WE ARE SO HAPPY AND PROUD
to welcome you to your first year in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) at Dalhousie University! My name is Roberta, and I’m the Acting Dean of the Faculty. We know that you’ve already had an unusual and challenging year, and that thanks to the impact of COVID-19 this fall is probably not going to be quite as you might have expected when you first became interested in attending Dalhousie. We want you to know, though, that we’re determined to make sure you have a great and rewarding experience at Dal this fall. In the pages that follow, you’ll have a chance to meet some of the excellent students, faculty members, and advisors who will support you as you begin your time at Dalhousie in this very unique year.

Our faculty and staff have been working overtime all summer to get engaging and effective online classes ready for you in September. As you read through this newsletter, you’ll see that we not only have many course options for you to consider, but also many extracurricular activities that can help you to learn about Dal, meet new people, and get well prepared for the year to come.

I am sure some of you have selected FASS to focus on one or more of our majors and honours programs. Others of you may be keen to try out a range of classes in order to discover where your interests lie. In the coming months, you will have the opportunity to explore an assortment of courses across our departments, in our interdisciplinary programs, and in the Fountain School of Performing Arts. As you work through program options, contemplate attaching your degree to one of our many minors, including Black and African Diaspora Studies, Indigenous Studies, Security Studies, and more! You may also want to check out our Certificates in such subjects as Art History and Visual Culture, Dance and Movement Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Medical Humanities, among others. Additionally, FASS offers programs in some of the languages most commonly spoken around the world and we strongly encourage you to explore those program options.

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.

Whatever your plans might be, I am confident that your FASS experience will be rewarding and memorable. Your time in the faculty will expand your understanding of society, history, culture, governance, gender, race, religion, languages, and literature. You will acquire a deeper understanding of some of the most crucial issues facing human beings today, such as the ongoing struggle to create more equitable, just, and inclusive societies;
HI EVERYONE! I hope you and your loved ones are well. Soon you will start one of the most exciting chapters of your life. Almost three years ago I started this same chapter, when I started I wasn’t sure what I would do, or where I would end up, but as it will for all of you, it worked out perfectly. When I started university I wasn’t sure what to choose as my major, but I have since declared my double major in Sociology and Philosophy. The interesting combination of my majors is very much attributed to my father, as I had originally planned to major in Environmental Sustainability and Sociology until my father strongly suggested I take a Philosophy class to fill a requirement of mine, which much to my dismay, I did. I have since come to love Philosophy and could not think of doing my major in different subjects. No matter what you major in, one important fact to know is that there is no set timeline for your university experience. You do not have to finish in four years, in fact over 50% of people do not finish their degree in four years, it is entirely up to you and to your pace, don’t feel rushed because people around you are moving at different speeds than you.

This year is going to be different and bring new challenges for us all; students, faculty, and staff alike are all going to be adjusting to the new online environment. One important thing to remember is that we are all in this together and Dalhousie and FASS are here to support you in every way they can to make this year memorable and the best that it can be. Dalhousie is introducing online supports this year such as: a new student life app, the Together@Dal mentorship program, and online learning supports to help you prepare for classes. Additionally, Dalhousie will still be doing first year orientation, although it will mainly be online, it is still a great way to meet new people. Many of you may be nervous about meeting people and how you will make friends in the online learning environment, it is important to know that this situation is temporary, and that you will still have opportunities to meet people and make friends. There are also many societies and clubs which I have found are great ways to get involved and meet people. I personally have been apart of the DalOut society for the past year. Even with over 200 clubs and societies, you are welcome to start your own if you cannot find one which fits you!

One of my biggest tips for the online fall semester is to maintain a schedule. It can be easy to put things on the back burner, or think “I will just do it later” when things are online, but it is important to stick to a routine to make sure you have enough time to get everything done academically, as well as have a social life.

