

**St. Francis Xavier University
Strategic Research Plan Summary
October 2010**

Major Objectives of the Strategic Research Plan

The original StFX Strategic Research Plan was developed to define the research foci of the University in the context of the Canada Research Chairs Program. This current version retains the format of the original Strategic Plan, including identifying research priorities of the University in research clusters. In this version, incremental changes have been made to update information on the research priorities of the University.

Major Thrusts for Research and Research Training

A. Oil and Gas, Oceans, and Environment Research Cluster

1. **Aquatic Ecology**
2. **Colloid Chemistry**
3. **Environmental Sciences, Climate Change and Global Warming**
4. **Modelling and Computer Simulation**

B. New Economy, Governance, and Human Development Research Cluster

5. **Culture and Human Development**
6. **Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development**
7. **Integrative Information Technology Diffusion in Small to Medium Enterprise**
8. **Public Policy and Governance**

C. Humanities Research Cluster

9. **Renaissance Humanism**

D. Human Health and Wellness Cluster

10. **Biological and Biochemical Determinants of Health**
11. **Social Determinants of Health and Health Promotion**
12. **Information Technology for improved Health Outcomes**

Development of Research and Research Training

The University has strategically placed its Canada Research Chairs (CRCs) in the clusters indicated above to facilitate research capacity development in the areas identified. One University Research Chair is situated in the Humanities Research Cluster. The allocation of Research Chairs is as shown in the table below.

Research Cluster	Affiliated Chair (S)
Oil and Gas, Oceans and Environment Research Cluster	Dr. Ricardo Scrosati, CRC in Aquatic Ecology (Tier II-Special, Biology Department) Dr. Derek Leaist, CRC in Colloidal Chemistry (Tier I, Chemistry Department) Dr. Lisa Kellman, CRC in Environmental Sciences (Tier II-Special, Earth Sciences Department and Environmental Sciences research Centre) Dr. Peter Poole, CRC in Modeling and Simulation (Tier II-NSERC, Physics department)
New Economy, Governance and Human Development	Dr. Petra Hauf, CRC in Culture and Human Development (Tier II-Special, Psychology Department) Dr. L. Jane McMillan, CRC in Indigenous People and Sustainable Communities (Tier II-SSHRC, Anthropology Department) Dr. Todd Boyle, CRC in Integrative Technologies (Tier II-SSHRC, Faculty of Business)
Humanities	Dr. Sharon Gregory, Erasmus Research Chair (Fine Arts Department)
Human Health and Wellness +	Dr. Petra Hauf, , CRC in Culture and Human Development (Tier II-Special, Psychology Department) Dr. L. Jane McMillan, CRC in Indigenous People and Sustainable Communities (Tier II-SSHRC, Anthropology Department) Dr. Todd Boyle, CRC in Integrative Technologies (Tier II-SSHRC, Faculty of Business)

+ Note: The Human Health and Wellness Research Cluster was not one of the original StFX Research Clusters but reflects an emergent interdisciplinary research area of emphasis. Several of the CRCs affiliated with the original clusters are also contributing to research in this cluster, as indicated.

The University has also continued to make faculty appointments that support the development of capacity in these research clusters. For example, the most recent (December 2009) tenure track appointment in Biology was in Evolutionary, Ecological and Developmental Biology. This appointment supports the development of laboratory based research that compliments the existing strength in field based studies of aquatic ecology, and supports the inter-disciplinary bio-fouling research under Research Cluster A. similarly, the most recent tenure-track appointment in Chemistry brings increased capacity in Synthetic Chemistry research which will support the bio-fouling group (Research Cluster A) but will also contribute to the capacity for research in the Biological and Biochemical Determinants of Health (Research Cluster D).

The University will continue to develop its infrastructure for the support of research in keeping with the priority areas (research clusters) identified in this plan.

Further the University has invested in support for research, through the appointment of an Associate Vice-President Research and related staff positions in the Research Services Group.

Inter-sectoral and inter-institutional collaborations

The Research Clusters identified above form the basis for inter-sectoral and inter-institutional collaborations. The University will continue to develop inter-institutional collaborations which result in enhanced research capacity by bringing to the research team expertise of the partner institutions which complements the expertise that exists at StFX. StFX has a long history of working with community, and is developing a record of collaborations with government agencies and private enterprise.

Examples of inter-institutional collaborations include the recent development of a successful NSERC CREATE application by an inter-institutional team led by members of the Environmental Sciences Research Cluster including the CRC in Environmental Sciences (Research Cluster A). This CREATE project will greatly enhance the capacity for training of HQP in environmental sciences. Similarly the work of the CRC in Culture and Human Development has led to the creation of regional, national and international collaborations that support the research and research training in Human Development (Research Cluster B). These collaborations increase the capacity for research in human development and enhance the University's capacity for training of HQP.

The University's strong Indigenous and community-centred social research capacity (Research Cluster B) is situated in the Departments of Anthropology, Sociology, Adult Education, Business, Economics and Political Science, the Faculty of Education, and the School of Nursing, as well as in the interdisciplinary programs of Development Studies and Aquatic Resources. These faculty members have established expertise, accomplishments and reputations in areas such as community/rural development, Indigenous peoples, First Nations archaeology, fisheries, comparative study of resource-dependent communities, First Nations governance and public policy, and together have formed the Indigenous Peoples Research Cluster and the Committee for Aboriginal and Black Student Success. Ten members of the Faculty of Education are involved in funded research related to Mi'kmaq educational policies and practices, in collaboration with the Atlantic Policy Congress of Chiefs and Mi'kmaq Kinimatnewey. The CRC in Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Communities, is greatly enhancing and developing the University's current research and educational capacity in the area of Aboriginal communities, natural resource dependent community development, documentation of local and traditional ecological knowledge, treaty rights implementation and 'action' social research.

Assessment of success in meeting the objectives

The Office of the Associate Vice-President Research will monitor success in research output, building research capacity and training of HQP using a variety of indicators. This Office will make reports on a regular basis to the Senior Administration and to the collegial bodies such as the University Senate.

Planning and Approval Process

The StFX Strategic Plan was originally developed to address the areas emphasis of the University in appointing Canada Research Chairs. Following a consultation with Departments to determine the distribution of Canada Research Chairs, the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) approved the initial Strategic Research Plan. Subsequent revisions, including this one, have retained the structure of the original Strategic Research Plan but have included incremental updates.

This current version retains the format of the original Strategic Plan, including identifying research priorities of the University in research clusters. This version contains incremental changes from the previous version (September 2008). These changes are intended to update information on the research priorities of the University, including the research thrusts of the Canada Research Chairs, to provide a more detailed description of the University's approach to research on health and wellness, and to provide concrete examples of current and planned research activities. The examples are intended to be

reasonably representative but are not an exhaustive account of research occurring in the research clusters.

The Office of the Associate Vice-President Research posted the current version of the Strategic Research Plan, in draft form, and faculty were invited to provide comments. Faculty were also notified about the draft version by presentations made at the General Faculty meeting, and meetings of the four individual Faculties (Arts, Business, Education, and Science).

The current version of the Strategic Research Plan was approved by the APPC on October 11, 2010.