DEAN’S WELCOME

By Dr. Jure Gantar
Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

WELCOME TO THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (FASS) at Dalhousie University where you will spend the next four years! When you decided to join us, you made it clear that you are interested both in understanding and in changing our world and that you are not satisfied with just accepting it. We will do our best to help you achieve this goal.

When you study languages, humanities, social sciences, and the performing arts, you learn how to analyze a problem and how to support your views. By the time you complete your degree, you will realize that critical thinking also requires the use of imagination and will be able to find connections between entirely unrelated matters and discover sense in seemingly meaningless events and situations.

FASS is a place where knowledge is forever reinvented, where professors learn just as much from their students as the students learn from their professors. Because of this, we will do our best to engage you in the lives of our academic units from the first week of school. Our learning communities extend far outside the lecture hall, and you will be encouraged to work with advocacy groups and participate in student societies and clubs.

An Arts degree is a wonderful opportunity to explore what truly matters in a manner that suits you. The great variety of courses offered by our programs ensures that you will learn your skills in subjects you enjoy. Since a liberal arts education is an interdisciplinary endeavour, being able to combine a foreign language and a discipline such as History, Music, or Political Science will give you an inherent advantage in any future career. Likewise, the opportunity to complement your study of English, Philosophy, or Theatre with a minor in Popular Culture Studies, Arabic Studies, or Security Studies will provide you with a unique ability to address a number of issues which would have otherwise remained elusive. We offer unique and important programs including Black and African Diaspora Studies and Indigenous Studies. You may also want to check out our Certificates in such subjects as Art History and Visual Culture, Dance and Movement, and Medical Humanities.

Visit dal.ca/fass/programs to learn more about each of these many offerings.

To discover classes that fit well together as an intensive first-year cluster, check out our Coordinated Arts Program, also known as the DalCAP program. To meet other first-year students and upper-year mentors who share your interests and can help to shape your path, consider enrolling in one of our Arts and Social Sciences First-Year Interest Groups. To learn more about experiential learning opportunities in which you can apply the knowledge and skills acquired in your FASS programs while gaining real life experience, check out our offerings at dal.ca/fass/ex.

Several of our programs offer classes abroad where you will be able
DEAN'S WELCOME CONT’

to experience first-hand the global significance of what you were taught in the classroom. You might travel to Cuba to improve your Spanish and learn about international development or to the Czech Republic where you will be immersed in baroque culture.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed everyone’s life in an entirely unexpected manner. While the conditions in Nova Scotia and Canada are rapidly improving, several challenges remain that will affect your first year at Dalhousie. But we want you to know that no matter what adjustments still lie ahead of us, we are determined to do our best to ensure you have a great and rewarding experience at Dal this year. In the pages that follow, you will have a chance to meet some of the excellent students, faculty members, and advisors who will support you as you begin your studies.

Enjoy your first year, and please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you meet your goals.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jure Gantar
Dean (acting), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

ADVICE FROM A CURRENT FASS STUDENT

by Wynne Clark-Squire
Fourth-year Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences student
Double Major in Gender & Women’s Studies and Creative Writing

HI EVERYONE, AND WELCOME TO DALHOUŞIE! We’re so excited to welcome you to campus and begin the first chapter of an exciting journey! You’ll soon be arriving on campus, meeting your classmates, and beginning classes. Although this is an exciting time, it can also be very nerve wracking. When I came to Dalhousie three years ago, I didn’t know anyone and had no idea what I wanted to do. I remember feeling like I had to immediately find a group of friends, select my major, and figure out what I wanted out of university. What wish I would have told myself then is to not put too much pressure on myself and accept that it’s okay to not have everything figured out. Transitioning to university is a big change and putting pressure on yourself only makes it more difficult.

In first year, I took a variety of courses within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. At first, I thought I might major in Social Anthropology, but of all the classes I took I enjoyed Gender and Women’s studies and Creative Writing the most. What’s great about first year in FASS is that you can take a wide variety of courses across different disciplines. I loved being able to explore courses on politics, sociology, religion, and literature amongst many more. My advice would be to keep yourself open to trying new things and follow the subjects that you feel most passionate and excited to learn about. Also keep in mind that it’s normal to change your mind about your degree and that you’re able to alter what you’re studying (I’ve changed my majors/minors at least four times!).

Although starting something new can be scary, know that you have a wide variety of support to help you along the way. The Together@Dal program allows you to connect with other new students and learn more about campus resources and opportunities. You’ll have the chance to ask questions, get advice from upper year mentors, and learn more about your program. The New to Dal program provides information on orientation and introduces new students and students who began studying in 2020 to the Dalhousie community and services.

