

Development of a Diploma and a Bachelor of Arts Major in Police Studies at Memorial University

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Abstract

In 2004, Memorial University, in partnership with the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC), introduced a Police Studies Diploma as the academic portion of the training for individuals accepted as police recruit cadets. There were a number of challenges to the development of this program, some of which continue to exist. However, today the program is highly regarded by the provincial government, Memorial leadership, other police services, and the community. This program, now in its 10th year, has been very successful, graduating 223 police cadets.

In 2008, Memorial introduced a Bachelor of Arts Major in Police Studies to allow graduates of the Diploma, experienced police officers, and other students to enrol in or complete a degree. There was also considerable opposition to the development of this degree. Although the Major was intended to be available online, it has been difficult to get various departments in the Faculty of Arts to develop required courses for online delivery, making core courses for the Bachelor of Arts degree, and Minor programs difficult to access. This degree is popular with experienced officers and other university students and now has approximately 180 declared majors. A policy for prior learning assessment recognition was put in place for this degree in 2012 and 25 experienced police officers are currently using their police training credentials towards their degree.

There is considerable growth potential for these programs. The provincial government has increased its funding to allow for a doubling in class size in the Diploma and there is potential for the Major to attract a much larger audience. This requires a commitment on the part of the University, and the Faculty of Arts in particular, to consider a stand-alone department of police studies, to support new course development and a willingness to make required courses in Arts disciplines available online.

Introduction

This reflection paper discusses the development of the Police Studies (PLST) Diploma and Bachelor of Arts Major in Police Studies at Memorial University. One of the authors of this paper was involved in the planning stages for the PLST Diploma program and the other became involved as coordinator of the PLST Diploma program in the first year. They were also both instrumental in the development of the Major. This paper examines why these programs were proposed, how they were put in place and how they have evolved. It focuses first on the Diploma and then the Major. Challenges to both programs and possible future directions are also discussed. Although considerable research was conducted before the implementation of both programs, most of the information in this paper is anecdotal, based on the experience of the authors.

Development of the Diploma in Police Studies

In 2004, Memorial University and the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) formed a partnership to deliver an interdisciplinary Diploma in Police Studies to train police recruit cadets. A participatory partnership approach was used to develop the program. This led to a process similar to McNiff's (2001) six action research steps: (1) review the current practice; (2) identify an aspect to improve; (3) imagine a way forward; (4) try it out; (5) take stock; and (6) modify the plan.

Step 1: Review the Current Practice

Pre-1980 RNC cadets were trained locally by the RNC. From 1980 to 2004 RNC cadets were primarily selected by the RNC and then trained at the Atlantic Police Academy (APA), Holland College on Prince Edward Island over 1,000 km away from RNC headquarters. All Atlantic Province's police services were trained with a common curriculum with little input from the individual services. There was limited opportunity for RNC staff to observe their cadets during training. This was also a costly (\$25,000-30,000), 35-week, residential program. A contract between the Provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador and APA to train officers for the RNC was allowed to expire because of low levels of recruiting in the 1990's. However, large numbers of retirements were projected and a new training solution was required.

Step 2: Identify an Aspect to Improve

There were a number of things the RNC wished to improve. Locating the training in Newfoundland and Labrador would allow consistent, ongoing involvement and assessment by RNC and locally relevant curriculum. A non-residential program would reduce the cost to the cadet and be more accessible to a wider variety of quality applicants, including more females and individuals with families. Using university level courses as pre-requisites and requirements was a bid to increase critical thinking and professionalization, as well as laying the foundation for ongoing continuing education and professional development. Overall, the aim was to achieve a broad range of knowledge about the difficulties many people experience that get them into trouble with the law. The hope was to graduate police officers who were critical thinkers with a social conscience.