I know you will have a great first year here at Dalhousie and I hope to see you around sometime soon!

by Kiera Thompson
Third-year Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences student
Double Major in Sociology and Philosophy
I AM DELIGHTED TO WELCOME ALL OF you to Dalhousie! This promises to be an extraordinary year. Your incoming class is not only embarking on a venerable rite of passage, your first year of university, but as the first online cohort in Dal’s history you will be establishing new university traditions and participating in a brand new version of university life in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

I have been teaching ancient and medieval philosophy in the Department of Classics for many years now—well, not that many; most of you were probably born before I started—and before that I was a student at Dal, completing both my BA and an MA here. This year, in addition to my academic appointment, 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. With the nearly total transition to online teaching and learning in the fall, we as a Faculty have spent the spring and summer reconceiving the way every course and program in FASS is delivered and supported. While this work began with some trepidation from our incredible instructors who have dedicated their careers to teaching students in traditional classroom settings, it has turned out to be a reinvigorating and revitalizing endeavor. We have reconfigured core FASS offerings such as the First Year Interest Groups (FIGs) and the Dalhousie Coordinated Arts Program (DalCAP); we have introduced

FASS LOCATIONS ACROSS CAMPUS

The Marion McCain Arts and Social Sciences Building
6135 University Ave
Home to the departments of: Classics, English, French, German, History, International Development Studies, Philosophy, Russian Studies, Sociology & Social Anthropology, Spanish & Latin American Studies, the Multidisciplinary Centre and the Dean’s Office.

The Henry Hicks Building
6299 South Street
Main administrative building for the University. Home to: the department of Political Science, the Centre for the Study of Security and Development and the Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence. It houses student accounts, Graduate Studies, the Office of the Registrar and of the President.

The Dalhousie Arts Centre
6101 University Ave
Home to: The Fountain School of Performing Arts and the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium.
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.
WHETHER YOUR SECOND or your seventh, learning a new language has big benefits. It can, for example:

• ease international trade and travel
• make you more competitive in the job market
• open to you new worlds of scholarship and knowledge, whether past or present
• allow you to immerse yourself more fully in another culture and its creative arts
• help you learn more about history, literature, travel and media
• allow you to gain new global perspectives

WHY LEARN YOUR NEW LANGUAGE AT DAL?
Whether you want to major in a language, add a language minor to another program, or simply take a course or two, you can take advantage of Dalhousie’s remarkable strengths in language teaching and scholarship.

Dal’s Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences offers programs in some of the languages most commonly spoken around the world.

We offer undergraduate and graduate degrees in French; undergraduate degrees in German, Russian and Spanish; and rich and dynamic Minors in Arabic, Italian and Chinese (Mandarin). Sometimes, too, we offer courses in other important world languages, such as Portuguese.

Dalhousie also has a unique position as a centre where the Classical languages of Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, the sources of many modern languages, are taught within a programme of study of Ancient cultures which retain real relevance to contemporary world issues. We offer established study abroad opportunities and exchanges to support language learning. We also offer a Certificate in Intercultural Communication that links language learning to cultural competency in a world of rapid and intensifying exchanges.

Learn more about our language learning opportunities by visiting dal.ca/languages.

BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS BY STUDYING LANGUAGES
By Aaron Brimacombe, Fourth-year Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences student Double Major in Spanish & Latin American Studies and French, Minor in Chinese Studies

Hi! My name is Aaron and I’m from British Columbia. I first came to Halifax back in 2017 to study at the University of King’s College. After completing King’s Foundation Year Program (FYYP), I transitioned into taking classes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Dalhousie thanks to the partnership between the two institutions. King’s and Dalhousie share a Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and this partnership allows students to build a combined and customized Bachelor of Arts degree that reflects your individual interests.

