



# Provost's Report to Senate

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**April 2020**

## SMA 3 Update

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities announced on April 8th, 2020 that the deadline for signing SMA 3 agreements would be deferred to enable Universities to focus resources on addressing COVID-19. The Ministry has committed to working with individual institutions to proceed with an agreement focused on student success once Ontario has reasonably moved past the current COVID-19 outbreak. At that time, Lakehead will resume our work and consultations with MCU to finalize the University's SMA 3.

## Academic Plan Framework

Lakehead University's 2019-2024 Academic Plan is built around four interconnected Academic Priorities, which represent key opportunities for transformational change at Lakehead over the next five years: **high-quality programs; innovative and impactful research, scholarship, and creative activities; commitment to social responsibility; and Anishnaabe Miikana Gichi Kendaasiwin.**

A number of Academic Strategies have been developed to support these Academic Priorities with the goal of aligning with Lakehead's Academic Statement and advancing the implementation of the University's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. Each Academic Strategy includes a number of actions to be completed over the course of the 2019-2024 Academic Plan.

In Fall 2019, the Provost's Report to Senate was redesigned to align to the 2019-2024 Academic Plan.

## Delivering High-quality Programs

### Aboriginal Initiatives

The Aboriginal Initiatives Orillia team continues to support Indigenous programming and curriculum content through class visits and events including a class on Residential School survivors and families for Bachelors of Education students (February 24 and 25), the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Annual Lakehead LUSU Spring Drum Social (March 11), an INTD3013 Water Ceremony and hosting MPP Sol Mamakwa for a guest talk (March 3), and Research and Innovation Week Celebrating our Partnerships Indigenous Research Partnership Panel (March 9).

### Faculty of Education

In partnership with the Biigtigong Nishnaabeg (Pic River First Nation) community, the land-based Master of Education program has recently been featured in a series of features on CBC. The links to the features are below:

[Land-based learning bringing traditional knowledge and skills to school curriculum](#)

[Teaching the teachers with land-based learning](#)

['We are part of a transformation' Lakehead University offers land-based learning](#)

['Language is key in all of our teachings': land-based learning must include language component, educator says](#)

[Land-based learning pilot project a blueprint for other schools](#)

The partnership between the community and Faculty is heavily based on trust. The scope and impact of this program has raised interest from other First Nations organizations in pursuing similar programs.

#### Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to move to online learning, FGS has been actively involved in ensuring Graduate Students and Graduate Programming continues with as little interruption as possible. This includes moving all defenses and Dissertation Exams to an online mode.

In response to COVID-19, the Dean of FGS is in ongoing discussions with his fellow Ontario graduate Deans to ensure that Lakehead's graduate programming is in alignment with other Ontario Universities. Collaborative sharing of policies and procedures across Ontario graduate programs ensures all graduate students can continue and finish their programs in the best possible way during this unprecedented time.

#### Faculty of Health & Behavioural Sciences (HBS)

The Bachelor of Kinesiology degree program was approved by Senate.

The external review for the proposed Master of Nursing program was positive. Members of the School of Nursing are developing a response to the reviewers' recommendations.

The majority of FHBS graduating students who were in placements have managed to meet their learning objectives despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

HBS instructors have completed the transition to online course and examination delivery for this academic year.

#### Faculty of Natural Resources Management (NRM)

NRM is redesigning many of its regular programming to suit an online delivery mode in response to COVID-19.

The professional spring field school program for course-based MScF students is being altered for a late summer delivery with some online components to avoid face-to-face community interaction.

#### Faculty of Science & Environmental Studies (SES)

Building upon the HBSc Anthropology and interdisciplinary Geoarchaeology programs, the Department of Anthropology has launched its newly approved MSc in Archaeological Sciences in September 2019 with an inaugural class of seven students. The Department continues to integrate emerging technologies to aid research and teaching with our 3D scanning and printing, 3D morphometrics, and aerial and underwater remote sensing capacity. This, coupled with its geoarchaeology, trace elements and stable isotopes, archaeobotanical, archaeometry, zooarchaeological capacity, places LU Anthropology as a significant player in the application of science in anthropology. The Department's graduate coursework also engages with the historical and ongoing colonialism embedded in scientific research and its ramifications for collaborations between non-Indigenous researchers and Indigenous communities.