Step 3: Imagine a Way Forward

Based on the experiences of other training programs in the country there were several ways to proceed. The potential options were: RNC stand alone, private academy, public college

system, university, or a partnership. The trend by provinces to amalgamate training of police officers, as seen in Ontario, could not be used in Newfoundland and Labrador as the only other police service is the federally trained Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Consideration of a university approach was supported by the University of Regina housing a police studies school on its campus and the Quebec system requiring university courses. Furthermore, Memorial has multiple professional schools including medicine, engineering, business, education, and nursing. Previously, education and nursing had both been moved to the university after existing as vocational programs. The progression of these occupations toward professionalism shares some characteristics with what is happening with policing.

There were also precedents for Memorial University involvement with police services. Serving RNC officers were involved in a three year Law Enforcement & Community Relations Diploma Program at Memorial in the 1980s. Memorial subsequently introduced a Bachelor of Police Studies, also for serving police officers. A custom partnership program with Memorial was proposed by the RNC in 1997 and received a positive reaction from the Faculty of Arts. However, the provincial government felt the program was not yet needed and would be too expensive. A few years later as the projected retirements were closer and it was obvious that the RNC would have to recruit aggressively to maintain staffing levels, and with some time to consider the level of customization required, a new approach was suggested.

The Dean's office in the Faculty of Arts explored existing courses that might meet the needs of the RNC. It was quickly realized that a single discipline would not be able to meet the needs, but an interdisciplinary approach would. The first meetings with the academic planning committees were not encouraging. Some of the representatives felt the cadets would not be able to handle the rigours of academic life. Their fears were exacerbated by the idea to include not only introductory but higher level undergraduate courses. The additional time that would be required for cadets to volun-

teer and complete practical training during the academic semesters was also not thought to be reasonable. Through the support of the Dean and Associate Dean at the time, the proposal was prepared and submitted through all the necessary committees. While there were still some who felt the approach would not succeed, the program was approved as a one year diploma with some prerequisites for entry, to ensure cadets would be academically prepared. The academic pre-requisites to be accepted into the program are: two first year English, two Psychology, and one Sociology course; a university degree; or proven ability to succeed at college/university level.

Step 4: Try it out

Recruitment by the RNC for the first class began in 2003. A major attraction of the program was the potential that all cadets recruited to and subsequently successful in the program would be hired as constables with the RNC. The first class began in September 2004. The program consists of two semesters at Memorial completing 10 required courses and a third semester full time at the RNC Training Section. These courses have changed somewhat over the last 10 years based on evaluations from cadets and input from instructors. Some PLST courses were introduced with the development of the new BA Major in PLST, and others have been introduced since.

The university courses cadets currently complete are:

Police Studies 2000	An Introduction to Policing in Canada;
Police Studies 3000	Victims of Crime and Policing;
Police Studies 3500	Investigative Interviewing;
Political Science 3620	Law & Society;
Psychology 2150	Introduction to Forensic Psychology;
Psychology 3640	The Psychology of Abnormal Behaviour;
Sociology 3290	Deviance;

Sociology 3306	Juvenile Justice and Delinquency;
Sociology 3395	Criminal Justice and Corrections;
Sociology 4212	Sociology of Policing; and
Police Studies 5000	Instructional Field Placement with the RNC.

The cadets also participate in a Collaborative Education Module on family violence with students from nursing, social work, and psychology. This involves an online component, focus group discussion, and question and answer session with a panel of experts who outline how they would proceed with the presented case. This is presently being completed as part of the requirement for Sociology 4212.

The courses are taken five at a time during the 12-week Fall and Winter semesters and are general Arts courses taken with other university students. This is fairly unique for the training of police cadets. If a cadet has previously taken any of these courses he/she must take an alternate(s) to maintain a full course load during both semesters. Alternate courses from various disciplines may be substituted with approval, including: anthropology, English, history, law & society, philosophy, and religious studies. The university courses are taught by a mixture of tenure, tenure-track, contractual, and sessional faculty. Three days per week are spent in classes at Memorial, with at least two days at the RNC. A normal day has a 6:45 am start for physical training before classes, then attend classes on campus, which sometimes go through the day and into evening classes ending at 10:00 p.m. RNC courses in use of force, control tactics, drill, note taking, etc. and community support sessions with community groups and partners fill the two RNC days and some weekends. The full course load and extra instruction put pressure on the cadets to, in part, assess their reaction to stressful and demanding situations.