If the past years have taught us anything, it’s that life can be unpredictable and often doesn’t go according to plan. While many of you may hope to finish your degree in four years, it’s important to remember that university does not have a set timeline. When I was in third year, I had to leave the semester early due to mental health issues. At first, I was upset about leaving school and felt nervous about falling behind my classmates, but I realized that it’s essential to make your health and wellbeing a priority. I received support from the wonderful advisors at the Bisset Student Success Centre and Accessibility Centre who helped me put my studies on hold and supported me through the process. Know that no matter what is affecting you, there are resources and supports at Dalhousie to help you.

One of my biggest pieces of advice is to ask for help early. If you’re struggling in a class, it’s better to reach out to the professor or teaching assistant earlier so you can get the help you need. I would also recommend having a system of staying organized, whether it’s keeping track of work in a notebook or using an electronic calendar; it’s a good idea to keep your homework and assignments organized so you don’t miss anything.

I wish you all the best of luck and welcome to Dalhousie!

TOGETHER@DAL

Our upper-year students will be hosting fun, interactive sessions to help you meet other new students enrolled in your program, learn about university classes, introduce you to some tips, support your transition to university, and answer your questions.

Sign up! Registration is now open.

To help us place you in a group with other FASS students, please indicate that you are enrolled in Arts and Social Sciences. You can indicate your program or intended program of interest, or you may select Undeclared Arts.

Sessions have already begun but students can continue to register and participate through the summer and start of the fall term. Learn more at dal.ca/together.
I AM DELIGHTED TO WELCOME ALL OF you to Dalhousie! My name is Michael and this year I will be the Associate Dean Academic in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. My primary role is to help support existing academic programs and to foster the development of new ones. For example, you might check out our existing Minors in Indigenous Studies or Black and African Diaspora Studies, both of which are currently being developed as new Majors in our Faculty.

This promises to be another extraordinary year as we welcome our incoming students to campus for the first time since September 2019. While the majority of our courses are returning to in-person delivery this year, there are still courses in most FASS programs—and at every level of study, from first year to fourth—being offered online. Our online offerings will continue to provide access to FASS programs for students who do not come to Halifax, but they will also allow students here to combine in-person courses and an on-campus experience with online courses for added flexibility in scheduling. You can search the timetable for courses in Halifax, online, or Halifax and online to see all of the options.

While we are pleased to be staying partially online as we collectively work...
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR admission to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Dalhousie University!
I’m sure that you are excited, eager, and optimistic as your first term of study approaches, and so you should be, for you are about to embark on a life-changing educational and personal journey.

I’m sure you are also feeling at least a twinge of nervousness and trepidation as well, and again so you should be, for any journey provides unexpected twists and turns, high points, and low points.

Like every other new student in the Faculty, you are here because you have talent and potential. But now you are facing the challenge of transitioning your talents and of realizing your potential in an unfamiliar learning environment that will pose new challenges as you learn to be more independent, make your own choices, and set your own goals.

And unfortunately, not every new student navigates the transition as successfully as they would like. So, how can you improve your chances of becoming a successful university student?

The key to success lies in becoming an “A” student: a student who is Adaptable. What worked for you in other educational settings may not work as well now, so you may need to find better ways to learn. To learn better, an Adaptable learner cultivates other important “A” student qualities:

- First, the capacity to Assess one’s progress: the ability to learn from mistakes and accept constructive criticism. Use any early disappointments as opportunities to identify weaknesses and strengths; then ...
- Act to improve: change the way you study and write, alter your habits, adjust your preconceptions. Take the necessary steps to learn better in your new environment. And if you are unsure what is wrong or what you might do differently, don’t be afraid to ...
- Ask for guidance: seek clarification, advice and support from your professors, teaching assistants, academic advisors, librarians, and other Student Services personnel; and if necessary, ...
- Acquire new skills: attend study skill workshops, contact the Writing Center, ask questions of our Research Librarians, and engage with your fellow students; then, crucially, ...
- Apply the advice and new skills that you have gained: initiate new approaches and innovative strategies in your work and life. Experiment. Push your boundaries.

To be an “A” student, then, is to be an Adaptable student, a flexible and resilient student, a student who identifies problems, then takes the steps necessary to achieve a successful and satisfying transition to university study.

I wish you much success on your journey. If you are ever looking for support from my office, please contact me at asstdeanfass@dal.ca.
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN FASS

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (EL) means learning from experience or learning by doing. It immerses learners in an experience and then encourages reflection about the experience. This combination of experiencing and reflecting allows learners to develop new skills, new attitudes, and new ways of thinking.

