



June 9, 2026

Mr. Henry Demone, Chair,
Acadia University Board of Governors
15 University Avenue
Wolfville, Nova Scotia, B4P 2R6

Dear Mr. Demone,

On behalf of the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers (ANSUT), I am writing to express our deep concern regarding the current proposal to restructure Acadia University into two faculties.

Universities are among the most important public institutions in our province. Decisions that alter their academic structures, governance systems, and educational missions must be guided by evidence, meaningful consultation, and careful deliberation. Unfortunately, the process surrounding this proposal has fallen short on all three counts.

Universities across the province are facing unprecedented financial constraints, and we realize that Acadia University is no different. The University community has repeatedly been told that financial pressures necessitate action, yet it remains unclear how the proposed restructuring would address the financial challenges that have been cited as the primary rationale for pursuing such significant change. Your proposal fails to demonstrate how dividing the institution into two faculties, and dissolving departments and academic units into schools will resolve those underlying fiscal concerns. Restructuring on this scale carries substantial costs, operational risks, and administrative complexities. To date, the University has not provided convincing evidence that the proposed model will improve financial sustainability or strengthen the institution's long-term viability, and actually states that the cost of the proposal will not be determined until after it receives Board approval.

ANSUT echoes the concern of the Acadia University Faculty Association (AUFA), many of whom are troubled by the process through which this proposal has been developed. Faculty, staff, students, and other members of the University community have consistently raised concerns about the process, warning that it is rushed, lacks in transparency, and is insufficiently democratic. Meaningful consultation requires more than the presentation of predetermined options. It requires genuine engagement, opportunities for substantive input, and a willingness to reconsider proposals when significant concerns are identified. Many members of the university community do not believe that standard has been met.

The lack of consultation with AUFA is also troubling. Your faculty association has not been properly consulted regarding the implications of the proposed restructuring for terms and conditions of employment protected under the Collective Agreement. Respect for collective bargaining rights is paramount, and requires that the effects of any restructuring on the Collective Agreement be identified, discussed, and addressed before irreversible decisions are made. Any proposal that alters academic units, reporting structures, governance arrangements, or academic programming inevitably raises important collective bargaining issues. Those issues cannot be treated as secondary considerations or deferred until after major decisions have been made, yet there is no mention of your intent to meet with the AUFA under "Opportunities for Continued Feedback".

We are also concerned that all three versions of the restructuring proposal contain elements that lack an adequate academic or operational rationale and that appear misguided to significant numbers of faculty, students, and staff. At Acadia University, and across the province, concerns have been raised about the educational value, governance implications, and practical consequences of the proposed changes. That these concerns persist across multiple versions of the proposal suggests that the problem is not one of communication but of substance.

Perhaps most concerning is the broader context in which this proposal has emerged. Across Nova Scotia, universities are grappling with increasing political pressure and government interference in post-secondary



education. The passage of Bill 12 has heightened concerns about institutional autonomy, academic self-governance, and the ability of universities to determine their own academic priorities free from political interference.

In this environment, universities face a critical choice. We can respond to external pressures by choosing rapid and dramatic internal restructuring, or we can work collectively to defend the principles that are the cornerstone of higher education: collegial governance, academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and evidence-based decision-making.

From ANSUT's perspective, this proposal appears to be a knee-jerk response to a political climate that is deeply problematic. Our universities will not become stronger by dismantling long-standing academic structures one institution at a time. They will grow stronger by standing together in defence of post-secondary education and by collectively resisting efforts to weaken the autonomy and governance traditions that are essential to their success.

ANSUT understands that the challenges facing Nova Scotia universities are real. However, solutions to those challenges must be developed through transparent, collaborative, and democratic processes that respect collective agreements, engage academic communities, and preserve the core values of higher education.

We encourage the Acadia University Board of Governors to insist upon a process that places transparency, collegial governance, and academic integrity at its centre, and to reject any proposal that has not been subject to meaningful consultation, rigorous scrutiny, and broad community support.

The decisions made in the coming weeks and months will shape not only the future of Acadia University but will also send a signal about how Nova Scotia's universities respond to growing political pressure. We hope you will choose a path that strengthens, rather than diminishes, the traditions of shared governance and institutional autonomy that have served our universities well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mathew Reichertz", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mathew Reichertz
President, Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers

cc: University Secretariat, secretariat@acadiau.ca

cc: Dr. Jeff Hennessey, President & Vice-Chancellor, president@acadiau.ca

cc: Dr. Geoffrey Whitehall, President, Acadia University Faculty Association, Geoffrey.Whitehall@acadiau.ca