Access and Engagement Strategic Plan 2011-2018

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Distance Education, Learning and Teaching Support

DISTANCE EDUCATION, LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT

Memorial University is known internationally for its innovative approaches to teaching and learning, especially its legacy of leadership in distance education. Memorial, the only university in Newfoundland and Labrador, has a special responsibility to service **all** citizens of the province. Distance education has been central to the fulfillment of that mandate and civic responsibility. In 1969, Memorial offered the first "for academic credit" course in distance education as a result of the creation of the Division of Summer Session, Evening and Off-Campus Courses for Credit. Over the next 40 years the names and the functions of the unit evolved. Core to all activity has been a culture of creativity and innovation. The unit (in all of its manifestations) has been recognized for pushing the boundaries in an effort to ensure equitable university access to **all** people in the province.

Distance Education and Learning Technologies (DELT) has been central to the university's mission and mandate since its inception. The university had benefited from early innovators such as Dr. A.M. House and Erin Keough in tele-health, Harvey Weir in K-12 delivery through StemNet, and Drs. Michael Collins, Emir Andrews and recently Brent Snook in distance education course development. These innovators have been supported by a culture of creativity and innovation in the academic support units, like Distance Education and Learning Technologies (DELT) and others.

In addition to its activities in support of distance education, the unit has always provided support to the teaching and learning aspect of the university more widely. Beginning with media support, then classroom design and support, and the creation of the Instructional Development Office in 1997, and finally, the significant support to on-campus use of the learning management system (technology-enabled learning), the unit has been able to leverage its core expertise to the entire institution. This expertise is also leveraged to a unique relationship with the K-12 system through the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI). This combined expertise and support places Memorial University in a position of strength over other Canadian universities with respect to distance education and teaching/learning.

As we celebrate over **40 years** of service of credit based offerings to the university and external community, it is fitting for us to reflect on where we have been, where we are, and where we go next.

Year	Milestone
1969	established the Division of Summer Session, Evening and Off-Campus Courses for Credit
1972	started using Video Tape Recording (VTR) for adult education and community development purposes
1977	the credit section of extension became known as the Division of Part-Time Credit Studies which held responsibility for off-campus programs, Intersession, Summer Session, the correspondence program, and the on-campus evening program
1978	developed correspondence courses for people who could not attend centres throughout Newfoundland and Labrador
1982	developed another medium for course delivery: the cablevision system
1985	 restructuring of three major outreach programs to form the School of Continuing Studies and Extension, the media unit combined with Educational Television, the Division of Part-Time Credit Studies became the Division of Continuing Studies created a community transmitter which would be a low power television system which would transmit pictures and sound up to a 10 mile radius
1988	first course using email
1989	- four business courses were offered via telecom; videotape and teleconferencing was also used - partnered with Faculty of Medicine in setting up of TETRA (Telemedicine and Educational Technology Resources Agency)
1993	the testing of "STEM-Net" (above network) a K-12 teachers network began
1994	developed a distance course with the internet for the first time
1996	 five degree courses were delivered using the Regional College Satellite program spring convocation was broadcast on the internet first Memorial professor to teach a course via the internet
1997	 restructuring created three divisions: the Division of Open Learning, the Office of Educational Development and Marketing, and the Centre for Academic and Media Services; the Office of the Dean position became the Executive Director position Instructional Development Office created
1998	first installation of classroom multimedia; also produced 13 web-based courses
2001	creation of Distance Education and Learning Technologies (DELT)
2009-10	celebration of 40 years of distance education

Our evolution can be captured with the following milestones:

DELT was created in 2001 as a result of a restructuring of the School of Continuing Education. The unit is responsible for the development and delivery of online and distance education, as well as the support and enhancement of teaching and learning both on-campus and at a distance at Memorial University. The unit strives for excellence in each of its core functions: (1) technology enabled learning support through distance education/online learning course development, course delivery and service; (2) faculty and graduate student teaching and learning support (instructional development and classroom support); and (3) multimedia design and production capabilities for wider academic benefit.

