As Dean of Arts at the University of Calgary, it’s my privilege to lead a large, dynamic and growing faculty within one of Canada’s most innovative, bold and ambitious universities. Our faculty is home to internationally acclaimed researchers from the humanities, social sciences and fine arts, as well as many emergent multidisciplinary fields. We are blessed with inspirational and award-winning teachers, innovative community partners and talented, energetic and motivated students. I invite you to explore this annual report to learn more about the brilliant research and learning environment in the Faculty of Arts.

I’m proud to look back with you on a historic and highly productive year for us here at UCalgary and in the Faculty of Arts. Most memorably, we were proud to be part of the 50th anniversary celebrations, which honoured the University of Calgary’s powerful contributions to our city, province and country and fostered new enthusiasm for the next half-century of discovery and learning. Arts students, faculty, staff and alumni also actively participated in the development of a new strategic plan for the university, Eyes High 2017-22. And closer to home, we delivered on our mission to engage, inspire and discover by launching our faculty’s own five-year strategic plan, Energizing Arts 2017-22. These foundational documents provide the strategic direction as we continue our transformative journey of critical inquiry, creative practice and collaborative exploration.

Indeed, 2016-17 was another extraordinary year of research and creative activity, student success and community engagement in the Faculty of Arts. I hope that you will find the contents of this report enlightening and exciting. I encourage you to be engaged with our faculty as we strive to engage, inspire and discover.

Richard Sigurdson,
Dean, Faculty of Arts
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
The Faculty of Arts delivered on its mission to engage, inspire and discover in Spring 2017 when it introduced its five-year strategic plan, Energizing Arts 2017-22.

“The Faculty of Arts is a vast and multidisciplinary academic community. Some of our researchers are conducting cognitive neuroscience at the Foothills Hospital, while others are choreographing exquisite dance performances. Likewise, some of our students are training to master Earth-space technologies, while others are learning the vocabulary and grammar of ancient languages,” said Richard Sigurdson, Dean of the Faculty of Arts.

“We see this diversity as our strength. Across our 12 departments and two schools, we create an environment where our students, faculty and staff foster critical thinking, engage as global citizens, and collaborate as leaders, bold innovators and creative practitioners.”

Energizing Arts 2017-22 is the result of extensive consultation between September 2016 and March 2017. More than 350 points of contact contributed to this strategy — undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff and alumni engaged in focus groups, online surveys and written feedback.

**ENERGIZING ARTS 2017-2022**

Energizing Arts sets the direction for the Faculty of Arts over the next five years to engage, inspire and discover the world and the faculty’s relationship to it through critical inquiry, creative practice and collaborative exploration. The strategy also supports participatory citizenship through informed discussion and evidence-based approaches.

The strategy is built upon three priorities:

- **CRITICAL AND CREATIVE RESEARCH, TEACHING AND LEARNING**
- **ENGAGING COMMUNITIES**
- **CITIZENSHIP, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

The Faculty of Arts has established meaningful goals, achievable actions, key responsibilities and measurable outcomes for each priority. Through the implementation of this strategy and the realization of its goals, the Faculty of Arts will make a difference in the lives of our students, faculty, staff and alumni, and in our community, nation and world.

“We’re laser-focused on excellence and driven to succeed. I’m incredibly excited to see what the next five years will bring as the Faculty of Arts embraces this opportunity to engage, inspire and discover,” said Sigurdson.
CRITICAL AND CREATIVE RESEARCH, TEACHING AND LEARNING – PRIORITY 1

INCREASE THE QUALITY AND IMPACT OF ARTS RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

Art Research and Scholarship

Does spaceflight affect astronauts’ spatial orientation skills?

In October 2016, the Canadian Space Agency announced funding for cognitive neuroscience professor Giuseppe Iaria’s Wayfinding project, which will look at the impact of weightlessness on the spatial orientation and navigation skills of astronauts. This is a unique opportunity in that Iaria will be studying subjects with healthy brain function who will be going to an environment where there will be very little vestibular information due to microgravity, and vestibular information is known to be very important for our sense of direction and balance. There is no other way to simulate this type of study on earth, and the results could benefit healthy brain function who will be going to spaceflight.