The Department of Chemistry is enhancing and adding experiential learning opportunities into programs that did not have fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) year research lab experiences and there will be a new “green chemistry” course added to explore environmentally neutral, sustainable chemical processes.

## Enhancing Lakehead’s Culture of Teaching and Learning Excellence

### Teaching Commons

Through email, Zoom, and phone services, the team in the Teaching Commons have fielded hundreds of queries from instructors needing assistance to successfully shift their winter term course delivery online because of the pandemic. At the same time, Teaching Commons team helped faculty set up final exams online and/or devise alternate assessments for the end of term. The team also worked with instructors in developing their courses for online delivery for the Spring/Summer sessions and have started working with those looking towards the Fall/Winter session, preparing for blended or possible online learning then as well. The Teaching Commons team has also worked during this time period to develop training for instructors to help them learn to design and deliver effective online courses.

## Advancing Access to Education

### Aboriginal Initiatives

Aboriginal Mentorship Program (AMP) staff have been updating webpage and social media pages while creating an online AMP classroom, and re-designing the entire AMP Research Project Fair into a virtual online format. In addition, Aboriginal Initiatives is working with regional schools to develop additional online activities and curriculum, including continuing our regular AMP sessions, sign-ups for group tutorial sessions, individual online tutorial sessions, as well as one-on-one help for research fair participants.

On March 12 Aboriginal Initiatives hosted transfer students and staff from Canadore College for Transfer Day set up by Andrew Heppner, as part of the ongoing ONCAT Project on Indigenous transitions across institutions. This was an excellent opportunity to connect with these potential students and to inform them of the student services provided by ACSS, programming and programs.

### Associate Vice-Provost (Special Projects)

Lakehead University has become Ontario’s first university to join The National Advanced Placement and Prior Learning (N-APPL) Program.

Lakehead University has entered into a new partnership that will assist Canada’s veterans and current members of the Canadian Armed Forces trade the experience they gained serving our country for a degree. The National Advanced Placement and Prior Learning (N-APPL) evaluates and recognizes the skills and expertise acquired through military training to fast-track credentials. N-APPL uses a collaborative approach between post-secondary schools Canada-wide. It is the national extension of the Legion Military Skills Conversion Program, originally based on the Advanced Placement and Prior Learning method (APPL) at British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). More information can be found at <https://www.military-appl.ca/>. This partnership will be built into the PLAR policy that is under development at Lakehead.

### Faculty of Science & Environmental Studies (SES)

The Department of Chemistry is embarking on an alternative model next fall to deliver one of its first-year courses. Chemistry 1050 (Foundations of Chemistry I) is one of 10 courses identified as part of a proposed Indigenous Certificate in Geological Studies under development by the Department of Geology. The overall intent to ‘recontextualize’ first year Chemistry to make it more accessible to a broader group of learners and to increase success rates in various programs who use this course. The ultimate plan is to have it accessible for remote learners from across Northwestern Ontario. The approach to be piloted this fall will deliver this course to Geology, NRMT and Nursing NNEP student groups and has been developed by Gabriel Oba and Merce

Romanec, who is a distance delivery education specialist with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) and works with Northern Nishnawbe Education Council (NNEC) based in Sioux Lookout. Questions about the planned Indigenous Certificate in Geological Studies (ICGS) can be directed to Drs Dawn Mills or Pete Hollings, Department of Geology and Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Mining and Exploration (CESME).

## Supporting Student Potential

### Aboriginal Initiatives

Indigenous Outreach and Recruitment (IOR) will be participating in the rollout of Student Central's virtual office hours (10am-8pm). The rollout of the new system is in progress and looks to be available to potential students within the next two (2) weeks. Aboriginal Preview Day will also be moving to online delivery in April and will include the Aboriginal Mentorship program fair.

