

President's Report to the Senate – November 11, 2011

October is the month for comparisons as reports by the Globe and Mail and MacLean's were published. On October 27th, MacLean's released its Annual Rankings for Canada's universities. This year, Lakehead ranks second overall among the five primarily undergraduate universities in Ontario. Thanks to the excellent work of the University's faculty and staff, Lakehead is showing clear strength in several of the Maclean's categories. Lakehead University, in comparison to Ontario undergraduate universities, finished:

- 1st in Total Research Dollars
- 1st in Social Sciences and Humanities Grants
- 1st in Library Holdings per Student
- 1st in Library Expenses
- 2nd in Student/Faculty Ratio
- 2nd in Student Awards
- 2nd in Scholarships and Bursaries
- 2nd in Library Acquisitions
- 2nd in Operating Budget
- 2nd in Faculty Awards

Overall, this shows a continuing success in comparison to our peers. One of the realities that we at Lakehead must face with these types of surveys is that our location means many people aren't very familiar with Lakehead and, therefore, our score on the objective measures is generally higher than our score on Reputation. It becomes a big part of my job, then, to help people become more aware of the advantages that Lakehead provides. Luckily I have lots of ammunition.

The Globe and Mail survey uses a grade system rather than a ranking and is based on the comments of our own students. The areas where our students gave us the highest grades were Class Sizes, Recreation and Athletics, and Student/ Faculty interaction. They are most concerned about the areas which require significant capital like buildings and facilities and information technology.

SUSTAINABILITY

Enhancing Future Enrolment

This year's recruitment theme "Live & Learn" promotes Lakehead University as a destination where students can have the best of both worlds – a world class education while having an experience of a lifetime. The Live & Learn theme and messages have been incorporated throughout all recruitment materials including the 2012 Viewbook, mylakehead website, postcards, banners, posters and recruitment presentations.

The Live & Learn message has also come to life in a new recruitment video. The new video, styled as a fictional movie trailer, uses creative film techniques (for example, camera angles, editing, and sound-track) to convey a sense of drama, suspense, and excitement about the prospects and benefits of living and learning at Lakehead University. This video is playing in Thunder Bay, Orillia, Barrie and Newmarket Cineplex theatres for 12 weeks.

Government Relations

The results of the provincial election are now in and Glenn Murray has been appointed the new Minister of Training, College and Universities. We are now looking forward to further details on three major areas of policy. First is the report on Don Drummond's study outlining potential areas for expenditure reductions in the public service. Second is the Government's approach to the White Paper on Differentiation, an issue that becomes more important with the recent publication of Academic Reform, a book that recommends even greater differentiation. Third is the publication of the criteria for satellite campuses. We will keep the Board informed as we receive information on either of these important issues.

The AUCC Annual Meeting on October 25th and 26th, was noteworthy primarily for the way that Stephen Toope, the incoming President, laid before us a call to change that included broadening the view of education, innovation in learning, an affirmation of commitment to excellence, tackling the world's big problems and building partnerships. I believe that the discussion of the role of universities in society will be broadened and enriched by his leadership.

Alumni Association

The Alumni Association held its Annual General Meeting in Toronto on October 21st. My thanks to the Staff and Executive for this effort to engage our alumni in the Greater Toronto Area.

Infrastructure – Orillia Residence

The newly constructed residence at the University Avenue campus had an opening delay, and as a result more than 100 Lakehead students were housed in local hotels for the first few weeks of the fall semester. When the students moved into their residence rooms in late September, they were faced with further inconveniences as construction of the residence and cafeteria continued. It appears, however, that the issues are finally being resolved.

The Residence building was ready for occupancy on September 30, 2011. The 110 students have moved into the 2nd, 3rd & 4th floors. The building is not 100 % complete with the 5th, 6th, & 7th floors only being turned over last week.

The Cafeteria/Bookstore has achieved substantial completion. The Cafeteria was opened for the first customers on October 15th. The contractor is currently working on the interior fit out for the Bookstore, which will be ready for use for the start of classes in January 2012.

Orillia Open House

The community will have an opportunity to visit and explore the University Avenue campus and its new facilities at an Open House event on November 10. The event will be held in conjunction with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) “Open Doors – Open Knowledge” celebrations taking place across Canada from November 4th – 13th.

COMPREHENSIVENESS OF THE ACADEMY

Faculty of Law

I had a special opportunity to speak at the Thunder Bay Law Association Fall Conference luncheon on October 21st. I received a warm reception and was able to speak about the progress with the Faculty of Law and provide a sense of the next steps. I am eager to work with them over the next two years as we bring this dream to fruition. In the meantime, the advertisements for the new Dean of the Faculty have now appeared in several publications.