Volunteering can reduce dementia risk

Psychology professor Yannick Grégoire tracked Swedish citizens, all of whom retired in 2010, over a five-year period, monitoring them for the development of cognitive problems. His study, published in PLoS One found that seniors who volunteered for at least one hour a week on a regular basis were 2.44 times less likely to develop dementia than the seniors who didn’t volunteer. Grégoire speculates that seniors who volunteer at least once per week experience the “latent benefits of work” by bringing a structure to the day, maintaining a social contact with people outside of family, having social status similar to a job title, and feeling like they’re making a meaningful contribution to society.

Unearthing the surprising history of seed banks

Maria Zytaruk, an associate professor of English, produced a CBC documentary on the cultural history of seed banks and their increasing importance today in the face of climate change and declining biodiversity. Investigating modern seed banks, Zytaruk went on a revealing journey through several, ranging from Britain’s Millennium Seed Bank — which seeks to bank 25 per cent of the world’s flora by 2020 — to the Heirloom Seed Sanctuary run by the Sisters of Providence at their convent in Kingston, Ontario. When the Global Seed Vault in Norway flooded last May because of global warming, CTV and CBC asked Zytaruk to appear on their networks to discuss the implications of this unsettling event.

Drama professor consults on production inspired by prison death of Canadian teenager Ashley Smith

In July 2016, Drama professor Penny Farfan served as dramaturgy for the UK premiere of Canadian playwright Judith Thompson’s Watching Glory Die, inspired by the case of 19-year-old Canadian prison inmate Ashley Smith, who choked herself to death while her guards, on suicide-watch but ordered not to intervene unless she stopped breathing, stood by and did nothing. With support from an International Project Grant, Farfan offered her expertise about the playwright, the play, and the case that inspired it, noting that the production was an opportunity to advance international awareness of the issues raised by the Smith case. Farfan also provided graduate training, mentorship, and international professional experience to Drama MFA student Anna MacAlpine, who assisted with pre-production work in Calgary and rehearsals in London. Farfan’s interview with Thompson about Watching Glory Die was recently published in the Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism.

Fossil groundwater vulnerable to modern contamination

Professor of Geography, Scott Jaschilo and his co-researchers studied the fossil groundwater stored beneath the earth’s surface in soil pore spaces and within the fractures of rock formations to date the water. They measured the amount of radioactive carbon in the water and discovered that the majority of the earth’s groundwater is likely fossil groundwater, derived from rain and snow that fell more than 12,000 years ago. This fossil groundwater accounts for between 42 to 85 per cent of total fresh, unfrozen water in the upper kilometer of the earth’s crust. Until now, the scientific community believed that fossil groundwater was safe from modern contamination, but Jaschilo’s study also revealed traces of tritium, a radioactive isotope that was spread around the globe as a result of thermonuclear bomb testing in the 1950s, in deep well waters. This indicates that contaminated rain and snow melt of today may be able to mix with deep fossil groundwater and, in turn, potentially contaminate that ancient water.

Primalogist Linda Fedigan was honoured with the Order of Canada for a lifetime of innovation.

English professor Bert Beaty was named a 2016 Killam Annual Professor.

Professor of Geography Brent Elsey and professor of Psychology and Canada Research Chair Sheri Hopton received Faculty of Arts Awards in the New Researcher category.

Professor of Psychology Clem Martini and professor and English of Psychology Linda Fedigan was named a 2016 Killam Annual Professor.

Professor of English Ashley Smith was named a 2016 Killam Annual Professor.
AMANDA MELIN

DIETARY AND SENSORY EVOLUTION OF PRIMATES

Anthropology assistant professor Amanda Melin named Canada Research Chair in Primate Genomics and Dietary Ecology

Amanda Melin runs a genomics laboratory on Foothills Campus and conducts research as a member of the Cumming School of Medicine’s Alberta Children’s Hospital Research Institute (ACHRI). Along with University of Calgary primatologist Linda Fedigan and Tulane University’s Kathy Jack she’s also co-director of a long running field site in Sector Rosa, Área de Conservación Costa Rica, where she focuses on the sensory and feeding ecology of capuchin monkeys.

“Sensory ecology has been my main passion and that’s probably what I’m best known for,” says Melin. “That incorporates feeding ecology and foraging behaviours. How do animals utilize their senses — vision, taste, smell, hearing and touch — to find food and assess what they should and should not eat? And what is the genetic basis of these senses and how they are integrated?”