The unit is supported by an operations group and a marketing/development group. Over the last eight years the unit has flourished. DELT is financially and organizationally stable. As a result of the partnerships between DELT and the Faculties and Schools at MUN, distance education enrollments have grown by 30% (500% in graduate programs). DELT has at least one partnership with every Faculty/School at Memorial and has serviced and supported growth in teaching and learning widely throughout the university. As detailed in Appendix A, in the past three years alone (2008-10) the unit was the recipient of over 25 awards, including ISO 9001 quality certification in March 2008, three Canadian Network for Innovation in Education Awards and the 2009 D2L International Award for Community Service (in partnership with Distributed Learning Service (CNA) and the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (Department of Education). The unit is also responsible for supporting Memorial's Distinguished Teaching Award and the national 3M teaching award program with an impressive six 3M teaching awards supported since 2001.

As a result of the evolution of DELT and current higher education trends, Memorial University now faces strategic challenges and opportunities, including:

- A challenge and an opportunity to stabilize and grow enrollment through the increased support for distance education programs in order to offset shifts in traditional demographics, provide added value to students, and attract mature learners to the university.
- A challenge and an opportunity to leverage institutional resources for wide impact on on-campus teaching and learning.
- A challenge and an opportunity to focus on the professional teaching development and support of faculty and graduate students to advance student engagement, learning and achievement.

In its 40th anniversary year, DELT developed a renewed strategic plan in support of the university's strategic framework. Through extensive consultations internally and externally we learned that there is a tremendous amount of support for the goals and objectives in this document. Finally this document creates a new vision for the unit as a provider of key learning and teaching support services to the university community, the post secondary education system and students (irrespective of where they reside within the province or beyond the provincial borders). The revision of the unit name to **DELTS – Distance Education, Learning and Teaching Support** reflects this renewed focus as we embrace the challenges and opportunities facing students and educators in the 21st century.

This strategic plan entitled Access and Engagement details the unit's plans until 2018. Key themes include access to university courses and programs particularly to rural communities and access to the unit's activities by the entire university community. The two themes of access and engagement relate to accessibility and engagement in the full suite of services offered by DELTS; student engagement in learning; and, community engagement by leveraging the expertise in DELTS for wider benefit.

Planning Process

The strategic planning process was committed to engagement – both within and external to the university. In total, 1703 individuals were engaged in discussion on the issues that faced the university and/or the community and how the unit could assist in supporting these issues. Some 225 members of the external community, in addition to representatives from government and the educational system, university deans, directors, faculty, administrators and DELTS staff were consulted. Consultation sessions were facilitated and recorded by an external consultant to ensure that all ideas were captured. More specifically consultation sessions were held with:

External Partners and Agencies	Internal Partners
• All 20 Regional Economic Development Boards	• Deans and Directors
 Distributed Learning and Learning Technologies College of the North Atlantic 	• Academic and Administrative Directors (Registrar's Office, Computing and Communications, Human Resources, VPA office)
 Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI) Department of Education 	 Grenfell College – through open invitation
 ADM (Advanced Studies), Department of Education Centre for Nursing Studies, Eastern Health Minister of Education (then Parliamentary Secretary to Minister) 	Marine Institute
	 Student Affairs and Services Leadership Team
	 Faculty – through open invitation
	• MUNFA
	 Faculty of Education – through open invitation
	Senate Committee on Educational Technology
	• All staff members in DELTS

A complete list of individuals consulted can be found in Appendix B of this plan. Student comments were gathered through semester surveys and a specific survey with over 1478 responses, 10 in-depth interviews and eight online focus groups conducted by an external agency. Sections of the university's strategic framework (particularly Pillar 1 Students and Pillar 3 Needs of the Province) for which the unit is responsible were specifically addressed in the consultation sessions.

Overall, those consulted expressed a high degree of satisfaction with services provided by DELTS. Every person consulted could point to at least one positive experience with a core function of the unit.

Vision 2018

Through collaboration with the faculties and schools at Memorial, DELTS will enable Memorial to be one of the top five institutions of choice in Canada for student engagement in learning by 2018.

Mission Statement

Distance Education, Learning and Teaching Support strives to meet and exceed student, faculty and external partner expectations in each of its core functions: distance education, online learning, and teaching and learning support.

We recognize a special obligation to provide teaching support to faculty, as well as services to mature learners who face accessibility challenges due to geographic location and/or social circumstance.

