

President's Report to Senate June 2022

As we head into summer, I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of everyone in the Laurentian community over the past academic year. I also want to encourage everyone to take the opportunity to have some away time, some down time, time to pursue your outside passions and to spend with family and friends. This has been an incredibly challenging year, but I am convinced that everyone's efforts will prove successful in providing a strong and sustainable future for Laurentian, a Laurentian in which pride will be rebuilt and service to our students and community will grow.

I also want to take the opportunity to give a shout out to Mechanical Engineering and the group of Mechanical Engineering students who have won the internationally recognized "Over the Dusty Moon Challenge" put on by the Colorado School of Mines. The competition was judged by field experts from Lockheed Martin, ICON and NASA. Congratulations to Alexander Mackenzie, Adam Farrow, Ethan Murphy, Goran Hinic, Christian (Quade) Howald, Kevan Sullivan, Kyle Wulle, Reid Ludgate, Dr. Markus Timusk, and Greg Lakanen. This is a terrific testament to the quality of our students and the engagement and support of our faculty and staff in providing an outstanding academic experience.

Convocation

With nine convocation ceremonies from May 30th through June 2nd, held for the first time in nearly three years, close to 2,000 Laurentian graduates and their families celebrated the successful completion of their degrees. I know many senators had the opportunity to attend convocation, and in the case of at least some of our student senators, receive their degrees. This was truly a positive week of celebration, a time to focus on students and their future hopes and dreams. This week is a great reminder of our purpose in guiding students through their educational journey - it is why we are here. These ceremonies also highlighted the tremendous efforts of our faculty members and staff who have supported these students throughout their journeys. Graduates who have now become alumni are quick to credit the nurturing relationships they formed with faculty members. Each ceremony was memorable in its own right, and there were many special moments, from the husband and wife duo of Mark & Stefanie Armstrong, to the parents seeing their children in the crowd, to the Solomon-Straub family celebrating their fourth-generation of Laurentian graduates cross the stage. I do encourage everyone to read more of our Graduate Spotlights, a series in which our graduating students were individually profiled.

These ceremonies created special moments for our graduates and I would like to recognize the many faculty, staff, and volunteers who dedicated their time to making these ceremonies possible. Additionally, a special thank you to Dr. John Gunn and the leaders of the Environmental Sustainability Committee who graciously provided seedlings to graduates all week long. I am proud to be part of a community where faculty, staff and students wholeheartedly celebrate and support each other.

Congratulations to all of our recent graduates, we will be sure to follow your future successes closely and celebrate them at every opportunity.

Applications update

The High School 101 OUAC confirmation date of June 1, 2022 has passed. It is the earliest date an Ontario high school student is required to respond to an Ontario university's offer of admission. As of the confirmation date, Laurentian typically receives between 90-95% of its high school confirmants, however, other applicant types (mature/transfer, online, international, graduate) do not have a deadline, and will continue to confirm through the summer months.

As of June 13th, Laurentian's admission data indicates that year over year, high school confirmants are -28% behind last year. Transfer, Mature and Internal confirmants are ahead of this same time last year at +22%. International undergraduate confirmants are showing more positively with a year over year increase of +37%. Domestic Graduate confirmants are also up year over year +41%, and International Graduate confirmants are up +260% year over year. Domestic fully online degree programs overall continue to show a year over year increase in confirmants at +63%.

June through August are critical months for our fall entry and applicants will continue to confirm their intent to register with Laurentian next fall. With fall registration opened, continuing to support the students accepting offers of admission and our returning students is critical as not only are they saying "yes" to Laurentian, but reconfirming their commitment to our university. These students understand that while there have been challenges, there are exceptional programs and faculty members available to them at Laurentian.

Update on Laurentian's Response to COVID-19 and masking policy

Laurentian continues to participate in waste water monitoring for signs of the SARS-2 virus and has had no detectable levels in its waste water since the middle of May. During this time we have also consulted with various members of our campus community and Public Health authorities to inform our decision to pause Laurentian's Policy on Face Coverings effective June 13, 2022.

The pause on the Face Covering policy also corresponds with the beginning of the second term of the Spring Semester. As we move forward into this semester, classroom density and the on-campus population is normally quite low, with most classes including fewer than 20 students.

Although we have determined, through consultation and based on waste water testing results, that this pause can be implemented while maintaining the health and safety of our campus community, we continue to recommend you wear a mask when gathering with groups of people. We also ask that everyone respects the choices of those around you as some in our community will continue to wear masks when gathering while others may choose not to.