Another pillar of Melin’s work has been researching how changing environments and seasonality can affect an animal’s diet and health. “The focus here is not only on how the animals find their food, but it’s also on what that food is doing to them,” she says. “How do seasonality and environmental changes affect the food they’re eating and how does this shape their digestive outcomes and evolution?”

This research is directly fed in to Melin’s work with ACHRI, where she’s studying gut bacteria. In Costa Rica, Melin has been investigating gut microbiomes in capuchin monkeys. “We have two seasonal conditions at the Costa Rican site and every year the monkeys experience a very intense drought,” she says. “Recently the area actually experienced its worst drought in recorded history. All the baby monkeys died last year. So we’re trying to understand how what they’re eating, or not eating, is impacting these microbiomes living in their guts. And how these microbiomes might be acting to give these primates the ability to digest certain foods and uptake the needed nutrients to survive.”

This knowledge could be crucial in furthering our understanding of human health. “Humans are primates too, so looking at comparative models can be very important,” Melin notes. “Gaining a better understanding of how primates are responding to a scarcity of food and water may have huge implications for health management where people are living in conditions of drought and famine.”

Melin is a member of the Cumming School of Medicine’s Alberta Children’s Research Hospital Institute, and the University of Calgary’s Human Dynamics in a Changing World and Infections, Inflammations and Chronic Diseases research strategy teams.
MARIT ROSOL

Food Justice and Affordable Housing Take Centre Stage for New Canada Research Chair

Geography professor Marit Rosol named Canada Research Chair in Global Urban Studies

Recruited from the Department of Human Geography in Goethe University in Frankfurt, Marit Rosol brings a well-rounded academic background to her research at the University of Calgary, including an MA in urban and regional planning, a year of graduate studies in Madrid, Spain, a PhD in geography from the University of Frankfurt. Among her many academic achievements, she was also awarded a German academic exchange postdoctoral research fellowship at British Columbia’s Simon Fraser University and served as a visiting scholar at both the University of California Berkeley and the University of California Santa Cruz.

As a human geographer, Rosol seeks to better understand global connections and uneven development in urban areas. For this, she draws from other social sciences such as economics, sociology, and political science, but also enhances these disciplines by situating analysis within a geographic context.

“I am interested in the ways in which global trends — such as the ongoing economic and ecological crises, the restructuring of the welfare state and general globalization — impact social inequality in urban communities,” says Rosol. “And the two areas of social welfare which I emphasize and also want to bring into conversation with one another are housing and food justice.”

“Theoretically, I will ask for example, to what extent concepts that are developed in a particular place can be transferred across space,” she says. “Take food justice, for example, which evolved in the U.S. out of struggles against the discrimination of urban neighbourhoods of colour. What, then, would food justice actually mean in other countries, like Canada or Germany?”

Also empirically, issues of food justice are more elaborate than they might at first seem. “It’s not just about people being hungry,” Rosol points out. “It’s also about the accessibility of healthy food, for example. Who can afford it? Are people in the food sector paid living wages? What are the coping strategies of households in cities with tight housing markets — and how does this affect their food choices? Or, more generally, what does rising social inequality mean for the daily lives of urban residents? What are the causes and consequences of this inequality? Who is working to overcome these situations and with what results? These are some of the questions we must ask.”

Studying food injustice goes far beyond simply looking at production or consumption only, says Rosol. Rather, it’s important to look at the “entire food cycle, from processing and transportation to retail and procurement, but also regulation.” The scope is massive and Rosol is already recruiting a team of graduate students to join her in her research.

Rosol is excited about the opportunities that the Canada Research Chair position offers her in pursuing her innovative research. She also seeks to enhance the Department of Geography and the urban studies program with her international experience and vast network of connections. “This is a strong contribution to the University of Calgary’s Eyes High international strategy which I know I can make.”
Opportunities responsive to the most current scholarship on pedagogy

Flexible learning spaces encourage student participation

Face Halbern, who teaches 19th-century American literature in the Department of English, was one of the first professors to teach in the new Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. She used both the simple and complex technologies offered by their classrooms to open up new teaching possibilities. The wheeled chairs and desks allowed the seating to be arranged flexibly, which enabled students to learn in different ways. “Almost every classroom I’ve seen has seating in rows, and it’s very hard to get a good discussion going if the students can’t see each other,” she said. “I was excited just having the possibility of being able to have students sit in a horseshoe. You’re not locked into a given structure.” She also began working with Padlet, an annotation software that helps students develop clear reading skills and facilitates small group work, enabled by the Taylor’s 50 touch-enabled screens.

