

## Faculty Constituency

(ONE to be elected)

The following members of faculty have been nominated for membership on the Board of Governors for the July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2030 term.

1. **GUNARATNAM, Lakshman** – Professor and Medical Doctor – Medicine / Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
2. **KIRKWOOD, Kenneth** – Associate Professor – Health Studies / Faculty of Health Sciences
3. **LEBO, Matthew** – Professor – Political Science / Faculty of Social Science
4. **SANTOS, Gildo** – Professor – Dentistry / Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
5. **STRONG, Michael** – Professor and Medical Doctor – Clinical Neurological Sciences / Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry

Candidate statements are provided below.

**GUNARATNAM, Lakshman**

**Professor and Medical Doctor  
Medicine /  
Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry**

---

As a Professor of Medicine and Clinician-Scientist at Western University, I am eager to serve on the Board of Governors to support the continued advancement of our broader academic community. I offer the following key perspectives to the Board:

1. Unique Lived Experience: A perspective shaped by my background as a refugee from Sri Lanka and my subsequent training at Harvard, centering on resilience and inclusivity.
2. Recognized Leadership: Proven expertise as an award-winning leader in the clinical and academic medical fields.
3. Cross-Disciplinary Insight: A deep understanding of Western's academic mission through direct teaching experience at all levels of higher education.
4. Scientific Rigor: A strong track record of securing peer-reviewed funding and contributing to the global scientific community.
5. Commitment to Mentorship: A dedicated focus on the development of the next generation of students and junior faculty.



**KIRKWOOD, Kenneth**

**Associate Professor**  
**Health Studies / Faculty of Health Sciences**

I have been a faculty member at Western since 2004. In that time I have been a long-time member of numerous University-level committees such as SRBA, ACA, UDAC, and many others where I have served as a member or as a Chair/Vice-Chair. I firmly believe in the saying that we should be able to know the difference between what we have control over and what we don't, and then focus our energies and creativity on the things we control to make for a better Western. Given the current fiscal environment, we at Western are in a relatively good position thanks to responsible management. Good stewardship of Western will be critical to avoid the fate of other universities (including my alma mater - Queen's).



**LEBO, Matthew**

**Professor**  
**Political Science / Social Science**

I've served terms as Chair of Political Science at both Western and the State University of New York. At SUNY, I led twenty departments as Chair of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and I also founded two interdisciplinary centres there. I am currently the Director of the Centre for Computational and Quantitative Social Science.

Canadian universities have an urgent and expanded role to play in higher education -- something I've written about in public scholarship. Attacks on science and universities in the United States leave us with greater responsibilities and opportunities. International students are looking for the ever-rarer combination of a world-class university in a politically stable and welcoming country. Many of the world's best researchers are rethinking where to build their futures. Western should be leading these efforts. Once-in-a-century opportunities are at our doorstep. We need to get our budgets in order while seizing them. As part of that, improving our commitment to graduate programs is essential to our research future. I've worked in several administrative roles and I know the obstacles that often prevent the implementation of bold strategic plans. Improvement requires creativity, ambition, and deep conversations of where policies and values conflict.



## Board of Governors Elections

**SANTOS, Gildo**

**Professor**  
**Dentistry / Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry**

I am seeking election to the Board of Governors to contribute to responsible governance and to serve the university community with experience and integrity. I am a tenured Professor at the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry with over three decades of academic, clinical, and leadership experience. I served two terms on Western's Senate, contributing to academic policy and institutional decision making. At Schulich, I held senior administrative roles including Associate Dean, Undergraduate Dental Education; Director of Clinics; Chair, Continuing Dental Education; and Chair; Restorative Dentistry. These roles involved oversight of budgets, resource allocation, and program sustainability, ensuring operational efficiency while maintaining academic and clinical excellence. I am a recipient of the W.W. Wood Award for Excellence in Dental Education and completed leadership training through Western Continuing Studies, the ADEA Leadership Institute, the Western Leader Academy, and Ivey Business School. I have also served on the Council of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario and the Council of Faculties at the American Dental Education Association. I bring an inclusive perspective shaped by extensive clinical experience and am committed to supporting Western's academic mission, financial stewardship, and long term institutional success. I am willing to serve if elected.



**STRONG, Michael**

**Professor and Medical Doctor**  
**Clinical Neurological Sciences /**  
**Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry**

I am proud to have spent my career as a clinician-scientist at Western University where I have benefited from the richness of its environment and culture. Through this, I gained governance experience as a Divisional Chair and Department Head, followed by two terms as Dean of the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry. During the latter, I also chaired the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, rebuilding its governance structure and beginning the process of addressing the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. I carried the experience from these activities into my term as President of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), overseeing all of Canada's federally funded health research including its expansion during the pandemic, a 1.3B budget and the development of a 10-year strategic plan that included clearly defined principles of equity, diversity and inclusiveness. I also oversaw a complete restructuring of CIHR's governance and budgetary processes to reflect best fiscal practices and activity-based planning principles. With all of this, I have gained a deep understanding of the culture of success for Canada's leading academic institutions and am keen to share these as Western embarks on its next chapter.