The third semester, which takes place at the RNC training facility and covers intensive practical skills instruction, is when the PLST 5000 Instructional Field Placement is completed. This course is the only course not taken with other students.

The schedule is 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. plus some evening work, five days per week, with in excess of 90 topics delivered. Multiple training formats are used including: lectures, scenarios, site visits, and computer training. Community volunteer involvement on evenings and weekends is organized and encouraged throughout the three semesters. A reflective report, applying the theory they have learned in university over the two semesters to the practical aspects of police work is required prior to the end of the third semester. This is similar in structure and aim to the work term reports of Memorial University's Bachelor of Commerce co-operative program.

The cadets pay their own tuition to Memorial for all three semesters. Funding to pay professors is provided by Memorial to a Police Studies budget within the Faculty of Arts and through various agreements with the disciplines inside and outside the Faculty. The cadets are paid \$15/hour by the provincial government during their third semester.

On successful completion of the training year, cadets are sworn in as constables and begin their probationary year under the supervision of a coach officer. They are assigned duties on an increasing continuum of autonomy, as they move from complete oversight by coach officers to increasing levels of independence as autonomous police officers. Supervision is constantly available throughout. They are also provided ongoing education and training alongside existing officers. This training is a mixture of in-house RNC training and training provided by a number of outside agencies. After a successful probationary year, they are offered permanent employment.

Step 5: Take Stock

Four levels of evaluation have been utilized to assess the program: (1) reaction, measuring motivation and satisfaction; (2) learning, measuring improvement of knowledge, increase in skills, and change in attitudes; (3) behaviour, observing desire to change, skill levels, and the effects of climate and reward; and (4) results, through comparison to stated objectives (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006).

The results have shown that the reaction has been favourable as the level of motivation is maintained throughout what is viewed as a long and demanding program. Satisfaction with the program has been illustrated by favourable recommendations to peers. Annual surveys and group feedback sessions collect information on: perceived relevancy of required and alternate courses; relevancy of group exercises; coverage of training topics; presentation; sequencing; methods; techniques; materials; and use of time. Suggestions for improvements are also requested. Examinations, testing, and observation are used to measure learning and behaviour. Written exams, individual and group papers, presentations, field testing, and scenarios are all used to assess knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Education, training, and experience all play roles in developing these cadets. Results are compared with the RNC Mission and Values statements. This work has been completed by the Coordinator and RNC staff since the beginning of the program and the results are provided to and within the RNC. Information from surveys about the academic part of the program are shared with the RNC and the PLST Advisory Committee. None of these results have been published to date.

There are varying levels of consultation between Memorial instructors and RNC training staff. Instructors have been invited to meet and greet sessions with new classes and graduation exercises. Usually new instructors are provided with some information on the program and what is expected from the cadets. RNC staff provide in-class presentations at Memorial for PLST and other courses as requested by professors.

Community feedback has been positive and has been gathered anecdotally from organizations who work with vulnerable populations in the community; through direct feedback to cadets, coach officers, and supervisors; commendations; requests for involvement with the program; media coverage; and support from municipalities. Additionally the mental health education has been identified as some of the best offered to Canadian police officers (Cotton & Coleman, 2008).

The Diploma was also included in the Police Academy Review carried out by the Canadian Police Sector Council. The evaluation was very favourable (Johnson *et al.*, 2012).

Step 6: Modify the Plan

There is an ongoing process in place to modify the program as necessary. The Police Studies Advisory Committee consists of the Program Coordinator, Associate Dean of Arts, four of the professors and lecturers in the various disciplines which make up the program, and policing representatives with ex-officio status. They oversee the program and discuss any issues that may arise.

