

STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN FOR FACULTY AND STUDENT RESEARCH

BECOMING “GREAT” – RESEARCH THAT BETTERS SOCIETY

. . . the academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic and . . . ethical problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teachers, and to our cities . . . and reaffirm its historic commitment to what I call the scholarship of engagement (Ernest Boyer, 1996)

Through achieving excellence in the generation of new knowledge and expanding opportunities for knowledge mobilization and transfer, we imagine a future where all people take their rightful places as torchbearers of peace and justice to create conditions where children and families thrive.

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Since its establishment in 1878, Western University has been among Canada's leading universities and has a proud tradition of exemplary scholarship, groundbreaking research, and influential graduates. Western administers a wide variety of academic programs distributed amongst 12 faculties, professional schools, and three affiliated university colleges. Almost 25,000 undergraduate and 5000 graduate students call Western home. More than 220,000 alumni and former students of Western can be found in over 100 countries around the world.

Western has distinguished itself as a research-intensive university in areas encompassing life sciences and the human condition, culture analysis and values, the human and physical environments, and social trends, public policy, and economic activity and, more recently, within neuroscience. Over the last number of years, Western has been consistently ranked in the top ten of Canada's 50 top research universities and internationally, within the top 200 universities. In an effort to further distinguish itself as an outstanding national and international research-intensive university and to use that as the platform for achieving excellence in teaching and learning, Western articulated a Strategic Research Plan in 2008-2011. Although that Plan is currently under revision, it continues to serve as the foundation for the Strategic Research Plan launched by the Faculty of Education.

The Faculty of Education is an integral part of Western University. Formally established through an agreement between the Minister of Education and the University of Western Ontario in 1973, by 2012, the Faculty of Education was home to approximately 675 pre-service and 310 full- and part-time Master of Education and PhD students. Approximately 40 full-time, 167 part-time, and a significant complement of adjunct faculty were actively involved in teaching, research, and service to the community. Through clearly differentiating our research-intensive and professional programs and focusing largely on applied research designed to strengthen outcomes for children, youth, and their families within educational and community contexts, we anticipate further growth in our graduate student population and with that, significant growth in our faculty numbers within areas demonstrating excellence or the promise of excellence.

Officially adopted in the fall of 2006, Western's Strategic Plan, *Engaging the Future*, affirms Western's objective to maintain and enhance its stature as a leading Canadian research-intensive University "through strategic investment in areas of established and emerging research strength". Rooted firmly in *Engaging the Future*, the Strategic Research Plan (2008-2011) establishes a proactive template for supporting both the culture and practice of research at Western through the selection of key areas for research focus and the establishment of appropriate structures and resources for maintaining and advancing Western's position as one of Canada's premiere research-intensive institutions. The primary objectives presented in the Strategic Research Plan are to:

- Identify specific areas of existing and potential research strength at Western;
- Assist the recruitment, training, and retention of highly qualified faculty, students, postdoctoral fellows, and staff at Western and ensure that such individuals are able to access the resources required to undertake their research;
- Encourage propagation of the collaborative and interdisciplinary research models required to tackle increasingly sophisticated research issues;
- Provide direction to facilitate the development of infrastructure and services required to promote excellence in research and meet specific targets for research performance for Western as compared to other research-intensive universities in Canada;

- Promote opportunities for researchers to transfer the knowledge they have generated to the benefit of Canadians through engagement with community agencies, commercialization of invention and other means as appropriate to their discipline; and,
- Cultivate broader research partnerships in London and southwestern Ontario, the province, the nation, and internationally.

Western’s research mandate is based largely on five core priorities that serve as pillars for fostering research excellence and impact at Western and for further nurturing the culture of advanced innovation at one of Canada’s top research institutions. From fundamental discovery to community-based knowledge mobilization and commercialization initiatives, these priorities encompass an overarching desire to be the destination of choice for leading researchers, students, and trainees while producing research with local, national, and global impact.

1. **Going Global.** Knowledge generation and mobilization are increasingly global endeavors, particularly in terms of talent recruitment, collaboration, and outcomes. Western seeks to reinforce its standing on the world stage and produce results with global impact, notably in signature research.
2. **Mobilizing Knowledge.** Knowledge transfer and knowledge mobilization activities provide global impact by allowing for the translation and transmission of new knowledge, strategies, policies and technologies for the greater good of society. Western holds as one of its core priorities to help researchers maximize the impact of their work by supporting the dissemination and translation of knowledge for practical public, government, civil society, and industrial benefit.
3. **Preparing Global-Ready Graduates.** Western is an institution of higher learning, responsible for providing unique, advanced education programs that produce global leaders. Western seeks to enhance the quality of research training for undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows to ensure their continued contribution to Western’s research enterprise.
4. **Partnerships with Impact.** Western is committed to building upon its strong record of leadership with key partners – universities, governments, businesses, and communities – and to establish new models for local, national, and international research cooperation that addresses this – and the generation’s most pressing challenges.
5. **Leadership through Interdisciplinary Research.** In an effort to find solutions to progressively complex questions, researchers are expanding their networks throughout and beyond their fields of study and establishing interdisciplinary research groups, centres, and institutes. Western continues to offer strong support for these interdisciplinary research efforts.

