



## **President's Report to Senate - November 2024**

Aanii, Hello, Bonjour,

With today's November Senate meeting we are just a few weeks away from the beginning of our exam period and the closing of the year. At this time, there is both much to be proud of and much left to do. A new addition to my report will see sections reserved for both the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, Dr. Malcolm M. Campbell and Vice-President, Research, Dr. Tammy Eger, to provide updates from their portfolios.

### **Congratulations**

#### **Open House**

The very successful event saw an increase in participation for the third year in a row, with the event growing to 917 people joining us on campus to learn about Laurentian. I am thankful for the many staff, faculty and students who made this event possible and delivered an exceptional experience for our future students. Based on the comments shared with me from those who attended, the Laurentian team made a great impression.

#### **Convocation**

Our fall convocation ceremonies were also major events that featured many smiles and a bright future. We were very proud to be able to recognize the hundreds of graduates and their families, and to name Jason F. McLennan and Tom Blake as honorary doctorates. This event would not have been possible without the dedication and support of the staff who led the event or the participation of so many faculty members who joined to honour their students and now graduates.

#### **Treaties Recognition Week**

Another key event on campus took place just two weeks ago, as we spread awareness and shared the significance of Treaty Week on campus. I would like to congratulate students of Dr. Elizabeth Carlson-Manathara's Strategies for Social Change course (Julia Cimino, Mili Patel, Chelsea Chamberland, Isabelle Mallette, and Savannah Beauchamp) for organizing information booths to share the importance of this week. Equally important was the work of Laurentian University's Office of Academic and Indigenous Programs as it partnered with Robinson Huron Waawiindamaagewin to deliver events throughout the week.

#### **Maamwizing Conference**

The unique [conference featuring community-driven research with, by, and for Indigenous Peoples](#) took place on November 15 and 16 here at Laurentian University. I would like to congratulate the conference team for an exceptional event.

Director: Nicole Wemigwans, ABD, Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory,  
Associate Director: Randy Pitawanakwat, Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory,  
Secretary/Treasurer: Paula Pitawanakwat, Serpent River First Nation,  
Full Member Representative: Sharlene Webkamigad, Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory,  
Indigenous Community Member at Large: Taryn Michel, Michipicoten First Nation,  
Allied Member Representatives: Dr. Elizabeth Carlson-Manathara,  
Graduate Student Representative: Carla Petahtegoose, Atikameksheng First Nation,



Partnered Representative: Ophelia O'Donnell, Henvey Inlet First Nation.

### **Students compete on international stage**

Congratulations to third-year [Sports Administration Students](#), Adam Mutuchky, Carson Harvey, Jordan Willmott, and Cooper Fontaine. These students represented Laurentian University as the only Canadian participants among 11 teams from around the world at the virtual National Sports Forum Challenge Cup where they bested many large US-based universities, ultimately placing runners-up to a seasoned Australian team.

### **Strategic Plan**

As Senators have already seen, the draft key performance indicators for the Strategic Plan have been shared for your review and feedback. I hope that you will be able to take a moment to contribute your thoughts to this important process. We greatly value your input and feedback as we establish the criteria against which the success of the Strategic Plan's implementation will be measured.

### **Transformation**

After a national search, Laurentian University was proud to welcome Frédéric Nickner, who began his role as Lead Transformation Officer on November 11. He joins us from Northern College and brings extensive experience with transformation projects in postsecondary education, having previously served in leadership roles at Mohawk College and Collège Boréal. He is also a graduate of Laurentian, having completed his Masters of Business Administration via the Faculty of Management.

He will look to carry forward efforts to staff the remaining positions in the Transformation Implementation Office, in addition to immersing himself in the operational priorities outlined in the Transformation Plan.

### **Efficiency and Accountability Fund**

In February 2024, the Province announced the creation of a \$15-million Efficiency and Accountability Fund (EAF) to support third-party reviews "to identify actions institutions can take to drive long-term cost savings and positive outcomes for students and communities." Laurentian's participation in the fund is mandated and funded by the Ministry. This project will allow our institution to expand our planning and continue in our goal of building a stronger and more resilient university.

### **Credit Rating Process**

Also this month, Laurentian University undertook the process of meeting with a credit rating agency. While this was a new process for Laurentian, it is a regular annual engagement at many other institutions in the sector, and one in which the Ministry is encouraging more institutions to participate. This allows Laurentian to prepare for a future in which we may once again be eligible to borrow from institutional lenders.