Aboriginal Cultural and Support Services (ACSS) continues to provide tutoring services during this time via email, Google Docs and/or Zoom. Designated tutors have remained available within the Native Access Program (NAP) and Native Nurses Entry (NNEP) programs. Additionally, the writing tutor continues to be available for all students every Wednesday, until the end of the examination period.

ACSS hosted a Career Information Session on March 10 with Wataynikaneyap Power, which is majority owned by 24 First Nations with Fortis Inc. and is building a powerline to 17 remote First Nations in Northwestern Ontario (2018-2024). They are seeking post-secondary students and graduates who are working towards meaningful careers in the powerline industry, to build and maintain the powerline.

The Bréne Brown Book club continues to run virtually on Friday afternoons where students work through lessons and action steps for each chapter practicing self-love for themselves.

### Faculty of Business Administration

Despite the challenges of physical distancing, a majority of students involved in Work-Integrated Learning field placements were able to complete their placements remotely. Scheduled workshops were postponed or rescheduled with remote delivery. New this year, spring and summer placements were added to the program suite.

### Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS)

FGS continues to work with other Lakehead University Departments on both campuses to plan and provide an inclusive Fall 2020 Orientation.

### Faculty of Science & Environmental Studies (SES)

Undergraduate students of the Biology Department (Applied Life Sciences and Biology Majors) had a very high success rate in the NSERC-USRA awards competition this year. Applied Life Sciences students proposed to work with various faculty members from SES, including the Departments of Biology and Chemistry, which illustrates the interdisciplinary nature of the courses required for the Applied Life Sciences program and that the emphasis on hands-on research translates to students pursuing research opportunities across various disciplines.

## Student Affairs

Student Affairs has been busy shifting service delivery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and working to ensure students are aware of the supports available and how to access them.

Student Health & Wellness (SAS) remains open on both campuses and is providing medical and counselling appointments by phone. Due to the rapidly changing situation, we encourage everyone to visit: [lakeheadu.ca/shw](https://lakeheadu.ca/shw) for the most up-to-date information about services and available resources. Given the uncertain times, many students are experiencing stress and anxiety; please remind them that Student Health & Wellness is here to support them.

To address students' wellbeing during COVID-19, SAS has been regularly updating its website homepage to reflect current services and direct students towards reputable and appropriate resources. This includes a social distancing tool kit: [lakeheadu.ca/wellu](https://lakeheadu.ca/wellu) which provides students with information on staying well while physically distancing. Features include: daily wellness tips, running a self-care social media contest, offering an online sleep hygiene program (open to students, staff and faculty) and partnering with Lakehead Campus Rec to offer a physical activity challenge (open to students, staff and faculty). We are also offering virtual meditation sessions every Thursday from 1-1.30 via zoom for the month April.

Student Central continues to provide support to students virtually. Students can email [studentcentral@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:studentcentral@lakeheadu.ca) to have questions/concerns addressed. Every Monday-Friday between 2:30 and 3:30 pm a general Q&A with the Student Central team is being offered – students can login [here](#).

SAS is providing intakes and appointments via phone or Zoom. Students can email [sas@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:sas@lakeheadu.ca) or [oraccess@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:oraccess@lakeheadu.ca) to book a meeting with an advisor to discuss disability/medical related concerns. For tests and final exams, SAS is working with instructors to ensure that all test/exam accommodations are honoured. Students who utilize assistive software have been provided access to free trial software licensing as needed.

SAS has begun to make preparations for the online delivery of “Planning for University: A Transition Program for Students with Disabilities/Medical Conditions”, which will be in collaboration with Student Accessibility Services at Confederation College.

The Career Zone is offering remote resume strategy workshops, online appointments, job search drop in hours, and a bank of online resources on the Career Zone [website](#).

The annual Lakehead Leader Award recipients have been selected and will be officially announced on the website and through social media. Students are nominated for a Lakehead Leader Award by a member of the University community in recognition of their leadership accomplishments.

On May 1 Student Success will be launching a newly developed D2L and web-based online orientation program to help prepare incoming students for their studies at Lakehead.