Student Recruitment

Recruiters have been engaged in active recruitment since the middle of September. To date, 428 high schools and colleges throughout Ontario have been visited. Additional school visits will continue throughout the month of November.

On October 22nd, over 500 prospective students and family members from all across Central and Southern Ontario attended the Preview Day event at the Orillia Campus. Highlights of the event included tours of the academic building and residence, interactive sessions, mock lectures and a student life/academic fair.

Student Experience

Workshops offered to enhance Student Success are ongoing with the session on "note-taking" being in high demand - with both students requesting additional such workshops and faculty encouraging students to attend these workshops. Additional note-taking workshops have been added throughout the month of October.

RESEARCH

Research Infosource published its annual list of the top 50 universities. We are included again, with over \$17M in research funds but dropped a few places to #36 for this year.

Major Research Grants/Contracts Awarded (Sept. – Oct. 2011)

Dr. Josephine Tan (Department of Psychology) received funds from the Bell Let's Talk Community Fund to assess the feasibility of developing a psychology clinic on the Thunder Bay campus. Establishment of a psychology clinic at Lakehead will support the healthcare system in Thunder Bay and Northern Ontario in a number of ways. The clinic will help train competent professional psychologists in evidence-based clinical services and research, and extend existing mental health care services in the community. By offering professional development opportunities for health professionals, the clinic will also improve the retention rate of clinical psychologists in Northern Ontario.

Robert Dekker, BRI, and Aicheng Chen, in collaboration with Greenfield Ethanol, received \$897,000 from CRIBE to develop bio-refining processes and bio-products from biomass and to extract value-added chemicals from lignocellulosic process streams.

Robert Stewart, Geography, was awarded a total of \$383,680 by the Nipigon Bay Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Public Advisory, Environment Canada and the OMNR for the Kama Creek Coaster Brook Trout Restoration Project.

Robert Stewart, Geography, was awarded \$220,000 by the Environment Canada Great Lakes Sustainability Fund for the Thunder Bay-Nipigon Bay Areas of Concern RAP Coordination Agreement.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The first two President's Roundtable Sessions for Economic Development were successfully held in October. One was general and included Economic Development Professionals and the other was on Forestry. Another nine sector specific sessions are planned over the coming year.

One new patent application has been filed regarding the efficient house construction method invented by Dr. Bryan Poulin (Business Administration) and Dr. Tony Gillies (Civil Engineering).

DIVERSITY

Internationalization

Overall international enrolment, to date, is up to 163 students this year from 121 for an overall increase of 42. It is composed of 96 undergraduate and 67 graduate students. New undergraduate students increased by 120% from the previous year while overall graduate students increased by over 25%.

At the same time, the international focus has already resulted in an increase of Lakehead exchange students studying elsewhere. The goal of the Study Abroad program is a balanced program (equal numbers of incoming and outgoing students) and to increase the number of Lakehead students participating in a significant international experience each year. Last year the number of students studying abroad increased from six to sixteen.

The University introduced English as a Second Language this fall to a few select students. Plans are underway for an expansion in the winter session and a full roll-out next summer.

Access

Last month I met with Jack McMaster, Director of Education of the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board, which covers most of Northwestern Ontario including Kenora, Dryden and Sioux Lookout, and Raymond Théberge, Assistant Deputy Minister of French-Language, Aboriginal Learning and Research. It was a great meeting as we start the process of getting public funding for this important initiative. Jack, in particular, was very excited about the proposed direction we are taking in developing access.

At about the same time several members of Lakehead's staff met with the Thunder Bay Public School Board to discuss the process by which we can work together to build a tuition credit program for eligible students in Thunder Bay. The key principles are that the focus will be on a few public schools in the inner city. The School Board will develop the programs, Lakehead will ensure that the University is available for part of each program, and students, once in the program, will continue to be tracked and to earn tuition credits throughout their school years. The next meeting is planned for November 10th.

I was also very pleased to meet with the Lieutenant-Governor and tell him some of what we are doing. He was very gracious and very interested, a fact that may show some potential for future co-operation.

Community Engagement

On October 2nd and 3rd, I visited the community of Kenora. During my visit there, I had an opportunity to host a Faculty of Law dinner with the Kenora Law Association regarding the new Faculty of Law. I also participated in a Community stake-holders breakfast organized by the Kenora Community Economic Development Commission where I presented my vision for Lakehead University. I specifically discussed the Access fund and engaging First Nations youth.

The grant request for the plan to use technology to bring Lakehead offerings to students in smaller Northwestern Ontario communities passed the approval-in-principle stage. We are now working on the detailed proposal with the expectation that this will be completed in late winter or early spring.