Program evaluation results have led to decisions to revisit course offerings, develop new courses, partake in collaborative learning opportunities, change topic offerings at the RNC, and edit the schedule. Participation on committees of the Canadian Police Sector Council and Canadian Association of Police Educators provides information on best practices from other centers which also informs decisions.

Repeat the Cycle

The RNC is a learning organization and thus works with Memorial to continuously improve the Diploma and ongoing training for their police officers. Police officers engage in continuing education and training as policing is in a constant state of change. There is a close consultative relationship between the RNC and the Program Coordinator. The progress of police cadets in university courses is monitored and they are offered supports to be successful in the program. They take full advantage of the university writing centre, the library, and tutoring sessions available on campus. Advice is also provided about continuing education opportunities. Many of the graduates are now working to complete the Major, while others are pursuing graduate degrees from various universities in different areas such as Forensic Artistry, Business, Sociology, and Criminal Identification.

Challenges Developing the Diploma

Uniforms and Para-Military Structure

Initially there was considerable opposition to the introduction of a police education program on campus. Some faculty members felt that as the “repressive arm of the state,” there was no place for police officers on a university campus. The RNC require the cadets to be identifiable because they want them exposed to public reaction as early as possible, so the cadets wear clothing bearing the RNC crest and the words *Police Cadet*. There were objections from some professors to cadets wearing this clothing as these are viewed as police “uniforms.” There was concern that with the para-military structure, and the presence of team leaders in the class, the cadets might feel inhibited in expressing their opinions. The team leaders are fellow cadets who are appointed to coordinate activities for the two teams in each class.

Seniority and the Quest for Good Marks

The RNC Association represents the non-commissioned officers of the RNC and in their contract with the employer there is a clause that allows seniority to be the deciding factor for promotions, etc. when all other qualifications are equal. The seniority standing within a cadet class had historically been decided by date of application. With the advent of the Diploma it was negotiated with the RNC Association that the seniority would now be determined within each class by the cadets’ grades at Memorial combined with marks in their police specific courses at the RNC. This was viewed as a negative by some faculty members as they saw it as imposing competition for grades. However, it motivated the cadets and did result in them being more engaged with their professors and instructors when it came to discussing evaluations and assessments. In reality, many university students are competing for places in professional schools and programs and competition is very common. From the RNC perspective, cadets are all expected to do their best, recognizing the different ability

levels in various aspects of training. Those better in academics are expected to help their classmates, just as those better with the physical fitness aspects are expected to help their classmates in that area. They operate on a team approach and all work together for the success of the group, while still striving to achieve the best results possible as individuals.

Competition for Scarce Resources

Interdisciplinary programs tend to run into obstacles due to competition for funding and resources among various departments. For example, budgets are generally approved by faculty and discipline, so teaching units cannot be easily shared. Access to courses for students outside a major could place pressure on a discipline to meet the needs of their own students. The PLST Diploma was seen as competition for funding and students by some other departments within the Arts Faculty.

Scheduling and Teaching

To accommodate the schedule of the cadets there were some requests to disciplines to schedule courses on certain days. This was not popular and was seen by some as the police telling the university what to do. Managing availability of courses when professors take sabbaticals is also sometimes a juggling act when dealing with a one-year program. Disagreements over credentials of teaching staff and permanency of staff, for example tenure staff versus contract lecturers, causes rifts between faculty members. Differences in opinions across disciplines as to which theories to teach and at what level have surfaced and have not been able to be quelled. The recent changes to the various interdisciplinary programs in the Faculty of Arts showed a significant resistance to including any courses offered outside the Faculty. Comments from some individual Arts professors have insinuated that some courses are not as academically rigorous and theoretically based as they feel is necessary. Practical application of information and knowledge is seen as diluting the academic process.