Psychology student is committed to helping people with celiac disease

Psychology undergraduate and Markin Undergraduate Student Research Program participant Karen Tang has been committed to helping individuals with celiac disease effectively manage their illness, to enhance their quality of life. While there is no cure for celiac disease, it can be controlled through strict adherence to a gluten-free diet. Research indicates that less than 42 per cent of individuals with the disease adhere to a gluten-free diet. As an aspiring health and wellness psychologist, Tang is involved in the pilot study POWER-C (Perinatal Optimal Well-Being, Education and Regulation for Celiac Disease), wherein she helped facilitate focus groups designed to teach individuals skills for coping with the disease, including self-compassion and self-regulation.

Biff! Bang! Pow! Superheroes enter age of the transmedia narrative

Angie Chiang, a PhD candidate and lecturer with the Department of Communication, Media and Film, studied the hyperconnected transmedia world of the “tentpole,” a big-budget movie that supports a wide range of spinoff productions which somehow further the narrative. These can include graphic novels, webisodes, videogames and television shows, among other productions. Chiang notes that through social media, fans’ participation has become more transparent as their feedback has been shown to more publicly influence narratives. From the studios’ point of view, this keeps the fans engaged, happy, and consuming cultural products like downloads, comic books, television programs, webisodes, and social media campaigns in between the release of more tentpole movies.

New graduate sets out to change the world, one policy at a time

Ever since she joined the Model UN in her high school Leigh Schmidt has been committed to social justice. This continued at UCalgary where she earned top grades in her double major — international relations and women’s studies — while also joining UCalgary’s Model UN, eventually becoming the club’s president. Last semester Schmidt worked as a junior political advisor co-op student with Canada’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York City. Schmidt helped support Canada’s work on the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, as well as the United Nations Commission on Disarmament. Schmidt is now deciding where to pursue graduate studies in interdisciplinary gender studies and political science, with offers from Columbia University, Cambridge, Queen’s and the London School of Economics.

Faculty of Arts graduate students received 2016 Killam Scholarships and Awards (first- and second-year scholarships): Clayton (Ford) Burke, Psychology; Colin Dubreuil, Anthropology; Elena Fares, Geography; Hyron (Andrew) Kim, Clinical Psychology; Briana Cassella, Clinical Psychology; Jane Chamberlain, English; Ian MacNairn, Anthropology.
ITALIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

RECEIVES BIG BOOST IN FACULTY OF ARTS

The Faculty of Arts was the recipient of a generous donation for $50,000 last December from the Fogolâr Furlan di Calgary, an Italian-Calgary association that celebrated its 50th anniversary.

The donation was presented at a post-show reception following the premiere of Six Characters in Search of an Author by Italian playwright Luigi Pirandello, performed by the University of Calgary’s School of Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA) at the Reeve Theatre.

Pirandello may not be a household name to most, but in the theatre world he is as important as Bertolt Brecht and Samuel Beckett. In Italy, where Pirandello lived and worked for his entire life (1867 – 1936), he is celebrated as one of the foremost writers in the country’s history. In 1934, Luigi Pirandello, performed by the University of Calgary’s School of Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA) at the Reeve Theatre.

The donation was presented at a post-show reception following the premiere of Six Characters in Search of an Author by Italian playwright Luigi Pirandello, performed by the University of Calgary’s School of Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA) at the Reeve Theatre.

So it was fitting that Fogolâr Furlan di Calgary committed $10,000 to keep our Italian heritage active, vibrant and alive.

Luis Torres, division chair of Spanish and Italian Studies at SLILLC expressed his appreciation for the gift, which will provide scholarship opportunities to students of Italian for many years to come.

“To my knowledge this is the biggest donation the Italian Studies program has ever received and it’s very special that this comes in the inaugural year of the new School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures,” said Torres. “We’re very impressed with the Fogolâr Furlan di Calgary and we’re happy and proud that they choose us for this funding. It’s an honour.”

Bruce Barton, director of the School of Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA) said that donations such as the one provided by the Fogolâr Furlan di Calgary are vital to the school. “The cost of a student performance is substantial, particularly when we are committed to otherwise impossible levels of innovation.”

