

To: Senior Operations Committee
From: Dr. Paul Davenport
Date: June 10, 2008
Subject: **President's Priorities for 2008-2009**

Each year I submit for approval to the Board my priorities for the coming year, which are considered by the Board and then discussed with Senate. In the fall of 2006 Senate and Board approved a new Strategic Plan, *Engaging the Future*, while in the spring of 2007 Senate and the Board approved a new *Campus Master Plan*. Overall, my priorities will be set to support the priorities set out in these documents, along with the priorities set by Board and Senate resolutions since the two Plans were adopted. The central priority is that set out in our mission statement, *the best student experience among Canada's leading research intensive universities*.

As in past years, my top priority will be to maintain a sense of solidarity and commitment among our faculty, staff, students, and alumni, which is the foundation of all our achievements. That solidarity is based on support for our mission and an understanding that while we have done well in recent years, we can certainly do better, both in student experience and in research. Since this is my final year as President, I owe a special duty to prepare the way for the new President's success, and to work effectively with the new President during the time between the announcement of the Board's decision and June 30, 2009.

The Priorities are again set out in four broad categories: Setting Directions; Keeping Academic Priorities First; Ensuring Open Administration and Effective Communication; and Strengthening Ties with the External Community. Ours is a decentralized, collegial institution, and accomplishing the Priorities will require effort by all in our campus community, as well as determined leadership by Vice-Presidents, Deans, Chairs, and Directors.

1. Setting Directions

- Provide a smooth transition to a new President in July, 2009, and assure that our academic and budgetary planning is sufficiently flexible to allow the new President to set her own directions.
- Maintain strong support for our mission statement, Strategic Plan, Campus Master Plan, the fixed target of 4,350 new first-year students, and the graduate enrolment expansion, among faculty, staff, students, and alumni.
- Build support for signature areas, as called for in our Strategic Plan.

- Keep the construction of our Long-Range Space plan on budget and on time. The 2008-09 Budget shows 18 projects over \$1 million in size currently underway, with a total value of \$282 million. These projects are critical to our academic mission and priorities, including the graduate enrolment expansion.
- Begin preliminary work on a new Long-Range Space Plan, following the Plan presented in the 2006-07 Budget.

2. Putting Academic Priorities First: Supporting Excellence in Teaching and Research

- Fulfill the plans for graduate growth as set out in Table 21 of the 2008-09 Budget. These goals are central to our mission of building the research-intensive university and are also a key part of our financial planning.
- Continue our efforts to ensure a supportive and respectful working environment on campus, give leaders the knowledge they need to enhance that environment, and promote the Safe Campus Community initiative. Diversity and respect for others are fundamental to Western's success.
- Support the new Scientific Director of Robarts, Dr. John Macdonald, as we integrate Robarts into the Western family and enhance the Robarts brand name.
- Improve career counseling and service learning as called for in our Strategic Plan.
- Increase the recruitment and retention of aboriginal students as called for in our Strategic Plan.
- Work with the Senate and Board on approval of the 2008-2011 Strategic Research Plan and begin implementation of approved recommendations.
- Complete and obtain Senate and Board approval of a revised Strategic Plan for Internationalization and begin implementation of approved recommendations.
- Give faculty and staff the support they need so Western can progress toward its goal of fifth place or better nationally in funding per faculty member from the three major federal granting councils and CFI. Currently we are below fifth place in the councils and CFI.
- Support the new School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and its aspirations to a strong service culture and effective partnerships with Faculties and the Registrar's Office.
- Complete the integration of tech transfer among Western, Robarts, and Lawson, with a single office that may well be downtown.
- Build the UWO Research Park as LANXESS and Surface Science Western join the Park. We will work with the LEDC to ensure proper integration among the LEDC, Western, the Research Park, the Stiller Centre, and Tech Alliance, to promote economic development and jobs in London.

3. Ensuring Open Administration and Effective Communications

- Work to maintain strong positive relations with faculty, staff, and student associations, and with the Affiliated University Colleges, Fanshawe College, and our health research partners in London.
- Strengthen Western's commitment to sustainability and communicate better our various sustainability initiatives.

- Improve our communications with regard to Western's research strengths and the research achievements of our faculty.
- Build our tech transfer brand with continued growth in medical devices, alternative fuels, and materials and biomaterials.
- Complete our crisis communications plan, working with University Police, ITS, and the entire campus community.

4. Strengthening Ties with the External Community

- Prepare for the launch of our \$500 million fundraising campaign in the fall of 2009. This involves Senate and Board approval of the priorities for the campaign and taking a leadership role in raising a substantial share of the funds in the quiet phase of the campaign before the formal launch. Our goal in 2008-09 is \$70 million in new private gifts and pledges, following our very successful 2007-08 year, in which \$61 million in private funding was raised.
- Work closely with staff at COU and officials at MTCU as the Province addresses some key policy issues, including the distribution of funded graduate spaces, new capital funding for construction and renovation, possible changes to the funding formula, and student accessibility.
- Submit high quality proposals to the Province for new construction and renovation projects, showing links to Provincial and University priorities.
- Work with AUCC to convince the federal government to pay the full institutional costs of research on the research grants it awards.
- Build on the success of the Vanier Scholarships to encourage the federal government to increase substantially the number of graduate scholarships it funds.
- Support the directions of the Alumni Association Strategic Plan, while expanding the number of alumni branches in areas with strong alumni growth.
- Continue to work with the City and our neighbours on student housing issues.
- Work with the City and the Thames Valley Conservation Authority to convince them that the current definitions of flood plain and flood fringe lands are appropriate for the Thames River as it passes by Western's campus.