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Laurier appoints new dean of Arts

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University has appointed **Richard Nemesvari** as the new dean of its Faculty of Arts. Nemesvari joins Laurier from St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, where he has been dean of Arts since 2010.

“We are thrilled to have Dr. Richard Nemesvari join us as the next dean of the Faculty of Arts following an international search,” said **Deborah MacLatchy**, Laurier vice-president: academic and provost. “Dr. Nemesvari has a first-rate record as an academic administrator and comes to Laurier at a time when there is significant opportunity to further develop our strengths in the humanities and social sciences.”

Among his many accomplishments while heading St. FX’s Faculty of Arts, Nemesvari was responsible for leading the development of the Arts Pathways website, which links academic choices in Arts disciplines with career opportunities. He also oversaw the development of a first-year Social Justice Colloquium, modeled after St. FX’s successful Humanities Colloquium. The specialized colloquia integrate first-year courses, residence learning environments and service-learning opportunities.

In addition to academic initiatives, Nemesvari co-chaired the Preventing Violence Against Women at St. FX Committee. He also chaired St. FX’s Joint Equity Committee, sat on the university’s Strategic Planning Committee and served as chair of the Faculty of Arts and of the General Faculty at St. FX.

“I eagerly anticipate taking up the position of dean in the Faculty of Arts at Wilfrid Laurier University,” said Nemesvari. “The innovative programming the Faculty offers demonstrates its commitment to advancing the study of the humanities and social sciences in ways that are unique and attractive to contemporary students. Expanding on this already outstanding foundation will provide an exciting opportunity to engage with faculty, staff and learners of all kinds, so that together we can continue the tradition of excellence at Laurier.”

This appointment at Laurier will be a homecoming for Nemesvari, a Waterloo native who completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Waterloo. A specialist in Victorian literature, Nemesvari holds a master’s degree from the University of Toronto and a PhD from Queen’s University, where he was an assistant professor for two years prior to joining St. FX. Before serving as dean of Arts at St. FX, Nemesvari spent two decades in the university’s English department – starting as an assistant professor in 1990, being named a full professor in 2006 – where he was a two-term chair.

An accomplished scholar, Nemesvari has had work published by several leading academic presses. He also serves as a vice-president and director of the Thomas Hardy Association and is the general editor of the Cambridge University Press Edition of the Novels and Stories of Thomas Hardy.

Nemesvari’s term at Laurier will officially begin Sept. 1. He will be taking over from Michael Carroll, whose five-year term commenced in 2010. Carroll will return to the Faculty of Arts as a tenured full professor in July 2016, following his earned administrative leave.

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“During Dr. Carroll’s leadership in the Faculty of Arts, key initiatives included development of active learning classrooms, first-year seminars and new experiential options for undergraduate students,” said MacLatchy. “On behalf of Laurier, I thank Dr. Carroll for his focus on integrated and engaged learning and leaving an important legacy for students in the Faculty.”

Michel Desjardins, associate dean of the Faculty of Arts, will serve as acting dean from July 1 to August 31.

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