Directed by SCPA faculty Val Campbell, with a full cast and crew of UCalgary students, staff and faculty, Six Characters in Search of an Author was a highlight of the 2016-17 drama season.

Beyond Aristotle

Philosophy has a diversity problem. Slightly over 20 per cent of tenured faculty in North America are female. This is why Megan Delahanty, an assistant philosophy professor and principal grant holder of the UCalgary Teaching and Learning Grants has pursued a project to promote the greater representation of successful women philosophers in introductory-level courses. Her group is developing databases of work by women specifically targeted to the content of non-logic, 200-level philosophy courses.

“There is a way to quantify this. We can create a climate where we encourage people to include a broader range of philosophers and topics in philosophy that have traditionally been ignored,” she says.
Film student produces 50-year retrospective for Alberta Ballet

21-year-old film studies student Kristin Larsen was tapped by Alberta Ballet to co-produce a video celebrating its 50th anniversary. The short film was screened at the Jubilee Auditorium in March before performances of Alice in Wonderland. Larsen has long been involved with the Alberta Ballet, dancing with the company since she ten years old and teaching ballet at its preschool summer camps. Alberta Ballet’s artistic director Jean Grand-Maître said Larsen proved to be a “precious resource” when he decided on producing a 50th anniversary video. “With only 12 minutes available, she had to capture the essence of this dance company, its history, its major players and also give us a glimpse of Alberta Ballet’s substantial artistic legacy,” he says. “The film has become a very precious historical artifact in itself.”

Alumnus follows a multilingual path toward career in international relations

25-year-old Brian Lee, BA’16, who graduated with his BA (Honours) in political science, is on an academic path that has crossed cultures, borders, and linguistic differences. He is fluent in French and he also knows German, Russian and Korean (from Korean-born parents). Next on his list of languages to master are Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Swedish and Dutch. Now taking his MA in international affairs with an economic policy specialization at Carleton University, Lee has applied to spend his last school year in Russia. He is aiming for a career as a trade or finance policy analyst, or diplomat at Global Affairs Canada.

Andrew Kim, PhD candidate in Psychology received a Vanier predoctoral award to study gamblers and the addiction substitution process

Inaugural Filmmaker in residence program features filmmaker Gary Burns

The Department of Communication, Media and Film launched its Filmmaker in Residence Program last spring with acclaimed Calgary filmmaker Gary Burns at the helm for the class’s inaugural run. Burns is known for such independent films as waydowntown (Best Canadian Feature winner at the 2000 Toronto International Film Festival) and Radiant City (Genie winner for Best Documentary). The class also hosted a free public screening of waydowntown followed by a Q&A with Burns at The Plaza Theatre. Charles Tepperman, associate professor in the film studies program, feels that the new program is an invaluable learning opportunity for fledgling filmmakers at the University of Calgary. “This course gives students an opportunity to bring theory and practice together under the supervision of a really accomplished and thoughtful director in Gary Burns.”

Academic partnership tracks effectiveness of GPS-assisted offender monitoring

The limitations of GPS technology could have serious consequences in the case of surveilling the whereabouts of high-risk offenders. To study the boundaries of GPS-assisted offender tracking, the Alberta justice and policing communities reached out to a dream team of University of Calgary academics: including sociologist Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot and engineer Gerard Lachapelle. Gibbs Van Brunschot, head of the Department of Sociology, investigated whether or not GPS tracking acts as a deterrent to offending. She pored over police background files for nearly three years, comparing monitored offenders with others who were not similarly tracked to get a sense of how GPS might contribute to public safety. The conclusion? Monitoring is not a cure-all but has a place among a variety of surveillance techniques. “You can’t simply put a monitor on and expect them not to reoffend,” Gibbs Van Brunschot says. Gibbs Van Brunschot was recognized as Peak Scholar for the impact of her work in the community.
Arts alumni inspire at inaugural conference
Alumnae Angila Dione, BA’09, and Angel Guerra, BA’09, BED’12, were finishing their Bachelors of Arts in Communications Studies when they were inspired to form Market Collective, a new market in Calgary to showcase local artists, artisans, designers and musicians. The two spoke at UCalgary’s inaugural Women in Conference in March to celebrate workplace equality and diversity. While still students, their mutual interests in artistic expression and community building quickly blossomed into what is now known as Market Collective. Since Market Collective launched in 2008, it has continued to grow, providing a space for hundreds of local artists to sell their goods and take home 100 per cent of the commission. The artist-centric approach to the market has helped create opportunities for Calgarians that weren’t as readily available before. Dione and Guerra attribute a lot of the market’s success to the community of artists that has built up around it.

