

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN SUMMARY
2007-2012

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Lakehead University is a leading research institution in Northern Ontario and plays a key role in the region's social and economic future. The University is transforming itself from a comprehensive university to a more research-intensive university. Within the next 5 – 10 years, Lakehead University's goal is to rank among the top 25 research-intensive universities in Canada, recognized as a world leader regionally, nationally and internationally in selected preeminent areas of research. The following major objectives form a crucial part of this plan:

- to maintain and enhance research capacity in existing areas of research strength that are prominent at, or unique to, Lakehead University among Canadian universities, while allowing for the development of new emerging areas of concentration, with the long-range objective of creating new institutional centres of research excellence;
- to enhance the resource availability for all faculty to effectively pursue their research programs;
- to strengthen interdisciplinary research activities for which Lakehead University is already known;
- to provide advanced research training through the enhancement, or development of new graduate programs especially at the Ph.D. level, as well as programs for postdoctoral fellows and visiting scholars;
- to provide opportunities for development of collaborations with community and private sector partners;
- to maintain and create research uniqueness and competitiveness to attract external funding opportunities to the university; and
- to make a significant contribution to the quality of life of Canadians and/or economic development of northern Ontario and Canada.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR RESEARCH

All research and scholarship will be valued by Lakehead University. However, in order to become one of the top 25 research-intensive universities, Lakehead University recognizes that it must focus its resources towards priority research areas where we have a unique advantage and strength. Specifically, priority areas will encompass clusters of research activity which 1) present opportunities for interdisciplinary research and/or partnerships with not-for-profit organizations, government, and the private sector; 2) present an opportunity to develop new

graduate programs, especially at the PhD level, or strengthen existing graduate programs; 3) have a proven ability or strong potential of attracting peer-reviewed and other external funding; 4) will benefit northern Ontario and Canada in terms of social and economic development; and 5) will foster synergistic research activity among our researchers that will benefit Lakehead University, the region, and Canada as a whole. The following seven research priorities have been identified for further development where new resources will be allocated including Canada Research Chairs and Canada Foundation for Innovation grants (priority areas are listed in alphabetical order):

- Aboriginal Studies
- Advanced Technology Systems
- Biotechnology and Material Science
- Culture and Society
- Environmental and Resource-based Development, Education, and Policy
- Health Research Across the Life Span
- Northern Studies

Descriptions of these priority areas can be found in Lakehead University's detailed Strategic Research Plan on the following website:

http://vpresearch.lakeheadu.ca/uploads/lu_srp_senate_approved.pdf.

DISTRIBUTION OF CANADA RESEARCH CHAIRS AND CFI INVESTMENTS

The Canada Research Chairs Program provides major investments in research and scholarship at Lakehead University. Lakehead is committed to a strategy of recruiting Canada Research Chairs from outside of the university in areas of strategic research importance to the University and in support of high quality graduate programs. Canada Research Chairs do, and will be used to strengthen and/or to build specific priority research areas within the university. Canada Research Chairs and CFI investments will be allocated in a strategic manner across Faculties, responding to the priority areas identified within the University's Strategic Research Plan. There are no entitlements to specific departments or Faculties.

GENDER REPRESENTATION IN RELATION TO CRC NOMINATIONS

Lakehead University is committed to Employment Equity, welcomes diversity in the workplace and will encourage applications from all qualified applicants, including women, individuals with visible minorities, Aboriginal persons, and persons with disabilities. As the current focus of the University is to use the CRC program to *recruit* leading researchers to the University, the issue of gender representation will be addressed by ensuring that recruitment processes are not only free of barriers to nominating women to CRC positions but, indeed, are proactive with respect to the nomination of female candidates, particularly in disciplines/fields where they are under-represented in terms of these positions. This includes: ensuring appropriate gender balance on all search committees; including a statement in CRC advertisements that particularly encourages women to apply; mandatory training of all search committee chairs on process and issues related to equity and diversity, including providing information on the placement of advertisements specifically directed at women; the appointment of the University's Equity Officer to the CRC Search Committee and the review, by the Office of the Vice-President (Academic), of all search processes to ensure that each has adopted a proactive approach to the identification of qualified females for CRC positions.

PLANNING AND APPROVAL PROCESS

A Strategic Research Plan Drafting Committee composed primarily of researchers drawn from the social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, engineering, and health disciplines met frequently and consulted widely within the University community. Advice and views of faculty were solicited broadly, and incorporated wherever possible. The draft Strategic Research Plan was then submitted to the Senate Research Committee in September 2006 and was Senate approved on March 23, 2007.

ASSESSING SUCCESS IN MEETING STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN OBJECTIVES

In order to assess if our Strategic Research Plan objectives have been met, research success will be evaluated based on nationally acknowledged common criteria (i.e., increase in external research funding; increase in peer-reviewed publications; increase in number of research partnerships; increase in commercialization activities; increase in scholarly prizes; and increase in number of PhD programs). At the same time we will attempt to establish additional indicators that respect discipline specificity and varying types of scholarly output.