Dalhousie University offers FASS students plenty of rich EL opportunities to pursue. Practicums and apprenticeships, group projects with community organizations, in-class simulations, undergraduate research, creative productions and performances are just some of the EL opportunities available to you as a FASS student.

Please visit the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences’ Experiential Learning online hub we refer to as FASS/Ex: dal.ca/fass/ex. This is the best place for you to check out for all things related to EL in FASS. You’ll be able to find a catalogue of EL courses, testimonials and stories by FASS students who have made EL a part of their BA experiences and links to university resources that can help you learn how to translate skills and knowledge from the classroom to other environments where you hope to have an impact – future workplaces, communities, teams, grad school – to name a few! New content for the website will be added regularly so check back often.

WHY I STUDY IT

FASS STUDENTS SHARE WHY THEY CHOSE TO MAJOR IN THEIR CHOSEN SUBJECTS

“I chose to study Political Science since it allowed me to strengthen my understanding of what a sustainable future could look like in the face of climate change while gaining a critical understanding of the structures influencing these decisions. I love the Department of Political Science since it offers a diversity of engaging courses enabling you to explore a plethora of topics related to politics around the world. These professors are passionate leaders in their field of study. They are always supporting students and providing opportunities to further our pursuit of knowledge.”

Divya Thomas
Bachelor of Arts Honours in Political Science and Environment, Sustainability and Society alum (class of 2021)

“I chose to study History because, to me, it is the best way to understand the present. It helps to answer the question, ‘How did we get here?’ International Development Studies, I find, provides a useful outlet for my knowledge of the past to affect change in the present; it helps me to answer, ‘What can we do?’ I chose to do a Minor in Middle East & South Asian Studies and the Certificate in Indigenous Studies mostly because I found those specific areas particularly relevant in today’s political climate.”

Ronny Blanchard
Bachelor of Arts student (Double Major in History and International Development Studies, Minor in Middle East & South Asian Studies, Certificate in Indigenous Studies)

“Becoming a student at Dalhousie has been one of the best decisions I have ever made. Every day I get to do what I truly love in a positive and inspiring environment. In every class, I am pushed to be the best musician/student I can be, and I am constantly learning something new. Every one of my professors has been a positive influence in my life. I can’t imagine where I would be without them. The Fountain School of Performing Arts has become my second home and the friends I have made here are so special to me. Becoming a Music student was a last-minute decision, as I thought I was destined to go into nursing. I chose Music because I couldn’t imagine not continuing with what I truly love. I have never once regretted my decision and I couldn’t be happier.”

Raquel Wasson
Bachelor of Music (Piano) student
GRAD PROFILE: KNOWING WHEN TO CONNECT AND DISCONNECT

This story was first shared in Dal News as part of a series focusing on the grads of the Dalhousie Class of 2021.

FOR SYDNEY BELFORD, TAKING the time to explore new things was key in deciding her path through undergraduate studies in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS).

When she first arrived at Dalhousie from Kawartha Lakes in Ontario, she was on track to earn a BA in International Development Studies (IDS). However, in her second year she learned of the new Law, Justice and Society (LJSO) program that FASS was offering. Her interest was piqued. “The course offerings were so unique and just aligned with my interests in Canadian law and policy,” explains Sydney who ended up doing a double major (with honours) in LJSO and IDS, with a minor in Philosophy. “The programs were flexible and allowed me to really hon in on my passions.”

MAKING THE MOST OF HER EXPERIENCE

Throughout her four years at Dal, Sydney took on many opportunities to make the most of her time and to get the best well-rounded experience she could build for herself.

Her roster of extra-curriculars include volunteering and sitting on the Board for The Loaded Ladle, serving as an executive committee member for Students for Wishes (Make a Wish), participating in Dalhousie Open House and orientation activities for new students, being a part of the Writing Across Curriculum Committee and other academic hiring committees, and working as a leader for the FASS First Year Interest Groups (FIGs).

“I took on the role as the FASS co-leader for the Law and Social Justice First Year Interest group in the fall term of my final year,” explains Sydney, who herself was a student in a FIG during her first year. “It was amazing to work alongside fellow FIG leaders who each took their groups in a unique direction and to have the support from Michael Fournier, the current FASS Associate Dean Academic. I tried to reflect back on my experience as a first-year student and offer the best support and advice to the first years.”

Her LJSO work also gained her valuable experiential learning. As a student in the Practicum Placement in Public Policy: NGOs and Government Services course, offered by the department of Political Science, she completed her placement with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), an organization she describes as “such a forward-thinking place.” She adds that the practicum course offered an opportunity for her to apply her knowledge learned and ground herself through action items, or solution strategies, to the issues she had analyzed throughout her degree.

