

President's Report to the Senate – May 13, 2011

The most important news for this month is the appointment of Dr. Rod Hanley as the new Provost and VP Academic. The appointment comes after an extensive eight month search. Dr. Hanley is in Thunder Bay this week and has already met with some of you. He comes to Lakehead from the University of Winnipeg, where he has served as Dean of Science since August 2008. He has a robust science background and experience as a faculty member, researcher, and administrative leader. In his new position he will have overall responsibility for the academic plan and quality assurance at Lakehead University.

I especially want to thank Dr. Moira McPherson for the quality of her contribution to the University during the last few months. Dr Hanley inherits a portfolio that is already actively on the move with a big start to a new Academic Plan, a Senate review of the Law School proposal, and an increased emphasis on Graduate Studies.

You are all invited to a reception after this meeting to meet with Dr. Hanley.

SUSTAINABILITY

Increasing Enrolment

Overall enrolment numbers continue to be lower than the previous year. The critical numbers for students from high school remain at approximately 1% less than last year. Further, there is a slower uptake than historical on other students so we are not yet able to report that we will be able to meet this shortfall through a higher rate of conversion. We have increased the number of events to help us achieve our targets.

While the overall remains a concern, there is good news from graduate and international students. Currently we are ahead of last year's pace for graduate studies with nearly 40 additional confirmations. International students are already ahead of last year, with the number of applications up by nearly 50% as of April 21.

Enrolment Events

Seventeen Applicant Receptions have been scheduled in key locations across Ontario from the end of April through to the middle of May. Applicants and their families are invited to attend an event in order to get their questions answered and, hopefully, confirm their offers with Lakehead. I can attest to the popularity, and the value, of these receptions as I attended the one on April 27.

Lakehead University hosted the North Superior Workforce Planning Board Regional Career Fair at the Hangar on April 29-30. The event saw approximately 3,000 attendees across the two days. Friday saw 2,000 high school students who were bussed in from 22 regional schools. Attendees were able to participate in hands-on activities at displays from both Lakehead University and Confederation College as well as representatives from regional employers and professional associations.

Enhancing Future Enrolment

For this year the university has identified two major areas that need to be updated so that they can help our commitment to enrolment growth. As a result RFP's have been recently approved for first, someone to help us upgrade the website and second, to provide us with advice on how we communicate with potential students. These two RFP's will give us the material we need to review and renew our marketing focus.

Increasing External Revenue

The first annual Standing Ovation (a successor to Lakehead Celebrates) took place on April 28, 2011 in the Agora. Guests were treated to a wide assortment of hot and cold hors d'ouvres with entertainment provided by a talented Music Department student and alumnus who each recently won awards and performed at the famous Carnegie Hall in NYC. Funds raised will be directed to the Faculty of Health and Behavioral Sciences.

Job Evaluation System

Human Resources has engaged Hay Group Ltd. to assess the current compensation levels, job evaluation system as well as salary and classification structure. Specifically, they have been asked to review the non-unionized groups (including VP's) and determine the appropriateness of the associated ranges, determine appropriate ranges, assign senior administration positions accordingly and review the suitability of the progression system within bands. Additionally, Hay Group will conduct a survey for non-union positions with applicable comparators from the Thunder Bay region and additional comparators from academic centres, considered our peers, as listed in the LUFA agreement. Finally, the current job evaluation system will be assessed to determine if the University should continue to use the system on a go-forward basis. In the event it is deemed inappropriate, Hay Group will recommend an alternative system of evaluation most applicable to a university setting.

Employee Service Recognition Reception

Last Thursday I attended a very special event, the employee service recognition reception. We honoured employees who have reached 20-, 30-, and 40-year career milestones at Lakehead University as well as those retiring in this year. The annual Staff Award was given to Tim Rowe, a selection that was applauded on both campuses.