SIGNATURE AREAS AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Through an iterative process, Western has identified four primary research fields which capture the breadth of work done at the University: **Life Sciences and the Human Condition; Culture, Analysis and Values;** the **Human and Physical Environments;** and **Social Trends, Public Policy, and Economic Activity.** Within each of these fields, some 60 specific areas of research strength have been identified for which individuals and groups have achieved national recognition by some or all of the standards of excellence listed below. Among these areas of strength, some stand out for their contributions in helping to define the University as one of the top research-intensive institutions in the country. As part of a broader institution-wide effort to enhance the profile of Western in an increasingly competitive educational and research environment, Western is promoting these “signature areas” widely within and beyond our community to meet the goal of consolidating our position within the public imagination as one of

Canada’s preeminent post-secondary institutions. The following criteria were used in the designation of these signature areas.

| Criteria for Identification of Signature Areas at Western | |
|---|--|
| <u>In Research</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of scholarly monographs and/or articles in prestigious journals • Attraction of outstanding graduate students or postdoctoral fellows • Success in achieving national and international awards and distinctions • Attracting a disproportionate number of Canada Research or other Chairs • Achieving unusual success in securing funding for infrastructure, equipment, and/or facilities |
| <u>In Teaching</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and international reputation as indicated by published rankings • Ability to attract students of high quality as measured by entering grades and awards • Success of graduates in their chosen careers, as measured by their accomplishments |

MEASURING AND PROMOTING SUCCESS AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Western has a long history of making significant research contributions on Canada’s behalf and for the world’s benefit. The University will continue to attract and develop talent, chart milestones and deliver results that place Canada at the forefront of discovery – while ensuring it communicates these stories of excellence. To measure and effectively monitor successes within and beyond areas of strength, efforts have been initiated across all Faculties to:

- Closely track our research performance in the publication of books, journal publications, awards, and distinctions, and success achieving goals for in research funding and commercialization;
- Seek ways to better understand and quantify the contribution of research to the social, cultural, and economic development of the local region, the province and the country, particularly in areas where such contributions may be less well known.
- Work with Communications and Public Affairs to develop a quantitative and qualitative database of Western’s research accomplishments through publication and other activities.

Faculty Planning Documents submitted annually to the Office of the Provost are expected to measure research success using these parameters.

BRIDGING WESTERN’S STRATEGIC PLAN WITH THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN

The Faculty of Education’s Strategic Research Plan draws from Western’s Strategic Research Plan but contextualizes the planning process to reflect our identity, mission, vision, organizational structure and processes, developmental stage, and most importantly vital differences due to the professional nature of our domains of disciplinary and interdisciplinary study and research.

BECOMING “GREAT” – RESEARCH THAT BETTERS SOCIETY

STRATEGIC PLAN – FACULTY OF EDUCATION

The establishment of a new Strategic Research Plan will facilitate research intensification within the Faculty of Education and identify areas of opportunity for growth and development. Further, the plan will help us to foster the support of research excellence in the Faculty while providing a strategic framework for driving our research reputation forward. It is our belief that a Faculty’s worth, its ‘greatness’ is judged by its value to society. Our Faculty seeks to be a great research Faculty of Education and to use that greatness as the platform for “bettering our world” by working toward the achievement of equity and social justice for everyone. We recognize that greatness is not achieved overnight; however, it is vital to begin to put in place the essential elements of the framework on which our greatness might be built. This is the explicit goal of this Strategic Research Plan.

RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

The Faculty of Education adopts the notion that “research” can and should be interpreted in a multiplicity of ways. We strongly believe that we should not only house academic disciplines and purely scholarly research but serve as a centre for bringing the richness of scholarship to bear on the pressing social issues of our time. As such, we take a broad view of ‘research’ which takes into account disciplinary differences and highlights the wide and diverse range of research activities in different settings including: scholarship, theory construction, observing and chronicling; experiment; theory testing; design; development; criticizing and elucidating; artistic creation; and consulting and advising. We believe that all of these activities may be classified as ‘research’ provided they include the discovery of new knowledge, the pursuit of a sustained line of inquiry, and the dissemination of results through publication for the scrutiny of peers (Bowen & Schuster, 1986: 16).

