

FROM THE OFFICE OF

Dr. Joanne MacLean  
*President & Vice-Chancellor*



## PART 2: A UNIVERSITY IS ITS PEOPLE

### COLLEGIAL GOVERNANCE

Collegiality must be a watchword for all of us. At its best, collegial decision-making engages everyone's views, insights, and experience. Importantly, academic matters come from within the Senate or academic units and find their way back to the Senate. Formally, under the University Act, and for UFV, collegiality is the role of faculty members, with the help of students, staff, academic leaders, and Board representatives in directing and deciding the academic directions of the University and assuring the quality of the academic activity within the university in the Senate. The Senate works hand-in-hand with the Board on many matters. The Board is made up of government appointed community leaders, faculty members, students, staff, and the President. It supervises the President's efforts to achieve the strategic directions of the university that have been agreed upon by both Senate and the Board. Under the University Act, the Board is responsible for the fiscal and reputational well-being of the university. As we progress towards decisions, I welcome and expect robust, lively conversation and debate about matters of academic standards, learning needs, and outcomes. I also look forward to open, honest, and fair discussion that is about ideas, practices, and goals and not about individuals, or at least not ad personam: attacks made on opponents' character as opposed to their arguments. To our credit, and in part because of our history, we have one organized association that represents most faculty and staff. Only those engaged in management roles or those involved in labour relations are exempted from membership. The

UFV Faculty and Staff Association (FSA) is vital to preserving and protecting the interests of its members through the creation of the Collective Agreement with the Board, and the implementation of it with the administration. Should a problem arise, the FSA has open channels and formal means to interact with the university. Under the collective agreement, both the FSA and the university are committed to abide by its terms.

### PROBLEM SOLVING

We should all seek to create a pervading spirit of good will and mutual support that makes taking up an issue respectfully and collegially the primary business of those who share the difficulty. In order to thrive as a healthy organization, collaborative problem solving is essential. If things are not working well, the collective agreement may or may not be brought into play, but efforts should be undertaken to work towards mutually satisfactory solutions. While we may have differences of opinions, effective and constructive communication is essential to resolving issues. I wish to avoid unnecessary differences, to respect opposing views, and to catch problems early. I seek your commitment to do the same.

As much as we would all like to agree as often as possible, it is not always a goal that we reach. However, understanding another's choices depends on our decisions being reasoned, fair, and balanced within the context and given the consequences. I commit to offer such decisions wherever feasible and hope we will all do the same. All relationships are at least two-way!

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## COMMUNICATION

For this commitment to be realized I will communicate with you regularly through multiple channels. From time to time I will visit with areas and groups to learn what is on their minds so I can clarify or amplify decisions that I, the Board, or the Senate have made. You will see me visiting, stopping to chat, or have coffee. I am keen to keep the lines of communication open, so we can work together and understand one another. Let good faith, honesty, and integrity be among our key words. Trust is at the centre of effective working relationships and trust comes from the value of one's word. I know with certainty from years as a coach that trust is earned and is fundamental to collective achievement. I will work hard to earn your trust. I hope I have already begun to do that. Together, we can realize Vision 2025, when UFV "will be a community and regionally-based University that is learner and student-centred, whereby the learning drives the system and structure of the institution. Students and local communities will view UFV as a centre for intellectual and social development throughout their lifetimes, and as a place to learn how they can be better global citizens".

I am in agreement with Dr. PM Forni from Johns Hopkins University when he says,  
" ...the quality of our lives must depend on the quality of our relationships".

Where else in our lives do we have as many opportunities to foster positive connections than in our workplace! I look forward to working with you and to our future discussions.

Respectfully yours,

Joanne MacLean, PhD President and Vice-Chancellor

September 10, 2018

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