Former writers-in-residence appear at the Canadian Writers-in-Residence Reunion Festival
In this milestone year, as the University of Calgary celebrated our 50th anniversary, it was fitting that the Calgary Distinguished Writers Program (CDWP), celebrated our 50th anniversary, it was fitting that the University of Calgary.

In this milestone year, as the University of Calgary celebrated our 50th anniversary, it was fitting that the Calgary Distinguished Writers Program (CDWP), now in its 23rd season, kicked off its 2016-2017 season with its first ever Canadian Writers-in-Residence Reunion Festival last September. The long-running CDWP, now in its 23rd year, has established a legacy of literary excellence from within the Faculty of Arts, fostering the careers of many acclaimed writers with its coveted Canadian Writer-in-Residence position. Thirteen past writers-in-residence have gone on to become performers and amazing mentors. Winners from the inaugural festival, with all events free to the public.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Michael Chabon gave a public reading as part of the 2016-17 Distinguished Visiting Writer for the Calgary Distinguished Writers Program.

In November 2016, Keith Nadas, professor psychology and Donald and Irene Ward Chair in Paediatric Brain Injury, along with retired Stampeder Jon Cornish, participated in the Gardiner public forum on concussion, hosted by the University of Calgary.

In January co-op students and employers were honoured as leading performers and amazing mentors. Winners from the Faculty of Arts were:

Student winner, off-campus: Doina Boia, Economics
Honourable mentions, off-campus: Vedran Baruzdit, Josiah Sinanov, and Kristyn Lines
Student winner, on-campus: Javen Paul, English
Honourable mentions, on-campus: Tisha Sladek, Paolo Gonzaga-Bonilla
Employer winner, small/medium: Leadership Africa
Honourable mentions: The Art of Living Foundation, Travel Alberta
Employer winner, large: Husky Energy
Honourable mentions: Devon Energy, Nexen
Employer on-campus: Leadership and Student Engagement
Honourable mentions: Students’ Union, Women’s Resource Centre

Rebirth of Leon the Frog
Vimy Ridge. The beloved story/poem of Leon, scrawled up the stairs of the Social Sciences tower by students in the 1970s — mistakenly erased as part of an effort to remove graffiti from campus — was restored thanks to 30 students, faculty, staff and alumni. The April 13 restoration was led by Ian Kinney, BA’10, MA’12, and it included the original poem as well as the painting of a brand-new mural and poem at the bottom of the stairwell. The addition of the new work of art was a collaboration between poet Derek Beaulieu, BA’96, MA’04, BED’08, and recent Post Laureate of Calgary, and Avril Lopez, an MFA student in the Department of Art. Arts adopts Campus Mental Health Strategy
On Feb 9, the Faculty of Arts became the first faculty on campus to formally adopt the Campus Mental Health Strategy. The unanimous vote by the Arts Faculty Council in favour of the strategy’s adoption signals an important step toward academic units showing support for the strategy and its implementation on campus. Following the formal adoption of the strategy, the Arts Faculty Council also approved a motion for the dean to strike a committee, which will be tasked with identifying ways in which the strategy can be tailored to the Faculty of Arts and create a plan for implementation. It will also look at ways in which pilot projects for the Campus Mental Health Strategy can be implemented within the faculty.

Foster Engagement and well-being within the Faculty of Arts
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FATHER OF ECONOMICS

THE LATE DR. FRANK ANTON LEAVES UCALGARY ONE FINAL GIFT

At the inaugural Dr. Frank Anton Distinguished Lecture Series in Economics, with the late professor’s family in attendance, Dean of the Faculty of Arts Richard Sigurdson made the announcement of a $1.5 million donation that the faculty received from Anton’s estate.

“This gift will leave a remarkable legacy to our Department of Economics,” said Sigurdson at the event, held at MacEwan Ballroom. “A portion of it will now support this very prestigious lecture series in perpetuity and the remainder will continue to support the previously established John M. Dalgarno and Dr. Frank Anton Memorial Award, which supports students registered full-time in a thesis-based graduate program in the preferred area of agricultural economics.”