We ensure quality in our programs and services; we ensure that stakeholders are clear on the programs and services that we provide; we ensure that our services are documented and clear; and we continually seek to improve our service to students, faculty and partners (internal to the wider university community and external to our unit).



Distance Education, Learning and Teaching Support (DELTS)

The renewed unit will be organized into three primary functions:

Memorial@Home[™] – Distance education is central to the unit and critical with respect to honoring the university's responsibility to serve **all** citizens of the province. Memorial@Home [™] is the university's well-established brand in distance education and has grown from 350 courses to 450+ courses in a short period of time. The number of new full programs is on the rise, as is the number of enrollments in distance education courses.

Memorial Online – The use of technology once earmarked for distance education is now rapidly finding its way into on-campus courses. The number of technology- enabled courses has risen from three in 2002 to over 1000 course sections in 2008/09. This steady increase is one measurement of faculty and student desire to utilize technology to enhance student engagement, to meet student expectations, to provide for greater efficiency to faculty, and to enhance the overall learning experience.

Teaching and Learning Support – Teaching and learning support encompasses relevant pedagogical assistance to faculty, training/workshops/institutes on current issues, teaching dossier support, effective classroom design and support, media support, technology enabled learning support, and a general focus on student engagement.

Teaching and learning support also encompasses graduate student development – a unique strength and offering of Memorial University. Support for the professional development of graduate students through the Graduate Program in Teaching (GPT) and other services as deemed necessary and appropriate in partnership with the School of Graduate Studies, Faculties/Schools, and graduate students themselves.

Managing Growth

The most significant strategic issue facing the unit is the management of growth. The rate of adoption of technology-enabled learning, coupled with the increase in students and faculty requests for the unit's services overall, create challenges with respect to (1) meeting the expectations of the academic units; (2) maintaining and expanding current service levels for students; and (3) providing increasing support to faculty. Over the next seven years, it will be critical for the unit to secure and retain fiscal, human resource and physical (space) resources in order to meet the expectations of the University community. This reality was fully recognized by the internal community in the consultation phase. These uncertain economic times will affect the ability of DELTS to secure the necessary resources. Therefore, numerous objectives are embedded in this plan that addresses this strategic issue.

Highlights

The top priorities for DELTS for the next seven years include:

Distance Education

- Maintain Memorial's connection to the people of the province through the provision of education opportunities to the home or wherever the student resides.
- Advocate for equitable technology access in all areas of the province (particularly rural) on behalf of our learners.
- Enhance relationships with the academic units to permit service to the community and to the unique learners which the academic units and DELTS serve.
- Maintain currency in technology, push the boundaries of its use and develop with faculty the highest quality, media rich and engaging courses available anywhere, by distance.

Teaching and Learning Support

- Work with the academic units to develop and implement a blended learning (technology enabled learning) strategy for on campus courses offered by Memorial University.
- Ensure that faculty and students are aware of the full suite of services offered by DELTS and develop training and support for faculty and students in all areas of teaching and learning.
- Support faculty members and students by ensuring that the teaching and learning support services at Memorial are the best available, providing relevant instructional development to faculty and graduate students, and contribute to student engagement in learning.

Organizational and Institutional Support

- Enhance established relationships with the external community and educational system for wider university and student benefit.
- Ensure that staff are supported in their work by providing resources and a working environment that cultivates creativity and enables the highest levels of productivity and employee satisfaction possible to the communities they serve.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Collaboration within the University and Educational System

Distance Education

- A high level of public (local, national and international) and institutional awareness of Memorial's online programs and DELTS services.
- Heightened awareness and increased levels of registration for undergraduate and graduate distance education programs (provincial including rural, military and aboriginal, national, and international students).
- Strategic and relevant ongoing partnerships with the academic units and supporting external partners/agencies regarding online program development and delivery.
- Well defined and enhanced relationships with community partners to ensure that: (1) partners are aware of the university's available expertise in areas of DELTS' responsibility; and (2) DELTS understands and is able to advocate for community needs, particularly in new online program development.

