Martha McGinnis is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Linguistics Department. Her main research area is syntactic and morphological theory. She received her BA and MA from the University of Toronto, and her PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, working with Noam Chomsky, among others. Her first tenure-track position was at the University of Calgary, and she moved to UVic in 2010 with her family. She is an Associate Editor of the journal *Linguistic Inquiry*, and has served as Secretary of the Canadian Linguistic Association. She chaired the UVic Faculty Association's Constitution and Bylaws Committee when it drafted revisions to the Association's governing documents following certification, then worked as Secretary of the Association from 2017–2020. Before becoming Chair of the Linguistics Department, she also served several terms as Undergraduate Advisor and Curriculum Chair, and will be serving as acting Chair of the Humanities Committee on Academic Standards and Curriculum while the Associate Dean Academic is on leave in 2023.

It is often said that academic freedom is an essential principle of a democratic society, but less widely recognized that this core value is primarily enabled by collegial governance. All members of the UVic community are responsible for doing their part to support the scholarly integrity of the university. Senate plays a critical role in shaping the university's academic mission, and an active and engaged faculty presence on Senate is important to ensure that its decisions are informed by the insights of those directly engaged in research and teaching.