Support and Advocacy

The Associate Dean of Arts at the time was the primary person involved in setting up the Diploma but wanted to have coordination of the program within a discipline in the Faculty of Arts. The Sociology Department seemed a likely “home” for the Diploma, however at that time the department was not interested in coordinating the program. Eventually during the first year, a contractual lecturer in Sociology (one of the co-authors), with several years of experience teaching police officers, and considerable community based research experience, was asked to coordinate the program. The Diploma is not attached to any department but is overseen directly by the Dean of Arts office, with the program coordinator reporting to the Associate Dean of Arts. This Associate Dean became an advocate for the Diploma and provided tremendous support for the program coordinator. The next Associate Dean continued the advocacy role and also became part of the recruitment team for the Diploma. He toured across the province with the RNC recruitment team and presented information on the university portion of the program. He continued this involvement as a volunteer when he retired. This close connection has not been maintained with the new Associate Dean who does not have the same interest in the program.

It was originally thought the Diploma program would fail. Many felt that the program should be managed by a tenure track faculty member and perhaps “housed” in a particular department within Arts. Discussions have taken place about the role of PLST in a potential “Justice Institute” at Memorial, the possibility of PLST becoming its own department within Arts or the potential for PLST to become a professional school similar to Nursing or Education. Also, changes in oversight by the Dean’s office have led to a strained relationship with the PLST committee. The Program Coordinator is retiring this year and at this time the future management of both programs is uncertain. The plan seems to be to split the position into two – one being an administrative manager

of the program and the other an academic coordinator. The present Program Coordinator was supposed to be involved in the hiring and transition to a new coordinator, but this has not happened.

Success of the Diploma

The concerns about academic ability of the cadets have proven to be unfounded. From the first class in 2004-2005 the cadets have excelled. No one has achieved below a “B” average, usually about 30% make the Dean’s list which is generally higher than the percentage seen in other disciplines. The police cadets are model students. They never miss a class. Most assignments are submitted on time. They participate in class. Many professors have commented very positively on how pleased they are to have them in class. To date, 211 cadets have graduated and at time of writing 12 more are preparing to graduate. Of the total number of cadets to date, 39% are female and 50% had university degrees prior to selection. The RNC and the provincial government are pleased with the Diploma. The provincial government has approved funding to double the class size for RNC cadets for 2014-15. The eleventh cadet class has just been selected with class size of 31 recruits.

Initially, in the first year or two, there were some negative comments from other students. Cadets were sometimes referred to as “pigs” etc. This negative attitude has changed considerably over the last several years. Police cadets are a common sight on campus, other students know who they are, and the most likely comments are queries about the program and how to apply. The cadets now feel very comfortable on campus and feel they have good relationships with other students. Fears that the cadets would not be able to offer their opinions in class apparently relate to how they are treated by professors and not the presence of “team leaders.” Although they feel that most professors treat them no differently than other students, evaluations have revealed that they are held to a higher standard by some professors, treated more fa-

vourably by some professors, and their opinions are ignored, made fun of or stifled by a small minority of professors who do not seem to like police.

Cadets volunteer on campus and in the community. Recently they helped the Canadian Association of University Women with their annual book sale. This group has donated four scholarships to help educate female police cadets. There are many requests from groups in the community for cadets to help with various events. These range from Run for the Cure, to delivering Christmas hampers, directing traffic at Remembrance Day ceremonies, to volunteering at safe grad events. These types of activities along with other policing initiatives have resulted in a very positive relationship between the RNC and the communities it serves.

As a result of the Diploma and the partnerships formed through its development there have been a number of other related developments at Memorial. Recruiting for the RNC in Aboriginal communities was initiated. The RNC is supporting research opportunities for students and professors and internal research through development of a research committee at the RNC. In response to criticism of established police interviewing techniques, the RNC has partnered with a Professor at Memorial to provide PEACE Interview Training (Snook, Eastwood, Stinson, Tedeschini & House, 2010). The Gardiner Centre at the Faculty of Business Administration at Memorial provides a Supervisory Leadership Program for police officers promoted into the ranks of Sergeant and above. The cadets also participate in a collaborative education initiative on domestic violence with nursing, social work and psychology students. The success of students in the Diploma has also been studied by a committee developing techniques to increase the success of first year students and has been used as an example for other programs aimed at improving student success campus wide (Wicks, 2012).

