

PRME Principles for Responsible Management Education

an initiative of the United Nations Global Compact

Sobey School of Business

Report on our Commitment to Responsible Management Education, 2018-2020



This work has been made possible through the leadership and dedication of the PRME Committee. This Committee holds us accountable for good governance in responding to our PRME commitment.

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Thank you all for your service to our community.

Special thanks to:

Dr. Michael Zhang, who organized the Research Expo that complemented our Finance for the Future event

and

Dr. Catherine Loughlin, who, as Associate Dean Research and Knowledge Mobilization, worked hard to embed PRME in the strategic research plan

THE COMMITMENT SHOWN BY THE SOBEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE WORLD IS REFLECTED IN THIS, OUR THIRD SIP REPORT.

I use the term “community” deliberately. Not only are the values of responsible business education shared across faculty, we have staff who are enthusiastic about supporting and enhancing our action on the Sustainable Development Goals, and our students and alumni as well demonstrate a strong desire to improve the world through responsible and sustainable business practice.

This year, we launched our new strategic plan, the result of a consultative year-long process. We developed a “strategy weave”, a visualization incorporating the overarching pillars of activity with transversal themes. The internalizing of PRME values into our ethos is evident: two of these themes are Social and Corporate Responsibility and Global and Intercultural Perspectives. The principles of responsible management education and our commitment to the SDGs are embedded throughout the plan, which is called *Elevating Impact*.

In our efforts to elevate our impact, we have applied for EQUIS accreditation through EFMD. It was our membership in EFMD that led to our undertaking the Business Schools Impact System review in 2016. In focussing on impact, we have found the SDGs offer a unique framework to describe some of the parameters of that impact. Our alignment with the values of PRME is a cornerstone on our path to securing EQUIS, and this highly-esteemed accreditation will further demonstrate our efforts to promote responsible management education.

Evidence of the fundamental nature of our commitment abounds. Our MBA program is once again ranked in the top 10 of the Corporate Knights Better World listing. We have published our first Research Bulletin, and I am extremely proud of the many Sobey School scholars publishing relevant SDG-related research in top-ranked journals. You will see, in these pages, a sampling of our newer researchers and some of their excellent work. Our International Centre for Cooperative Management was launched in 2019, folding in some of the education programs and research that was ongoing at the school in the field of co-operative businesses, credit unions and mutuals. Even as this report is submitted, Sobey management science professor Tony Charles is launching a documentary film on sustainable coastal communities.

In 2020, we became PRME champions, and this is a mantle we are proud to wear. Last November we held our first PRME event focused on Responsible Investing and the experience has shown us there is an appetite for this kind of event. We look forward to creating more.

You can find our new Strategic Plan posted online, at sobey.smu.ca.

Warm regards,

Harjeet S. Bhabra, PhD

Dean, Sobey School of Business

Committed to Responsibility and Impact



Sobey School of Business Dean
Dr. Harjeet S. Bhabra

Reflections on our Progress

IN OUR 2018 SIP REPORT, WE REPORTED THAT OUR PRME STRATEGY NEEDED RENEWAL.

We shared that our School was entering into a period of transition and that we needed to re-evaluate our values and commitment to PRME and the Sustainable Development Goals. We acknowledged that our steering committee needed an injection of “fresh and diverse energy” and that we needed to better engage our junior faculty. We went so far as to describe anticipating a quiet period while our Dean search was completed and a new Dean oriented to the Sobey School. Although we believe it to be an important practice, we did not articulate specific objectives for the next two-year cycle. In the interest of transparency and authenticity with the PRME community, we feel it is important to acknowledge this as a shortcoming of the previous report, and one that we took steps to ensure we rectified in this report.

In spite of the lack of a formal plan and leadership change, our PRME commitment did not wane during this time. As will be evident from the following pages, 2018-2020 was a very busy period for our PRME steering committee, particularly from a transition and planning perspective. We are pleased with our progress on a number of fronts.

In September of 2018, Dean Harjeet Bhabra was appointed. The PRME steering committee worked to familiarize the Dean with the PRME goals and our desire to meaningfully embed the values of the SDGs in our School’s new strategic plan. There was strong



Chair, Sobey School of Business PRME Steering Committee, Dr. Margaret McKee

representation from our 2016-2018 PRME steering committee on the School’s newly-formed strategic planning committee. We are very happy to report that we achieved our goal. The Sobey School of Business Strategic Plan 2020-2025 fully reflects our deep commitment to the UN’s Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The following are additional activities we wish to highlight:

- PRME has influenced hiring decisions, with several new faculty members joining us with research, teaching and service interests strongly aligned with SDGs.
- With the participation of our new Dean, we held orientation sessions for new and junior faculty to familiarize them with PRME and our School’s commitment to advancing the SDGs.
- We once again secured funding from our Dean and United Nations Association of Canada to hire a full-time PRME coordinator, who worked with us for five months on PRME initiatives.
- We made two formal presentations on PRME and the SDGs to our School Faculty Council.
- We held our first PRME day in November of 2019 with a focus on responsible investing. This event was a huge success with excellent participation from our students, faculty, researchers, investment professionals and the public at large. More details on the many events incorporated into our PRME day are featured later in the report.
- We recruited several new faculty and staff to our PRME Steering Committee and now have representation from every area of the School (all departments, programs and units). We are particularly pleased to have several junior faculty as very active members.
- With the encouragement of our new Dean, we applied for and became PRME Champions in January 2020.
- We undertook a fulsome strategic planning effort with our PRME steering committee to map our goals for the next two-year cycle.

The Looking Forward section of this report outlines our intentional plan for advancing the PRME principles within our School and the broader community during 2020 - 2022. We are very excited about the opportunity to elevate our engagement with the PRME community as a PRME Champion, and look forward to reporting on our progress in our next report.

Margaret McKee, PhD

Chair, Sobey School of Business PRME Steering Committee

PRME Principles

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Purpose

We will **develop the capabilities of students** to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.



Sobey Graduate Net Impact members gather for a hike. In summer 2020, we received notice that the group had achieved Gold status. Back, left to right, Morris McLeod, Jyoty Dev Nath, Avinash Chandrapati, Anant Tomar, Sanjay Raj, Kyle Gulliver, and two friends who joined the hike. Front row: Haley Maillet, Breagh Matheson, Sascha Hamilton-Miller, Jana Buchanan, Ashley Lawrence, Nicole MacDonald

Sobey's Graduate Net Impact



In Spring 2017, the Sobey School of Business MBA Society decided to start their own Graduate chapter of **Net Impact**, a nonprofit membership organization for students interested in using business skills in support of social and environmental causes. Net Impact and PRME share many of the same values and goals—with Net Impact's core goal being to inspire and equip emerging leaders to build a more just and sustainable world, very much aligned with the PRME principles.

When the society decided to create the Net Impact chapter at the Sobey School of Business, they made the important decision to embed the responsibility directly

into their MBA Society as an executive role responsible for the activities of the chapter, so that the legacy would live on long past the founders.

Ajaypal Singh is the current President of the Sobey School's Net Impact chapter. He decided to apply for the role because he was interested in the work that Net Impact was doing and wanted to take initiative. Ajaypal was part of his school's Enactus club while he completed his undergraduate degree in his home country of India, and felt that many of the ideas and goals of that organization were echoed in Net Impact.

The first event the team organized was a hike to help the master's students connect to nature, underscoring

the principle of “leave no trace”. Ajaypal fondly remembers the great conversations they had during that event, talking about climate change and other issues that the students felt were important to themselves, both as students and leaders. In Fall 2019, the club also hosted a speaker series on transportation in Halifax and heard from four guest speakers on biking and alternative forms of transportation in the region. The students took part in the global climate strike as a group in September 2019.

