

MEMORANDUM

To: Faculty of Information & Media Studies, President's Leadership Team, Senate, Campus Council, SOGS and USC Executive, Affiliate University College Presidents

Cc: Decanal Selection Committee

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

Date: Monday, May 12, 2025

Re: Leadership Appointment: Acting Dean, Faculty of Information & Media Studies

I am pleased to share that Susan M. Knabe, Associate Professor and Associate Dean, Undergraduate, in the Faculty of Information & Media Studies (FIMS), has accepted my invitation to serve as Acting Dean of the faculty for a one-year term effective July 1, 2025. Susan will take on leadership of the faculty as Dean Lisa Henderson completes her term.

As Associate Dean, Susan has led key initiatives, including the development and launch of the Creative Arts and Production program, in conjunction with the Associate Deans in the Faculty of Arts & Humanities and the Don Wright Faculty of Music, and contributions to new academic policies as part of the Central Academic Policy Working Group. Susan also holds a joint appointment with the Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies (GSWS) in Arts & Humanities.

Under Susan's leadership, FIMS has achieved important milestones, including the renaming of its undergraduate program to Media and Communication Studies (MACS), a change already demonstrating strong benefits through enrolment growth. She was instrumental in piloting a Supported Learning Group model for first-year students and contributed significantly to the University's new academic policy on undergraduate student absences through her work with the Central Academic Policy Working Group.

Susan is widely recognized for her institutional knowledge and cross-campus collaboration, having worked closely with numerous governance committees and working groups. She has served on several Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) review panels and is a founding member of Western's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Advisory Council. Her leadership in curriculum development spans multiple undergraduate modules and certificates, and she continues to be closely involved in the CAP program's operations.

An accomplished scholar in feminist media and cultural studies, Susan continues to publish and supervise graduate students across FIMS and GSWS. She is a dedicated educator, teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses in feminist theory and methodology.

I would also like to thank Dean Lisa Henderson for her leadership over the past six and a half years. During her tenure as Dean, Lisa guided FIMS through significant academic growth, strengthened external partnerships, and supported new faculty and student success. She helped launch key initiatives such as the Starling Centre for Just Technologies and Just Societies (the Faculty's first research centre), the on-line Master of Library & Information Science program and the collaborative Creative Arts and Production (CAP) program. Her steady leadership, thoughtful mentorship, and deep intellectual commitment to the Faculty and its mission have left a lasting impact.

Please join me in thanking Lisa and in supporting Susan as she steps into this important leadership role.