



Dear Acadia Community,

Over the past two weeks since we released the initial draft proposal for a structural re-organization of the academic sector on April 6, we have engaged with and heard from hundreds of faculty, staff, and students through Town Halls, Working Sessions, surveys, emails, and meetings.

We recognize these are difficult, stressful, and uncertain times, with multiple financial, internal, and external stressors driving tight timelines, and that the speed with which these changes are happening is hard. Despite these challenges, we have been heartened by the level of engagement, dialogue, feedback, and ideas that have emerged from students, staff, faculty, and community. Since the release of the draft proposal, we have had the following **virtual and in-person sessions**:

- April 7: Virtual All-Faculty Town Hall from 9:30-11:00am, with 155 participants
- April 7: Virtual All-Faculty Town Hall from 1:30-3:00pm, with 86 participants
- April 8: Virtual All-Staff Town Hall from 9:30-11:00am, with 147 participants
- April 8: Virtual Town Hall for Faculty & Staff from 3:00-4:30pm, with 168 participants
- April 13: Senate Feedback
- April 13: Student Drop-In Session from 12:00-3:00pm, with close to 200 participants
- April 14: In-Person Faculty Working Session from 9:00-11:00am, with 74 participants
- April 14: In-Person Faculty Working Session from 1:30-3:30pm, with 42 participants
- April 15: In-Person Staff Working Session from 9:30-11:30am, with 84 participants
- April 15: In-Person Working Session for Everyone from 2:30-4:30pm, with 85 participants
- April 16: Discussion with Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC)
- April 16: Student Drop-In Session from 1:00-3:00pm, with approximately 50 participants

It was encouraging to see so many people from our community come out and engage, many of you in multiple sessions.

We have also created **two surveys**: one for students, staff and faculty that was released on April 6 with the initial documents (140 responses to date: 38 faculty, 33 staff, and 69 students) and one for students specifically that was created for the student drop-in sessions (74 responses to date).



What We Heard

Through all these feedback points, we have heard some very clear themes and concerns:

1. The challenging financial circumstances and external stressors are widely recognized and understood, and most people see the need for change and accept that we are in a critical moment for the University;
2. Very few people like the proposed names of the Colleges;
3. The term 'College' is causing some concern regarding a lack of understanding in Nova Scotia of the difference between a university college and a community college. Others are supportive and intrigued by the concept, particularly when it comes to the structures and ideas that would create and promote more embedded resources and a stronger sense of community;
4. The proposal to eliminate discrete academic units does not have wide support, and is causing a lot of stress and concern; yet there is also a recognition that our current structures have limitations;
5. The embedded support model has widespread support, and there is excitement that we can break down silos and create a stronger sense of community among students, faculty, and staff – and that there is need for further clarity about roles, scope, responsibility, structure, etc. as stress around job loss and role change is high;
6. There is support for creating more structures that allow students to get more involved in academic decision-making;
7. There is a lot of interest in creating structures and opportunities to enhance creative partnerships and encourage different ways of thinking and collaboration;
8. We have also heard that even having two Colleges/Faculties/Entities as an organizational structure could still create siloing and may still be too much for a university of our size, and that the divisions would either be too artificial or would result in a distortion of numbers of people across the two entities;
9. Some people were excited about the concept of creating two academic learning communities each with embedded Schools that support a common theme. Ideas emerged about naming these communities with respect to place and space and adopting Mi'kmaw names. Others found this idea confusing and even risky; *and*
10. The introduction of a new administrative role – Associate Dean – has presented some confusion and concern about administrative bloat and integration into the existing AUFA Collective Agreement.

The Next Proposal

We have taken your extensive feedback seriously, and feel this next iteration puts forward a



structure that reflects the voices, ideas, and concerns we have been hearing. This proposal is still open for feedback, and we look forward to continued engagement on these ideas.

In response, we are proposing to create a model with 1 Faculty of Acadia University, with 8 Schools led by 8 Directors, embedded within the overarching Faculty.

While the concept of dividing into two Colleges/Faculties/Academic communities has merit and opens intriguing possibilities around a more collegial learning environment, we have heard that this moment calls for more simplification and clarity. We agree with the many voices who articulated excitement around the creation of two collegial communities and that this possibility merits further discussion and study; yet we recognize that the short timelines do not allow the idea to be fully conceptualized.