University leadership is quite supportive of the Diploma program and demonstrates this by attendance at and positive comments during the cadet graduation ceremonies. The RNC is

very pleased with the program because they are committed to becoming an educated police force, the program has raised their profile in the community, helped develop a good public image and received very positive feedback from the people they serve.

Development of the Major in Police Studies

When cadets graduate with the Diploma they are half way towards a Bachelor of Arts. In 2008, upon the recommendation of the Dean of Arts, the Bachelor of Arts Major in PLST was developed to provide officers who completed the Diploma the opportunity to finish a university degree and also to offer the opportunity for experienced police officers, and others interested in different aspects of policing, to complete a university degree.

It was based on the model of the Women's Studies Interdisciplinary program already in place. Initially three core PLST courses were developed for the Major. The vision was to have the degree completely available online and to make the program truly interdisciplinary not only within departments in Arts but across faculties, recognizing the benefit to police officers of courses in Business, Human Kinetics, Education, and Social Work. Disciplines within Arts and other faculties were visited to discuss which courses might be appropriate for police officers and others interested in policing. Availability of the courses by online delivery was a consideration. A list of recommended courses was then taken to the PLST Advisory Committee for discussion. The course requirements also include a single disciplinary minor and the core requirements for a degree in Arts. This degree program was strongly supported by the Dean and Associate Dean of Arts at the time. A proposal for the development of the degree was put forward and approved by University Senate. The management of this program on paper was assigned to the Associate Dean of Arts, but in fact it became the responsibility of the Coordinator of the PLST Diploma.

With the introduction of the Major, new PLST courses were gradually introduced, including: An Introduction to Policing

in Canada; Introduction to Corrections; Crime Victims and Policing; Gender, Crime and Criminal Justice; Internship (with agreements for placements within the police service and the Provincial Department of Justice); Investigative Interviewing; Advanced Issues in Policing; and Police Decision Making and Ethics. These courses were developed as online courses with the assistance of Distance Education and Learning Technologies at Memorial. Three of these courses replaced less relevant courses in the Diploma program.

The Major is popular with serving police officers. Having so many university educated police officers in the ranks seemed to raise the educational bar for senior officers within the RNC and requests for information about the degree and the possibility of receiving university credit for prior training was raised. A Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) sub-committee of the PLST Advisory Committee was formed to explore this option already being used in many centres across Canada. Representatives from Lifelong Learning, Nursing, Education, Business, and the Registrar's Office (all of whom had experience with PLAR) researched what was happening elsewhere in Canada. After considerable research and discussion, a proposal to offer 30 credit hours for experienced police officers from accredited training programs was submitted. Other courses officers had completed were to be considered on an individual basis. This proposal was approved by University Senate in 2012. At time of writing, there were 25 police officers from many different police services including RNC, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Ontario Provincial Police, Halifax Regional Police Service, and Canadian Forces Military Police enrolled in the Major using PLAR credits towards their degrees. *One of the first graduates of the Major using PLAR is the current RNC Chief of Police.*

Challenges for the Major in PSLT Program

Introducing the degree program was also challenging. It was opposed by some disciplines which felt they would lose

students to PLST. After a brief flurry of course development and although there are new course proposals ready to move forward, the development of the Major has been on hold for the last two years since management has changed in the Dean of Arts office. This program was intended to be available entirely online to enable police officers easy access to complete a university education. Although this program has grown rapidly and become very popular with police officers and the general student population, the goal to have it available entirely online has not been achieved and access to required courses is often a problem. Although requests have been sent, there has been limited response from the disciplines within Arts to make more of their courses available online.