As I have done in the past, I would continue to caution that this pause may be temporary, and could be reversed based on Public Health guidance.

I would also like to remind the Laurentian community that the Health and Wellness Clinic on campus continues to offer COVID-19 vaccines every Wednesday. Laurentian will also continue to work with Public Health Sudbury and Districts to have a mobile vaccine clinic on campus at the beginning of the fall term when students begin to return to residence.

CCAA Updates

On May 23 Laurentian served motion materials in support of an extension of the stay in the CCAA proceedings, which included a letter outlining additional support offered by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) with a value of up to \$53.5 million. This was welcomed news, and will help facilitate Laurentian's emergence from CCAA proceedings.

On May 30 Laurentian obtained an Order from the Court extending the stay of proceedings to September 30. There will be further activity over the summer as we finalize the Plan of Arrangement, obtain an Order from the Court authorizing a meeting of creditors to be scheduled, and the Monitor prepares and sends out detailed packages to all creditors. Over the next four months, Laurentian will present its Plan of Arrangement and schedule a meeting to give all creditors an opportunity to vote on the Plan. These steps are critical milestones as we continue to advance towards emerging from CCAA restructuring. Detailed packages explaining the terms of the Plan will be mailed to all creditors well in advance of the meeting.

In parallel with the development and presentation of a Plan of Arrangement, Laurentian and its advisors will be working hard over the summer to put in place the documentation that will be required to ensure a successful exit from CCAA proceedings. That includes the long-term financing that will replace the \$35 million in existing financing made available by MCU. Laurentian, its advisors and the Monitor will also continue to determine all outstanding claims filed within the claims process, for purposes of voting on the Plan and to receive distributions under the Plan.

Updates on all aspects of the CCAA restructuring will continue to be posted on the Monitor's website.

Fall 2022

Looking ahead to our next academic year, Fall 2022 already has many activities and events planned to welcome our first-year students to campus for the first time, as well as welcome back our returning students. Ahead of this, the team in Student Success is holding multiple Registration Clinics throughout the summer. Fall Orientation will begin on September 7th and we will look forward to the start of our 2022-2023 academic year.

Planning for the full return of our staff and faculty is also underway as we plan to host "Hello 2022" to welcome all with a pancake breakfast, as well as Academic Orientation Day with a faculty meet and greet on September 6th. More information on these events, and other related events, will be shared as it becomes available.

Kudos

1. First, I would like to congratulate the many students who graduated this Spring, as well as all those who contributed to the success of the nine memorable ceremonies we were pleased to host in person and on campus at the end of May and beginning of June. I commend every graduate whose adaptability and resiliency enabled their success. You earned your moment. From the initial days of anticipation and uncertainty as you arrived on campus for the first time, to the stress of final exams and projects, you conquered all challenges that awaited you during this phase of your academic journey. I would also like to take the opportunity to commend our faculty and staff for doing everything possible to support student journeys at Laurentian University. Well done!