## **Generating and Supporting Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities**

### Aboriginal Initiatives

The Vice Provost, Aboriginal Initiatives continues to work with Dr. Robert Robson and staff from Canadian Forest Service/Natural Resources Canada and Keewaywin First Nation on a research project involving learning from Keewaywin's Fire Evacuation experiences.

## Engaging with Communities

### Aboriginal Initiatives

Lakehead's NAP Coordinator attended the Matawa Education Conference at the beginning of March along with Indigenous Outreach and Recruitment (IOR) and our Indigenous Education Coordinator to recruit for our programs and build capacity with other educators attending the conference.

The ACSS Coordinator attended a Board of Directors Meeting with the Ontario Native Education Counsellors Association (ONECA) on March 25. ONECA has cancelled its annual conference but continues to support First Nations with online resources.

### Faculty of Business Administration

For the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) year, MBA students will be working with the Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bio-Economy (CRIBE) in their capstone project course. Students will work remotely as consulting teams to develop recommendations for research questions related to real-life business applications.

### Faculty of Natural Resources Management (NRM)

The COVID-19 challenge has highlighted some new opportunities for NRM to be of support. NRM (LU-CARIS) is part of a hands-on effort to manufacture (3D printing and assembly) personal protective equipment (PPE) devices for front line health professionals. The effort is going 24/7 and has a weekly capacity of some 150 – 200 devices.

## Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

### Aboriginal Initiatives

Indigenous Outreach and Recruitment contacted KAIROS to discuss conversion of online delivery of the KAIROS blanket exercise. This would still be an interactive and participatory activity delivered via zoom.

ACSS in partnership with Aboriginal Education hosted the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) annual Rock Your Mocs on March 9. This event, in celebration of Aboriginal culture, saw the Ogichidaa Mak'wa Singers share drum songs and Elder Ernie Kwandibens shared traditional teachings and an opening and closing prayer, and ended with a feast.

### Faculty of Business Administration

The Faculty of Business Administration and Work-Integrated Learning Program at Lakehead, in partnership with Aboriginal Initiatives, held a panel discussion on March 4 titled "Business and Reconciliation: Educate, Reflect, Act" that focused on the role that business can play in building capacity within the Indigenous business sector and how business relationships play a role in the reconciliation process. Panelists had a range of business experiences including: consulting, entrepreneurship, and business development with Indigenous communities.

## Developing and Sustaining Global Perspectives

### Aboriginal Initiatives

On March 3, the ACSS Coordinator shared a presentation with a group of seven (7) Mexican students. The presentation showcased the history and culture of Indigenous peoples in Canada and was followed by a leather pouch-making activity. This was an opportunity for students to learn about Indigenous history and culture and to practice their English language skills.

### Faculty of Natural Resources Management (NRM)

NRM is developing a modified MOU with the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR) in Sunyani, Ghana. Previous collaborations were based on land use planning and remote sensing in-Ghana applications. The intent with the modified MOU is to broaden the scope to include staff exchanges and student mobility.

## Advancing Life-long Learning

### Faculty of Science & Environmental Studies (SES)

The Department of Anthropology is exploring options to develop capacity for more effective on-line delivery of conventional and micro-credential training to remote and rural communities in the region.

## Developing People, Places and Systems

### Library

The task group for developing the Library's action plan is currently working on the first draft of the plan. Another survey was sent to Librarians to gather more comments and suggestions. The first draft will be ready in two (2) weeks.

Librarians and staff are prepared to support faculty for the spring/summer semesters. Librarians have developed plans to reach out to faculty and communicate supports available through the Library.

### Technology Services Centre (TSC)

Technology Services Centre has been thoroughly engaged in supporting the transition to online services. This has included:

- Connecting the University community to secure resources at the University
- Enabling and supporting video services to address a host of needs
- Providing workshops, resources and information
- Monitoring the capacity of our systems and adjusting them to address new workloads
- Improving our cybersecurity infrastructure in response to emerging threats

Throughout this time, TSC has also begun testing the new University phone system and is now in the process of enabling new voice services to assist Lakehead in addressing the immediate challenges. This process began almost a year ago and will continue as a consultative project, engaging each department as they work through the changes.