When I tell people what I’m studying, it often comes as a shock. Everyone takes a language in university to fill the language requirement; however, people rarely take three. I’m doing a double major in French and Spanish, and a minor in Chinese Studies, specifically Mandarin. Needless to say, there isn’t a lot of room for many other classes! I did French Immersion back in B.C., having started in the sixth grade, and started Spanish in my first year of university. I began studying Chinese in second year. There are a couple reasons for why I chose to study these languages. First-of-all, I think the world dictates it. Two hundred years ago, you might never leave your country, or even your province, for people in that era, speaking more than one language was something of a passing fancy, excluding those who made their trade by traveling or communicating with other countries. As a citizen of the 21st century, I hold myself to a higher standard, and I hope that others do too. It is my firm belief that everyone should speak at least two languages, and ideally more. With air travel and the internet, we come in contact with foreign languages and cultures more today than we have ever before in human history. If we as a people want our cultures to get along and understand each other, we have to make an effort to speak their language.

On a smaller scale, learning languages is fun. It’s extremely entertaining to see a whole new portion of the world to open up, to understand the significance of a piece of music, or a joke, that you previously couldn’t understand. It’s not to say that jokes or music, or films or any kind of media are necessarily better in a different language, but it’s about being open to those languages that broadens your horizons. Understanding each other is an ongoing process, and it can only be helped by speaking each other’s languages. Perhaps, in another 200 years, when translation software has advanced beyond the need for humans to learn languages, and we are either all peacefully coexisting in a utopia or all dead. But here in the present day, where we’re stuck with Google translate, we need people with a passion and a real interest for understanding one another.

I strongly recommend getting involved with at least one (or more) language programs at Dal. Dalhousie offers a wide range of them, and my experiences with the staff of the language departments have been really positive. The smaller class sizes really help you connect individually to the prof and I find that all of them are extremely passionate about their work. Plus, it doesn’t hurt that the student-run societies for the language departments here at Dal are always organizing fun events: The Chinese department’s societies here at Dal are always organizing fun events: The Chinese society gets together once a year to make and eat dumplings, the Spanish society often hosts La Velada – a really spectacular celebration of Spanish and Latin American culture, and the French society often hosts movie nights or bake sales. I can’t speak to the events of the other language departments’ societies here at Dal as I am presently uninvolved with them, but I hope to be sometime in the future! I strongly recommend studying languages at Dal. It’s a great opportunity to better yourself and have a lot of fun while you learn more about a new way to interpret the world! I hope to see you on campus once things open back up!
WHEN MY FAMILY FIRST MOVED TO CANADA FROM PAKISTAN, my mother established an important rule: whenever we spoke English at home instead of Urdu, she would fine us twenty-five cents. At six years old, given my lack of income, I found this wildly unfair but at twenty-two, I am immensely grateful for her decision. Language, as almost everyone will tell you, is the door to culture and, thanks to my mother’s insistence, the door to my culture and my heritage has always remained open to me. My mother’s love for languages was also what stoked my own interest in them, something which she has always encouraged.

In my first year at Dalhousie, I signed up for Ancient Greek as my language requirement. I was planning on studying Psychology, so it wasn’t a strictly “useful” course, but I was determined to take it regardless. After my first Ancient Greek class, I immediately changed my entire schedule to one suitable for a Classics student instead. Four years later, I am both horrified and absurdly proud of the confidence I had in my decision. When I started studying Ancient Greek, I expected it to be difficult and frustrating (it was and sometimes still is both of these things). What I didn’t expect was the sense of kinship and familiarity I would feel from a language so old and so different from the one I grew up speaking. I remember being particularly frustrated once while trying to render in English what was so clear in Ancient Greek and thinking how much easier it would have been to do so in Urdu. Although the sense of familiarity was what struck me when I first started learning, I fell in love with Ancient Greek for its own sake, for its rich and absurd vocabulary (I suggest looking up Greek epithets), for its ability to express a moment, and for the small window it opens into the lives of people and societies which are long gone. However, I would never have learned to find the idiosyncrasies of Greek endearing without my professors as they taught me different ways to approach the language.

