

MEMORANDUM

To: Faculty of Education; President's Leadership Team; Senate; Campus Council; USC and SOGS Executive; Affiliated University College Presidents

From: Florentine Strzelczyk, Provost & Vice-President (Academic)

Date: October 9, 2024

Re: **Reappointment of Donna Kotsopoulos, Dean of Faculty of Education**

I am very pleased to announce that **Donna Kotsopoulos** has been reappointed Dean, Faculty of Education for a second term, beginning January 1, 2026, through June 30, 2031.

Drawing on feedback from the Faculty of Education, along with input from community and campus partners, the recommendation for Donna's reappointment was unanimously advanced by the Faculty of Education Decanal Review Committee and supported by President Alan Shepard.

Since joining Western as Dean in 2021, Donna has overseen tremendous success across the Faculty of Education. Her commitment to excellence, facilitated by a data-driven approach, has resulted in a rise in several impressive national and international rankings that reflect Western's reputation as an institution focused on driving positive impact. Western's Faculty of Education is now among the top-ranked education faculties in Canada and internationally.

While guiding the Faculty safely through the challenges of the pandemic, Donna also oversaw the development of Canada's first Faculty of Education strategic plan that links directly to the UN Sustainability Development Goals. Recently, the Faculty of Education was the first in Canada to launch a new open-access resource platform, OpenEDU, where resources developed by faculty can be shared throughout the world at no cost. By engaging the Faculty around a shared vision and focusing on building trust, Donna's leadership has curated a culture shift, as shown through significantly improved employee survey results.

Donna has outlined a number of ambitious goals for her second term. She will remain focused on growing the faculty complement, reconciliation, advancing the Faculty's world-class impact in research and teaching, and ensuring future financial sustainability through strategic resource management. Responding to the evolving demographic of students and the changing landscape of the education system, Donna has also signalled the need for innovative thinking about new programs while re-envisioning those traditionally offered in the Faculty of Education. With construction underway for the new home of the renowned Mary J. Wright Child and Youth Development Clinic, Donna will work to advance the impact of this community-facing clinic that supports child and youth wellness.

Previously a Professor of Management and Organizational Studies at Huron University College before assuming the role of Dean, Donna holds a cross-appointment with DAN Management in the Faculty of Social Science. Donna is also the president of Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada (SWAAC) and serves on the boards of both the Fields Institute for Research in Mathematical Sciences and the Executive of the Ontario Association of Deans of Education. She continues to be an active scholar, holding external funding and supervising student research assistants/associates.

Donna is a tremendously proud Western alum having earned her MEd and PhD in Educational Studies from Western.

I want to thank the members of the Decanal Review Committee: **Rizwan Ahmed** (doctoral student), **Heather Beecroft** (Director of Administration, formerly Administrative Coordinator), **Ken Coley** (Dean, Faculty of Engineering), **Grace Flaherty** (former teaching candidate, 2024 graduate), **Kathy Hibbert** (Distinguished University Professor and former Associate Dean of Teacher Education), **Matthew Lebo** (Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science), **Penny Pexman** (Vice-President Research), **Goli Rezai-Rashti** (Professor, Faculty of Education), **Jacqueline Specht** (Professor, Faculty of Education), and **Geoff Wild** (Professor, Faculty of Science).

Please join me in expressing my gratitude to Donna and wishing her continued success in serving Western's academic and research mission together with her team in the Faculty of Education.