INNOVATION

RESEARCH CENTRES

The Faculty of Education includes highly visible, progressive, and productive research Centres established for the purposes of collaboration with diverse partners to provide research and education that is committed to social justice and its companion ideals, equity and inclusion. Each of our Research Centres has deep ties to the local, national, and international communities through involvement with multiple stakeholder groups.

THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (CREVAWC)

The Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women and Children is committed to preventing violence against women and children in our community, provincially, nationally and internationally. In 2012, research activities and projects focused on threat assessment and risk management activities; prevention of violence in schools, workplaces and communities; and prevention of domestic homicides. The work of CREVAWC is strongly supported and recognized within our immediate community, provincially, and nationally. The Centre continues to explore the impact of childhood and adult trauma, as well as the health care and justice system response to abuse, in

collaboration with our Canadian partners. In addition, CREVAWC continues to support undergraduate and graduate students in their research

It is noteworthy that the work of CREVAWC has had a significant impact on policy and practice across human services dealing with domestic violence including new curriculum on violence prevention and healthy relationships for youth now in place in over 2,000 school across Canada and 7 US states.

THE CENTRE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Centre for Inclusive Education is a research association composed of faculty members, research associates, and graduate students who share an interest in inclusive education research. The goal of the Centre is to encourage collaborative investigations of theories and practices in an effort to enhance the educational opportunities of all students with exceptionalities. The Centre is committed to sharing research findings and resources with academics, educators, and families

The Centre for Inclusive Education is evolving, and has become the national headquarters of the Canadian Research Centre on Inclusive Education; connections have been established with a strong group of renowned researchers in inclusive education at universities all across Canada. Although many Canadian scholars are involved in research that is directly related to inclusion, there is no national voice for research in this area at the present time. By researching and disseminating findings across Canada and around the world, collectively they aim to empower teachers and others with the knowledge they need to be effective with all students, including those with exceptional needs.

THE CENTRE FOR SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH

The Centre for School-based Mental Health was established in 2012 in response to a national crisis in the provision of services to children and youth presenting with mental health challenges. Although over 1,000,000 Canadian children and youth experience significant mental health concerns, only a minority receive some form of mental health services. For the vast majority, the school system is identified as the sole provider. Western is the sole Canadian Faculty of Education to house a *Centre for School-Based Mental Health*. The Centre aims to play a leadership role in addressing the need for education, training and consultation for schools and allied professionals regarding the integration of school-based mental health initiatives for children.

The integrated research and education approach is targeted specifically at the promotion, prevention and treatment of children's mental health within a systems of care model. The Centre is directing efforts toward advocacy, translating and disseminating research, and developing and implementing, in collaboration with communities, effective research-based integrated systems of care for children and adolescents with serious mental health challenges and their families. They seek to make it possible for children who might otherwise be stigmatized and alienated to live, learn, and thrive in their own communities.

THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Supported through the Teaching Support Centre, the Centre for Research on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education promotes the advancement of teaching and learning in higher education at Western University. It provides avenues for the exchange of ideas and information about research on teaching

and learning in post-secondary education. A related goal of the Centre is to facilitate the continued growth of a scholarly community in the area of research on teaching and learning. Emphasis is placed on supporting the development and dissemination of scholarship relevant to teaching and learning and recognizing and promoting excellence in research on teaching and learning.

RESEARCH GROUPS

The Faculty of Education also supports external and internal research groups, as outlined below.

Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research

The Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research (KNAER), in consultation with the Ontario Ministry of Education, engages in a dialogue with groups of practitioners/researchers to facilitate the development and dissemination of advanced knowledge through the application of applied education research, extending to effective practices in class-rooms, schools, school boards as well as provincially. The KNAER also focuses on building, advancing and applying robust evidence of effective practices through conducting research, synthesizing state-of-the-art knowledge from existing bodies of evidence from Ontario, nationally and internationally.

Researching International and Contemporary Education (RICE)

The central aim of RICE is to deepen collaborative capacities to develop and engage new conceptualizations and innovative approaches to researching international and contemporary forms of education in a globalizing world. RICE has received seed funding to create and maintain a small number of activities to support this aim. These activities include: periodic book discussions on new and relevant texts in the field, maintaining a website and other modes of connection and dissemination, offering a one-day annual symposium, and pursuing additional funding to further develop and expand the activities of the group.