2. Also on the topic of convocation, I extend my thanks to Laurentian's Environmental Sustainability committee, who distributed gifts that grow to convocating students. Beautiful pine seedlings donated by Vale and packages of wildflowers brought smiles to all. The trees that graduates took home to plant will serve as a lasting reminder of their momentous day, which they will be able to share with loved ones for the next 70 years (the lifespan of the tree). Although the trees at convocation have a sentimental purpose, they also serve as critical tools in tackling climate change. Laurentian University alumni are proud to be a part of a globally known greening story and the UN Decade of Restoration's global initiatives. Congratulations to all who are playing their parts in efforts that have resulted in significant land reclamation, better air quality, and cleaner water.
3. I extend my congratulations to the Laurentian Lunars: a team of eight Spring 2022 Mechanical Engineering and mechatronics graduates who bested students from across the globe at the "Over the Dusty Moon Challenge," hosted by the Colorado School of Mines. The competition found six finalist teams from the United States, Germany, Poland, Australia, and of course, Canada (the Lunars), immerse themselves in the challenge of producing a prototype that could effectively transport regolith (or in other words sand or fine aggregate) in outer space. Participants from Laurentian included Ethan Murphy, Adam Farrow, Alexander MacKenzie, Christian (Quade) Howald, Goran Hinic, Kevan Sullivan, Kyle Wulle and Reid Ludgate. Congratulations as well to the School of Engineering, and to faculty advisors Dr. Markus Timusk and Greg Lakanen who supported the development of this project.
4. I am also pleased with the announcement that our Laurentian community shared at the end of May regarding the Ministry of Health providing funding of \$800,884 to Laurentian University to develop an Accelerated Critical Care Nursing educational program in partnership with Health Sciences North. The University's nursing and *sciences infirmières* programs have benefited from long term affiliations with HSN. For over 50 years, nursing students have successfully completed clinical placements at HSN in both official languages. The two institutions have also consistently collaborated in research ventures that support the health of the Northern Ontario community. Congratulations to all those involved with this project!
5. I am happy to highlight that Registration for Fall and Winter 2022-2023 opened on June 8th for our students. This is a great achievement! In recent history, we had opened registration only in late June or July. I am also happy to report that there have been major improvements in the processes and there are more to come for next year. Kudos to the whole team who made this possible with their hard work!
6. Congratulations to the Orientation Team, led by Student Association Leaders, and members of the Student Success Team, Corie Flesch, Christina Laroque, Andrew Dale, and Michelle Brunette, for launching Fall 2022 Orientation to help new students make the important transition to university studies. The 2022 Orientation events include Registration Clinics from June 9 - September 6, Academic Orientation Day, Carnival Day, Residence event, International Student Orientation, events led by the SGA, AEF, Pride, Indigenous Student Affairs, Laurentian Online, Graduate Studies, Peer Wellness, Accessibility, Varsity, and more. The full calendar will be posted at [;laurentian.ca/orientation](http://laurentian.ca/orientation).
7. Today, on National Indigenous Peoples Day, it was announced that the Maamwizing Indigenous Research Institute (MIRI) at Laurentian University has received \$430,832 in funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's (SSHRC) Race,

Gender and Diversity Initiative. This grant was awarded to Dr. Joey-Lynn Wabie, with funds to support a three-year project, titled: *Maamwizing: a hub for Indigenous community-driven research*, with two local Anishinaabe community partners' (Akinomooshin Inc. & White Buffalo Road Healing Lodge Inc.) This is excellent news for our Laurentian community, and I commend all those involved.

8. I would like to acknowledge a job well done to the Indigenous Student Affairs Office who last week, hosted in collaboration with the Legacy of Hope Foundation, an exhibit highlighting the efforts of Dr. P. H. Bryce, a medical officer with the Department of Indian Affairs, who reported on the high number of deaths of First Nation children at Residential Schools in the early 1900s. All were welcome to attend, and see the impressive exhibit in the Round Round at the Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre. The activities commemorating National Indigenous Peoples Day continued today and I would like to once again recognize the important work of our Indigenous Student Affairs team. Miigwech.
9. Thank you and congratulations as well to all those who supported and took part in the Pride Crosswalk repainting in front of the R.D.-Parker Building on campus, last Tuesday. In June, we celebrate Pride month, and this repainting of the rainbow crosswalk reflects the new inclusive pride flag, which emphasizes the inclusion and progression within the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Well done to all supporting these critical inclusive initiatives.
10. Dr. Patricia Orozco from the School of Business Administration received a Faculty Mobility for Partnership Building Program grant from EduCanada. The grant provides Canadian professors with opportunities to create or expand partnerships with Latin American and Caribbean post-secondary institutions through short-term teaching and/or research activities. With this \$7,000 grant, Dr. Orozco will travel to Arequipa, Peru, to develop a partnership with the Universidad Catolica de Santa Maria and participate as an Entrepreneurship and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) lecturer for a period of three weeks at the "E-Quipu Santa Maria" and "INNICIA" program, both entrepreneurship/innovation programs that are part of the university.
11. Finally, congratulations to the newly appointed interim Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Dr. Parveen Nangia. Dr. Nangia steps into the office to replace Dr. Joël Dickinson who has been appointed President and Vice-Chancellor of Mount Saint Vincent University. Dr. Nangia, a Full Professor, is well-positioned to lead the Faculty of Arts through an important time in its evolution. As a faculty member at Laurentian University for nearly 20 years, he has filled multiple leadership roles within the Faculty of Arts. I look forward to working with Dr. Nangia in this new capacity. I also congratulate Dr. Joël Dickinson on her new and exciting appointment. Laurentian will miss you, and we wish you well in your new role.