Teaching and Learning Support

- A well defined and implemented system of teaching and learning support services within Memorial University.
- A responsive DELTS organizational structure that reflects growing demand and effectively integrates DELTS services within faculty operations.
- A state-of the-art facility that reflects the growing importance of online learning to post-secondary and K-12 education and that provides for a creative, dynamic, collaborative work environment for faculty, staff and students.
- A framework for the sharing and reuse of learning resources among educators at Memorial, the province and other educational institutions, both nationally and internationally.

Student Needs and Expectations

Distance Education

- Development of high quality and interactive (media rich) online courses and programs.
- Availability of a much broader range of graduate and undergraduate online programs and courses through effective support to and partnership with academic units and faculty.
- Seek partnerships with academic faculties and schools to develop a doctoral degree by distance.
- Appropriate policies and regulations regarding distance education courses and programs that are relevant to mature learners and maintain academic integrity and quality.
- A focus on improving student retention for distance education students.

Teaching and Learning Support

- A focus on student engagement as it relates to instructional development and technology use in learning (pedagogy, classrooms, technology enabled learning).
- Continuous improvement and relevance of services to students engaged in technology enabled courses and programs.
- Creation of a learning community within D2L for social networking among students
- Leveraging of knowledge and expertise in technology enabled learning for the benefit of remedial services (mathematics, writing, tutoring, etc.).
- Development of services to address the unique professional development needs for graduate students through Graduate Program in Teaching (GPT) and other aspects of supportive development.

Faculty Development

- A range of faculty support services that are accessible, visible and understood by all faculty members.
- Support provided to faculty through DELTS in two main areas: (1) enhancing the use of expertise with technology in teaching among faculty members; and (2) strengthening pedagogically skilled teaching in faculty, through instructional development that is focused on the unique and specialized needs of individual faculty members and units, while addressing institutional wide needs and expectations.
- Administration of awards which recognize and promote faculty excellence in teaching and development of additional strategies for acknowledgement of teaching excellence.

Technology Enabled Learning

- A facilitative approach to Memorial's leadership in technology enabled learning/blended learning.
- University-wide initiative to explore with faculty the incorporation of appropriate aspects of technology enabled learning in all courses.
- High quality standards and guidelines for the development and delivery of blended learning courses (on-campus courses embedded within the learning management system).

Emerging Technologies

- Early identification, research, and application of innovative, technology related learning tools (hardware and software).
- Identification and support for faculty champions.
- Advocacy for widespread availability of robust and equitable broadband services in all communities of the province.

Strategic Goals are supported by the following organizational and institutional goals:

Staff Engagement and Development

- A commitment to people development and support at the forefront of the unit.
- A work environment that respects diversity, embraces engagement and celebrates creativity!
- A positive work environment for staff through the provision of professional development opportunities required to effectively conduct and grow within their role.

Space

• Space which is adequate and appropriate to enable and support: (1) the effective delivery of programs to faculty and (2) the development of user-created content by faculty and students; and (3) the growth and development of staff creativity and expertise.

Fiscal Resources

- Stable funding for the growing operational requirements of the University, based appropriately on the level of service delivery by DELTS external funds to support innovative projects, while achieving the appropriate balance between internal and external funds.
- Collaboration with internal and external partners in the pursuit of funding.

Quality Assurance

- Commitment to the value of ISO registration and our Quality Management System.
- Well-established systems to capture and respond to feedback from students, faculty, staff and partners.
- Adoption of appropriate international technical and instructional design standards.