Language and Literacy Education Research Group

The Language and Literacy Education Research Group seeks to understand language and literacy practices and learning across the lifespan and the role that language and literacy play in all areas of social life. The group is committed to improving people's language and literacy learning opportunities and communication options through dialogue and collaboration between students, researchers, and educational practitioners. Its membership draws from a variety of disciplines (e.g., education, medicine, information and media studies, psychology), and its foci are plentiful and diverse (e.g., early childhood literacy policy, literacy curricula, multimodal literacy, digital literacies, multilingual literacies, content area literacy, reading, and writing, to name a few).

OTHER CENTRES

Althouse Press

The Althouse Press is a significant Faculty of Education initiative that for the last 35 years has served to disseminate to the academic, professional, and wider communities educational theory and practice-based knowledge through its publications. Internationally renowned phenomenologist, Max van Manen, has described the Press as "the foremost and finest 'boutique academic press' in Canada.

The English Language Centre at Western University

The English Language Centre at Western University will open its doors in September 2013. The Centre will engage in research and program initiatives related to second language teaching, learning, and assessment. The Centre will seek to become one of the leading university-based English language centres in Canada, offering a variety of ESL programming to international students who may be conditionally admitted to Western University while they complete their English program.

IMPACT

Explicitly recognizing the impact of research is relatively new to research assessment in higher education. In recent years, "research impact" has become a major topic within the academy, largely due to the processes for evaluating research and the allocation of funds. Generally, impact is broadly defined as encompassing research that supports teaching, contributes to the body of knowledge, changes practices, influences policymakers, and importantly, benefits society or the environment and contributes to economic development.

Less clear is how impact is measured. Particularly within Education, impact remains a diffuse concept. At the **system level**, impact could encompass changes in practice, changes in policy, institutional changes, as well as enhanced public debate and increased public awareness of important issues. At the **individual level**, in practice and policy, research evidence, however strong, rigorous, and effectively communicated, does not simply compel to action, but is filtered through judgments about aims and values, and balanced against other forms of evidence and incentives to action. Dialogue and partnership throughout the research process may enable shifts in the language used in public debates, and in the assumptions shaping the use of research evidence, which may have implications for both the individual and the systemic levels (Strategic Forum for Research in Education III Report, 2012). As the Faculty of Education moves forward with implementation of its Strategic Research Plan, mechanisms for determining impact will need to be considered and implemented.

To date, the Faculty of Education has not systematically collected or reported impact data. What is available, however, indicates that we have many researchers with high levels of externally funded research, academic and technical publications, and presentations and reports delivered to a broad range of audiences. Researchers hold significant funding from external sources. Since 2008, they have collectively held at least 1.8 million dollars per year and together generated over 1200 research and knowledge mobilization publications. Further, researchers contribute to professional knowledge via partnerships with schools and a wide range of community agencies, governments, and international organizations including professional staff and others who work on the front lines, as well as those who engage at various administrative levels. Noteworthy is the number of Editors of national and international journals who call the Faculty of Education their home.

INTERDISCIPLINARITY

Researchers in Education represent complementary disciplines within Education including sociology, history, science, applied linguistics, psychology, fine arts, political science, and law and thus, by locating themselves in Education engage in interdisciplinary practice.

Interdisciplinary research teams are now frequently the successful models with national granting agencies. Similarly, the increasing use of multi-method research allows researchers to approach a variety of problems and use a variety of skill sets. Increasingly, our researchers are called upon to engage in research with colleagues from Education, as well as other disciplinary areas and communities. Researchers in the Faculty have been actively involved in collaborative research ventures with medicine,

psychology, information and media studies, computer science, languages, health sciences, science, linguistics, mathematics, anthropology, health professions education and engineering disciplines. Along with other Faculties, The Faculty of Education is a collaborator on a Canadian Excellence Research Chair application with the Brain and Mind Institute.

Within a Faculty of Education, the scholarship of engagement may well be the highest form of interdisciplinarity – it involves redefining faculty scholarly work from application of academic expertise to one where the faculty members are involved in reciprocal partnerships with the community. Essentially, it integrates faculty roles of teaching, research, and service. While there is variation in current terminology (public scholarship, scholarship of engagement, community-engaged scholarship), engaged scholarship is defined by the collaboration between academics and individuals outside the academy for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. The scholarship of engagement includes explicitly democratic dimensions of encouraging the participation of non-academics in ways that enhance and broaden engagement and deliberation about major social issues inside and outside the university. Researchers within the Faculty of Education are deeply engaged with local and global communities in productive relationships and activities through scholarship in action. However, fitting community-engaged scholarly into the traditional framework for defining and evaluating faculty work will require Western and the Faculty of Education to review engaged scholarship both as a concept and as a set of faculty practices, incentive systems, and supports.