Other successful past Net Impact events at the Sobey School included screening an environmental documentary and planning a coat drive to raise money for United Way. Although the MBA Society designated one specific executive role to manage Net Impact activities, the role naturally became embedded in the other executives’ roles as well as they worked together to plan impactful events.

Net Impact hosts an annual conference for students to attend, and Breagh Matheson, past VP of Ethics and Communications for the MBA Society, shared her experience getting to attend the conference. The year she went the conference was in Atlanta. Breagh was inspired by the innovative and creative ways the leaders who spoke were using their business skills to support social and environmental causes.

Breagh feels that being involved with the Net Impact chapter complemented her MBA program. In particular, she noted it connected to the two-semester Responsible Leadership course that all MBA students take, and highlighted the fact that being a sustainable and ethical leader is a core competency of completing the Sobey School MBA program.

Often students, especially MBA students, can get caught up in the academic part of their degree; Breagh says it is a nice reminder to see that there is more to learn outside of your courses. Net Impact helped to show her that learning to be a responsible and ethical leader is greater than just your education. Ajaypal agrees that being

involved in Net Impact has reminded him, “We need to be aware of the situation going on in the world so we can be responsible leaders and contribute to society.”

In terms of seeing a future for the Net Impact Chapter at the Sobey School, Breagh hopes that Sobey students will take advantage of some of the fantastic case competitions hosted through the global Net Impact program. Breagh finished her MBA and is now working as the Case Competition Coordinator with the Sobey School of Business and would love to use her new role to help facilitate any case competition opportunities for students.

Ajaypal is excited and ready to continue to grow the society and make an impact as the President for 2020 and is planning a speaker series on climate for the Fall. Whatever way the society comes together, they know that planning and hosting these impactful events will continue to open and broaden their ideas of responsible leadership and help them to be better leaders for the future. ■



Sobey Graduate Net Impact members in Atlanta. Maria Palacios, Parker Bell, Breagh Matheson, Kyle Gulliver, and Warren Mosley

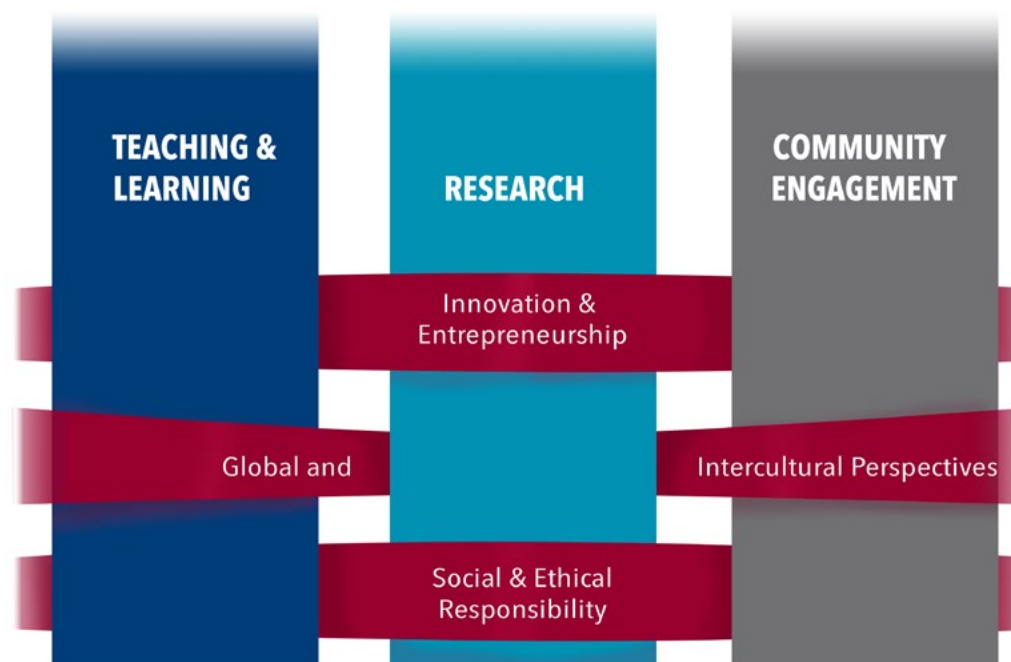
Elevating Impact

PRME EMBEDDED IN STRATEGY



In early 2019, Dean Harjeet Bhabra launched a strategic planning process that was intended to set the course for the next 5 years and deliver on our mission: the Sobey School of Business, through active learning and the creation and mobilization of scholarship, prepares citizens of the world to lead sustainable, entrepreneurial businesses and communities. The result of that process is [*Elevating Impact 2020-2025*](#).

Early on in this process, the Steering Committee developed a strategy weave. It reveals the guiding principles that informed our work and that are foundational to the plan. Subsequently, the image demonstrates our unique value proposition: the transversal themes of Innovation & Entrepreneurship; Global & Intercultural Perspectives and Social & Ethical Responsibility weave through the traditional pillars of business education: teaching & learning, research and community engagement.



The framework of a weave is intentional: it is strong and flexible, multi-dimensional and integrated. It demonstrates the centrality of the PRME goals to our strategy.

Throughout the consultation process that informed Elevating Impact, our stakeholders were firm in their expectation that we deliver on the commitment we have made: that we produce socially-minded and ethical graduates and work to advance the Sustainable Development Goals through all of our activities. Subsequently, the PRME principles are embedded throughout Elevating Impact. Specifically, our Advance goal emphasises transformative learning experiences that incorporate social responsibility and intercultural perspectives. One of the key objectives related to this is the alignment of pedagogical practices with our highly-desired learning outcomes including critical thinking and responsible behavior. All 3 of our goals reference service to society and aligning our activities with societal needs. Our Connect goal requires us to engage with the broader community to enrich learning and discovery to address issues of local and global significance.

Elevating Impact is the strategic directive to our entire organization—our students, faculty, staff, alumni and community partners. This directive includes focusing our organization's attention on the need to make an impact; inspiring our people by demonstrating that their efforts are meaningful; encouraging individual and group participation and contribution; and directing resources

to the fulfilment of our key strategic objectives: all of which speak to having a positive impact on society. We look forward to updating the PRME community on our achievements and our impact. ■

Values

We will incorporate into our **academic activities and curricula** the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

PRME
Principle

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PRME in the Classroom

At the Sobey School of Business, we have had faculty who have been teaching and doing research on PRME-aligned topics long before we became a PRME signatory, and so their impact as well as the influence of joining the PRME initiative have strongly influenced course offerings. Although there are many courses taught at the Sobey School that align in one way or another with PRME, today we want to highlight just a few of our courses that home in on the importance of sustainability and responsible management education.



Dr. Tony Charles (right) with his students.

Environmental and Sustainability Management



Dr. Tony Charles teaches the elective course *Environmental and Sustainability Management*. This course is typically offered at the graduate level, but the Fall 2019 class was opened to senior undergraduate students interested in the topic. The course began about 5 years ago, and in the past two years, Tony has integrated service learning into the course to enhance the student's understanding on the topics and help them to learn from a real-world environment.

While the course was originally listed as a special topics course (making it harder to promote to students), because of the success, Sobey School is seeking to offer it as a regular course in future years.

For the Fall 2019 semester, the class comprised five undergraduate and five graduate students, with the class being divided to complete its service learning projects as two groups. As it was offered as an elective, a diversity of students took the class. Two of the graduate students were doing their Master of Business Administration, two were enrolled in the Master of Applied Economics program and one student was doing their Master of Science. The undergraduate students came from all three faculties at Saint Mary's University—business, arts and science. This mix of experiences and approaches from different disciplines enhanced the learning experience for the students.

