



Racism on Campus

This past month has been a tumultuous one for both the University and for society as a whole. Layered on top of the ongoing progression of the COVID-19 pandemic have been stark images of racism and a wellspring of responses spurred through growth of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Just a few short weeks ago, the world witnessed the violent death of George Floyd, sparking global protest movements demanding an end to racism in our communities. The death was met with immense shock, horror and grief, including in our community at Laurentian. On June 2nd, [I reached out to our community](#), affirming my solidarity with the Black community and my commitment to personally work to end all inequities and injustices that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour face on a daily basis in our community.

During the week, I reached out to student leaders who are working to end racism, assuring them of my solidarity and support for their powerful anti-racism work. I have begun meeting with groups to directly solicit their input and learning how the University can better assist them in their efforts. I am also looking to the ongoing leadership of the group leading the conversation on Strategic Plan Outcome 23, which seeks to promote and foster inclusion, acceptance, and respect for the diversity that exists within our campus community. I look forward to further development and implementation of recommendations from the group

On June 8th, the issues and challenges we face at Laurentian landed closer to home with a tweet by a leader in the Laurentian community that was inappropriate and offensive. [I condemn any racism on campus](#). The issue is not one of intent, but of outcome and impact.

To members of our community who have been affected by racism: I hear you and I stand with you. I am committed to continuing this pressing conversation and to taking further action on racism. As was shared with me by one of the groups that I have met with, while issues of racism are systemic, we must work towards solutions through engagement and education leading to behavioral change.

We must speak up, and we must speak out. We all have a responsibility to support the resilience and advocacy of equity-seeking groups. Embracing our values which give power to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we will move forward *together - ensemble - maamwi*.

Reflections on Year 1

While my term formally started on July 1st, 2019, I turned my mind to all things Laurentian earlier in the year when I agreed to take up the position. I took advantage of some transition time in April, May and early June to begin meeting with community members and supporters, to build
Spending the entire summer on

indeed the very survival of the University itself, depends on the evolution of our programs through academic renewal: the high school leaving population in the North is declining; over the past 20 years reductions in per-student government funding have established the requirement that Ontario universities be the most efficient in Canada in delivering their programming; the postsecondary sector continues to evolve rapidly as a global enterprise with competition ever increasing, and; it continues to be laid bare that we as a society, and as a university, still have miles to go to eliminate bias and prejudice in all its forms. To thrive, let alone survive, Laurentian must undertake a fundamental journey of renewal - an open, transparent and collegial journey, where prejudices and preconceptions are left on Ramsey Lake Road, and where innovation, creativity, enthusiasm and compassion are given the opportunity to guide this University to the standing and success its passionate people truly deserve and which our students will relish.

A New Academic Plan

By the time our agenda fo

budget forward in the fall once the impacts of COVID-19 on enrollments and on-campus university operations are better understood.

Amidst the chaos, spring enrollments across the system, including at Laurentian have been strong. Overall individual course registrations for spring term are up 24% over 2019 and the number of individual students registered for courses is up approximately 5%. Thus slightly more students are registered for significantly more courses. Notably, registrations were stronger in our traditional online courses compared to our previously face-to-tye cours str9(g)10(792 reW*nBT/F4 12 Tf1 0 0 1 72.02

#Imagine2023 - Strategic Plan Midterm Review

-2023 strategic plan continues to play a fundamental role in guiding the University forward during these uncertain times. Like all plans, at the midway point it is important to reflect on the progress made to date and on the work still to be achieved and to check in on how the vision supporting the plan has evolved.

In December, I initiated a conversation with Group 26, the group originally tasked with overseeing the implementation of the Strategic Plan, on the steps needed to provide an insightful midterm review.

With leadership from my office, and the support of Group 26, information on progress has been collected and a format for the midterm review report explored. While completion of the review, like many things at the moment, is being delayed by effects COVID-19, I am committed to bring forward a midterm report on our strategic plan in the coming months as our activities return to a new normal.

Return to Campus and Research Resumption

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pandemic, in support of the provinces efforts to flatten the infection curve. I wish to commend again all of the members of the Laurentian community that have worked so hard through the ensuing months to ensure the safety of everyone in the community and to provide the best possible support to allow academic activities to continue in the best manner possible.

With infection rates now declining, over the past few weeks we have turned our attention towards staged, stepwise and safe return to campus. While undergraduate programming has largely been able to continue during the campus closure, university research and graduate student activities have been severely impacted. Thus it is critical that we begin a return to campus as soon as it is safely possible to do so.

For the past several weeks, a Laurentian operational resumption team has been planning our return to campus. Again here, Laurentian is committed to being a leader in Canada for charting a safe return to campus. They are now being assisted in their work by a larger Return to Campus Committee.

The focus of the planning has centered first on a return to research activities in advance of planning for a return to on-campus teaching in the fall for courses where face-to-face learning is required. The team is also considering how to manage student traffic on campus come the fall, including the availability of residences and other operations.

On June 4th, a community conversation, attended by over 700 members of the community solicited feedback on both plans (research and fall teaching). The Laurentian community emphasized a strong desire to return to on-campus activities, together with a strong realization and concern that

any and all resumption of activity must be done with considerations of safety and enabling student success being paramount. A number of insightful suggestions were received to enable the further development of plans. In October, it may be anticipated that Senate will recommend protocols for the delivery of academic programming for the winter term, which if all goes well, will include an increased return to on-campus activities according to the new normal.

In order to evaluate health and safety procedures and risk mitigation plans we started, on June 8th, with a pilot opening of the Vale Living with Lakes Centre to graduate students and researchers. This pilot is being carried out under strict supervision to ensure appropriate safety and sanitary measures, and responsible social distancing. The lessons learned and protocols validated in this pilot will be incorporated into plans to open additional facilities. If all goes well, it is hoped that most campus research activities can be reanimated within four to six weeks, with the exception of research involving face-to-face interaction with human participants.

It should also be stressed here that Laurentian is working very closely with Public Health, Greater Health in all our planning.

I look forward to a successful and safe return to campus for all over the coming months.

Kudos

As an update and kudos to donors that the response to the call-out for our Student Emergency Fund was overwhelmingly positive with more than \$110,000 gifted by 225 donors which has helped more than 310 students. Some notable gifts include:

- Family of Jean and Bob Lye: \$20,000 (matching dollars in the appeal)
- LUAA donation (alumni association): \$10,000
- LUFA (Faculty Association): \$7500
- LUSU (Staff Union): \$5000
- LUAPS (administrative and professional staff): \$1000

I was so pleased to see the Laurentian family, friends and community rally around our students to help support them through these tough times, and sincerely thank everyone for their heart warming generosity.

Thank you to our alumni who were asked by our Advancement team to send congratulations to graduating students by recording and sending a short 30 second video, welcoming them to the Laurentian University alumni family. The call was well received and resulted in a total of 28 videos.

The Student Engagement Team, in coordination with academic units, mobilized to create a new summer academic transition program for new students. Beginning in July, the Science Prep program includes refresher courses in Math and Chemistry. In August, the

