



**MEMORANDUM**

September 8, 2025

**TO:** All in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems – faculty, staff, students, and postdoctoral fellows  
(distributed via the Dean's office)

**FROM:** Gage Averill  
Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver

**RE:** **Search for a new Dean of the Faculty of Land and Food Systems - Update**

I am pleased to advise that the President's Advisory Committee (PAC) for the selection of a new Dean of the Faculty of Land & Food Systems has been established with the following membership, consisting of elected and appointed members, per [UBC Policy AP5](#):

Joseph Al Rahmani, Undergraduate Student, Faculty of Land & Food Systems  
Rick Barichello, Professor, Food and Resource Economics  
Steven Tyler Bristow, Graduate Student, Faculty of Land & Food Systems  
Tamara Cohen, Assistant Professor, Food, Nutrition and Health, and Associate Dean, Students and EDI  
Robert Kozak, Dean, Faculty of Forestry  
Dana-Lyn Mackenzie, Senior Manager, EDI and Indigeneity, Faculty of Land & Food Systems  
Tabitha Robin, Assistant Professor, Applied Biology  
Risa Sargent, Associate Professor, Applied Biology  
Ya Shen, Professor and Head, Department of Oral Biological and Medical Sciences  
Will Valley, Associate Professor of Teaching, Applied Biology  
Hannah Wittman, Professor, Food, Nutrition and Health  
Gage Averill, Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver (Chair)  
Kate Carr, Executive Assistant to the Vice-Provost and AVP Faculty Planning (Secretary)

The PAC's task is to consider and advise the President on the candidates before the President makes a recommendation to the Board of Governors.

Griffith Group Executive Search firm will be supporting the work of the PAC.

The search consultants are beginning consultations with select groups within the Faculty for the purpose of gathering input to create a candidate profile. They are also seeking your input on the following questions:

1. What are the opportunities and challenges facing the incoming Dean over the short and long term?
2. What qualifications and experiences should be sought in candidates (academic credentials, lived experience, leadership style, and expertise)?
3. How can the Dean engage in the work of the Faculty of Land & Food Systems to advance decolonization and address Truth and Reconciliation?



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4. What is the Dean's role in ensuring that principles and practices of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility are supported, promoted, and implemented in the Faculty of Land & Food Systems?
5. Are there any individuals you would like to recommend as either possible candidates or sources of referrals?

Please submit your input, **by end of day September 22<sup>nd</sup>**, via this confidential [online survey](#).

The President's Advisory Committee will be meeting soon to begin its task. The PAC will be reviewing the candidate profile and advertisement, both of which will be informed by feedback received through the consultations and via the survey.

The advertisement will be distributed widely through web-based media. The search is international in scope, and open to internal and external candidates.

In the coming months, Griffith Group will be following up on your suggestions of individuals and using their extensive networks to source nominations and potential candidates. The PAC will then reconvene to review the candidate list and will invited a number of candidates to meet with them for confidential interviews. When the PAC has narrowed the candidate list to a small number of outstanding individuals, those candidates will each be invited to a second phase of interviews. We will provide information about the phase of the process later.

The document "Overview of process for decanal searches at UBC" is attached again for your information.

We look forward to your participation in the search process. I will continue to update the Faculty as the search progresses. If you have any questions about this decanal search, please contact Kate Carr at [lfs.dean.search@ubc.ca](mailto:lfs.dean.search@ubc.ca).

GA:kc  
Attach.



## Process description for the search for a new Dean of a Faculty at UBC

This document is intended to provide an informal set of explanatory notes to accompany the [Deans/Principals Appointment Policy \(AP5\)](#), which governs the selection of Deans at UBC.

At a high level, the main phases in the search for a new Dean are the following:

- establishing an Advisory Committee to consider candidates and to advise the President on recommendations to be made to the Board of Governors;
- elections and appointments of Advisory Committee members pursuant to the requirements set out in the Deans/Principals Appointment Policy;
- meetings of the Advisory Committee supported by the search firm engaged to assist with finding suitable candidates;
- long-list interviews of candidates selected by the Advisory Committee;
- short-list interviews of candidates selected by the Advisory Committee;
- short-listed candidates will be requested to appear at a Faculty forum, where faculty members, staff, students, and postdoctoral fellows of the applicable Faculty can hear directly from the candidates, ask questions, and provide feedback to the Advisory Committee;
- selection by the Advisory Committee of (preferably) two or more candidates it determines to be suitable for appointment as a Dean and provision of the list with the selected candidates to the President; and
- the President's recommendation is provided to the Board of Governors for confirmation of appointment of the Dean.

### The Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee's task is to consider and advise the President on the candidates before the President makes a recommendation to the Board of Governors. The composition of the Advisory Committee is outlined in the Deans/Principals Appointment Policy and includes students, staff and faculty members, who serve as representatives on behalf of the Faculty concerned and not for their individual departments or units. For the Dean of a UBC Okanagan Faculty or a UBC Vancouver Faculty (e.g., Faculty of Arts on the Vancouver campus), the Chair of the Advisory Committee is the Provost from the applicable campus. For the Dean of a dual-campus Faculty (e.g., Education), the Provosts from the Vancouver and Okanagan campuses will serve as Co-Chairs of the Advisory Committee. In each case, the Chair or Co-Chairs are voting members of the Advisory Committee. The secretary of the Advisory Committee, a staff member from the Provost's office, is a non-voting member of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee includes a balance of both elected and appointed members.