Recently, concerns have been raised regarding the academic integrity of multiple interdisciplinary programs in the Faculty of Arts, including the PLST Major. Two of the key areas of concern are the number of courses outside the Faculty of Arts that can be used towards the degree and the number of credits awarded for PLAR. In spite of the fact that PLST Instructors are a committed group of individuals, all of whose academic qualifications are augmented by their direct experience in subject areas, there is a concern that these courses are being taught by contractual lecturers. No tenure track faculty have been hired in the PLST area. A proposal for changes to the Major, affecting course requirements and the use of PLAR, has been sent to University Senate without much consultation with or the support of the Police Studies Advisory Committee. In the past all proposals were put forward by the Program Coordinator and the Police Studies Advisory Committee, with the support of the Associate Dean of Arts. This proposal has cut most of the program electives from any disciplines outside Arts and also made some changes to the degree that may affect the awarding of PLAR.

There have been concerns that PLST does not have a “home.” Discussions have occurred with another interdisciplinary program, Law and Society, which has very popular major and minor programs and is housed in the Department of Gender

Studies. There is also a Criminology Certificate which is being managed by a sociologist with expertise in that area. It was managed by the Division of Lifelong Learning until it was dissolved in 2012. There have been discussions that a Justice Studies program or a Justice Research Institute could incorporate all these areas. There is also a current recommendation for a Law School at Memorial which may influence how these undergraduate programs are managed. It also appears that the Sociology Department may now wish to take on the management of the Diploma and the Major.

Another concern related to the PLST Major is the practice of current police officers continuing their education and attending classes on campus. While most officers would be able to take courses by distance or evening classes, occasionally officers are granted permission to attend class to complete required courses that are not accessible other times, in full uniform, including carrying their sidearm. This issue was recently debated by University Senate and based on a large majority vote, a policy was put in place allowing officers to attend classes on campus in full uniform, carrying their sidearm. This debate has recently been renewed by the Sociology Department as a perceived safety issue and possible threat to academic freedom.

Success of the Major

There are over 180 students declared as majors in PLST. The courses are generally at capacity and extra offerings need to be made each semester. The development of new PLST courses has been overseen by the Program Coordinator and all PLST courses have been developed based on a similar model to maximize student participation. For example, the 4000 level courses both begin with a section of reviewing police research and require considerable literary review, critical thinking, and writing, along with a group presentation and individual term paper. Individual course Instructors and Distance Education and Learning Technologies (DELTS) at Memorial have won awards for some of these courses. There are

plans for more course development in the area of research/writing, criminal behavior, etc. Two of the PLST courses, also have been used as required courses in the Criminology Certificate.

Regular consultation with disciplines about new course offerings has been beneficial for the program. Work with the excellent Instructional Designers at DELTS at Memorial has resulted in the development of quality course offerings via distance education technologies. The RNC and other police services value continuing education and support their police officers taking courses online and in-person. PLAR credit hours have put a university degree within reach for serving police officers. Instead of being intimidated by the prospect of having to complete 120 credit hours in part-time study, the officers can have their prior training recognized, with a 30 credit hour push toward their degree. Those who complete the Diploma generally have at least half their degree completed, so their incentive to finish is even greater.

Future Direction

The PLST Diploma will continue indefinitely. Memorial has a commitment with the RNC to provide an academic program for its cadets and this program has great support from the provincial government. It is very successful in terms of interest from applicants, graduate percentages, and community feedback. The degree program is also very popular with police officers and other students and has huge growth potential. It is uncertain how the programs will be managed going forward. The new Associate Dean of Arts is looking for a Department to take on the management of the Major and possibly the Diploma as well. Sociology has expressed some interest in taking on these programs, but given the difficult history between PLST and Sociology that may mean a further hold on program development or further changes. The most recent proposal for changes to the Major, put forward against the advice of the PLST Advisory Committee, has two Sociology research methods courses put forward as highly recom-

mended courses, as opposed to courses in social inequality and minority groups discussed by the committee. Immediate concerns relate to continuity of knowledge and history, given that the Coordinator who has been involved with both programs since the beginning is retiring this year.