Tony remarked that students were able to learn from each other, and the outside world. The overall objective of the course was to look at how organizations are dealing with the challenges of improving their sustainability practices. What does their business model look like when reflecting on the triple bottom line of people, planet, and profit? Students explored how organizations can improve their sustainability practices. A key question was “What’s good enough?” Students explored real-world challenges and were challenged to ask questions like “What’s possible here?” and “Who’s the leader here?”

For one assignment, the students had to compare Air Canada and Westjet’s sustainability practices, and Tony was surprised that the students were swayed in different

ways by the evidence they found of the organizations' social and environmental sustainability practices. He discussed in his class that comparing sustainability activities is tricky because the actions organizations take may not be easily comparable.

Feedback from organizations participating in this course has been positive. Tony originally got connected to them through the David Sobey Centre, which has many retailer contacts. Tony remarks that it has been very rewarding to see the enthusiasm of the students as well as the organizations throughout the process.

Throughout the teaching component of the course, Tony talks about ethics and social responsibility, expanding on the practical aspects of how businesses engage with Corporate Social Responsibility, and how they often engage through connecting with the local community. The Sustainable Development Goals were a recurring theme in the course, serving as a great framework for looking at these topics.

The undergraduate students in the course worked with a non-profit called Chebucto Connections for their service-learning component. Chebucto Connections first visited the students in the classroom and told them about issues they were having in their organization that related to sustainability. The students then spent the semester working on a proposal for how the organization could look at solving those issues, starting by creating a culture of sustainability in their organization.

One of the undergraduate students, Mitch Archibald, a 4th year Commerce student who plans a career in public administration, learned about the course through a tweet by the university. He was excited to have the opportunity to take something different and broaden his expertise on sustainability management. Although Mitch's focus isn't on sustainability, he pointed out that "we need people who understand sustainability in order to complement the environmental champions" and was excited to have the opportunity to take this foundational course in the topic.

Mitch found the course structure very organic, which could be frustrating at times, but was also a reflection

on how dealing with real-world issues may feel. After taking the course, Mitch now feels more conscious of sustainability issues, and has taken away practical tools.

Meghan Brodmann, a current MBA student, also took Tony's course, but as a master's student, and found it very insightful. She enjoyed how hands-on the course was and liked the ambiguity of trying to solve a problem for a business because it felt a lot like work she may have to do in a career after graduating. The master's students worked with Payzant Home Hardware Building Centre to help them identify sustainability opportunities. The students prepared a sustainability report with recommendations like going paperless, implementing a sustainable management plan and getting more involved in the community. Meghan felt that doing

this type of service learning for a local business helped the business to open their eyes to sustainability opportunities.

Meghan enjoyed working with a local business because it showed her what working with a real business could be like and working with real data and people added to the complexity and authenticity of the service-learning

experience. Her team had to look at the feasibility of their ideas and constraints, which can often be financial. The course gave her the tools she needed to do the work in the service-learning component. Meghan has experienced service-learning in several courses in her MBA program and feels it is a very important part of the program. The benefits extend to the students, the organizations, the school and the wider community. She said, "It really breaks down the barriers between academia and the business world."

Jim MacGregor, the Chief Operations Officer with Payzant Home Hardware Building Centre was one of the staff members who worked with the master's students through the service-learning experience. He enjoyed the experience and commented, "The students were adaptable in their focus as they listened to what our business challenges were."

With this initial positive experience, his team is open to doing service-learning again with another group of students. ■

"The students were adaptable in their focus as they listened to what our business challenges were."

Jim MacGregor, COO, Payzant Home Hardware Building Centre

Fostering Responsible Leadership

Dr. Cathy Driscoll teaches the MBA *Responsible Leadership* course, which was recently created by merging the MBA's leadership course and the *Ethical Issues in Business* course due to their strong alignment of the two issues. *Responsible Leadership* is a two-part course, offered over two semesters, which introduces students to ethical dilemmas they may face as business leaders.

Cathy has been a strong proponent of service learning for over 25 years and tries to always incorporate it into her courses. When asked why she wanted to include service learning in the university experience, she says "It just makes sense". This year, the Responsible Leadership classes worked with Hospice Halifax, United Way, Welcome Housing and Support, the Ecology Action Centre and Project Next Mile.

At the master's level, student service-learning experiences are typically centred on a specific project. The students work with the community partner to determine their needs and how they can design something, such as a business plan or marketing strategy, to help the community partner meet that need.

Helping Homelessness

Welcome Housing and Support representative Beth McIsaac, remarked on the organization's experience with the students that the service learning was incredibly important because it exposed the students to issues they may have not been aware of, and forced them to see things from a different perspective. She is an advocate for these kinds of partnerships, sharing her thought that "people learn so well when they're in the field," and commenting that "it's a win-win" for both the organization and the students.

For this service-learning experience, the students worked on two main projects. One was *Care Coffee*, which was set up to help raise funds to support outreach efforts. The students created a business plan for selling the coffee, and helped sell it. The second project was looking through a database of fundraising opportunities and helping Welcome Housing to pinpoint the grants and opportunities they were eligible for.

Vivek Ramasamy (MBA'19) took Cathy's course and worked with Welcome Housing and Support on the second project. He and his classmates identified 200-

300 potential grants for which the organization may be eligible.

Vivek shared that this was his first experience working with a charity in Canada, and it was eye-opening to learn how charities work and operate on a tight budget. The experience was made more personal when he met some of the organization's clients on a site visit. Working within the constraints that a charity in Canada faces, Vivek learned that is it often not a decision of right versus wrong that leaders are faced with, "it's what is the right decision and what is the more right decision". Vivek now has an even stronger desire to work in a field that is helping others in a meaningful way.

Vivek was drawn to the Sobey MBA program because of the school's emphasis on responsible leadership and affiliation with PRME. When deciding where to

It was eye-opening to learn how charities work and operate on a tight budget.

study, it was important to Vivek to find a university that matched his values and desires to graduate from the program as a responsible leader. "Not many MBA programs offered a course on responsible leadership," Vivek said.

The students visited Welcome Housing and Support several times and were able to see the outreach and housing support activities in action. Seeing the clients who were using Welcome Housing and Support was moving for the students and motivated them to want to raise as much money as they could. It raised students' consciousness around homelessness and made them passionate about an issue they may not have known very much about before this service-learning experience. Vivek and another classmate stayed on after the service-learning experience to continue volunteering with Welcome Housing and Support. ■



Raising Awareness about Poverty



After leaving Welcome Housing and Support, Beth McIsaac started working with United Way, which is also a service-learning partner for the Responsible Leadership course, and so had the opportunity to work with service-learning students again. The student's task with United Way was to do research on single room occupancies and how to connect more partners on this issue to work together to find ways to increase the stock of this type of housing. Again, some students were so engaged with the project that they stayed on after their service-learning experience to continue volunteering. As students became more aware of the issues faced by those experiencing poverty through their research, Beth said they really "got connected to it". The Responsible Leadership course again partnered with United Way the next year, and this time focused on fundraising efforts. Beth sees the students being engaged with service-learning as a very foundational "consciousness-raising" activity, which ties in well with the PRME initiative to raise awareness of the sustainable development goals, "No Poverty" being one of them. ■

Helping the Environment



Three students in Cathy's responsible leadership course were placed with the Ecology Action Centre, and all given different projects to help the centre. Aishwarya Jayaprakash was one of those students, with her project being focused on fisheries. Her classmates also working with the Ecology Action Centre were working on projects related to Sustainable Development and Coastal issues.

