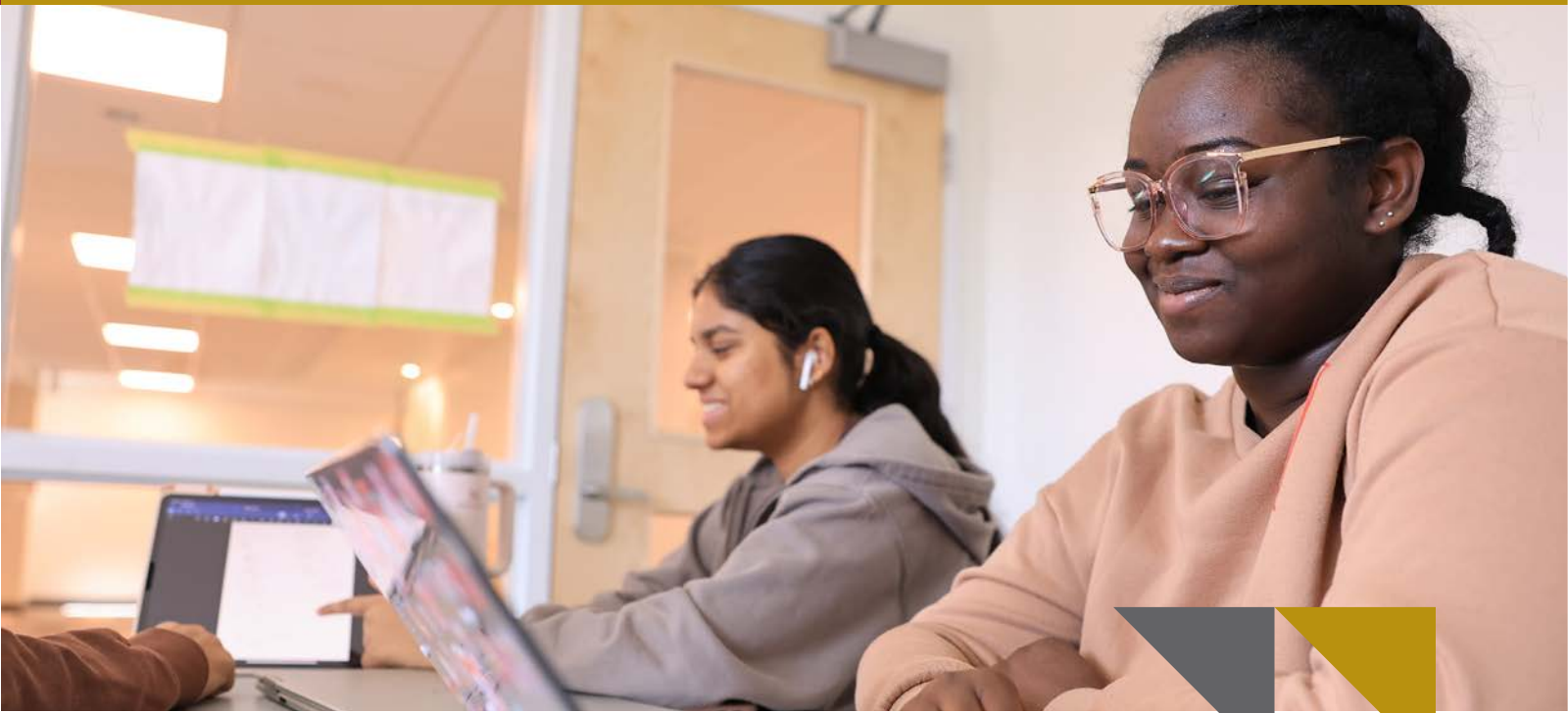
## EVALUATION AND ADAPTATION

Strategic planning and implementation is an ongoing, long-term process that continuously emerges and evolves in relation to internal and external factors — an ever-changing series of contexts. Given the rapid pace of change in the world, regular review and adaptation of this plan will be necessary. To ensure Mount Allison has the emergent capacity and in addition to the regular updates and reports referenced above, implementation plans include key waypoints at approximately 18 months, three years, and a full review at the five-year mark from the start of implementation.

