

President's Report to Senate March 2022

I would like to begin my report this month by highlighting some important events and dates in our community.

March is Francophonie Month (*Mois de la francophonie*). At Laurentian, the Francophonie is at the core of our identity and our community, and sets us apart. During Francophonie Month, I invite you to take part in everyday life in French, attend cultural events of the Francophonie, and reflect on the essential role of the French language and culture in Northern Ontario and our country as a whole.

March 20th, just a few days away, is the International Day of the Francophonie. Let us take this opportunity to celebrate the Francophonie in our world, our country, and our province.

I would like to highlight that the Francophone Advisory Committee was recently created to provide guidance on Francophone issues, and put forth recommendations on the implementation of strategies to ensure an adequate offer of French-language programs and services at Laurentian. I am convinced that this committee will contribute to the actualization of our University's bilingual mandate.

On February 25th, I had the honour of attending the Laurentian Moose Hide Campaign Event organized by the Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre. This campaign is a reconciliation movement seeking to end violence against women and children. Leading up to this event, moose hide pins were distributed across the community to be worn by those who seek to end violence against women. These pins are also important conversation starters about the role that each and every one of us can play in ending violence against women and children. The National Moose Hide Campaign day is planned for May 12, 2022, and I encourage members of the Laurentian Community to participate by wearing a Moose Hide pin, getting informed and reflecting on what role you can play in supporting this movement.

On March 8th, we also celebrated International Women's Day. This year's theme was "Break the bias" which is about working towards a diverse, equitable and inclusive world free of stereotypes and discrimination. On this day, Laurentian's Presidential Advisory Committee on the Status of Gender Equity along with the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office's Consent is Simple Team awarded its "Outstanding Women of Laurentian University Award" to three women who stand out for their ability, determination and courage. My sincere congratulations once again to Nasim Yavari, Dr. Elizabeth Wenghofer and Suzanne Pharand (posthumous award).

As we are now past the midway point of the semester, final examinations for the Fall/Winter and Winter 2022 courses are coming up shortly. It has been a challenging semester including a transition from virtual to face-to-face learning as restrictions begin to ease. I wish to recognize and thank faculty and staff who are working so hard to provide the best possible experience for

students under the continuing pandemic and I wish to recognize our students who are working hard and navigating these continuing challenges.

Update on Laurentian's Response to COVID-19

On February 28th, faculty, staff and students returned to campus with the resumption of face-to-face learning. The return has gone well and I would like to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of everyone for your commitment to health and safety. I also want to take this opportunity to remind everyone to stay home if you are not feeling well and experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Laurentian's Health and Wellness Clinic continue to offer COVID-19 booster shots, rapid tests for symptomatic people and can provide advice if you have questions about what to do if you are feeling unwell.

Although Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health recently announced that COVID-19 vaccination policies in post-secondary institutions would no longer be required and after March 21 mask mandates in the province would be lifted for most organizations, Laurentian will maintain its Policies on COVID-19 Vaccination and Face Coverings at least until the end of the Winter term. This means all who attend the Laurentian campus, at least until April 30th will be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and will be required to wear a medical mask, KN95 or N95 masks when on campus.

Our decision aligns Laurentian with the Ontario University sector, where all have agreed to maintain vaccination and mask policies until at least the end of the current term in order to minimize uncertainty and disruption and to continue to support our students, staff, faculty and university communities.

We will continue to consult with Public Health Sudbury and Districts before any changes are made to our vaccination or mask policies. The health and safety of students, faculty, and staff will continue to be the number one priority. We also commit to communicating any changes in policies to our community well in advance of any changes taking effect.

Laurentian University Strategic Plan 2023-2028

As Laurentian continues through the CCAA process, one of the conditions of the financing made available by the province is that Laurentian undertake a strategic planning process that will lead to the adoption of a new Laurentian strategic plan that will guide the university over the next five years as it emerges from creditor protection. This plan is to be focused and forward looking and to tightly link its goals and objectives with the University's financial plan.

This plan will be collegially developed under the guidance of a steering committee that will include representatives of both internal and external stakeholder groups. Faculty representatives will be identified through a senate election process, and student representatives through the student associations. Staff and other stakeholders will also be represented on the steering committee. The goal is for a steering committee of 15-18 that will meet regularly to guide the planning process. The steering committee will guide the efforts of an externally recruited consulting group with expertise in strategy planning that will lead the consultations and conversations that will provide the foundations for a plan. The procurement of this group has been approved in the order extending the stay of proceedings this past January. I truly look

forward to working with the steering committee and the entire Laurentian community in developing this key roadmap to the future of Laurentian University.

Next Steps in Governance and Organizational Transformation

With the NOUS reports providing a comprehensive series of recommendations with respect to both governance and operations of the university now released ([link to the reports here](#)), it is incumbent upon everyone in the organization to turn their minds to consideration of the recommendations and to how the reports can be utilized to enhance the governance and operations of the university. This work was undertaken independently under the oversight of the Chief Redevelopment Officer based on terms agreed to back at the end of April 2021. It is important to recognize that the reports provide an in-depth analysis of Laurentian and contain thoughtful recommendations that must be discussed and seriously considered at all levels of the organization. At the same time, the reports contain recommendations rather than directives and thus there must be a fulsome discussion as the recommendations are considered and tailored to the best advantage of Laurentian University. The Senate has a very important role to play in this discussion, and I look forward to a robust, collegial discussion on changes that are needed to improve the governance and overall success of this University.