Aishwarya's project involved creating a business case for a proposal the Ecology Action Centre was preparing to send to the government on the topic of open net fish farming. At the time, there was a change being made to sustainable fishing practices in the province, and the Ecology Action Centre enlisted Aishwarya's help to build a case to show that open net fish farming is harmful, in that diseases can spread easily and be transported to humans in the consumption of the fish.

Although she has long had an interest in environmental issues, Aishwarya shared that fisheries were not

something she had typically spent a lot of her time thinking about, especially in terms of where her fish comes from. Working on this project really opened her eyes as a consumer and made her think and learn more about the impact she can have. Like Vivek, Aishwarya was so touched by her service-learning experience, that she has offered her time to continue volunteering with the Ecology Action Centre. She sees a lot of value in the experience she was given, especially in terms of transferable skills she has picked up. ■

Changemakers: Empowering Student Leaders



The need for a new leadership course was evident. The Saint Mary's University committee for graduating students with entrepreneurial and innovative mindsets realized they needed a course that could hone in on the act of leadership and help students become better leaders in roles they already held. Thus, the Changemakers: Empowering Student Leaders course was created. It is taught by Michael Sanderson, Director of the Saint Mary's University Entrepreneurship Centre.

The purpose of the course is to take existing student leaders, in any role from leading a student society to creating their own social enterprise and help them to grow and expand on their leadership skills to make them better leaders and the groups they're involved with more successful. The course is offered under the Education department in order to make it accessible to all faculties. The prerequisite is that students need to be in some sort of leadership position and meet with the professor before the course to ensure they are a good fit.

The class size ranged from 10-14 students in its first two years. This compact size helped students interact with each other and identify their own strengths and weaknesses as leaders. The course's foundation is reflective practice on what they learn and how they can apply what they learned. Students have a variety of assignments during the course, ranging from reflections, projects on what they've been able to accomplish as a leader, researching leadership topics and presenting in front of their peers.

The structure of the semester goes through leadership through various topics such as social impact and how to build effective teams. Each class session had a guest

speaker to expose students to different faculty who were doing work on leadership, or leaders from the community showing how they have put leadership into practice. One of the most exciting speakers of the semester was when the Mayor of Halifax, Mike Savage, came to speak to the class of ten about leadership in politics. Another guest speaker was Karen Oldfield, President and CEO Halifax Port Authority and past Saint Mary's Board Chair, who spoke about being a leader in a non-traditional female role.

The sustainable development goals were an important topic of conversation in the course – students learned you couldn't separate being a good leader from

professional and personal relationships.” The final presentation saw students presenting their weaknesses as leaders, which took a certain amount of vulnerability and humbleness.

The course seems to be popular with Enactus Co-presidents, because in 2020, Leena Roy Chowdhury, another former Co-president for Enactus Saint Mary's, took the course. A lesson that really touched her was one on transformational leadership, where leaders aim to encourage, inspire and motivate their employees to innovate and create change themselves in order to shape the future success of the organization. Leena decided to take this course because in her role as Co-president,

she often worked closely with the Saint Mary's University Entrepreneurship Centre, and would consult Michael Sanderson for advice, so knew she would benefit from taking an entire course on leadership with him.

David Upton, Co-Founder of Halifax-based Common Good Solutions was a guest speaker who focused heavily on the Sustainable Development Goals. Leena shared, “He gave us an in-depth insight into how social enterprises leverage the UN SDGs to positively impact our community while generating revenue! It was very insightful because it is still not very common to be encouraged by successful businesspeople to use UN

SDGs while developing a model for a business.”

Michael Sanderson believes there is a lot of power in the course, and one of the most important components is how much reflection the students can do on their own leadership. Meredith, who is now working as the Manager, Programs for Enactus Canada, says she didn't realize until after she finished the course just how impactful it was. She now takes the opportunity to reflect on her actions as a leader and will always incorporate the lessons she learned going forward.

Leena echoes Meredith's comments, saying she “would highly encourage senior student leaders to take this class. This course helped me to learn about other leaders' journeys, perspectives, struggles and much more! Being able to network with and learn from renowned experts in various industries is an incredible opportunity.” ■



Changemakers Shashwat Duggal, Dominique Best, Stephanie Johnston, Nevell Provo, Halifax Mayor Mike Savage, Guillermo Villarreal de Lara, Mark Firth, Bethany Ripoll, Leena Roy-Chowdhury, Justin Chenier, and Salma Maliha Maisha.

incorporating sustainability into your actions.

Meredith Drost, 2019 BComm graduate, took the course in her final semester of university in the Winter 2019 semester and says it was by far the most impactful course she has taken in her academic career. Meredith served as Saint Mary's Enactus Co-president the year prior to taking the Changemakers course and took the opportunity to reflect on her leadership role in that position.

Meredith says that the Changemakers course changed her leadership style by providing her with an understanding of what it means to be a leader. The course helped her to reflect on challenging situations in her leadership roles and learn how to adjust her responses and actions going forward. Meredith shared that the course “provided me with the tools and confidence to admit when I am wrong, open up to other perspectives and build stronger

Method

We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that **enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.**



The Saint Mary's University Community Food Room.

Learning through Service



Although service learning has been happening informally for decades at Saint Mary's University, in 2017, Sarah Bray was hired as the Service Learning Placement Coordinator to amplify the efforts being made and encourage new faculty to try adding service learning to their courses.

Service Learning at Saint Mary's University involves students volunteering with organizations in their community to gain experience working with local groups and help give back to the community. Fourteen Sobey School courses have integrated service learning in the past two years with Sarah's help, and more professors are joining in every year. There have been two new initiatives put in place since our last update on service learning, which we are excited to share.

Service-Learning Faculty Modules

In February 2020, Sarah published online modules about service-learning available for faculty to learn more about the theory and methods behind the mode of learning. She worked on designing these modules with faculty member Dr. Stephen Schneider. The modules are titled Developing Service Learning Classes: The Essentials.

The inspiration to create the Faculty Modules was to design a space where faculty who are interested in integrating service learning into their course can go for direction, such as sample syllabi from other service-learning courses. These modules are a way to provide a great overview about service learning, how it works at SMU, and student reflection resources.

Faculty can choose to selectively view any of the 11 topic areas, which are broken down into three sections:

Section One: What is service learning?

In this section, faculty can learn about service learning theories, tenets and influences. The section also discusses effects and benefits of service learning, as well as providing some models and critiques.

Section Two: How do I apply service learning in my course(s)?

This section details how faculty are supported through service learning at the university, including steps in planning, implementing, and assessing a service learning course. It also includes resources on reflection, preparing students and working with community partners.

Section Three: What if I want to know more about service learning?

The third section contains sample syllabi, a list of service learning courses at SMU, case studies and further references.

The modules serve as a library on all things service learning and make it easy to decide if service learning is a good fit a professor's course. ■

Introducing Service-Learning Early

For the future, Sarah and the Sobey School are currently working on having a micro service learning experience embedded into first-year *Introduction to Business Management* which is a required course for all Sobey School students. It will start off as an optional component for Fall 2020 and the plan is to make it mandatory if the pilot is successful.

Dr. Vurain Tabvuma, the Sobey School Management professor who teaches the first-year Business Management Course, says the plan for implementing the micro service learning component is to have it offered in one section each semester for the 2020-2021 academic year. This way, there will be a comparison group of students who have completed service learning versus those who have not, and follow-up surveys can be done to measure the impact. If it proves impactful, the plan will be to have a mandatory service learning component in the course by the 2021-2022 school year.