“I found myself aligning with the values, feeling motivated by internal conversations - by the partner organizations and coalitions. I didn’t want to leave that space,” she says about her time at the CCPA, where her work efforts focused on housing, specifically the rental market in Halifax, an experience she described as eye-opening, learning about the issues in the local and provincial communities.

“Ultimately, I think we all seek work that is fulfilling to us. Envisioning a just and sustainable future is not something just possible but essential for sustainability.”

AN HONOURABLE FIRST

Not only did Sydney graduate with a very interdisciplinary combination of programs, she is also the first student to graduate with an honours degree in LJSO from Dalhousie.

“It was intimidating being the only and first student, but I had a fantastic experience. I have to thank the program coordinator Dr. [Margaret] Denike and my honours advisor Dr. [Stephanie] Kapusta for their support throughout the process. I really hope that other students pursue the option. It’s a wonderful opportunity and specifically in LJSO being interdisciplinary, there are so many avenues and lenses to be applied to your topic of choice.”

Sydney’s advice to new and returning students is to develop good time management practices (including planning your schoolwork in blocks with breaks rather than spending hours upon hours in front of the computer), find the courses and activities that interest you, allow yourself to be introduced to new things and people, and most importantly, connect with your professors and take advantage of their office hours.

“Building a relationship can certainly help you academically, but I credit many of my instructors with my personal growth. One-on-one conversations facilitated my growth as a thinker and drove me in certain directions planning my future.”

She adds that being a great student is one thing, but being a well-rounded person requires you to step back every once and a while and have fun. “For myself exploring the East Coast, or just hanging out with friends was an important weekend break. In the long run I think this helped my productivity.”

Sydney’s next move will take her to British Columbia to attend Simon Fraser University to pursue a Master’s in Public Policy. Her honours thesis focused on child welfare/wellbeing, a field she hopes to continue to research in grad school and pursue professionally.
FASS SOCIETIES

CLASSICS SOCIETY
*Res Publica* is the Dalhousie undergraduate Classics society. We have a variety of events, meetings, and social events throughout the school year! We host a variety of events from movie nights to the annual Classics party. Even though our events are related to Classics (although, often loosely), we welcome students from all disciplines. We know these are strange times and a lot of changes have been made at the university including in our society; but as restrictions continue to ease and the situation evolves, we’re working hard to ensure that we have some great events in-person this Fall! Even though so much has changed, we’re really looking forward to getting to know you all and making the most of the Fall semester. If you’re interested in getting involved, want more info, or just want to get in touch with us, join our Facebook group Dalhousie Res Publica Classics Undergraduate Society, send us a message on our Instagram @respublicadal or email us at respublicadal@gmail.com.

ENGLISH SOCIETY
The Dalhousie Undergraduate English Society represents all English and Creative Writing students at Dalhousie, as well as all with a passion for literature! To learn more about this society contact Dalhousie.english@gmail.com or find the Dalhousie Undergraduate English Society page on Facebook.

SOCIETY OF DALHOUSIE MUSIC STUDENTS (SDMS)
With social events, fundraising projects, and as a liaison between the university, students, faculty and the community, the SDMS is committed to the betterment of music student life at Dalhousie. With a council comprised of executive and representative members, the SDMS provides social and academic support for all music students. Contact sdms.dalhousie@gmail.com or visit the Society of Dalhousie Music Students Facebook group.

DALHOUSIE THEATRE SOCIETY (DTS)
The DTS encourages networking and offers students the opportunity to participate in and operate a live performance. This objective shall be achieved by any or all of: producing a season of live shows at Dalhousie; encouraging and giving financial assistance to independent productions produced on the initiative and with the responsibility of students; workshops for skills required in any aspect of the production of live performances; acquiring and disseminating information relevant to members of the Society; participating in competitive performance festivals that include other universities. Contact stage@dal.ca or visit the Dalhousie Theatre Society Facebook group.

DALHOUSIE COSTUME SOCIETY
The purpose of this society is to celebrate costume and dress as a form of self-expression and creativity. Costume is not limiting. It can apply to historical or theatrical dress, costume design, cosplay, use of fashion to express oneself, or something as simple as an unhealthy love of Halloween. Dalhousie’s Costume Society wants to bring these like-minded people together. Contact costumes@dal.ca or visit the Dalhousie Costume Society Facebook group.

DALHOUSIE CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES SOCIETY
Here for students with a love for film! Keep updated on cinema events on campus and with the society by following the Dalhousie Cinema & Media Studies Society’s Facebook page. Submit movie reviews or film-related essays to the Society’s journal, Supercut, by emailing submissions to dalsupercut@gmail.com.

