



HARRIS CENTRE FELLOWSHIP

A program for emerging policy leaders
in Newfoundland and Labrador

October 2024 - May 2025

Program Overview and Application Guide

Harris Centre Student Fellowship Program

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Overview

The Harris Centre Fellowship (pilot program) is a professional development program for graduate students and senior undergraduate students with a passion for solving problems and driving change. By learning together through roundtable discussions, interactive workshops, mentorships, and real-world policy research, fellows will develop the skills and relationships they need to take a leading role in creating positive social, political, and economic change in our province and beyond.

About the Harris Centre

As Newfoundland & Labrador's public policy & regional development hub at Memorial University, the Harris Centre serves as a bridge between the university and the community. The Centre helps connect people, communities and ideas of Newfoundland and Labrador with the resources of the University for positive impact. The Fellowship is the latest addition to a range of programs, grants, and activities that bring together university and community partners to solve the complex challenges facing our province. Recent projects include developing housing profiles for local governments to apply for federal housing funds, running a public forum on civilian oversight of government megaprojects, and supporting applied research projects ranging from folklore preservation to rural water sanitation.

You can read more about the Harris Centre and learn about other resources and opportunities available to students at mun.ca/harriscentre

How to Apply

ELIGIBILITY

The Fellowship is open to undergraduate students in their senior year (at least 60 credit hours completed) and graduate students at Memorial University. Students from any

academic discipline are welcome to apply, though priority consideration will be given to students enrolled in fields related to public policy.

Please note: a limited number of students will be accepted into this pilot initiative.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested students must complete a short online application form where they will submit the following documents:

- Updated CV
- Unofficial copy of recent academic transcripts
- Cover letter outlining why you would like to participate in the program, your areas of interest, and any relevant experiences
- A Letter of Recommendation from your faculty supervisor (graduate students), or any faculty member from your department (undergraduate students)

Application materials will be reviewed and adjudicated by a committee of Harris Centre staff and Memorial faculty. Successful applicants will be notified by email.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- **Academic Standing**
Applicants must be in good academic standing. While applications will not be evaluated solely on their GPA, students must demonstrate a solid commitment to their academic endeavors.
- **Background/Interests**
The Harris Centre Fellowship program is designed to foster the development of students who are interested in contributing to the social and economic wellbeing of their communities. As such, applicants who have demonstrated their interest and commitment to community-engaged work (either through academic, professional or personal/volunteer experience) will be prioritized.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**
Selection will also aim to achieve a diverse overall cohort of students with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and academic and professional interests.

Program Description

STRUCTURE

The Harris Centre Fellowship Program brings together exceptional undergraduate and graduate students from diverse disciplines and backgrounds into a cohort that will work and learn together over the course of the academic year.

Through a mix of peer discussions, mentorship, workshops, and hands-on projects, fellows will gain a rich understanding of the complexities of the local policy and development landscape of Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as how local issues relate to national and international contexts. Through the program, Fellows will meet and learn from experienced policy professionals, government officials, community leaders and researchers working to solve complex socio-economic and political challenges and drive positive change.

There are no costs associated with this program. There are no application fees, and all workshop attendance is covered by the Fellowship. In addition, students will receive a small honourarium upon completion of the program requirements.

REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Program Requirements

In order to complete the Harris Centre Fellowship Program students are required to complete the following:

1. Participate in all **5 Roundtable Discussions**
2. Complete a minimum of **3 Professional Development Workshops**
3. Develop and present a short **Policy Brief**

More information on each of these program components is available below.

Additional Opportunities

Program participants will be active members of the Harris Centre's professional community, and are encouraged to take advantage of additional opportunities beyond the program requirements. As Fellows, students will have access to a range of optional events and resources that take place over the course of the program, such as professional development workshops, volunteer and paid work opportunities with community partners, networking events, and local events and conferences.

Roundtable Discussions Sessions

Peer relationships, collaborative learning, and developing student interests are important parts of the Fellowship Program. Roundtable discussions bring together students and Harris Centre program staff regularly throughout the program to share and reflect on experiences, prioritize themes and projects for upcoming guest speakers and activities, and provide general program updates.

A total of five Roundtable Discussions will be held over the course of the program. Dates and times will be shared in advance, and attendance at all five discussions is required for program completion.

Professional Development Workshops

Fellows are required to complete 3 professional development workshops, and may choose to take additional workshops that align with their interests and goals. Fellows will be given free, priority registration to professional development workshops delivered by The Harris Centre. Workshops typically run 2.5 hours, and cover a wide range of topics related to local policy and applied research, such as:

- **Public Engagement and Community Collaboration**
An overview of the theoretical framework and practical techniques for public engagement and community-engaged research and policy.
- **Knowledge Mobilization**
Moving beyond basic dissemination, knowledge mobilization looks at how we can put knowledge directly into the hands of those who can use it. This workshop introduces common methods and how to shape your approach to sharing information.
- **Data to Decisions**
Good policies need good data. This course developed by the Regional Analytics Lab within the Harris Centre provides an easy-to-follow introduction to high-quality local data sources, data collection practices, assessing data quality, accessing census data, and much more.
- **Newfoundland and Labrador 101**
A social, economic and historical guide to our province and the politics, policy and turning points that contribute to the current context.

Policy Brief Project

Fellows will develop a briefing note on a policy-related topic that explores the issue, summarizes available information and data, and provides analysis and recommendations for future policy action and research. Students will develop the brief in collaboration with Harris Centre staff, research associates, and community partners where applicable. Topics will be generated from community partner priorities, and will be matched with student research interests wherever possible. These briefing notes may build on or contribute to work undertaken for other courses.

Fellows will present their findings and recommendations to a panel of experts, policymakers, and community members at The Harris Centre's *Ideas & Insights Exchange* event at the end of the academic year.

Outcomes

Over the course of the fellowship, students will gain:

- A community of peers
- Leadership and professional skills
- Policy analysis experience
- A nuanced understanding of the policy context in NL
- Connections to policy-makers and community leaders
- Experience in creating policy briefs and related material

Harris Centre Fellows will also join a growing network of alumni dedicated to advancing the public interest through effective public engagement, policy development, analysis, and implementation at the local, national, and global levels.

Contact

If you have any questions about the program or application process, please contact: Cathy Newhook, manager of public policy & communications, cathyn@mun.ca