*Lynn Wells, PhD*  
*President and Vice-Chancellor*



## **Update from Provost and Vice-President, Academic**

Having just passed the first 100 days as Provost and Vice-President Academic, it seems an ideal time to take stock. First, I would like to thank the Laurentian University community for such an incredible warm welcome since starting the position on August 1st. Whether it is in our infamous “bowling alley”, at the campus canteen, walking across campus, taking the elevator, participating in a conference, workshop, or community event, or during my daily early morning run through Bell Park, or walking up or down the Ramsey Lake Road hill to and from the office, I have had the great pleasure and privilege of being greeted by friendly welcomes, genuine interest in how I’m doing, and advice on how to settle in at Laurentian University and in the Sudbury region more generally. I truly feel welcomed with open arms, and it has meant the world.

The first 100 days as Provost have been an immense learning experience - about the role of Provost at Laurentian University, about Laurentian University itself, about our students, staff, and faculty, and about our place in the city, the region, the province, the country, and the world. As many of you know, this learning experience has been shaped by many events - from the moving in and welcome week for our students to our pep rally and sporting matches, from meeting with government officials on our bilingual mission to participating in our Indigenous community’s deeply moving consideration of the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, from a global OECD conference to internal workshops, from donor, alumni, and retiree meet-ups to Chamber of Commerce and industry get togethers, and from our strong presence at the Ontario University Fair to our phenomenal Open House. To top this off, the last 100 days also included three convocation ceremonies, with a convergence of graduating students, their friends and families, faculty members, alumni, and dignitaries. Prominent amongst these learning experiences has been beautiful conversations with people - as individuals, in small groups, as departments, as schools, or as entire faculties. These conversations, which have occurred “where people are” (that is, decidedly not in my office!), have created an indelible impression of where you have been, where you are now, and where you wish to go.

Principal amongst this impression is that the Laurentian University community - students, staff, faculty, and our surrounding community - share an immense passion for this university, and a boundless desire for a future filled with hope. As a “service leader” - someone who is motivated by a similar boundless desire to inspire, encourage, support, and promote the aspirations of others, so that they can realise those aspirations and live their best future - I think our desires align perfectly. It remains only for us to bring those together to start creating a hope-filled future. So, what steps is your new Provost taking in that direction?

The first step is to put in place tools to help create a hope-filled future. Our new [Academic Plan](#) will be an absolutely critical tool in achieving this. Over the past three months we have been undertaking consultations to develop our next Academic Plan. The Academic Plan will function as a guide for the next half decade - both pointing to our academic destinations, our “North Stars”, providing the principles that will function like a compass to guide us there, and outlining the key performance indicators that will help us ensure that we are making progress towards the destinations. We have been working with StrategyCorp on the consultations. Critically, working together with the Vice-President Research and the Strategic Research Plan planning committee, the Academic Plan planning committee is creating the next Academic Plan in close coordination and alignment with the creation of our next Strategic Research Plan. This approach builds off of our excellent Strategic Plan, and leverages the relationship and creates synergies



between our academic and research missions. We anticipate having a draft plan in the hands of Senators early in the new year, and an approved plan before the end of the academic year.

Our second step in helping to shape a hope-filled future is to start putting the proper supports in place to both support our people and support our navigational ability. To this end, we are in the process of creating a new Office of Faculty Support. Obviously, faculty are central and essential in delivering the university's mission and vision. Consistent with this, support of faculty is a prominent directive in the Laurentian University Strategic Plan, under the pillar: **Energizing our Academic and Research Mission**, with the specific goal: *Invest in Faculty Career Development and Success*. Support for faculty is further emphasised within the Strategic Plan, under the pillar: **Valuing and Supporting Our People**, with the specific goal: *Take Care in Developing Our People*. To address a critical gap in Human Resources (HR) support for faculty, we are creating an Office of Faculty Support. An Assistant Vice-President Faculty Support will lead this office. The role of the unit will be three-fold: 1) support the arc of a faculty member's connection with Laurentian University, including faculty hiring, onboarding, orientation, and career development; 2) support faculty leadership (with an emphasis on supporting Deans, Chairs and Directors); and, 3) steward the relationship with the faculty association, including collective agreement bargaining and oversight. The Office of Faculty support, and the hiring of a new AVP, has been proposed to and received the support of our Board of Governors. In the coming months we will be hiring the new AVP and putting the office in place. I look forward to working together with colleagues, including LUFA and LUSU leadership, to put this important office in place to better support our amazing faculty, including, for example, the 22 new faculty we recruited over the summer months and who joined us this autumn.

Another critical support that has been put in place over the last 100 days is a newly configured Strategic Enrolment Management Group (SEMG). Strategic enrolment management is fundamental to recruiting the next generation of learners at Laurentian University, and is intimately connected to our budgeting process. The newly configured SEMG is much more inclusive (16 members vs 5 last year), has new terms of reference, and well-defined goals, objectives, and timelines. The SEMG will spawn multiple working groups that will be tasked with specific elements of enrolment management, reporting to the inclusive SEMG to ensure strong collaboration, coordination, and communication.