The service learning experience will take place for three to four weeks during the semester long course – this is so that multiple student groups can take turns working with the same service learning partners, which is where the limitation lies. With approximately 150 students in each course section, it can be hard to find enough service learning partners to work with groups of students, and so the micro service learning

experience allows that opportunity to be maximized so all students can have a turn at the service learning. This way, the service learning partners also get consistent assistance throughout the semester, with new streams of innovative ideas from the students.

The micro service learning project will be developed more in the coming months, but so far the plan is for students to work with the on-campus food bank, the Enactus Square Roots enterprise as well as other local enterprises. The opportunities will hopefully all be on or near campus to allow students to maximize their time with the service learning partner.

All students will be required to do a pre-exercise before starting their service learning experience, and then prepare reflective responses after the service learning experience. The service learning would take place in groups of five to six students, and they would then do a presentation on their experience for the class.

Vurain has a particular interest in implementing service learning in his course because he went to boarding school growing up and had to do service learning there, which he felt had a major impact on his learning. He is also involved in the student success committee at the university, which is working on ways to improve the experience of first year students and increase the retention rate from first year to second year. In the past two years of teaching the course, Vurain has worked with the committee to implement different ideas off a list of 11 principles to improve the first-year experience, with service learning being one of those ideas. From his own experience, Vurain knows that service learning changes how you see the world, and he hopes he can see those changes reflected in his Introduction to Business Management students. ■



Professor of Management, Dr. Vurain Tabvuma

Research

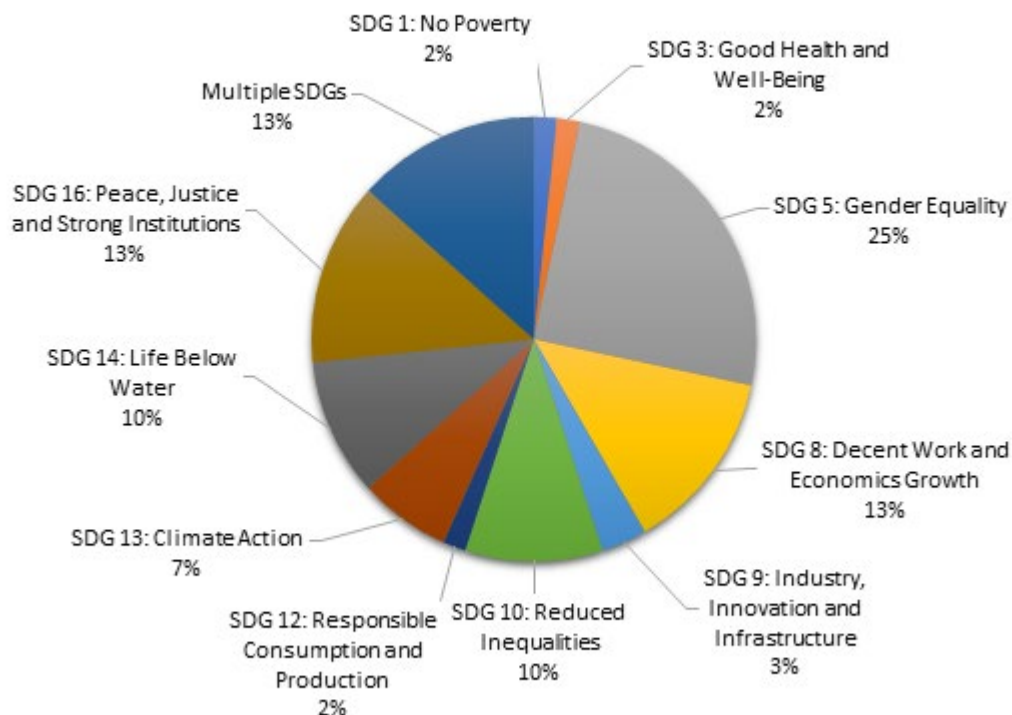
We will engage in **conceptual and empirical research** that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

PRME-Aligned Research and Faculty

In recent years, we've noticed a trend at the Sobey School of Business. Many of our recent faculty hires are doing work in very relevant areas of issues relating to the Sustainable Development Goals. In fact, over half (54.9%) of the journal articles published by our faculty in the past two years can clearly be tied to at least one of the Sustainable Development Goals. Naturally, some of the Sustainable Development Goals align well with a business education, such as SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth and SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, but we were inspired to see that our faculty are incorporating over 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals regularly into their research, with some of our faculty even doing research on the Sustainable Development Goals themselves!

We would like to profile just a few of our innovative faculty members who are doing research and teaching students on the important and relevant issues that we are facing as a globe.

Research Aligned with SDGs



2019 | Meet Majid Taghavi



Dr. Majid Taghavi joined the Sobey School in 2019 as Assistant Professor of Management Science. He teaches quantitative methods to undergraduate students.

Majid's area of expertise is management science—disaster management planning for medical facilities, capacity planning and expansion in health care, and health care resource planning. His work addresses SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being. He is currently principal investigator in four research projects involving grants worth approximately \$180,000. His work has been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals.

Majid is a professional member of the Institute for Operations Research and Management Sciences (INFORMS) and the Canadian Operations Research Society (CORS), as well as track organizer for the Healthcare Operations Research Special Interest Group within CORS. He is also Adjunct Professor in the Department of Industrial Engineering and the School of Health Administration at Dalhousie University.

Majid received his PhD in business administration in 2015 from the DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University. He earned his MSc in industrial engineering at Sharif University of Technology in Tehran, Iran, in 2009. ■



Dr. Majid Taghavi

2018 | Meet Marie-Claire Robitaille-Blanchet



Dr. Marie-Claire Robitaille-Blanchet joined Sobey School in 2018 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics. Previously, she worked at the Chinese campus of the University of Nottingham.



Her research interests are in Development Economics, with a particular interest in gender issues, health, and education. She is also working on international trade. Marie-Claire's research addresses the 5th and 16th SDGs, Gender Equality and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. She has published in the *Journal of Development Studies*, *World Development*, and *World Economy*, among others. Her current research looks at son preference among immigrants in Canada, son preference in Turkey, dowry and son preference in India and the impact of maritime piracy on international trade.

She received her PhD in Economics in 2011 from the University of Otago in New Zealand. In 2006, she received her Master's in Development Economics and Project Analysis from CERDI at the Université d'Auvergne. ■



Dr. Marie-Claire Robitaille-Blanchet



2017 | Meet Xiaoyu (Kellie) Liu

In 2017, Dr. Kellie Liu joined the Management Department of Sobey School as an assistant professor, teaching courses in strategic management, international business and management, and business ethics.



Her research interests lie in the areas of corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate reputation, and sustainability. Her research has addressed SDG 7 in the past – Affordable and Clean Energy. Her current work addresses SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth, and through the CSR focus, a number of others. Current research projects include the role of new CEOs in CSR development process; CSR strategy and stakeholder engagement after a negative event; and the relationship between corporate social responsibility and enterprise risk management. Kellie's work has been published in numerous academic journals and books including the European Business Review, the Journal of International Management, and Medicine Marketing.

Kellie received her PhD in strategy and global management from Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary (2015); her Master of Management in enterprise management from the School of Management, Dalian University of Technology in China (2005); and her BEcon from the International Business School of Management, Zhengzhou University in China (2002). ■



Dr. Xiaoyu (Kellie) Liu



Professor of Management, Dr. Vurain Tabvuma

2016 | Meet Vurain Tabvuma



Dr. Vurain Tabvuma joined the Department of Management at Sobey School in 2016, in the position of Associate Professor. He teaches undergraduate students and PhD classes. Previously, he worked at Bournemouth University and the University of Surrey in the UK as a Lecturer and Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management / Organizational Behaviour. He has also served as a Visiting Professor at Ryerson University in Toronto.