Evidence of interdisciplinary collaboration within the Faculty of Education is strong. Conjoint or Cross Appointments and Adjunct/Affiliate Memberships within Western are held by a number of faculty in diverse units including the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, Richard Ivey School of Business, and Faculties of Health Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Social Science, and Music. Products of these collaborations are apparent in research funding, publications, interdisciplinary graduate student supervision, and scholarship in professional education. Our faculty also actively engaged in interdisciplinary practice and research with external universities, both nationally and internationally.

INTERNATIONALIZATION

To face the rapidly changing social, technological, economical, and political environments, universities, particularly in the last two decades, have been under immense pressure to internationalize. The proximity and intertwining of diverse cultural experiences, political systems, economic relationships and technological options require the development and infusion of a world view and perspective in curriculum formulation and implementation and in the definition of research areas and questions posed by researchers in the various disciplines (Bartell, 2003). Moreover, it is critical to enhance research and knowledge capacity, in order to increase cultural understanding. Indeed, “higher education institutions must become in a genuine sense institutions without boundaries if the nation and its people are to prosper in the environment of the new century” (The American Council of Education, 1995).

The Faculty of Education has implemented several strategies to advance its internationalization, including, international involvements by faculty members; study abroad programs, increasing the number of international scholars integrated into the Faculty, and delivery of graduate programs in international education. Our RICE Research Group is a sterling example of efforts to develop innovative approaches to researching international and contemporary forms of education in a globalizing world. International program and research collaborations have been consolidated with a number of universities.

CORE RESEARCH AREAS

Research expertise at the Faculty of Education will be categorized within distinct and overlapping areas, which are united in purpose to promote conditions in which children, families and communities thrive.

Over the next few months the Faculty of Education Research Committee will establish criteria to identify core research areas. They will then apply those criteria to name the core research areas.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. INNOVATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

We have chosen to focus on two aspects of innovation for our faculty's research agenda. The first is innovation that comes from creating a community of scholarship; the second, innovation that comes with seeing how research outcomes are integrated within the larger world of policy and practice.

a) Creating a Community of Scholarship.

Our faculty embraces the creation of a community of scholarship in two primary ways. The first is the community of scholarship within the faculty, including all faculty and graduate students; the second, the community of scholarship we are part of within our broader external communities.

As a faculty committed to excellence in the production of relevant research, we look to our faculty and graduate students to participate collegially as a community of scholars to address meaningful areas of research. Graduate students are warmly welcomed as representatives of the future of our profession. We endeavor to create – within an ethos of support and enthusiasm – a momentum that views the progression of research and knowledge through the very broad lens of investigative areas found within our Faculty of Education.

Our pursuit of knowledge is further facilitated by our active engagement in research partnerships with the broader community. We believe a reciprocal relationship between academic, practice and policy communities is central to developing relevance and excellence in research. Our defined community is broad and unrestricted by geography; instead, we are an international faculty as defined not only by our scholars and scholarship, but also by our reach and influence.

b) Research Outcomes

We respect the traditional importance of scholarship that is reflected by publications and successful grant applications; however, as a research community we also aim to influence public policy. We define our research efforts as successful when they reflect meaningfully on broader questions relating to the promotion of the welfare of others, creation of safer communities, promotion of academic success for all students, addressing social justice issues within communities, and an increased awareness of mutual concerns within the international community.

We are also committed to making better known the results of our research efforts through innovations in communication technology. In this way, we honor both our immediate community as well as the international community.

2. ADVANCING THE RELEVANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

We envision our faculty will measure the relevance of the research we provide not only through influence of theory, but policy and practice as well. In this regard, we embrace the value of research as a means of learning from and helping shape society by translating and implementing the outcomes of our research efforts. In short, the results of our research are only the beginning of our real efforts to play a meaningful role in an ever-changing community landscape.

Our submissions for research funding include strategies for disseminating results beyond the traditional means of scholarly publication. In addition – while not intended to minimize the importance of connecting with the scholarly community through publication – we emphasize that as a scholarly community within a faculty of education, we have the potential, and responsibility, to develop close working ties within our professional practice and policy communities.

This belief in knowledge mobilization as part of our faculty’s fundamental mission is a move away from traditional views of the role of university-based research. Due to its unique position within both the university and local and international communities, a Faculty of Education can find itself, if it chooses, at the juncture of where practice makes good science, and good science makes useful and informed practice. We are choosing to be leaders of that confluence of ideas and momentum of change.

As a further belief, we view our faculty’s research role as being informed through our interactions within our practice and policy communities. Successful university research efforts will no longer take place outside the communities of which they are intended to be a part.

Rather, we believe there is more to be gained by both creating relevant research and advancing the dissemination of findings through reciprocal relationships. This is based on a recognition that unique skills and knowledge are to be found within the practice and policy communities and the university community, and that such relationships enhance the ultimate value of the research we provide.