Institutional planning and analysis is a key component of strategic enrolment management. Institutional planning and analysis also creates a variety of mission-critical reports that inform the academic mission and an evidence-based budget process. In recognition of the breadth of its role and its importance to the academic mission, the Office of Institutional Planning has been renamed the Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis (IPA) and now reports directly to the Provost. We are currently in the process of implementing a new staffing plan for the Office of IPA, including hiring a new permanent Director of IPA. The new Director of IPA should be announced before year's end.

In keeping with my approach to service leadership, my first 100 days as Provost were geared towards listening to understand, as opposed to speaking to be understood. Consistent with this, these days were dominated by listening and learning, and asking a lot of questions. Part of this included meeting together with the entire faculty cohort from 9 of our 14 schools. The next 100 days will continue on that path - listening, learning, planning collaboratively, and creating positive outcomes together. I'll be meeting with the remaining 5 schools, and then start organising our next meetings together. We'll be bringing our new Academic Plan forward for



approval and mobilise ourselves toward implementation of this plan. To this end, in the next 100 days we'll also be launching the new Office of Faculty Support and putting faculty supports in place. The next 100 days will also focus on planning our academic budget for 2025-2026 as well as our new Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA4) with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, both of which will be informed by our newly reconfigured SEMG and an elevated Office of IPA. We'll be sharing our academic budget plans and SMA4 plans with the community in the next 100 days. Most importantly, we'll also be charting our course to that hope-filled future we all desire.

*Malcolm M. Campbell, PhD*  
*Provost and Vice-President Academic*

## **Update from Vice-President, Research**

### **Strategic Research Plan Development**

Consultation sessions to inform the next Strategic Research Plan are wrapping up. The final in-person consultation session took place on November 18th. Building off the consultation sessions the Strategic Research Plan Planning Committee will work with Strategy Corp Inc to develop a draft framework for the plan which will be shared with the Senate for feedback. If you have not had an opportunity yet to share your thoughts on the next Strategic Research Plan you can send your ideas to Strategy Corp Inc at [EngageWithLU@strategycorp.com](mailto:EngageWithLU@strategycorp.com)

### **Research Funding**

Congratulations to Dr. Jackie Litzgus, the lead researcher on a \$1.35M NSERC Alliance Grant entitled, *Conservation and Restoration of Aquatic Diversity in the face of Legacy and Emerging Stressors* (CRADLES). The CRADLES project, based out of the Vale Living with Lakes Centre, includes partners from several universities and \$450,000 in funding support from industrial partners Vale and Glencore as well as in-kind support from the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. Dr. Litzgus is also the recipient of an 5-year NSERC Discovery Grant to support her research program entitled, *Population Ecology and Behaviour Inform the Conservation of Reptiles*.

Congratulations are also extended to Drs Tom Johnston, Thomas Merritt, Isabelle Cote and Kamran Eshghi on being awarded grants through Canada's federal research funding agencies for their innovative research projects.

### **Research and Innovation Fellowships**

The Office of the Vice-President Research [recently awarded three Research Fellowships](#) to recognize significant research contributions of Laurentian faculty and provide them with more time to focus on their research programs and training of students. Congratulations are extended to Dr. Kerry R McGannon in the Faculty of Education and Health, Dr. Albrecht Schulte-Hostedde, in the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Architecture and Dr. Mark Kuhlberg in the Faculty of Arts.

With the generous support from Kathryn Kril-Atkins and Michael R. Atkins two [Research Innovation Fellowships were established](#). The inaugural recipients are Professor Steven Beites and Dr. Mateus Pepinelli. As recipients of the Kathryn Kril-Atkins and Michael R. Atkins





Innovation Fellowship Professor Beites will advance a Housing Innovation and Automation project that aims to revolutionize construction by empowering local builders with the knowledge required to benefit from low-carbon prefabrication and advanced automation technologies, and Dr. Pepinelli will lead the development of a new eDNA device to track climate-induced changes across plant-pollinator networks.

### **Save the Date, Research Week 2025**

Laurentian University will celebrate Research Week 2025 between February 24-28, 2025. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to mark this week in their calendars. More information on planned events will be shared soon including information on how you can get involved to celebrate scholarly activity, research and innovation.

### **Open Calls for Applications**

The Office of the Vice-President Research currently has several calls open including the following:

- Call for nominations for the **2024-2025 Research Excellence Award**. Information on eligibility and the [criteria and procedures](#) for submitting a nomination can be found here.

**The deadline for submissions is Friday, January 10th, 2025 at 4 pm.**

- Call for nominations for **Research Fellowships** that advance Indigenous Research, Francophone Research and Research in the Faculty of Management. Click here for information on the [eligibility criteria and the nomination process](#).

**Applications are due by no later than December 10th, 2024 at 4 PM**

*Tammy Eger, PhD*  
*Vice-President, Research*