

# St. Thomas University Strategic Research Plan 2014-2019

## Summary

St. Thomas University has a flourishing undergraduate liberal arts program and two professional programs, one in education, the other in social work. Within its B.A. degree, there is a strong representation of both the social sciences and the humanities. In recent years St. Thomas University has continued to build on its expertise in liberal arts to significantly expand its research and scholarship. Recent initiatives by the province of New Brunswick include the establishment of an industry/university focus that will begin to materialize at St. Thomas in the form of partnerships and scholarship/internship opportunities for student research.

Faculty have produced first-rate research during the six years covered by the University's second Strategic Research Plan (2009-2014), evidenced by faculty international and national awards, the development of two new e-journals (*Narrative Works* and the *Journal of New Brunswick Studies/Revue d'études sur le Nouveau-Brunswick*) as well as numerous books and peer-reviewed articles. In addition, faculty have produced poetry, art, and musical compositions. To date faculty research has been funded by a variety of external sources including SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR, CRC Secretariat, CIDA, DIAND, Health Canada, Justice Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Canadian Heritage, The Province of New Brunswick, the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation, the New Brunswick Council on the Arts, the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation, the Ontario AIDS Network, the National Institute for Education (US), the Donner Foundation, the McConnell Foundation, Literacy Canada, and MindCare. Faculty research has also been funded by focused internal grants financed in part by the University. The Canadian Foundation for Innovation has also contributed financial support for the provision of research infrastructure.

Existing areas of expertise that continue from the last Strategic Plan remain research interests of a broad sector of faculty. They include:

1. Qualitative Analysis\*
2. Human Rights and Social Justice\*
3. New Brunswick Studies, Atlantic Region\*
4. Narrative Studies\*
5. Global and International Studies
6. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

\* Areas marked with an asterisk currently have Tier 2 Canada Research Chairs.

The CRC plan recognizes the ongoing contributions of the fields of qualitative analysis, rural social justice, narrative studies and New Brunswick studies by the leaders in these fields, Canada Research Chairs D. Van den Hoonaard, Susan Machum, Clive Baldwin and Anthony Tremblay. The University will continue to support the faculty who work on these

research areas, by supporting the Chairs and their work, as well as individual faculty members whose research areas mirror these interests.

St. Thomas University will continue to follow internal equity guidelines in the recruitment and hiring of future CRC's as prescribed by the CRC Secretariat.

Areas new to this plan reflect new or additional concentrations of research interests among our faculty. They include:

- Health and wellness
- Human rights and diversity
- Social justice and social engagement
- Environmental sustainability
- Arts and culture

## **GOALS and OBJECTIVES**

**GOAL ONE:** *To have faculty conduct high quality research, particularly in the focal areas in which we have existing expertise.*

### **Objectives:**

- *To strengthen and extend interdisciplinary, inter-institutional and community research partnerships.*
- *To enhance the reputation of the university as a national and international leader in narrative studies.*
- *To increase the University's capacity and productivity in the field of global and international studies.*
- *To increase the University's capacity and productivity in the field of scholarship on teaching and learning.*
- *To increase research capacity in health and wellness.*
- *To enhance the current capacity on human rights research.*
- *To increase current emphasis on social justice to include emerging models of social engagement.*
- *To increase existing capacity in the field of environmental sustainability*
- *To enhance funding applications from literature and the fine arts.*

**GOAL TWO:** *To increase external and internal support for research at St. Thomas University.*

### **Objectives:**

- *To increase external resources for research and scholarship.*
- *To increase internal resources for research and scholarship.*
- *To provide researchers with information, mentoring and support.*
- *To increase the contribution to research by student researchers.*

We will measure our success when we can see that faculty's scholarly productivity continues to grow, when external research grants increase in number and size, when larger numbers of faculty are presenting at national and international conferences, when faculty-student research collaborations increase, and when awareness of our research and creative activities broadens within New Brunswick and beyond.