APPENDIX A

University Awards

- 2010 Commonwealth of Learning Award of Excellence for Institutional Achievement
- 2010 Export and Innovation Award Distinction in Innovation, Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development
- 2010 Award of Excellence and Innovation in a Partnership/Collaboration by the Canadian Network for Innovation and Education. DELT (Memorial University), DLS (College of the North Atlantic), CDLI (K-12) and Desire2Learn for Province-wider learning management system.
- 2010 Award for Institutional Achievement, National Universities Technology Network (first time given outside of the US).
- 2010 Noflett Williams Award for Service to the field of distance education Awarded to DELT's director
- 2010 Institute of Public Administration of Canada/Deloitte Public Sector Leadership Award (Bronze Winner Education)
- 2010, Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education Most Outstanding Master Thesis Award Awarded to Senior Instructional Designer Albert Johnson
- University Professional & Continuing Education Association 2010 Community of Practice Awards, Distance Learning, Program of Excellence Master of Physical Education Program (Honorable Mention)
- 2010 University Professional & Continuing Education Association (New England) Award for Innovative and Creative Programming for the online Master of Physical Education program
- Desire2Excel 2009 International Award for Community Service DELT, Distributed Learning Service (CNA), Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (Dept. of Education) for province-wide LMS adoption.
- CAUBO 2009 Quality and Productivity Awards 2nd nationally for ISO 9001:2008 registration implementation First DE unit in Canada to achieve this designation.
- Canadian Network for Innovation in Education Award 2009 Excellence in the use of Educational Technology for use of second life in a naval architecture course (with the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science)
- 2009 Export and Innovation Award (Finalist) Distinction in Innovation, Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development
- Canadian Network for Innovation in Education Award 2008 Excellence and Innovation in Student Service
- Canadian Network for Innovation in Education Award 2008 Excellence and Innovation in Use of Learning Technology for Online Music Theory (with the School of Music)
- Canadian Network for Innovation in Education Award 2007 Excellence and Innovation in Instructional Design, Canadian Association for Distance Education for Psychology 2150 with Dr. Brent Snook (Faculty of Science)
- Canadian Network for Innovation in Education 2007 Award -Association for Media and Technology in Education in Canada
- European Distance and E-learning Network 2008 Best Paper Award (Tim Seifert, Bruce Sheppard, Ann Marie Vaughan)
- Registered to ISO 9001:2008 March 31, 2008

- Four media and technology awards since 2001:
 - 2007 Association for Media and Technology in Education in Canada Award of Merit, Visual Media/Informational/Post-Secondary category for "Building Community Capacity for the Health and Well-Being of Children: A Framework for Action" (D McGee)
 - 2003 Association for Media and Technology in Education in Canada Award of Merit, Post-Secondary Visual category for "Formula Mun" (K O'Leary)
 - 2002 Association for Media and Technology in Education in Canada Award of Merit, Live Documentation category for "Rising From the Ashes" (D McGee)
 - 2001 Association for Media and Technology in Education in Canada Award of Merit, Informational Visual category for "Out of the Dark: Youth and Depression" (D McGee)
- Six 3M teaching awards developed and supported since 2001 Two AAU awards and 14 Memorial Teaching Awards
- 17 marketing awards/acknowledgments:
 - 2010 UCEA Marketing Awards Gold, Online Advertising
 - 2010 CAUCE Marketing Awards Best Marketing on a Shoestring
 - 2010 CAUCE Marketing Awards Best Collateral Materials (Broadcast)
 - 2010 CCAE Prix D'Excellence Awards Silver, Best Audio, Video or Multi-Media Presentation
 - 2010 IABC Pinnacle Awards Award of Excellence in Advertising
 - 2009 CASE District I Communication Awards Honorable Mention, TV/Radio Ad
 - 2009 CAUCE Marketing Awards Best Collateral Materials (Broadcast)
 - 2009 CCAE Prix D'Excellence Awards Silver, Best Audio, Video or Multi-Media Presentation
 - 2009 IABC Pinnacle Awards Award of Merit in Advertising
 - 2008 CASE District I Communication Awards Bronze, TV/Radio Ad
 - 2008 CAUCE Marketing Awards Best in Show
 - 2008 CAUCE Marketing Awards Best Collateral Materials
 - 2008 CCAE Prix D'Excellence Awards Gold, Best Brochure (Collaborative effort with the Office of Student Recruitment and Marketing and Communications
 - 2008 CCAE Prix D'Excellence Awards Bronze, Best Audio, Video or Multi-Media Presentation
 - 2008 Marketer of the Year Finalist, Atlantic Progress Magazine
 - 2008 IABC Pinnacle Awards Award of Excellence in Advertising
 - 2001 CASE District I Publication Awards Gold Medal, Print Advertising
- Co-hosted Canadian Association of Distance Education annual conference, 2003
- Co-hosted Canadian Association of University Continuing Education conference, 2005
- Co-hosted Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE), 2001