Anton was both the “Father of Economics” at the University of Calgary and one of the founding fathers of the university itself. It was a set of remarkable experiences that brought him, eventually, to UCalgary.

Born June 21, 1920, in Ireland, Anton was studying to be a pharmacist in England when the Second World War broke out. Joining the Royal Air Force as a navigator, he was shot down in a Lancaster bomber over Nuremberg in 1943, one of three men to survive on his crew of seven. Parachuting into a frozen field, Anton smuggled his way onto a passing train in an attempt to escape Germany. However, the Nazis caught up with him and for the next two years he was a prisoner of war in Stalag VIII-B, in Lamsdorf, which is now part of Poland.

Rather than wasting his time away or finding trouble, Anton took advantage of an educational program offered within the prison by studying German and French. It was here that he also found his life’s calling as an economist.

“Somebody gave him a book about economics and the light went on in his head,” says Norman Smyth, Anton’s nephew. “He realized that conflicts around the world were caused by political dissatisfaction that generally had an economic base to it. In the middle of this political turmoil of the war he was trying to understand what drove people and he felt if he understood economics, he could get a better handle on it.”

In 1945, Anton was sent on a punishing 40-day forced march as his Nazi captors sought to stay ahead of the advancing Soviet army. Many of his friends from the prison camp died on the march but Anton survived and the following year he gained entry into the elite London School of Economics, where he earned his bachelor’s degree. He later received his MA at UCLA before returning to the London School of Economics to complete his PhD.

Anton spent the majority of his academic career in Calgary, arriving in 1957 when this campus was a branch of Edmonton’s University of Alberta. When that satellite declared its autonomy in 1966, establishing itself as the University of Calgary, Anton played a leading role in the new institution’s development. He fathered the university’s Department of Economics, becoming its first department head in 1963. He also co-authored, with M. Iremonger, the seminal textbook Economics: In a Canadian Setting and throughout his career he contributed to the resolution of many labour disputes.

Anton’s estate also gifted an equal donation to the London School of Economics.
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NEWCOMER RESEARCH NETWORK OF SCHOLARS STUDY THE NEWCOMER EXPERIENCE

Mary O'Brien, an associate professor in the School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures is a member of the Newcomer Research Network (NRN), launched in Fall 2016 through funding from the Office of the Vice-President (Research) as a part of the Human Dynamics in a Changing World strategic research theme. O’Brien says language plays a central role in how well newcomers settle and thrive in a new country. She explores aspects of newcomers’ language and listeners’ attitudes toward non-native speech.

Amal Madibbo (Sociology) was honoured for her academic and community work as one of 100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women.

Julio Mercader (Anthropology and Archaeology) received the Internationalization Award at the Faculty of Arts Awards in Spring 2017.

THE CALGARY INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES DIVES INTO WATER

The Calgary Institute for the Humanities held its annual community forum, entitled Water in the West: Rights to Water/Rights of Water, in May 2017, with invited speakers Michelle Daigle, postdoctoral fellow in geography at University of British Columbia; David Laidlaw, research fellow at the Canadian Institute of Resources Law at UCalgary; and Adrian Parr, UNESCO co-chair of Water Access and Sustainability at the University of Cincinnati. Filmmaker and Indigenous Studies professor Tasha Hubbard moderated the day-long session of community-based research, which explored environmental and First Nations’ perspectives on water resources, along with community members, artists, environmentalists and representatives from the City of Calgary and the Tsuu T’ina Nation.

Thesis presents raw, compelling view from inside the child welfare system

In winter 2017 Daniela Navia BHSc’11, MA’15 received the Distinguished Master’s Thesis Award for her innovative anthropology research on Indigenous youth who have spent time in the child welfare system. Collecting first-hand perspectives of youth innovative ways like painting, dances, beadwork, sculpture and one-on-one interviews was critically important to her work where she was able to show how the present-day child welfare system fits into the larger context of colonial structures.
The Dawn of Humanity

Stone Tools, Diet and Sociality

Archaeologist Julio Mercader began a project working with a multidisciplinary team of researchers to study ancient diets, stone tools and sociality in the face of environmental changes at several sites known to be some of the cradles of humanity, dating back 1.8 million years.