3. EXCELLENCE IN SCHOLARSHIP

The faculty’s priority is to attract, retain and promote research talent in the Faculty of Education. This talent exists prominently among faculty researchers, graduate students, professional teachers and pre-service students. At each level, we support researchers’ development in their professional and scholarly practice. Within the faculty’s ranks, as well, it is expected that senior researchers will provide advice and support to junior faculty, with a specific emphasis on the needs of pre-tenured faculty who are establishing their research programs.

The faculty will attract, retain and promote research talent in several ways: recruit outstanding faculty who have – in addition to solid teaching credentials and commitment to service – demonstrated outstanding potential or achievement in research; develop formal mentorship programs for doctoral students and pre-tenured faculty; advocate and promote individual, collaborative and collective research efforts and achievements; obtain research infrastructure that will support faculty researchers and provide opportunities to further develop a culture of research innovation.

Finally, the Faculty of Education will place considerable energy toward attracting Research Chairs, either through established programs (e.g., CRC or CERC) or endowed funds. Our belief is that these programs

will help the Faculty of Education attract and retain the best talent from around the world and advance knowledge in their fields through exemplary research and teaching.

4. STRENGTHENING A CULTURE OF SCHOLARSHIP

We believe that it is essential to grow and maintain a culture of scholarship that recognizes diversity and nurtures personal and collegial commitment. We define scholarship broadly to include discovery, integration, application and teaching. Discovery scholarship, or research, plays a vital role, but integration, including the capacity to synthesize and look for new relationships between the parts and the whole, application, including how knowledge can be applied to serve the interests of the larger community, and teaching, as a dynamic endeavor that goes beyond the transmission of knowledge to transform and extends knowledge are crucial components that we do not overlook.

There is a strong and well-established infrastructure to assess and reward the scholarship of discovery. We believe however, that there is an urgent need for mechanisms to review and advance the scholarship of integration as well as specialization, application and teaching. Integration should happen within the faculty community of scholars – which we discuss, share and collaborate with one another - to utilize collective expertise as a basis of identification, exploration and investigation of both parts and wholes. We believe that scholarship in outreach is crucial, because it is the impact of scholarship that is most relevant and useful to the community at local, regional and global levels. There is a need to develop a strong infrastructure that can provide a systematic examination of the degree to which there is support and recognition for faculty members as educators.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan outlines the strategies and tactics the Faculty of Education intends to use to place it solidly in the local, provincial, national, and international arena of educational research. Both the Strategic Research Plan and Action Plan therein are ‘evergreen’ plans, and as such, will be subject to review and revision on an annual basis by the Research Committee and Faculty of Education Council. In addition, the research committee will be asked to structure a survey form that elicits data on faculty and graduate student satisfaction with various strategies.

| Objectives | Strategies | Measured by | Plans/Actions and Progress |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Creating a Community of Scholarship</p> <p><u>Within the Faculty</u></p> | <p>Create frequent opportunities for faculty and graduate students to share their research work in a safe and supportive environment</p> | <p>An annual assessment of faculty and student satisfaction with research support will be administered by the Research Office. Success in these initiatives will produce findings indicating general satisfaction with the research culture and support.</p> | <p>Provide on-going “seed” funding to research groups for collaborative, interdisciplinary initiatives. Responsibility: Research Office Timeline: Ongoing</p> |
| | <p>Build more structured “bridges” between: research-generations of members (from graduate students through active faculty researchers to retired researchers); members with diverse research areas and disciplinary backgrounds, and; members locally and across the world.</p> | <p>As above</p> | <p>As above</p> |
| | <p>Highlight faculty and student research by creating a monthly series of electronic briefs based on faculty research findings.</p> | <p>Surveys and feedback provided by the community will indicate positive impressions.</p> <p>More significant media coverage and recognition of Faculty research by university community as determined by coverage.</p> | <p>Creation of a monthly electronic newsletter on research accomplishments and annual print copy of achievements. Responsibility: Research Office Timeline: October 2012</p> |
| | <p>Conduct annual review of all faculty members for consideration for various research awards.</p> | <p>Increase in the number of awards and recognition given to faculty and graduate students.</p> | <p>Annual Review. Criteria will need to be developed for review purposes. Responsibility: Research Committee Timeline: September 2012</p> |