- At 18 months, the University will perform a formative assessment, a check-in, to measure early progress, identify what’s working or lagging, and recommend any course corrections. Intended as an effective waypoint, the assessment will review progress reports and efficiently survey the University community for feedback.
- At three years, a more comprehensive mid-point review will evaluate the effectiveness of implementation and the consequent outcomes. The University will reflect on whether shared goals are being met and how they may need to shift. This mid-point review will engage a more substantive survey of the University community and result in a report of findings and recommended adjustments.
- At the five-year mark, the University will complete a fulsome strategic plan review. This will measure the overall success and outcomes of the strategic plan to date. It will highlight major accomplishments, lessons learned, and outstanding work. This review will include an assessment of how the University has addressed progress on Reconciliation, Indigenization, and DEIAR. This review will serve as a springboard for future strategic planning and alignment.

The shift from strategy to action happens collectively, with each of us — each department, unit, and faculty — sharing, collaborating, and working together.

**There is no place like Mount Allison!**



# APPENDICES

## BACKGROUND AND PLANNING PROCESS

This plan was nearly a year in the making, with the first meeting of the Strategic Planning Facilitation Team (SPFT) in December 2024. It combines the voices of our extended community as expressed through a comprehensive survey, 35 live feedback sessions covering every unit on campus, town hall meetings, community cafés, and email feedback. The SPFT undertook these community discussions guided by the principle that everyone at the University be invited to at least one opportunity to provide input.

With the support of the Academica Group, the SPFT read background reports on the post-secondary educational sector and innovations at comparable institutions in programming, revenue generation, and campus and residential life. In addition, the team learned about university finances and reviewed internal plans and reports to gain greater insight into Mount Allison’s operations. Within that broader context, the team considered feedback from the more than 800 members of the MtA community who responded to the survey or provided input through consultation sessions and emails. It speaks to the generosity of our community that so many students, faculty, staff, regents, and alumni took time out of their busy lives to express their ideas, concerns, and hopes for Mount Allison’s future. A “What We Heard” document, reflecting and summarizing these contributions, was shared in June 2025.

In May 2025, Academica led a retreat with the SPFT at which the team developed the outline of the plan. The SPFT leads then workshopped the main ideas with President’s Council and a writing group drawn from the SPFT shaped the main ideas into this document.



## TIMELINE



## THE TEAM

The Strategic Planning Facilitation Team was co-led by Dean of Libraries and Archives Dr. Rachel Rubin and Professor of Economics and Secretary of Senate Dr. Craig Brett ('91). Working with the committee chair, President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ian Sutherland, the co-leads recruited a team of members chosen for their academic, professional, and personal expertise, as well for their wide array of lived and cultural experiences and perspectives. The team included Regents, faculty members, staff, students, and alumni. It is notable that the team included Mount Allison alumni from four different decades, two of whom have returned to MtA as faculty. With experience and training covering the liberal and performing arts, science, and business, this group of individuals generously contributed thoughtful, honest, and diverse perspectives on Mount Allison and its future. The full membership is listed below:

**DR. ANDREA MORASH ('05)**  
Faculty of Science, Biology

**DR. CAITLIN McLAUGHLIN**  
Faculty of Social Sciences, Commerce

**DR. BETH JEWETT\***  
Director of Extended Learning;  
Faculty of Arts, Canadian Studies

**CASSIE RODRIGUEZ**  
Staff, Student Life

**EMILY SANFORD\***  
Staff, Experiential Learning &  
Career Development

**BENTLY HUFFINGTON**  
Student, Biology, Commerce

**NATE LESSER**  
Student, Biology, Data Science

**LAKSHMI KODUVELIL SAYAN**  
Student, Commerce

**TANYA HAGE COBURN\* ('06)**  
Alumni, Music and Psychology

**LOGAN REID\* ('23)**  
Alumni, Biology

**LISA YARMOSHUK ('88)**  
Board of Regents, Economics

**PAUL HENRY ('85)**  
Board of Regents, Commerce

CHAIR OF PROCESS  
**DR. IAN SUTHERLAND\***  
President and Vice-Chancellor

TEAM CO-LEAD  
**DR. RACHEL RUBIN\***  
Dean of Libraries and Archives

**TEAM CO-LEAD**  
**DR. CRAIG BRETT\* ('91)**  
Professor of Economics and  
Secretary of Senate

\* *Member of the writing team*

We would also like to extend our deepest gratitude to Trudy Hicks, executive assistant, and Alexandra Montana, communications officer, for their invaluable contributions to this process. We would also like to thank Bonnie Crocker and her team at the Academics Group for their support and guidance.

## MY STRATEGIC PLAN IDEAS AND GOALS

[illegible]

