

Dean's Message - Welcome Back FOA

Published 8/27/2024 by [Elaine Simionato Hayashi](#)

Welcome Back!

I would like to officially welcome you back for another academic year! For some of you, the preparations have been ongoing, and I deeply appreciate your hard work to help get ready for another September startup.

For me, this is a time of transition. While it is an unusual feeling to not be planning for classes next week, I am excited to continue working with you all as Dean. Over the past five months with the FoA, I've appreciated the conversations I've had and emails I've received highlighting your support for our students and your ideas for adapting to changes in the learning environment. I'm also grateful for your willingness to participate in FoA hiring panels, committees, and research projects.

The transition into my new role has been made smoother thanks to the support from the FoA administrative team: Amanda, Danielle, Krista, Mary, Melanie, and Solmaz, as well as everyone from support staff who have kept me focused as we have navigated many changes together, including the welcoming of the Public Administration programs in July and the movement of ELI and GEA programs from the FoA to the International Pathways department in mid-August. Welcome to everyone teaching and supporting the five newest FoA programs (PAD, RPA, RPAA, LIT, and LITA), and thank you Jesse, Kim, and the rest of the ELI team for your contributions and the energy you brought to the group.

I also want to welcome our newest members of the administrative team: Barb Paterson (Acting Academic Program Manager, School of Arts and Science) and Karen Spires (Chair, School of English & Liberal Studies, S@Y and King), and extend my heartfelt congratulations and thanks to Irene Kanurkas for her 37 years of service and for staying on through the summer to assist with the transition. Her official last day is August 31.

During my welcome back address this Wednesday, I will discuss the many recent changes within the FoA, provide an update on our enrolment, and outline what lies ahead this year. I will also highlight the significant shifts in postsecondary education policy. In my 20+ years in the sector, I can't recall a time when both levels of government and public policy changes have had such a strong impact on our sector.

I look forward to connecting with many of you later this week. Amidst all the preparations that come with this time of year, I hope you find some time to enjoy the last long weekend of the summer with family and friends.

Jon Olinski
Dean, Faculty of Arts