Vurain's research focuses on intrinsic motivation, public service motivation, pro-social motivation, job satisfaction, organizational change and adaptation. His work addresses SDGs 5 and 8, Gender Equality and Decent Work and Economic Growth. Vurain's research has been published in refereed international journals such as Human Resource Management, Journal of Vocational Behavior, Public Administration Review, Journal of Public Administration: Research and Theory, and Kyklos.

He obtained his Master's degree (with distinction) and PhD from Brunel University, under a fully funded scholarship. ■

Corporate Knights Ranking

The Sobey School ranked in the top 10 of the Corporate Knights Better World MBA ranking in both 2018 and 2019 and in both years was the number 2 Canadian school on the list. In 2019, Corporate Knights judged 146 business schools, culled from the Financial Times top 100, past top 40 Better World listed programs, accredited schools and those who, like Sobey, are

signatories to PRME. The ranking speaks to a schools' commitment to environmental and social responsibility. Sobey has placed on the list for the last five years, four of those in the top 15, and two in the top ten.

Participating schools are graded on five indicators: the number of institutes and centres dedicated to sustainable development; the percentage of core courses

that integrate sustainable development; faculty research publications and citations on sustainable development themes; and faculty gender and racial diversity.

We are especially proud of our achievement in 2019 when methodological changes to the survey emphasized research impact (as opposed to research productivity).

“Placed as we are here on the east coast of Canada, the impacts of climate change are strongly felt. At the same time, our province is a leader in immigration, and has a deep history in co-operative and alternate business models. We understand how important sustainability must be in business today,” noted Dean Harjeet Bhabra in the press release published with the ranking announcement. “We are proud of our faculty’s strengths in international research and ethics, and the growing expertise in social enterprise development at Saint Mary’s, which have helped us achieve this recognition.”

Selected High-Impact PRME-Aligned Research

Ashworth, L., Darke, P. R., Mcshane, L., & Vu, T. (2019). The rules of exchange: The role of an exchange surplus in producing the endowment effect. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 152, 11–24. doi: 10.1016/j.obhdp.2019.03.012

Bae, K.-H., Driss, H., & Roberts, G. S. (2018). Does Competition Affect Ratings Quality? Evidence from Canadian Corporate Bonds. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. doi: 10.2139/ssrn.3137107

Chowhan, J., Denton, M., Brookman, C., Davies, S., Sayin, F. K., & Zeytinoglu, I. (2019). Work intensification and health outcomes of health sector workers. *Personnel Review*, 48(2), 342–359. doi: 10.1108/pr-10-2017-0287

Dilmaghani, M. (2019). Exploring the link between sexual orientation, work-life balance satisfaction and work-life segmentation. *International Journal of Manpower*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print). doi: 10.1108/ijm-10-2018-0313

Griffin, J., Liu, J., & Maheu, J. M. (2019). Bayesian Nonparametric Estimation of Ex Post Variance*. *Journal of Financial Econometrics*. doi: 10.1093/jfinec/nbz034

Hartt, C. M., Mills, A. J., & Mills, J. H. (2019). The role of non-corporeal Actant theory in historical research. *Journal of Management History*, 26(1), 60–76. doi: 10.1108/jmh-01-2019-0004

Hervieux, C., & Voltan, A. (2019). Toward a systems approach to social impact assessment. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 15(2), 264–286. doi: 10.1108/sej-09-2018-0060

Mansouri, B., & Hassini, E. (2019). Optimal pricing in iterative flexible combinatorial procurement auctions. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 277(3), 1083–1097. doi: 10.1016/j.ejor.2019.03.043

Paludi, M. I., Mills, J. H., & Mills, A. (2019). Cruzando fronteras : the contribution of a decolonial feminism in organization studies. *Management & Organizational History*, 14(1), 55–78. doi: 10.1080/17449359.2019.1578668

Peerally, J. A., Fuentes, C. D., & Figueiredo, P. N. (2019). Inclusive innovation and the role of technological capability-building: The social business Grameen Danone Foods Limited in Bangladesh. *Long Range Planning*, 52(6), 101843. doi: 10.1016/j.lrp.2018.04.005

Ruel, S., Mills, A. J., & Mills, J. H. (2019). Gendering multi-voiced histories of the North American space industry: the GMRD White women. *Journal of Management History*, 25(4), 464–492. doi: 10.1108/jmh-02-2018-0019

Sayin, F. K., Denton, M., Brookman, C., Davies, S., Chowhan, J., & Zeytinoglu, I. U. (2019). The role of work intensification in intention to stay: A study of personal support workers in home and community care in Ontario, Canada. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*. doi: 10.1177/0143831x18818325

Shaffner, E. C., Mills, A. J., & Mills, J. H. (2019). Intersectional history: exploring intersectionality over time. *Journal of Management History*, 25(4), 444–463. doi: 10.1108/jmh-02-2018-0011

Tajeddin, M., & Carney, M. (2018). African Business Groups: How Does Group Affiliation Improve SMEs’ Export Intensity? *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 43(6), 1194–1222. doi: 10.1177/1042258718779586

Partnership

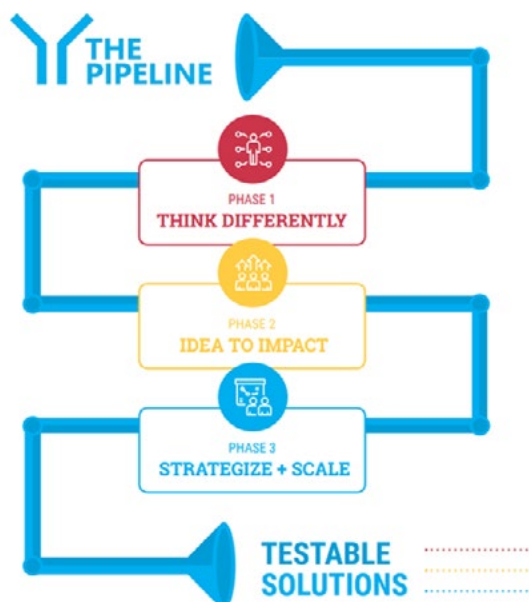
We will **interact with managers of business corporations** to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

Sparking Social Innovation

Saint Mary's University is lucky to have a dedicated Entrepreneurship Centre, which works closely with businesses, aspiring entrepreneurs, and the university's award winning Enactus team to spark innovation in the Halifax community and beyond.



Students engage in training at The Pipeline



The Pipeline



One key project the Entrepreneurship Centre is running is called The Pipeline. The idea for The Pipeline was born in 2016 as the Enactus team and the Entrepreneurship Centre brainstormed for ways to work together and create change. The team

knew they wanted to focus on promoting and encouraging social entrepreneurship, and creating economic change through that process, so they knew they had to come up with a process to launch these ideas. This was the birth of the Pipeline – a milestones-based training program that encourages participants to tackle challenges in their communities to create social good while still operating as a business and making a profit. The Pipeline focuses on pushing participants on a path to progress, much like an entrepreneurship accelerator, and relies on the participants putting in meaningful work to make the change they want to see.

The Pipeline has already helped many individuals and communities, including the Square Roots project that started with Enactus and a Syrian food start up called Piece of the East focusing on sharing the food and culture of Syrian food while reducing food waste.

The Pipeline program is modular, and the Entrepreneurship Centre often uses bits and pieces of the lessons to do shorter training sessions in schools and with other community groups.