The multi-year excavations — made possible thanks to a SSHRC Partnership Grant for $2,461,839 over seven years — will mark the first time that a Canadian-led team has ventured into the Olduvai Gorge, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Tanzania’s Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Heavily excavated for decades, Olduvai Gorge has been invaluable in furthering the understanding of human evolution, demonstrating how social complexities developed in the earliest humans. Particularly revealing is the evolving production of stone tools discovered in the area.

And yet, this important paleoanthropological site has never seen an excavation program as comprehensive as the one Mercader has stepped up to co-lead. “There has never been a partnership this wide and far-reaching at the Olduvai Gorge, with so many experts from different labs, institutions and countries,” says Mercader, an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology at the University of Calgary. “The mix of research topics is truly compelling, because we’re covering the technology, the climate, the diet, the plant life, the human realities. That mix is important. This is the sort of effort that no single team of researchers could achieve on its own.”

Indeed, the team Mercader brings together will include 20 scholars from 10 organizations and four countries, including universities in the U.S., Spain, Tanzania and Canada, with McMaster University the other Canadian institution on board. The partnership extends across disciplines to include archaeologists, palaeoanthropologists, museologists, social and environmental scientists, geoscientists, biologists and conservationists.

Mercader notes that the biological diversity of the Olduvai Gorge adds greatly to its richness as a source of palaeoanthropological discoveries. A key objective of his team will be to explore the correlation between climate change on the site and shifting technologies, food processing abilities and diets over time.

“For about a half a million years, from around 1.8 to 1.3 million years ago, we can see evolution from a technological point of view and we begin to understand how climate change had an impact on the resources these early humans exploited,” says Mercader. “We can observe how their diet went from simple to one more complex, where they began to combine meat and plant life. We’re looking at a complex manipulation of the ecosystem, in the face of climate change.”

Mercader adds that there is a contemporary value to studying the way early humans adapted to climate change. “We look at the ways in which drought impacted the landscape and the food resources and how early humanity was able to adapt to these changes, modifying their diets and the ways that they lived,” says Mercader. “These are problems that we also face today. We are still adapting to climate change.”

Olduvai Gorge is also invaluable for the technological changes it reveals in the same time frame, between 1.8 and 1.3 million years ago, as early humans moved from the use of crude tools to hand axes and cleavers. “This represents a seminal evolution in human technology,” Mercader says.
BUILDING A GENUINELY DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Building an archival record of feminist filmmaking in Canada

During its 22-year run that began in 1974, The National Film Board's (NFB) Studio D produced some of the NFB's most critically acclaimed films, including Not A Love Story (1981), If You Love This Planet (1982), and Flamenco at 5:15 (1983). Budgetary cuts, as well as conflicts with feminist film collectives and independent producers, spurred its disbandment in 1996. Ever since that time, academic studies and policy reports have indicated that women’s participation in the film and media industries in Canada has steeply declined, particularly when it comes to key creative and decision-making roles. Rebecca Sullivan, professor and coordinator of the Women’s Studies program, and Annie Murray, associate university librarian for Archives and Special Collection, along with colleagues from Simon Fraser University are working to preserve this record of Canadian feminist media and revive the momentum of Studio D by building an archival record of feminist filmmaking in Canada.

Department of Art interprets disability experience creatively

The Department of Art offered two courses in 2016/17 in partnership with SPARK Disability Art Festival in which students explored disability through art. In their teaching, instructors Jennifer Eiserman and Dick Averns are fostering new approaches to marginalized communities and disabilities by addressing physical impairment, mental health and how gallery and museum structures often fail to accommodate visitors and artists with disabilities. In ART 231 Eiserman’s students collaborated with community members from the In-Definite Arts Society who self-identified as having a disability. In pairs, they created jointly rendered drawings. In the Art 381 sculpture class, Averns challenged students to explore how people adapt to the world, considering disabilities and the visible and invisible abilities that we take for granted. Students also confronted the conventions of museum/gallery display to mount their works in a more accessible manner. The artworks were on display throughout the festival.

Canadian women gathered to “show what they know” at the ‘Speaking Her Mind: Canadian Women and Public Presence’ conference in October, 2017

Professor Emerita Adrienne Kertzer (English) received the Order of the University of Calgary.