One Faculty with 8 Schools provides a much more cost-effective, sustainable, streamlined, nimble, and responsive structure that will reduce bureaucracy, allow for the more equitable allocation of resources, improve oversight, enhance accountability, and maintain disciplinary cohesion in a form that is recognizable and already existing at Acadia.

The Proposed Schools

We propose the following 8 Schools, based on feedback from the working sessions, surveys, and additional conversations. The disciplinary groupings in each were frequently proposed. We have also considered the student and faculty numbers in these proposed Schools, with an aim to create a better balance and distribution of both.

These proposed Schools are listed in no particular order and are purposely not named, as each School will work with us to determine appropriate names. We continue to be open to further conversations around School composition.

While some viewed the introduction of the role of Associate Dean as being appropriate to the administrative roles for each School (with one unit wanting its own Dean) – and while we were excited about an academic leadership role with an expanded scope that better reflects the workload – many were anxious about creating a new and undefined role. We are therefore proposing to retain the title of Director for each School for this proposal.

In proposing these Schools, we recognize that this more traditional approach may be disappointing to some who voiced excitement around a more creative structure and identified opportunities for more diverse clusters. We encourage colleagues within and between the Schools to continue discussions around more inter- and multi-disciplinary partnerships and to explore ideas for program creations and partnership, and we hope that this structure creates an environment in which we can continue to evolve as a university.

**Business, Economics, and Math & Stats**

- Business Programs (Undergrad)
- Economics Program (Undergrad)
- Math & Stats Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
~615 Students¹
~43 Faculty

Nursing and Counselling

- Nursing Program (Undergrad)
- Counselling Program (Grad)
~243 Students
~17 Faculty

**English Literature, History & Classics,
Languages & Literatures, Law & Society,
Philosophy, and Politics**

- English Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- History Program (Undergrad)
- Classics Program (Undergrad)
- Languages & Literatures Programs (Undergrad)
- Law & Society Program (Undergrad)
- Philosophy Program (Undergrad)
- Politics Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Social and Political Thought (Grad)
~344 Students
~46.5 Faculty

**Community Development, Creative Writing²,
Education, Environmental & Sustainability
Studies, Music, Art, and Theatre**

- CODE Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Education Programs (Post-grad + Grad)
- ESST Program (Undergrad)
- Music Programs (Undergrad)
- + Theatre, Art, and Creative Writing courses
~480 Students
~34.5 Faculty

Biology, Chemistry, and Applied Bioscience

- Biology Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Chemistry Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Applied Bioscience (Undergrad)
~495 Students
~37 Faculty

Kinesiology and Nutrition & Dietetics

- Kinesiology Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Nutrition & Dietetics (Undergrad)
~524 Students
~28 Faculty

**Computer Science, Engineering, Environmental
Geoscience, Environmental Science, Geology,
Physics**

- Computer Science Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Engineering Program (Undergrad)
- Environmental Geoscience Program (Undergrad)
- Environmental Science Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Geology Program (Undergrad + Grad)
- Physics Programs (Undergrad)
~434 Students
~27 Faculty

**Psychology, Sociology, and Women & Gender
Studies**

- Psychology Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Sociology Programs (Undergrad + Grad)
- Women & Gender Studies Program (Undergrad)
~497 Students
~26 Faculty