Taking the training national

In Summer 2019, The Pipeline travelled to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan to conduct a train-the-trainer session through a partnership with Community Futures Saskatchewan. Over a 5-day training program, the trainers trained 25 community developers on The Pipeline, so that these community leaders could then take the training and share it with their communities. The relationship built was so



positive that The Pipeline has been asked to return to Saskatoon again and run a community-based Pipeline training session.

When doing a community-based Pipeline, the team makes sure to put in the work needed to really understand the local issues and opportunities before leading the training. They do a deep-dive on the community culture and survey the stakeholders, map resources in the community and build cases to use in the training. This helps to ensure community buy-in, so that training participants can really understand how The Pipeline can be applied to local issues they are facing.

Square Roots

One of the first successful ventures to be created from The Pipeline training is the Square Roots program, a social enterprise focused on redirecting food that would be thrown away into the hands of communities. They are directly tackling the issues of food waste and food insecurity at both farms and restaurants through their food bundle service and token program.



Square Roots is even taking their project global, currently working on a partnership with the Enactus team at the University of Limerick's Kemmy Business School (a PRME champion school as well!).

Using the Sustainable Development Goals to solve problems

The core training given through The Pipeline integrates the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as a lens for looking at community problems and generating solutions. For example, the Square Roots program heavily zeros in on SDG 2: Zero Hunger, but also ties into other SDGs: 1: No Poverty; 3: Good Health and Well-being; 10: Reduced Inequalities; 12: Responsible Consumption and Production; and 13: Climate Action.

The trainers review how the sustainable development goals relate to the community issues the group is trying to solve, and address how the goals interact. For example, Square Roots' affordable produce bundles directly reduce hunger and help those experiencing poverty obtain better nutrition for health.



Enactus Square Roots team members pose with produce bundles.

Engaging the local start-up community

It is important for Saint Mary's University to keep close ties with the local start-up community to help with the sharing of ideas and engaging entrepreneurs. Saint Mary's University and Volta, Canada's East Coast Innovation Hub, partnered earlier last year to provide a space at Volta to collaborate on projects in the Volta Co-Working Space. Entrepreneurial Saint Mary's students and alumni can book the space for working on ideas, meetings and more. Master of Technology Entrepreneurship and Innovation students at the Sobey School regularly use the space, and it provides a great space to meet other like-minded individuals and ideate.

Creating the future

Social innovation is alive and well at Saint Mary's University, and students are excited to work for organizations that have more of a social purpose, or even start their own business. SMU's Entrepreneurship Centre sees Social Innovation as a key path forward to continue to create wealth for our economy, but also to create social good for our community. Using the Sustainable Development Goals as a framework, students, organizations and communities are embarking on new and exciting projects to create the future they want to see. ■



Gordon Neal, CEO, Halifax Hospice and Ashley Lawrence, MBA'19, Stewardship and Development Coordinator.

MBA Ashley Lawrence Finds Her Place With Hospice Halifax



Hospice Halifax has a calm, peaceful, beautiful property on the Northwest Arm, near the Atlantic School of Theology. As you enter, the candles in an alcove by the elevator serve to underline the hushed, reverential tone.

Ashley Lawrence explains that the candles are a hospice feature that, when lit, quietly communicate that a patient has passed away, and honour their passing.

This close presence of death and the lived realities of palliative care are not typical characteristics of an early post-MBA career.

Ashley Lawrence, MBA, was hired by Hospice Halifax for a stewardship role.

Ashley came from a background in telecom sales and development. Armed with a Sobey School Bachelor of Commerce degree in Economics (and three courses shy of an honours economics major), Ashley accepted a role in sales at a large telecom company and found her natural facility with sales, along with her degree-honed attention to data and aptitude for process improvement propelling her up the corporate ladder. From sales leader, she became a sales coach and finally

Development Manager.

Along the way, she decided to pursue a part time Sobey MBA, recognizing the value it would add to her career. She got her sought-after last promotion before completing the program.

As Development Manager, Ashley implemented a major innovation that significantly increased the effectiveness and output of the sales team. After this, though, “I felt like a hit a ceiling,” Ashley says.

Responsible Leadership was the MBA course where Ashley connected with Hospice Halifax.

Dr. Margaret McKee introduced the class to Gordon Neal, CEO of the Halifax Hospice. It is Halifax’s first Hospice residence, welcoming 150 patients each year. Generally, a city the size of Halifax would require thirty hospices to meet the demand of the population. The residence opened in April of 2019. Neal challenged the class to work on three projects: a new social enterprise retail development, a planned fundraising hike, and a strategic plan.

Sixteen students in the class divided up to work on planning the projects. Ashley, with her sales background, chose to work on the retail development project. The retail development would be a large consignment shop, mostly volunteer-run, which would provide a revenue stream for the Hospice. She found herself enjoying this new challenge, and inspired by the meaning behind it.

Gordon was pleased with the experiment of engaging with service learning, saying, “Working with the Sobey School of Business MBA students was a great experience. It was fun, engaging, and they provided Hospice Halifax with excellent work for all three of their projects. A lot of their work will be used this year in our strategic plan and events.”

“I’m also thrilled about the connections we were able to make with the students and faculty. We look forward to working with the MBA class, other students, and Saint Mary’s faculty more in the future. “

After graduation, Ashley chose to leave her promising executive career, stepping off the telecom corporate ladder. She tried out a few new positions and found that, although she was quickly promoted in each, none of them really felt right.

Meanwhile, Gordon Neal recognized that

he needed someone to take on the coordination of stewardship and development at the Hospice. Gordon called Ashley for a meeting.

Ashley laughs, remembering. “I sat down and – plunk!– he puts down this stack of paper in front of me and says, I have a job opening. Know anyone who might be interested? And I read it over, and said, ‘why not me?’ He thought because of my past role, maybe I wouldn’t be interested. But this felt good. I left that traditional corporate climb purposefully. I don’t regret it at all.”

The job was posted, but sure enough, after the posting expired, Gordon called and offered her the role.

Today Ashley’s job sees her utilizing her skills developed and honed in her degrees, along with her work experience in outbound sales, customer-facing relationship building, statistical analysis, the organization of and safeguarding of private data, process analysis and business improvement. She finds the work challenging and feels satisfaction that she is able to make a difference for patients.

During a tour of the Hospice, Ashley points to a bereavement space with a wide set of doors leading outside. “This is where our patients leave.”

It takes a minute to realize what she means. Patients tend to leave hospice one way only. She describes a metal tree she would like to place in the space, designed to hold glass memorial ornaments, a lasting but organic-feeling reminder of the patients who have lived at the Hospice.

These details make a tremendous difference, just like Ashley’s work. ■



Ashley Lawrence, MBA'19,
Stewardship and Development
Coordinator, Halifax Hospice

Dialogue

We will facilitate and support dialogue and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

Responsible Investing: Finance for the Future?

November 8, 2019 began with a question – do we have a responsibility to invest in the future? Nearly 200 people showed up to the PRME Responsible Investing Event to find out.



What's Driving the Global Momentum?



The keynote speaker for the day, Ian Robertson, CFA and DPhil Candidate in Corporate Governance, started the morning by discussing what is driving the global momentum to shift to responsible investing. He began by giving an overview on the current state and trends in responsible investment in Canada and situated it in the global context. Ian talked more about the origins of responsible investing and clarified a few definitions around the issue as well. He then highlighted the evolving fiduciary duty for asset managers and for corporate directors to pay attention to responsible investing as a key means of financing for the future. He also gave a critical review of evaluated research on responsible investing, before reviewing the implications for both investment practitioners and academics.

Ian was happy to be invited to speak at the PRME event.