Laurentian University Open House

I am happy to report that this past weekend we held our first in-person Open House since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. On Saturday, March 12, we welcomed future students on campus to showcase the Laurentian experience. Students were able to participate in personalized campus tours, witness sample lectures and engage in an academic and student services fair where students and their parents were able to speak with professors, student ambassadors, student support staff as well as members of the liaison team. There truly was a buzz and excitement in the air with an enthusiastic turn out. I wish to thank everyone who participated in and supported the open house and look forward to seeing many of the prospective students on campus this fall.

CCAA Updates

We are continuing to make progress as we move through the CCAA proceeding. The next significant step as we look forward to an exit from the CCAA process is the development of a Plan of Arrangement on terms that will be acceptable to our creditors. This is currently underway, and we are working towards having a plan that can be included in court materials to be served in May, prior to the expiry of the current stay period. The determination of creditor claims continues to take place under the oversight of the monitor, and Board renewal remains a focus at the Board of Governors. All of our efforts for the next two months will be focused on developing a Plan of Arrangement, since emerging from the CCAA process as a fully-restructured university is our top priority.

Kudos

1. Much success has recently been achieved by our Laurentian Voyageurs. In February, Laurentian hosted the OUA Nordic Ski championships that welcomed 135 skiers from 11 different schools. Maddie Norman was named an all-star OUA. Well done, Maddie! What's more is that LU's Women's curling team qualified for the quarterfinal of their OUA Championship tournament. Though they lost this game, Abby Deschene was recognized for

her superb play and was named an OUA All-Star as the First Team Skip. Teammate Keira McLaughlin was named an OUA second team all-star. Congratulations to both, and to their teammates, Julia Deklein and Mya Smith, for an excellent season. Looking ahead, the Voyageur Women's basketball team head to the playoffs tomorrow, and this coming weekend, track athletes and Men's curling will compete at their OUA championships. We wish all athletes safe and fun games!

2. Congratulations are also in order to the dedicated Indigenous Student Affairs team. In the month of February, they hosted two virtual events: The Red Dress Campaign and the Moose Hide campaign. While the Red Dress campaign brought heightened awareness to the staggering number of murdered and missing Indigenous women across Canada, the Moose Hide campaign and reconciliation movement sought to end violence against women and children. Thank you, Indigenous Student Affairs, for your efforts in planning these events that honoured these important campaigns.
3. I'd equally like to recognize the efforts of the Laurentian University African and Caribbean Student Association. LUACSA has made a tremendous contribution to the Laurentian student body, as well as to the Greater Sudbury community by offering opportunities in the month of February - Black history month, to celebrate and learn about Black history. Black Canadians and their communities have contributed substantially to the prosperous nation that Canada is today, and Black History Month brings attention to this.
4. Kudos are also due for Kyle Davidson, a Sports Administration alumni who has recently been named General Manager of the Chicago Blackhawks. We are proud of this outstanding milestone in Kyle's career. Kyle graduated in 2010.
5. I would also like to acknowledge that on March 11 and 12, 2022, Laurentian Relay for Life hosted its eighth annual event. Relay for Life raises awareness and funds in support of the battle against cancer. Fundraising efforts benefit the Canadian Cancer Society. This Relay for Life was preceded by March 6th's virtual Hope Ceremony that honoured cancer survivors, those living cancer-free or those living with the disease. The compassion of students on this organizing committee is inspirational and speaks volumes to the kindness for one another, present within the Laurentian community.
6. Congratulations to the Micro-credential team in the Centre for Continuing Learning! They were successful in obtaining funding through the Ontario Micro-credentials Challenge Fund to develop two new non-credit Micro-credentials: Registered Behaviour Technician (RBT) and Soins palliatifs. RBT is based on the task list published by the Behavior Analysts Certification Board and successful completion of this 4-course program will allow participants to write the RBT certification exam. The team is also developing "Soins palliatifs", a series of five courses that cover topics from ethics and legalities to end of life care. Miranda McKenzie, an instructional designer, and Shawn Patterson, an online course technician, deserve high praise for the work they have put into these two rapid training programs in a very short period of time (between January and April 2022). Thanks to them, these two non-credit micro-credentials will be ready for a spring 2022 offering.
7. Frantz Siméon, Ph.D., professor of social work in the School of Nursing and Allied Health received a Catalyst Grant - Official Language Minority Communities in Health Research from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research for his project titled "*Soutien aux proches aidants francophones en situation minoritaire dans le contexte rural nordique : la contribution de la dynamique communautaire partenariale du Nord de l'Ontario au vieillissement à domicile*". The research team includes three other Laurentian researchers:

Patrick Timony, Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research, Dr. Sara Torres, and Dr. Sylvie Larocque of the School of Nursing and Allied Health. With this one-year grant, Dr. Siméon and his research team will study what the community partnership dynamic contributes to home support provided to Francophones in Northern Ontario, from the viewpoint of natural caregivers and support organizations, in terms of service access issues.

8. Students in the MSoA recently saw their skating pavilion exhibits hit the ice. Kudos to these students for seeing their projects through from the drawing board all the way to their final exhibition. Students were also featured in a CBC Radio interview with Markus Schwabe. Congratulations!
9. Kudos to Bio-Mine Ltd and its chief scientific officer, LU School of Natural Sciences professor, Dr. Vasu Appana, who have won \$67,000 from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund to support work to develop fast, efficient and affordable COVID-19 testing kits.