

Statement of Motivation: University of the Arctic Board Membership

I am honored and excited by the possibility of joining the Board of the University of the Arctic. While my background is in literary and humanistic studies, as well as university administration, I have long held a fascination and respect for the polar regions, their inhabitants, and their futures. It was Ross Virginia who first mentioned UArctic to me several years ago when I came to his class to discuss the significant role of the Arctic in Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*. Ross's description of a close-knit network of universities and institutions devoted to knowledge generation across the northern regions was compelling. Today, I believe an institution like UArctic is more crucial than ever before to our planet's future. Learning how to handle changes in the Arctic, while heralding new opportunities, will show the rest of the world the path forward as we work collectively on confronting this global transformation.

Speaking personally, I am certain that UArctic can profit from the perspective and knowledge of someone with a strong background in the humanities. As climate change both transforms and makes increasingly visible the circumpolar regions, we need not only scientists but also scholars, writers, and advocates to come together to identify, celebrate, and influence thinking about Arctic lands, seas, and people. Science can only take us so far; as the Covid-19 pandemic made clear, science cannot persuade us of anything, only tell us the facts. We need words, images, videos, podcasts, and other media to spread the message about the beauty, fragility, history, and wonder of the Arctic; we need urgent and convincing calls to action and engagement; and we need people who understand how to lead others forward into futures that will be radically different from any our world has known.

I would be thrilled to contribute to that effort in a modest way, through serving on the Board and through amplifying UArctic's model of collaborative and forward-thinking engagement in an absolutely unique region of the world. My background of many years in Dartmouth university administration has taught me how to navigate complex operational, strategic, and financial challenges; I am a trusted and discrete thought partner to senior administrators like the President and the Provost; and, as a scholar, I am inherently curious about new frontiers. Again, please accept my thanks for considering my nomination to the Board. I look forward to joining you and learning from you all.

Warmly,

Barbara Will
4 February 2024