Positive discussions have occurred with the School of Graduate Studies regarding potential for a graduate level PLST program. However, before that can happen more work needs to be done to stabilize support for the Diploma and the Major.

There are many more research opportunities available within policing. The RNC has formed a research committee and one of its first goals is to complete a longitudinal evaluation of the recruitment, education, and training of RNC officers as they become more experienced, specialized, laterally transferred, promoted, etc. Each year the cadets in their third semester of the Diploma prepare reports on research topics of interest to them and many of these reports have sparked interest from the leadership of the RNC for more study in various areas. The critical thinking that was the goal of the Diploma and the Major has now become the impetus for more applied research.

There are many positive outcomes related to the development of these two programs. We have a much better educated police service in Newfoundland and Labrador. More experienced police officers are pursuing a university degree. The provincial government, the university, and the public are very pleased with their police officers (Bartlett, 2010; Canadian Broadcasting Corporation News Newfoundland and Labrador, 2009; Harron, 2008; Sweet, 2014; Wicks, 2012). The RNC-Memorial partnership has also been supported by a recommendation from a provincial inquiry held in Newfoundland and Labrador. The late Antonio Lamer, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, and Commissioner of this Inquiry stated in recommendation 8 of his report that: “The excellent RNC Training Program with Memorial University should receive strong support and recruits should be encouraged to obtain the degree and diploma as

well as the certificate of completion of training” (Lamer, n.d., p. 327).

We feel strongly that at this time the Diploma program must remain fairly independent and not be attached to a particular department in the Faculty of Arts. The Diploma program needs an advocate, similar to the role carried out by the former Associate Dean of Arts. It should be managed by a person who has experience with police, a positive attitude towards policing and who can report directly to the Dean of Arts office. The Diploma and Major are closely related and whoever is managing these programs should work together. A positive direction for the PLST programs to take would be working towards becoming a Department with the possibility of developing a professional school in the future. This will involve a commitment on the part of Memorial to hire full time faculty in the Police Studies area.

Authors

Anne Morris has served as Police Studies Coordinator since 2004. She has taught in the Sociology Department at Memorial University since 1992. She studied at Carleton University, McGill University, and received her MA in Sociology, Certificate in Criminology and completed courses toward a PhD from Memorial University. Anne worked closely with the former Associate Dean of Arts in the development of the Major and the policy on Prior Learning Assessment Recognition. Anne teaches three courses in the Diploma and co-teaches two courses in the Major with Ms. Trenholm. In 2012-13 Anne was presented with an award by the Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) Association of Canada for her work on developing policy on PLAR for serving police officers. She was also awarded the Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence in the Faculty of Arts. Anne recently completed a book chapter on the implementation of the Youth Criminal Justice Act in NL. She is also a member of the RNC research committee.

Sharon Barter Trenholm holds a Certificate in Criminology, BSc in Psychology (Honours), and a co-operative MSc in Applied Social Psychology. Work term placements with the RNC led to 16 years working with the RNC Planning and Research Section. The Diploma and the Major were part of Sharon's professional life with the RNC from the first inkling of the idea in 1996. After guiding these programs to life and spending several years evaluating and participating in the adjustment of the programs, Sharon decided it was time to return to school to pursue an Interdisciplinary PhD. This program allows her to further her education in Psychology, Business, and Education with a focus on critical thinking in police decision making. Sharon serves on the PLST Committee for the Diploma and Degree programs. She also teaches part-time in the programs.

Both authors have worked together on the development of both programs and course development from the beginning. They have worked extensively with organizations furthering police research, training, and education, including the Police Sector Council, the Canadian Association of Police Educators, and the Canadian Police Knowledge Network.

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