

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Governors
From: Amit Chakma
Date: September 8, 2015
Re: Priorities for 2015-16

Each September, I outline high-level priorities to pursue in the academic year ahead that will help achieve the broader teaching, research and service mission of our university. These priorities are informed through my ongoing interaction with individual colleagues and groups within our campus community, as well as with key external stakeholders who play important roles in Western's success. My 2015-16 report continues this tradition.

This year, I plan to focus on two overarching priorities: the first is to continue championing the rigorous pursuit of goals outlined in Western's Strategic Plan, "Achieving Excellence on the World Stage," and the second is to address key issues raised during the campus-wide consultation process I undertook this past spring to hear the concerns, ideas and suggestions shared with me by faculty, staff, students and alumni.

With regard to the latter priority, and as detailed in my July 22 Update to members of the University community, several task forces have been convened to study the key themes that emerged from the spring's consultation meetings, which relate largely to matters pertaining to resources, research, governance, communication and administrative support. I reference the commitments made in my July 22 Update as an important document that will guide my activities in the year ahead.

With regard to the former priority, it re-affirms that Western's Strategic Plan is an important document that will continue to guide my activities with the support and cooperation of the University's senior academic and administrative leaders. As in past years, it remains imperative that I continue to pay attention to the four "pillars" of the plan. However, while the largely external nature of my role as president will continue to demand significant time and energy to building and strengthening partnerships with external public and private sector partners, I am also committed to redoubling my efforts to being more visibly and actively engaged with on-campus issues and activities.

In pursuit of these high-level ends, specific priorities will include:

1. Building Western's capacity to attract the best students from across Ontario, Canada and around the world through the high quality, innovation, breadth and reputation of our academic programs, research, scholarship, and outstanding learning environment.
2. Examining Western's approach to budgeting, research, governance and administration with a view to making improvements that will further advance priorities outlined in the University's Strategic Plan.

3. Cultivating a more research-intensive culture through strategies including select program expansion; increased focus on the quality of our graduate programs; investment in internal support for research, and; strategic investment in interdisciplinary areas of strength including research infrastructure.
4. Monitoring and contributing to Ontario's post-secondary education policy discussions while anticipating and managing the impact of policy shifts that may emerge.
5. Continuing our efforts to enhance and diversify revenue in support of our Strategic Plan.
6. Reviewing and managing resource allocation and utilization in light of the changing fiscal and education policy environment while pursuing income diversification strategies.
7. Increasing my engagement with on-campus issues and activities while continuing to play a leadership role in advocating with external agencies for greater public and private support of the post-secondary education and research.
8. Strengthening Western's internationalization efforts through engagement with alumni, community and institutional partners, including Governments in all areas of our teaching, learning, research and service mission.
9. Raising Western's visibility through media, communication, public affairs, and events activities.