

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Governors

From: Amit Chakma, President & Vice-Chancellor

Re: President's Priorities for 2010-11

Date: September 29, 2010

At the beginning of each academic year, I outline the high-level priorities I plan to pursue in the year ahead. These priorities are informed by input gathered from individuals and groups within our campus community, and from key external stakeholders who have important roles to play in Western's success. During my first year as President, members of our campus and external community have been generous in sharing their views about the opportunities and challenges confronting Western and post-secondary education—which include local, provincial, national and global perspectives. With this input in mind, my priorities aim to advance Western's academic mission under five broad areas of strategic importance: 1) leadership; 2) students; 3) research intensiveness and graduate education; 4) financial accountability; 5) community partnership. It should be noted that these areas of strategic importance reflect the framework of Western's strategic plan, [*Engaging the Future*](#).

1. LEADERSHIP

Fostering a culture of collegiality and respect has been a cornerstone of Western's success for the past 132 years, and it remains a priority for our entire campus community. To compete successfully in our increasingly complex and globalized world, we must also work in a more collaborative and interdisciplinary fashion—within the University, across Faculties, and in partnership with other institutions. Goals related to this priority include:

- Continue to develop a collegial and collaborative culture in partnership with all members of our campus community.
- Continue to raise the University's international profile and reputation.
- Continue to develop and strengthen Western's partnerships with the broader community.
- Plan and manage enrolment growth at both the graduate and undergraduate level, with special emphasis on increasing the number of international students—particularly at the undergraduate level.
- Continue to support and strengthen the leadership team.
- Guide the development of the next four-year budget plan.
- Actively participate in Council of Ontario Universities' and G-13 universities' advocacy activities that enhance Western's academic mission.

2. STUDENTS

We will maintain focus on our mission to provide the “best student experience,” to retain top rankings earned in student satisfaction surveys, and to improve in areas where program and service opportunities are identified. Among the important elements for enhancing the student experience is increasing the number of international students on our campus. Goals related to this priority include:

- Continue to build strong and effective relationships with student leaders on campus, and to identify and act on ways to enhance the Western undergraduate and graduate student experience.
- Explore more opportunities to expand study-abroad programs and community-service learning programs at the local, regional, national and international level.
- Develop and strengthen strategies for recruiting and supporting top undergraduate and graduate students, with special emphasis on attracting more international students to Western.

3. RESEARCH INTENSITY, GRADUATE EDUCATION AND POST-DOCTORAL STUDIES

Research intensity, graduate education, post-doctoral studies, and the strength of our reputation among leading universities are closely inter-connected. While developing and maintaining strong research programs helps us attract talented graduate students and post-doctoral scholars, these same individuals help us drive discovery and innovation—which ultimately raises Western’s profile on the world stage. Goals related to this priority include:

- Continue to refine and execute our graduate expansion plans in keeping with provincially approved enrolment targets.
- Continue to expand our professional Masters programs with the goal of enhancing Western’s reputation as a preferred destination for innovative graduate education.
- Continue to establish and support major/interdisciplinary research clusters.

4. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Building excellence and creating an environment where all members of our campus community can flourish cannot rely entirely on government funding—we must become more creative and entrepreneurial in developing new revenue streams. At the same time, as a public institution, we are accountable to the people of Ontario and we have a responsibility to ensure funding from both government and donors is spent wisely. Goals related to this priority include:

- Continue to realign our Campaign with our academic priorities and move the Campaign into its next, more active phase.
- Develop the next long-range budget cycle in support of our institutional aspirations while recognizing the economic challenges facing universities and governments across Ontario and Canada.
- Continue to develop an income diversification strategy, including non-government sources, to provide new revenue streams.
- Oversee major capital projects to ensure their completion on time and within budget.

5. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

While we intensify our focus on enhancing our national and global influence, we also know that Western's roots and impact run deep in the local community. Working together with our community partners, there is much that the City of London, Middlesex County, the region of Southwestern Ontario, and the University can achieve for our mutual benefit. We also recognize that beyond the impact of our research and individual community projects, the University's most essential contribution is made through the education of our students—intelligent, engaged and dedicated citizens who contribute to the communities around the world in which they live and work as Western alumni. Goals related to this priority include:

- Continue to develop the full potential of the Advanced Manufacturing Park in partnership with the City of London.
- Continue to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for strengthening government relations at all levels.
- Continue to explore ways to serve and engage Western alumni in meaningful and impactful ways.
- Continue visits with alumni, friends and other key stakeholders to promote Western's ambitions and invite their participation in helping the University fulfill its mission.

I look forward to working with members of the campus and external community in the coming months to pursue these goals, and I thank the Board of Governors for its ongoing support.