| Objectives | Strategies | Measured by | Plans/Actions and Progress |
|---|---|--|--|
| Creating a Community of Scholarship <u>Within the university and broader external communities</u> | Support a Community Research Series wherein faculty and graduate students have the opportunity to present innovative research not only to their immediate peers but to those outside of the Faculty (other Faculties at Western, other local universities, and the community) | Feedback forms obtained following presentations will indicate positive impressions. | Funding provided to establish a Community Research Series. Responsibility: Research Committee and Research Office. Feedback forms to be developed by Research Committee and Research Office. |
| | Support graduate students financially and administratively in hosting a yearly conference for graduate students from across the country that features research and scholarship innovations and trends in education | Students will report satisfaction with the learning and networking experience | Research Office, and graduate student body. Timeline: Initiate in 2014. |
| | Continue to attract national and international scholars to share their research and scholarship not only with graduate students and faculty but with external constituents as well | Two measures used to determine success: a) increase in the number of national and international scholars presenting at the Faculty of Education; b) feedback forms prepared by the Research Committee and Research Office indicate positive impressions. | Secure funding through International Visiting Scholars Fund, Provost Visiting Scholars Fund, and Faculty of Education resources to support selected scholars. Responsibility: Research Committee, Associate Dean Research Timeline: Ongoing |
| | Seek out opportunities for research collaboration across schools, Faculties, other universities and international partners | Benchmarking data will indicate increase in the number of interdisciplinary collaborations. | Through Associate Dean's Group, seek further opportunities for research collaboration. Dean to support opportunities for faculty to be "released" to participate in initiatives housed in other Faculties and units. Dean to support interdisciplinary initiatives for CERC's and CRC's. Collection of benchmarking data: annually in May |
| | Continued support to graduate students in the provision of their Research Seminar. | Students will express satisfaction with the financial and person support they receive for their research seminar. | Associate Dean (Research), Associate Dean (Graduate Programs), and Dean's Office. |

| Objectives | Strategies | Measured by | Plans/Actions and Progress |
|---|--|--|--|
| Integrating research outcomes within the larger world of policy and practice | Identify a limited number of high quality- high impact collaborations and focus on advancing and sustaining these projects | Benchmarking data will reveal enhanced research products related to these collaborations. | Electronic and print newsletters as noted above will be used to enhance community-based and professional research endeavors. Timeline: Ongoing Support provided through Research Office. |
| | Utilize our research strengths to enhance the Faculty profile through systematic dissemination of our research findings to academic, professional, and lay communities | Benchmarking data will show an increase in presentations and collaboration with community and professional constituents. Benchmarking data will also demonstrate an increased number of formal knowledge mobilization agreements. | Collection of benchmarking data: annually in May |
| | Prioritize research for resource allocation that positions the Faculty in high quality strategic educational domains | Increasing productivity in areas that have been prioritized | The Research Office and Research Committee using benchmarking and other relevant data will develop criteria for the determination of areas of research priority and apply these criteria to aide in identifying areas for priority resource allocation. Timeline: to be completed by January 2013 |

| Objectives | Strategies | Measured by | Plans/Actions and Progress |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Excellence in Scholarship | Prioritize research for resource allocation that positions the Faculty in high quality strategic educational domains | Increasing productivity in areas that have been prioritized | The Research Office and Research Committee using benchmarking and other relevant data will develop criteria for the determination of areas of research priority and apply these criteria to aide in identifying areas for priority resource allocation. Timeline: to be completed by January 2013 |
| | Leverage the resources of our existing or developing research centres in Educational Psychology to develop an overarching mission/vision and developing supportive mechanisms to have it become a Signature Area at Western | Achieving Signature Area status at Western for the overarching initiatives of our established Centres | The Dean, Associate Dean (Research) and Directors of CREVAWC, Centre for Inclusive Education, and Centre for School-based Mental Health to work on overarching mission/vision and leveraging our collective accomplishments to have this work considered as a signature area for Western. Timeline: 2012-2014 Research Committee and Research Office will develop criteria for identifying high-quality, high-impact collaborations and will use these criteria to identify priorities. Required support in the form of various initiatives will be provided to these priorities. Timeline: January 2013 |
| | Review and revise Faculty of Education plans for recruitment and retention of faculty in areas of excellence or potential excellence. | Growth in faculty recruited and retained in areas of excellence or potential excellence. | Using programmatic, research, and service data, the Executive Committee will be asked to develop criteria for the establishment of areas of excellence or potential excellence and apply these |
| | Attract outstanding researchers with international reputations through programs such as the Canada Research Chairs program or endowed funds in areas of research excellence. | Number of chairs. | The Faculty of Education under the leadership of the Dean will oversee the preparation of one to two CRC applications in 2012-2013. Criteria will be based on an analysis of areas within the Faculty. Responsibility: Executive Committee and Dean Timeline: January 2013 |