Ancient Greek is not the only language I’ve had the opportunity to pursue over the course of my degree, I’ve also been taking Latin for the past 2 years and had the opportunity to take Sanskrit last year. Latin was a language I had some difficulties with at first, finding it too rigid in comparison to Ancient Greek. Back when my relationship with the language was rather rocky, I once complained about how Latin lacked the flair of Greek. My complaints were promptly overruled by a TA who taught me about Latin word pictures. He showed me how the description of Aeneas and Dido in a cave in the Aeneid was simultaneously a visual representation of their situation due to the sentence structure. My feelings towards the language thawed considerably after that. I’ve learned that Latin can be flexible and wondrous and strange in the right hands, as is the case with all languages. Not to mention, the way that it allows for a particularly clever (and occasionally crass) kind of wordplay. Being part of an inside joke that is over 1000 years old is a uniquely wonderful experience.

My study of languages has made me a better scholar in every other aspect of my education because learning a language is an intimate and involved process. When you learn a language, you cannot escape a simultaneous education about the people who speak it, their customs, their fears, the ways in which they express love, and even their prejudices. Last year, I read the speeches of an Athenian orator named Lysias in Ancient Greek. He was a metic, a resident alien, which meant he did not have the rights of a citizen. Lysias wrote a specific speech in response to the murders and seizure of assets of minorities by the Thirty Tyrants during the 4th century. In that speech, he wrote at length about the decades his own family had spent in Athens and how they had been model residents all that time. His words, written over a thousand years ago in a language long-dead, sound almost exactly like the response of modern immigrants in the face of rampant xenophobia and our need to present as “model minorities” in order to survive. The word “xenophobia” itself comes from the Ancient Greek word, xenos, which has a number of meanings depending on the context but can be translated most simply as “stranger.” As an immigrant, it is hard to express what it felt like to see something that echoed my own experiences so closely in an ancient text. My research interests in Classics are primarily that of Greek conceptions of the “Other” and the experiences of foreigners in Greek city states. A great deal of my work is concerned with language, how it is used as a tool and as a weapon respectively. Although my work is based in antiquity, the lessons I have learned throughout my time studying languages have been relevant in everything I do. I have learned to weigh the meaning of every word I read, hear, speak, or write and it has been an excellent education.
FASS SOCIETIES

THE DALHOUSIE ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES SOCIETY (or DASSS for short) represents all students in the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences (FASS). DASSS acts as a forum of exchange between departmental student societies within the faculty and organizes events relevant to FASS students. We are also the representative voice of FASS students within the university administration and the student union. In other words, we are a society made for and by Arts & Social Sciences students and we are here to advocate for you!

To learn more about this society, visit dalhousearts.com or visit the Dalhousie Arts and Social Sciences Society — DASSS page on Facebook.

CLASSICS SOCIETY

Res Publica is the Dal 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; however, we’re working hard and have planned some great online events for the 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 Society 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! We are working hard to come up with and organize really fun online events for this upcoming term! Alongside our French department liaison, we have been planning online collaborative French Cuisine Nights which we hope will be a great way to introduce people to tasty food and the French language. We also have French discussion nights where we usually play games and just socialize in French! Through tough times like these, it’s easy to feel isolated (literally) so we want you to feel welcome and at ease and know that we are in this together.

If you have any questions or want to learn more about joining our society, you can reach us through our Instagram: @dalhousiefrenchsociety, Facebook: @DalhousieClubFrancais or email us at francais@dal.ca.

À bientôt tout le monde! Stay Safe and Wear a Mask.

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 language skills in German, 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 starting to plan events for the new year and would love to welcome any and all new students who are taking History courses – 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. For the History program more generally, visit our home page at history.dal.ca and follow us @Dal_History.

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
Hello everyone! 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.

Despite COVID-19, our society plans to remain very active this year. We will have a variety of accessible events both online and in person when permitted. Such events 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!

This transition to an online university setting will be different. As a society we are here to support you. Please contact us if you have any questions!

To stay up to date on 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, and we encourage careful and critical thought in every activity. To learn more, please visit the Facebook page.

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.

SOCIOLGY 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 of 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 student society by contacting dalljsstudents@gmail.com or visiting the Dalhousie Association of Law, Justice and Society Students Facebook page.

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.

FIRST YEAR NEWS is published annually by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences with production support from Dalhousie Creative Services.

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