

**Dean of Arts, Saint Mary's University
Halifax, Nova Scotia**

Saint Mary's University (SMU) invites applications and nominations for the position of Dean of Arts. This is an exceptional opportunity to lead a diverse, engaged, and research-active Faculty that supports one of the broadest ranges of humanities and social science programs in Atlantic Canada.

The Organization

Saint Mary's University acknowledges that the university is located on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship, first signed in 1725 between Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik Peoples and the British Crown. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact, recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

SMU is a vibrant, student-centered institution known for its global outlook, academic excellence, community leadership, and commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. With more than 5,500 students from over 115 countries, SMU provides a dynamic learning and research environment rooted in interdisciplinary collaboration and community partnerships.

The Faculty of Arts is home to 11 academic departments, one of the broadest arrays of humanities and social science disciplines in Atlantic Canada, and a rich selection of interdisciplinary programs and certificates. Through its Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Environmental Studies programs, students explore complex social, cultural, political, and environmental challenges with support from leading scholars whose research has local, national, and international impact.

The Faculty offers experiential learning opportunities including co-op programs, field schools, and service learning. Departments include Anthropology, Criminology, English Language and Literature, Geography and Environmental Studies, History, Languages and Cultures, Philosophy, Political Science and Global Development Studies, Social Justice and Community Studies, Sociology, and the Study of Religion.

The Role

Reporting to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic and Research, the Dean of Arts is a senior academic leader responsible for advancing the Faculty's vision, academic mission, and operational effectiveness. The Dean fosters an environment where excellence in teaching, research, and community engagement can thrive, and plays an essential role in supporting faculty, staff, and students across a diverse range of departments and programs. They play a key role in community engagement and philanthropic efforts of the institution.

The Dean is responsible for the following areas of oversight:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Develop and advance a compelling academic vision for the Faculty of Arts aligned with Saint Mary's institutional priorities. Support innovation in curriculum, pedagogy, and experiential learning.
- **Faculty Development and Support:** Promote excellence in teaching, research, and scholarly activity. Support recruitment, retention, mentorship, and career progression for faculty and academic staff.
- **Operational and Administrative Oversight:** Provide effective oversight of budgets, staffing, resource allocation, policy implementation, and compliance with collective agreements.
- **Advocacy and Relationship Building:** Serve as an articulate and passionate advocate for the arts. Build strong relationships within the university and externally with community, government, donors, and academic partners.
- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA):** Advance a culture of inclusion and respect, address systemic barriers, and ensure that EDIA principles are embedded in academic and administrative practices.

The Ideal Candidate

As the ideal candidate, you are an accomplished scholar and leader with a proven record of academic leadership, research excellence, and strategic vision. You bring experience in academic administration, a deep understanding of the role of the arts in higher education, and a leadership style grounded in collaboration and creative thinking. You are a data-driven decision maker with a record of fostering positive culture through strong and effective relationships across administrative and faculty departments. You are a collaborative and inclusive leader with exceptional communication skills and a deep commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

Qualifications and Experience

While the Search Committee recognizes that no one candidate is likely to meet all qualifications in equal measure, those listed below are desirable and will be used to compare candidates.

- Must currently hold the rank of associate professor or full professor and have an established record of success in research, scholarship, and teaching, normally demonstrated over several years at a senior academic rank.
- Significant experience in an academic leadership role.
- Relevant administrative experience including performance evaluation, project management, budgeting, annual reporting, and successful fundraising efforts.
- Experience working collegially and effectively within a unionized environment, building trusting relationships both internally and externally.
- Demonstrated commitment to EDIA, with examples of fostering inclusion during their career.

- Demonstrated experience in conflict management, with strong ability to navigate complex situations in a calm and collaborative manner.
- Understanding of the current provincial funding landscape and opportunities.
- Demonstrated skill in strategic planning and implementation in an academic setting.
- Evidence of exceptional team building skills and consultative leadership.
- Demonstrated success in developing external strategic partnerships including academic & research initiatives, community engagement, fundraising, and government relations.

Skills and Attributes

- A visionary and strategic thinker with a passion for arts education.
- A competent and effective administrator and manager.
- A collaborative and transparent leader committed to inclusive decision-making.
- An excellent communicator and active listener with strong interpersonal skills.
- A principled decision-maker who leads with integrity and respect.
- An adept relationship-builder who inspires trust, inclusion, and shared purpose.
- Good judgment and action-oriented, able to make timely, informed decisions.

Application Process

At Saint Mary's University equity and diversity are integral to excellence and enrich our community. As an institution committed to fostering an environment of inclusion and respect, we welcome applications from women, Indigenous peoples, racialized persons/visible minorities, persons with disabilities, persons of minority sexual orientation or gender identity and others who might contribute to the growth and enrichment of our community. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, preference will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Saint Mary's University is committed to providing an inclusive and barrier-free experience to applicants with accessibility needs. Requests for accommodation can be made at any stage during the recruitment process by contacting accommodations@kbrs.ca.

To Apply

If you are interested in this opportunity, contact Abbey MacLeod at amacleod@kbrs.ca, or Kyle Steele at ksteele@kbrs.ca, or submit your complete application package online [here](#).

We will begin reviewing applications on April 26, 2026.