| Objectives | Strategies | Measured by | Plans/Actions and Progress |
|--|---|--|---|
| | Ensure that research record with relevance to career stage remains a high priority in faculty hiring | The Faculty will be successful in recruiting their first choice candidate for faculty positions | Appointment and Search Committees will be instructed that research productivity relevant to career stage is a priority in short-listing and hiring candidates. Responsibility: Dean Timeline: Ongoing |
| Objectives | Strategies | Measured by | Plans/Actions and Progress |
| Strengthening a Culture of Scholarship a) <u>Enhance the research culture by building scholarly skills and capacity</u> | Develop research curriculum in teaching | Student evaluations will demonstrate an enhanced appreciation for and knowledge of research methodology and educational research findings. | Research Office and Research Committee will provide guidelines for enhancing research curriculum in teaching and hold meetings to share this information. These guidelines should be applied to both graduate and preservice programs. Timeline: 2012-2013 |
| | Creation of research-intensive PhD programs in selected areas of excellence | Introduction of research-intensive PhD programs in selected areas of excellence or potential for excellence. | Using the results of findings from the Research Committee and Executive Committee on areas of research excellence and programmatic/research/service excellence, select PhD programs will be developed. Encouragement will be given to develop areas of potential excellence through leveraging of resources. Responsibility: members of the professional and research-intensive task forces; Dean and Associate Dean (Graduate Programs) |
| | A mentoring plan to assist faculty in obtaining external research, training, and service funding | Faculty, both new and mid-career, will express satisfaction with the mentoring support they receive | Associate Dean (Research) and Research Office in collaboration with the Research Committee |
| | Untenured faculty will be provided with regularly structured feedback, individual meetings with Associate Dean (Research), and meetings with disciplinary and other new colleagues to share work-in-progress in a supportive environment. | Untenured faculty will express satisfaction with the support provided in establishing their research agenda. | Associate Dean (Research) will arrange to host new faculty on a regular basis to discuss their research agenda. Timeline: Ongoing |

| Objectives | Strategies | Measured by | Plans/Actions and Progress |
|--|--|---|--|
| Strengthening a Culture of Scholarship b)Enhance research resources | Create frequent opportunities for members to share their research work in a safe environment and to provide mutual support | Faculty and graduate students will express increasing satisfaction with the research culture. | Faculty and graduate students will express increasing satisfaction with the research culture. |
| | Direct efforts in areas of excellence or having the potential for excellence to attract a Canada Research Chair, endowed Chair, or CERC. | Recruitment of two Research Chairs | Recruitment of two Research Chairs |
| | Make internal research funds available to graduate students for course-based research. | Students will express satisfaction with seed funding for course-based research. | Students will express satisfaction with seed funding for course-based research |
| | Work with Research Western and other national and provincial funding agencies to diversify our funding support | Increase in faculty and graduate students awards | Associate Dean (Research) and Research Office |
| | Provision of research support services including grant facilitation and other informational sessions as needed. | Faculty and graduate students will express satisfaction with support provided. | Associate Dean (Research) and Research Office will provide grant facilitation support and other informational sessions as needed. Timeline: Ongoing |
| | To employ research staff to assist with administration of grants. | Faculty will express satisfaction with administrative support provided | Graduate Office will provide administrative support. Timeline: ongoing |
| | Foster partnerships for the purpose of developing endowments, initiatives, scholarships, research centers, and faculty lines. | Financial support for various research-related initiatives will substantially increase. | Dean and Development Officer, in collaboration with Associate Dean (Research) Timeline: Ongoing |

BENCHMARKING

The success of our research programs will be measured using the following parameters. These are listed alphabetically and not hierarchically. Responsibility for data collection and reporting will rest with the Research Office.

- Administrative reports
- Awards and distinctions
- Books
- Chapters in books
- Contractual funding
- Contributed papers in published conference proceedings and abstracts
- Development of sustainable partnerships with school boards, NGOs, governments, etc.
- Expository and Review Articles
- Facilitation of transformative change leading to higher quality and more equitable education in public, private, and other institutions
- Invited lectures/Invited Conference presentations
- Papers in non-refereed professional journals
- Papers in refereed journals
- Participation on editorial boards for major journals
- Practical application of research for practice (e.g., curriculum writing)
- Presentations at conferences (non-invited)
- Professional and Association Offices and Committee Activity Outside the University
- Professional consulting work
- Research Grants
 - a) Tri-Council Funding
 - b) Other Funding
- Technical reports relevant to academic and professional field
- Training of research personnel (e.g., RAs)
- Translating research to the public and private sector through knowledge and technology transfer, policy formulation, or other mechanisms.

A database using the above categories will be created from the annual collection of data (May) from faculty members and will serve as the benchmark for annual updating.