Infrastructure - Braun Building Fire

The University has concluded the Braun Building fire construction and received the final payment from the insurance company (CURIE). The total cost of reconstruction and restitution of property damages total \$5.4 million of which the University had a \$50,000 deductible. In addition, the University spent approximately \$600K to reconfigure the space for better utilization and to upgrade items not covered by insurance such as installing an elevator, enhancing insulation, etc. Consequently, the University now has a modernized 20,000 sq. ft. "building" for \$650K. In addition to the property and building damages, there was \$477K of damages to computers which required either replacement or cleaning.

COMPREHENSIVENESS OF THE ACADEMY

Law School Proposal

This month the Law Society of Upper Canada approved unanimously the Lakehead University proposal for a new Law School. The LSUC decision follows approval of Lakehead's proposed curriculum by the Federation of Law Societies of Canada in February 2011. As a result of this approval, graduates of the program will be able to enter the Law Society of Upper Canada's Licensing Process. These responses clearly reflect the quality of our submission and I am eagerly awaiting the discussion in Senate.

Student Success Centre Update

Departments within Student Affairs are planning for the launch of the Student Success Centre which is slated to open in mid-June. This office will provide a one-stop hub to which students can go to receive assistance in a wide range of services focusing on helping students succeed. Ms. Heather Doyle has been appointed Director of the Student Success Centre.

Website Enhancement and Redesign

Plans are underway for a redesign and enhancement of the Lakehead University website with the overall goal in Phase I being to enhance the website's effectiveness as a marketing tool to a variety of prospective students and as a student-focused service

centre. The plan is for Phase I work to be completed by September. Additional work in future phases is planned.

Research

The Tier II CRC renewal applications for Judy IsekeBarnes and Aicheng Chen have been approved so they will now be able to start their second 5 year term.

The Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bio-Economy (CRIBE) awards Dr. Nancy Luckai, Faculty of Natural Resources Management, a grant worth \$150,000.

During the month of April, Lakehead University was awarded a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Aid to Small Universities Grant worth \$90,000. The funding is being provided to a project led by Dr. David Greenwood, Canada Research Chair in Environmental Education, Faculty of Education, entitled "Centre for Environmental, Sustainability, and Place Names". The objective of the project is to establish a new interdisciplinary Environmental Education Research Centre. This is an institutional grant.

DIVERSITY

Internationalization

Lakehead English Communications Program (LECP) will start with a summer term in July and August with approximately 25 students. These students are part of a bridging program of ESL and academic study over 12 months leading to full time degree programs at Lakehead in 2012. Strong support has been expressed by the Deans and we look to growing the LECP into a broad based English program both for short-term students and degree seeking students. We are planning to expand to include Orillia in early 2012.

International recruitment is ongoing and will continue throughout the summer. Lakehead University International will be hosting the first International Orientation during the last week of August.

Applications and admissions are still positive, and we will have a clearer picture of confirmed numbers over the next few weeks.

On May 10th the Chair of the Board of the ZhuHai College, Mr. Taoguang Wang and his wife visited the Thunder Bay campus. The visit was a great success and discussions are ongoing to develop an MOU including a 1+3 program to move cohorts of students

from ZhuiHai College to both Lakehead University campuses. Dr. Stevenson and Tony Williams will be visiting the college in June to finalize an MOU.

Aboriginal Programs

Last month I told you about Aboriginal Preview Day: Follow Your Dreams. I can only add to that my congratulations for this very successful event. Over 250 youth participated in this event and got a chance to interact with a broad cross-section of our community. The day introduced Aboriginal youth to the multitude of post-secondary options and supports available at Lakehead University. It is no wonder, when you look at events like this, that Lakehead has become such an important centre for Aboriginal enrolment, program development and research. We can all be proud.

Community Engagement

My staff and I have been working with the Metis Nation of Ontario towards a memorandum of understanding. We are close to agreement and are planning an announcement in late summer or early fall.

My search for a way to use technology to connect Lakehead with its communities is beginning to take shape. A proposal for the first phase of this project is currently being developed. I want to thank the members of Senate who have given us ideas for this project.