FRENCH SOCIETY
Bonjour et bienvenue à tous! We hope to welcome lots of you to Dal’s Undergraduate French Society this coming Fall term!

To learn more about what kinds of activities the society is planning for the upcoming year, or if you have any questions or want to learn more about joining the French Society, you can reach us through our Instagram: @dalhousiefrenchsociety, Facebook: @DalhousieClubFrancais or email us at francais@dal.ca.

A bientôt tout le monde!

GERMAN SOCIETY
The mission of the Dal German Society is to increase student interest in German culture and language, to host events that actively reflect German culture, to provide opportunities for fellow students to better their language skills in German, to provide help regarding German courses, to engage students and introduce them to DGS and German culture, and most importantly, to have fun and build relationships with students and faculty!

Find the Dalhousie German Society on Facebook or contact the German department at german@dal.ca for information on the status of their student society.

HISTORY SOCIETY
The Undergraduate History Students Society is already planning events for the new academic year and welcome any and all students who are taking History courses or just enjoy history — you don’t need to be a History major! The Society has a newly elected executive, but will also be looking for new first year student reps. For information on the Society for this coming academic year, please contact ughs@dal.ca. Be sure to follow us on Instagram @dalhistorysociety for updates and/or memes. For the History program more generally, visit our home page at history.dal.ca and follow us on Twitter @Dal_History. We are excited for the return of in-person classes and can’t wait to meet you in the fall!
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND AWARENESS SOCIETY (IDEAS)
IDEAS is the International Development Education and Awareness society at Dalhousie University. Open to all students interested in social justice, development & sustainability issues.

We do fun events to connect the IDS community at Dal & King’s, educational + awareness events to keep up to date with what’s going on in the world re: poverty, development & social justice, and many other things. Find the Dalhousie International Development Education and Awareness Society – IDEAS on Facebook or email us at ideas@dal.ca to learn more about how you can get involved!

POLITICAL SCIENCE SOCIETY
The Dalhousie Undergraduate Political Science Society (DUPSS) is a non-partisan, student-run organization. Our mission is to provide the student community with opportunities to fulfill their interests in politics.

We host events that may include politically themed events, social events, panel discussions, information sessions, free peer tutoring, tips and tricks, and many others! It is also important to note that DUPSS welcomes students from all disciplines. Whether you’re pursuing a career in politics, have a general interest, or just want to meet new people, this society is a welcoming space for all! Keep an eye open for news about our Fall Annual General Meeting if you are interested in joining DUPSS!

Please contact us if you have any questions! To stay up to date for upcoming events, follow us on Instagram: @dal_poli, Facebook: www.facebook.com/dalpoli/ or email Dalhousie.politicalscience@gmail.com.

PHILOSOPHY SOCIETY
The Dalhousie Undergraduate Philosophy Society is a student-run organization open to all. As a society, we encourage careful and critical thought in every activity and aspect of life. To learn more, please visit us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/DalDUPS or e-mail us at daluphilsoc@gmail.com.

RUSSIAN STUDIES SOCIETY
The mandate of the Dalhousie University Russian Studies Society is to represent and promote Russia – its language, culture and people and to serve as a centre and forum for the Russian and Student communities. To learn more about this society, please email durs@dal.ca or find the Dalhousie University Russian Studies Society group on Facebook.

CHINESE SOCIETY
The Dalhousie Chinese Society is a student run organization that encourages people to learn more about Chinese culture and language. If you’re interested in learning more or becoming involved, please visit the Dalhousie Chinese Society – DCS Facebook page.

SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY SOCIETY
The Sociology and Sociology Anthropology Student Society is dedicated to hosting exciting and creative social and academic events, creating opportunities for student involvement and networking, organizing fundraisers, and promoting an interest in Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University. To learn more, visit the SOSA society Facebook page or email sosasociety@dal.ca.

SPANISH SOCIETY
If you’re interested in becoming involved with the Dalhousie Spanish Society, please email dalhousiekingsspanishsociety@gmail.com or find the Dalhousie Spanish Society group on Facebook.

LAW, JUSTICE AND SOCIETY
Students studying Law, Justice and Society at Dalhousie are welcome to learn more about the status of the student society by contacting liso@dal.ca.

If you don’t see a society listed for a FASS department or program and you are wondering if there is a student society, please contact that department’s administrative staff directly.

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Editor in Chief
Genevieve MacIntyre
Manager of Student Recruitment, Communications and Marketing
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Dalhousie University
genevieve.macintyre@dal.ca

Graphic design
Christin Roper
Dalhousie Creative Services
design.services@dal.ca