### *Elected Members*

The Chair or Co-Chairs, as applicable, or their delegate writes to the Registrar requesting the initiation of the call for nominations and election of the following Advisory Committee members:

- for the selection of a Dean of a UBC Okanagan or UBC Vancouver Faculty, four faculty members<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> All persons defined as "faculty members" per the University Act and Senate are eligible to stand for election, nominate candidates, and vote. These faculty members are persons employed by the University as instructors, lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, professors; and assistant professors, associate professors and professors of teaching.



- whose primary appointment is in the Faculty concerned, one undergraduate student registered in the Faculty concerned, and one graduate student associated with the Faculty concerned; and
- for the selection of a Dean of a dual-campus Faculty, five faculty members (four members whose primary appointment is in the UBC Vancouver Division of the Faculty concerned and one member whose primary appointment is in the UBC Okanagan Division of the Faculty concerned), two undergraduate students (one registered in the UBC Vancouver Division and one registered in the UBC Okanagan Division of the Faculty concerned), and one graduate student associated with the Faculty concerned.

The nomination period lasts a minimum of five days. The nominations and elections are conducted in accordance with the [regulations for elections to non-governing bodies](#). There will be at least seven days between the close of the nomination period and the start of voting, and the voting period will be open for a minimum of three days. **Note:** It is critical that deadlines are respected. For faculty members and students who wish to nominate persons, self-nominate and/or vote in the elections, it is advisable to monitor one's UBC email closely for updates and instructions from the Office of the Registrar/Enrolment Services.

### *Appointed Members*

Once the election results are received, the remaining positions on the Advisory Committee are filled by appointment by the President. These usually include a staff member from the Faculty concerned, a Dean from another Faculty, and two additional persons (or, in the case of a dual-campus Faculty, three additional persons). In making appointments to the Advisory Committee, the President seeks to include a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, including from various academic disciplines. If the President chooses to appoint Additional Members to the Advisory Committee (in addition to the ones listed above), there will be further Additional Members elected to the Advisory Committee as required by the Deans/Principals Appointment Policy.

### *Expectations of Advisory Committee Members*

Serving on the Advisory Committee entails a significant responsibility and commitment of time. However, it can be a rewarding experience. The Advisory Committee generally meets five or six times and participates in a number of interviews over a period of about ten months. Advisory Committee members are also expected to assist with developing the candidate profile and reviewing application letters, CVs, and references. While COVID-19 restrictions are in place, meetings and interviews will be conducted virtually via videoconference.

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are important values to UBC; indeed, UBC recognizes that inclusion is an integral component of excellence. For this reason, we invite applicants to self-identify with one or more of the equity-deserving groups that UBC tracks; this process is managed by the Equity and Inclusion Office. Further, the members of the Advisory Committee receive training on unconscious bias and are expected to give EDI factors appropriate weight as they formulate their advice. In addition, the Chair, or Co-Chairs, as appropriate, will identify a member of the Advisory Committee who will have the function of ensuring EDI factors are considered during the search process.



### **The Search Firm**

The role of the search firm engaged by UBC is to support the work of the Advisory Committee. The members of the search firm are not members of the Advisory Committee and do not have a vote on which candidates the Advisory Committee chooses to recommend. The search firm normally assists in advertising the position domestically and internationally, helping to attract a strong pool of candidates, the coordination of interviews, and the conduct of reference checks. The search firm is expected to act as directed by the Advisory Committee and the Chair or Co-chairs.

### **Timeline**

Once established, the Advisory Committee works to develop a candidate profile and advertisement, both of which are informed by feedback received through the consultations the search firm conducts with the applicable Faculty. The search firm will use the profile and advertisement as it approaches prospective candidates throughout the months that follow. The search process typically lasts nine months. More details regarding the search timeline are communicated following the establishment of the Advisory Committee by its Chair or Co-chairs, as applicable.

The Chair or Co-chairs, as applicable, will provide updates to the applicable Faculty on the search as it progresses, as and when this is possible while respecting the confidentiality that must be observed about details of the search. Communications regarding the progress of the search will only come from the Chair or the Co-Chairs, as applicable, or the President. Please note that in accordance with the Deans/Principals Appointment Policy, and to preserve the confidentiality of the search, there may be extended periods between updates to the Faculty. However, please be assured that the Advisory Committee and the search firm are continuing their important work in the search for the next Dean during such time and updates will be provided as appropriate.

### **Community Engagement**

Deans play an enormously important role at UBC. We encourage members of the UBC community to engage with the selection process, whether that is by providing input to the Advisory Committee, participating in Faculty forums, voting for members of the Advisory Committee, running for an elected position on the Advisory Committee, or accepting an appointment to the Advisory Committee. The work of the Advisory Committee is very important and the advice that it provides has a profound impact on UBC.