“The Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary’s University has long been a leader in responsible investment, and that leadership was on full display. It was also evident in the energy and engagement by faculty, staff and students at the PRME event.”

“When I was invited to speak, I saw it as a chance to share my experience in responsible investment and some early findings from my PhD research; to share what types of investment actions are consistent with traditional (neoclassical) financial theory, and what are consistent with behavioral financial theory; and to share some considerations about the investment strategies and products available to investors.”

“I was so pleased to be able to donate my speaking fee back to the Sobey School of Business, and to know in particular that it will be used to help educate the next generation of investment professionals via the Impact Fund.” ■

A Sobey School Event in Alignment with our Commitment to PRME

RESPONSIBLE INVESTING: FINANCE FOR THE FUTURE?





Panelists were (left to right) Jane Anderson, Executive Director and Secretary to the Nova Scotia Securities Commission; Rob Sobey, Director of Norvista Capital Corporation and SeaFort Capital; Melanie Adams, Vice President & Head, Corporate Governance & Responsible Investment for RBC Global Asset Management; and Gary Hawton, the Senior Director of Client Relations at Sustainalytics. Moderator (below, far right) was Coro Strandberg, President of Strandberg Consulting.



Responsible Investing: from Multiple Perspectives

Following the keynote speech by Ian Robertson, a panel on responsible investing was held. Panelists included: Melanie Adams, Vice President & Head, Corporate Governance & Responsible Investment for RBC Global Asset Management, Gary Hawton, the Senior Director of Client Relations at Sustainalytics, Jane Anderson, Executive Director and Secretary to the Nova Scotia Securities Commission and Rob Sobey, Director of Norvista Capital Corporation and SeaFort Capital. The session was moderated by Coro Strandberg, President of Strandberg Consulting. During the session, topics discussed included:

- Who cares about responsible investing and why?
- What is the role of regulation and regulators?
- What are the drivers of long-term investment value?

Robert Richardson, 4th Year International Development Studies and Economics student, was one of the many students in attendance that day. He was very impressed that the Sobey School was able to host this event and highlighted the importance of “leading by example”. Robert thoroughly enjoyed Ian Robertson’s keynote speech and the following panel event, leaving with a new appreciation for the value of responsible investing.





Dr. Najah Attig, professor and Canada Research Chair in Finance, a noted CSR expert, shared how he has incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals into the curriculum.

Sustainable Development Goals Teaching Showcase

Over the lunch hour, a teaching showcase was held for Sobey faculty to discuss how Sobey faculty have incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals into their curriculum. Speakers included: Martha MacDonald, Sobey School Professor and past Chair of the Economics department, Kevin Schwenker, MBA course instructor, and Najah Attig, Sobey School Finance Professor.

Many examples of incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals into curriculum were presented including Kevin Schwenker's class assignment for his Project Management course taught in Fall 2019. The term project for the students was to plan a sustainable Valentine's Day wedding and honeymoon, with a lens focused on incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals. Dr. Schwenker gave the students

several sample couples who had specific cultural and environmental requirements for their wedding planning, and then had the students design sustainable weddings and honeymoons for the couples. This was just one of several examples that were exhibited at the teaching showcase, which helped Sobey faculty to open their minds up to the ways and means which they could incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals and principles of responsible management education into their courses and assignments. ■



Dr. Chantal Hervieux shared her Social Impact Assessment research. Dr. Hervieux is the Director of the Centre for Leadership Excellence and ImpactLab at Sobey School.

Research Expo

Throughout the morning, guests were encouraged to visit the research expo happening in the Sobey foyer, showcasing research from Saint Mary’s University faculty and students related to social responsibility and sustainability. Each poster presentation was tagged with which Sustainable Development Goal it aligned with, helping to highlight the work that Sobey faculty and students are doing which relates to the Sustainable Development Goals. Many Sobey School faculty and students have done and are continuing to do research on topics that are related to the broad themes of social responsibility and sustainability, and even more specifically to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. As part of the Sobey School’s commitment to PRME, the aim of the research expo was to showcase findings from faculty research, as well as the broader Saint Mary’s faculty and student community. The goals were to increase awareness of the important work being done on Saint Mary’s University campus, as well as create opportunities for discussion about potential future research collaborations. ■



Dr. Michael Zhang, Acting Associate Dean of Research, presented his operations research related to health care.

Journey to Learn

While many of the attendees were based in Halifax, PRME Day also received visitors from outside of the city. Brad Long, Chair of the Department of Management at the Gerald Schwartz School of Business came to learn about responsible investing with two students from St. FX. Brad stated “I had two-fold interest in the event. First, I was interested in giving students an opportunity to learn more about responsible finance and investing, and this did not disappoint. I found the speakers and panelists to be unequivocal in stating the need for finance to be on board for caring about sustainability social impact, and how the investment industry can be a driver for change in public corporations by both screening and advocating for improvements in environmental, social and governance factors. It is important for students to see these connections. I was even reacquainted with someone who then became a guest speaker in my own class on responsible investment a few weeks ago! Second, being new to PRME ourselves, I was interested in how SMU constructed and managed a PRME event. From the signage to the faculty research poster presentation (with SDG alignment prominently featured) to the opening remarks, there was a consistent

narrative created concerning the importance of PRME to the Sobey School of Business.”

One of the students that attended with Brad was named Adam Starr and is part of the St. FX's Bachelor of Business Administration's class of 2020. He commented “I particularly loved this event because I believe there is hope for a sustainable future, and it starts with business leaders...Hearing the panelist speak to how prevalent the environment is in our current day and age was inspiring to me because there are endless opportunities to create sustainability in every facet that faces our society. My motivation to attend this event is two-fold: First, because I actively invest in sustainable companies, I thought it would be great to seek validation and pursue other investment opportunities from the advice of business/industry professionals. Second, I believe there is a social-environmental-financial-governance-and business shift happening right now. I wanted to hear what companies are doing to take clear action to reach sustainability.” ■



Attendees were welcomed and encouraged to ask questions and respond to the panelists.

LOOKING AHEAD

PRME Principle	Action Item 2020-2022
1. PURPOSE We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.	<p>Target high-impact opportunities to raise students; awareness of SSB commitment to the SDGs and to the purpose of PRME.</p> <p>Strengthen faculty capacity to infuse sustainability into the curriculum.</p>
2. VALUES We will incorporate into our academic activities, curricula, and organisational practices the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the UN Global Compact	<p>Identify and target for improvement those programs (majors/graduate programs) with the least SDG integration.</p>
3. METHOD We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership	<p>Target the core curriculum in the undergraduate program for deep and meaningful integration of the SDGs.</p> <p>Increase sustainability-focussed industry engagement in the core curriculum.</p> <p>Enhance service learning in all programs and draw explicit links between the learning and the SDGs.</p>
4. RESEARCH We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.	<p>Promote and encourage sustainability research done in partnerships with research centres, community organizations, and transdisciplinary research.</p> <p>Mobilize SDG-aligned research to students and the community through public events, conferences, etc.</p>
5. PARTNERSHIP We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.	<p>Increase and profile the applied or community-engaged research that aligns with the SDGs.</p> <p>Engage leadership from the non-profit sector in the formal curricular and through extra-curricular events.</p>
6. DIALOGUE We will facilitate and support dialogue and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.	<p>Connect with the research centres and all internal allies to facilitate and advance the public discourse around sustainability. Ensure students are engaged in this discourse.</p> <p>Better leverage Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) techniques to connect students with sustainability leaders and issues in the formal curriculum.</p>

PRME Principles for Responsible Management Education

an initiative of the United Nations Global Compact