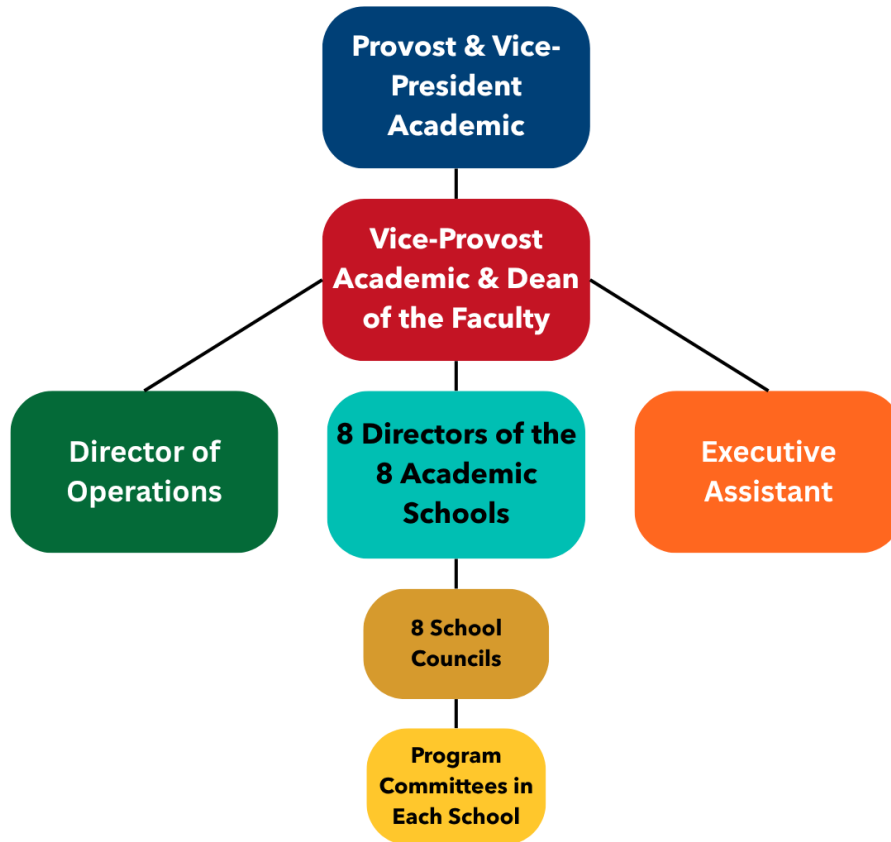
¹ Student numbers are from December 1, 2025; Faculty numbers were pulled on March 31, 2026, and include all faculty/instructors in each program/unit at that time.

² This would necessitate redeploying Creative Writing faculty members out of the rest of the English program, but only with their consent and interest.



Proposed Governing Structure

To support the academic administration of the 8 Schools, we propose the following governing structure.



This structure will reduce and streamline academic administrative leadership and provide the Directors and the Vice-Provost Academic and Dean of the Faculty with the scope and authority to lead, as well as the supports to ensure their continued success.

The Vice-Provost Academic and Dean of the Faculty will be supported by two critical staff roles: Director of Operations and an Executive Assistant.

The position of Director of Operations will support and maintain the financial, project management, and logistical needs for the Vice-Provost Academic and Dean of the Faculty Office, as well as providing support and guidance to the additional embedded supports throughout the Schools. While the embedded supports/staffing model is still forthcoming, we remain committed to creating deeper and more integrated connections across staff, faculty, and students at Acadia, and will be incorporating all the feedback received to date. We also remain committed to working with SEIU, AUPAT, and staff across the university on these



discussions. The Executive Assistant will support the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic and Dean of the Faculty, as well as provide oversights and supports for the embedded Academic Administrative Assistants in each of the Schools. We envision at least two Academic Administrative Assistants in each School, to maintain the high level of support for programs, students, and faculty that these important roles offer.

Each School will have a School Council, responsible for academic decision-making at the School level. Each program within the Schools can create and operate a Program Committee, which will be responsible for the curricular and academic decisions related to each program, feeding up to the School Council.

Next Steps

We would like to arrange **engagement sessions with members of each of the 8 proposed Schools as well as cross-School groups** over the next few weeks to get feedback on this second draft proposal. We will continue to evolve this work.

We will also continue to work on creating a more detailed staffing plan for the embedded support model, integrating the feedback we have received and clarifying roles and responsibilities. This will be released in the coming weeks.

The Academic Planning Committee (APC) and Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) of Senate will also be engaged in preparation for this proposal to be discussed at Senate in May, which may also require an additional special meeting to accommodate the proposal prior to submission to the Board in June.

Finally, the entire proposal will need to be costed to determine the magnitude of immediate savings. This will also be shared in detail with the community.

Again, we thank you for your continued commitment, insight, and courage as we shape Acadia's future, together.

Jeffrey J. Hennessy, PhD
President and Vice-Chancellor

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