




December 15, 2023

MEMORANDUM

To: All in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies – faculty, staff, students and postdoctoral fellows (distributed via the Dean's office)

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

Re: Leadership transition in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

I would like to announce that Dr. Michael Anthony Hunt will be appointed Dean *pro tem* of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies effective January 1, 2024.

Dr. Hunt is currently Senior Associate Dean, Policy and Programs in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS), a role he has held since 2021. He has led a number of new initiatives that have enhanced collaboration and engagement between G+PS and graduate programs, as well as professional development for graduate program administrators across campus. Prior to this, he held the role of Associate Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral Education in the Faculty of Medicine, which saw the implementation of a graduate student wellbeing strategy, a Faculty-wide peer mentorship program, a dedicated graduate program review process, and programs for supervisors and trainees to foster and maintain healthy and respectful working environments.

Dr. Hunt's academic appointment is as Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy. His research is at the intersection of human movement, pain, and health, and is currently funded by a number of funding bodies, including CIHR and NSERC. He has had the great fortune of working with many outstanding graduate students and postdoctoral fellows over the past 15 years.

Dr. Susan Porter has served in the role of Dean and Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for the last 12.5 years, and her appointment concludes on December 31, 2023. On behalf of the university, I would like to thank Dr. Porter for her steady leadership and for the key role she has played in the many successes and achievements of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies over the last decade.

Throughout her 20-year career in graduate education leadership, she has promoted a student-centric orientation to graduate education, with a special focus on holistic development and a rethinking of student research to better prepare them for the urgent needs of the 21st century. She established the Public Scholars Initiative in 2015 to support doctoral students in broadening their dissertation work, and ensured that UBC policies and procedures would support the "next generation dissertation" using transdisciplinary approaches. She was instrumental in increasing the minimum funding amount for PhD students, and has worked to provide additional funding opportunities to support graduate students. As a result of this work, she is known nationally and internationally for her contributions to graduate education.

I am grateful to Dr. Porter for her leadership and many contributions to the university, and I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

GA:jh