APPENDIX B

We recognize and thank those people who provided input into this plan

1478 students Mark Abrahams Alex Ambrozic Darcy Andrews Peter Ayres Greg Babstock Paula Baggs Cathy Baker Faith Balisch Ken Barter David Behm Victoria Belbin Jill Bennett Carol Best Perry Bingle Glenn Blackwood Tony Blanchard Mary Bluechardt Shelly Birnie-Lefcovitch Neil Bishop Cameron Bodnar Gary Bolger Wade Bowers Ron Bowles

Ron Bowles Jim Bradley Corinne Breen Marlene Brooks Bertha Brophy Tom Brophy Jean Brown Lorraine Busby Pamela Bussey Joan Butler Gillian Byrne Sean Cadigan Christine Campbell Angela Carter Jamie Chang Elizabeth Chaulk Marlene Chidlev Aubrey Chubbs Michael Clair Kevin Clarke Su Cleyle Rachelle Cochrane Colleen Collett Conrad Collier

Adrian Collins Alice Collins Glen Collins Glenn Collins **Rick Collins** Todd Constantine Jane Costello Shari Costello Daphne Crane Elaine Crocker Kathy Croucher Pat Curran Mike Delurey David Dibbon Donna Downey Maureen Dunne Ian Edwards Joerg Evermann Nancy Fagan Joyce Fewer Russ Flynn Dale Fraser Rod French Marc Glassman

Glenn Gleeson Francis Glynn Noreen Golfman Tom Gordon Gary Gorman Rex Goudie Rick Goulding Deirdre Green Courtenay Griffin Allyson Hajek Lloyd Harnum Wesley Harris Thomas Hawkins Martha Hickman Hild Jason Higgins Clyde Hillier Ed Hipditch Lisa Hollett Joan House Derek Howse Bill lams Judy Innes Mel Janes Albert Johnson

Benjy Kean Sam Kean Stephen Keats Deborah Kelly Joe Kelly Rob Kelly Tom Kendall Shawn Kenny Darin King John King Jennifer Kirby Phil Kirby Ross Klein Margo Kondratieva Ryan Lane Sonya Lane Jason Langdon Norman Lee Sandy LeFort Ariana LeMessurier Roseanne Leonard John Lester **Robert Lewis** Clyde Lush

Vanessa MacAurthur John MacPherson Anne Maher Paula Mahon Rob Mallay Rita Malone Calvin Manning Dana March Antonio Martin Debbie McGee Paul McGinn Gerona McGrath Levin Mejia Cluney Mercer Katrina Mercer Roxanne Millan Peggy Miller Leo Moriarity Paul Morris Graham Mowbray Harold Mullowney Debbie Munden Elizabeth Murphy Faye Murrin

Janice Neary Doreen Neville Elizabeth Noseworthy Ashley Noonan Sean O'Neill Kevin O'Leary Leonard Pecore Jan Peddle Nathalie Pender Ken Penney Wayne Penney Dennis Peters Pam Phillips Jo-Anne Philpott Holly Pike Paul Pike Trevor Pike Carm Porter Gerry Porter John Power Michelle Power Wade Powers Arlene Power Miranda Pryor

Kim Puddester Venky Ramachandran Cyril Reid Catherine Rice Samantha Richards Nancy Robbins Gord Rogers Calvin Rose Wavne Rose Jim Rourke Joan Rowsell Lisa Russell Doris Sacrery Tim Seifert **Bill Schipper** Mark Shallow Pat Shanahan Patrick Shea Debbie Sheppard **Dion Sheppard** Steve Shorlin Lora Simmons Nancy Simmons **Evan Simpson**

Gillian Skinner Karen Skinner Christine Snow Lisa St. Croix Sean St. George Bill Sterling Cathy Stratton Barbara Strong Carol Taylor **Connie Taylor** Pam Toope Reeta Tremblay Sharon Tucker Rhonda Tulk-Lane Jim Tuff David Tulett Dennis Vaughan Ashley Wakeham Lilly Walker Dennis Waterman Karen Webber Mary Wells Clyde Wells Rob Wells

Doreen Westera Maudie Whelan Gladys White John Wickham Cathy Wicks Sean Wiltshire Brenda Winslow Kate Wolforth Lorna Yard Chris Youe Eric Young



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