

Office of the President

To: All staff and faculty

From: Feridun Hamdullahpur, President

Date: April 5, 2012

**Re: The President's Quarterly
Waterloo Community Update**

It is my pleasure to provide you with the first of our reports I will be sending to the members of our campus community this year.

Board of Governors Meeting

The Board of Governors met on February 7, 2012. [I invite you to download my presentation to the board.](#)

Senate Meeting

The university senate met on February 27, 2012. My [presentation to senate](#) is available for download.

Senate approved the name change for our department of Co-operative Education and Career Services (CECS), which will now be known as Co-operative Education and Career Action (CECA). The new name brings the department into alignment with last year's renaming of the Centre for Career Services to the Centre for Career Action.

At both board and Senate I had an opportunity to discuss the challenges facing the post-secondary environment in light of the Drummond report, the Jenkins report on federal R&D funding, and the fiscal challenges faced by our provincial and federal governments.

The austerity measures found in the provincial and federal budgets, coupled with ongoing economic uncertainties, are hints at the challenging years ahead of us. It will be a challenge to continue to receive the support we need to increase our research intensity in terms of operating and research grants. However, this is good opportunity for us to be focused and strategic. Only through strategic planning and a focus on our university's strengths, that includes improving the student experience, will we come out of the next two to three years of challenging times as a winner. I have no doubt about our ability to endure these turbulent times.

Mid-cycle Review Community Update

We held a special community update meeting on February 29. [A copy of my presentation is available for download.](#) In addition, I invite you to [read my latest progress report](#), delivered in March, which is available on the Mid-cycle Review web site.

A number of developing priorities have begun to emerge as we enter the next phase of the Mid-cycle Review, analyzing the results of more than 2,285 survey responses and the feedback from 40 consultation sessions.

As we begin to take action to address these priorities, the University of Waterloo's six foundational pillars will remain at our core:

- Academic excellence
- Research excellence and impact
- Co-operative education
- Graduate studies
- Internationalization
- Entrepreneurship

To date, the results of the first phase of the consultations have been sorted into statements about issues that concern our university community, and have pointed us to seven emerging priorities:

- Student opportunities and experience
- Quality of education
- Visibility and outreach
- Clear and effective leadership
- Resources
- Campus environment
- Image and Philosophy

In addition, research excellence was seen as fundamental to many of the priorities identified.

There are several objectives in each priority area. For example, in “Student opportunities and experience”, the challenge is to offer students a balanced life in a student-focused university, and in “resources”, we have been asked to re-evaluate how resources are distributed across the university in a transparent and accountable way. “Quality of education” objectives include encouraging excellence in mentors and supervisors, and increasing inter- and transdisciplinary study opportunities. In “Clear and effective leadership” the charge is to engage students, faculty, and staff in decision-making and work collaboratively across faculties and departments. We will work to create a virtual and physical sense of community on campus (“Campus environment”) and do a better job of telling our stories (“Visibility and outreach”). In the “Image and philosophy” area, we will encourage innovation and entrepreneurship while balancing teaching and research.

So what's next in the process? Beginning this spring, we will start to set goals and plan a course of action for the next five years, addressing the priority areas that have been defined by our stakeholders. We will establish an accountability framework, which includes individuals responsible for action plans and measures of success. We will continue to share our progress with the uWaterloo community at regular intervals, as we did with the community update in February.

Our priority areas will drive our planning and budgeting decisions, as we create a coordinated process for decision-making across campus.

Recent Activities

I visited Suzhou, China from February 20 to 23, as we established a Soochow University Nanotechnology (SUN) and Waterloo Institute for Nanotechnology (WIN) Joint Research Institute for Nanotechnology. Suzhou is the second largest industrial city after Shanghai, and home to one of the world's largest research and industrial parks, with 20,000 tenants. It is a city within a city, and the university will have a presence on that campus as part of the joint research institute.

In mid-March, I participated in a tour of Germany with the presidents of the U15 universities that included the signing of memorandums of understanding with Ruhr University Bochum and the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

Upcoming international activities include a keynote at the 3rd International Exhibition and Conference on Higher Education in Saudi Arabia in mid-April, and a trip with AUCC presidents and the Governor General to Brazil later in the month.

In closing, I would like to wish all members of the uWaterloo community a pleasant long Easter weekend.

Feridun Hamdullahpur
President

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