

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO
McMASTER UNIVERSITY'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MARCH 12, 2015**

Following a number of discussions at recent Board meetings focused on potential opportunities available to the University (the federal Canada First Research Excellence Fund and the provincial Capacity Expansion proposal to name two recent examples), or risks facing the University (whether fiscal, reputational or otherwise), I thought it appropriate to update the Board on McMaster's Enterprise Risk Program. The Program has been developed over a number of years with input from across the University and is overseen by the President and Vice-Presidents group (PVP) and the Audit Committee of the Board. Focusing on opportunities, as well as areas of risk, the Enterprise Risk Program is intended to support the mission and priorities of the University through the identification of problematic issues and the implementation of risk mitigation strategies, whilst acknowledging the importance of innovation and risk-taking to the success of the academic enterprise.

Framework

The Enterprise Risk Program was developed after a detailed series of meetings with academic and non-academic administrators from across the institution. Having identified the key areas of risk, a risk leader was assigned for each area, and risk mitigation strategies have been developed with the guidance and support of the Office of Audit and Risk Services. The overall risk map and mitigation strategies are reviewed by the PVP group, which functions as the Enterprise Risk Steering Committee, on an annual basis. In order to balance the notion of risk with opportunity, and reflect the importance of innovation and creativity to the University's mission and success, an opportunities register has also been developed, which is similarly reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Copies of the current risk and opportunities maps, which were last reviewed and updated in December 2014, will be made available to Board members at the meeting.

Key Areas of Focus

The significance of particular risks facing the institution, as well as the range and importance of potential opportunities, obviously shifts over time as changes to the local, national and global landscape occur and as mitigation strategies are applied and areas of growth developed. The Enterprise Risk Program has been designed to reflect this necessary flexibility and allow for the identification of new or emerging risks and opportunities in a timely fashion. Over the coming year, McMaster will be engaged in a concerted focus around three key areas of potential risk and opportunity: Research Funding, Enrolment and Mental Wellness.

Research Funding

As members of the Board are well aware, ensuring an adequate flow of funding to support the pure and applied research that is so fundamental to the mission and purpose of a research-intensive university like McMaster has been a perennial area of concern. Indeed, it was to address this that we made the decision at the beginning of this academic year to make research—the quality, volume and impact of the work we do at McMaster—our priority for this and succeeding years. In addition to the institutional investments that we have made to support the needs of our researchers, the announcement of the Canada First Research Excellence Fund at the end of last year represents a huge opportunity for the University, both fiscally and reputationally.

McMaster's proposal is focused on anti-microbial resistance, an area of already demonstrated global strength, and is being led by a team of top-class researchers from a range of diverse yet relevant disciplines. We very much hope to be successful in the first round of the competition and will do everything we can over the coming months to support the Project Team and assure their success. Alongside this, we will continue our work to promote McMaster as a research powerhouse, maintain our strong relationships and advocacy efforts with government and use our available institutional resources to ensure that appropriate material and financial supports are made available to our researchers.

Enrolment

While overall levels of undergraduate enrolment are generally healthy at McMaster, changing demographic patterns and enrolment trends have resulted in certain disciplines and units experiencing declining enrolment. The Provost and Deans are monitoring this closely and the affected Faculties have been engaged in reviewing their course offerings and developing strategies to address the areas of falling demand. A detailed review by the PVP group will also take place later in the year. At the graduate level, the University is working hard to meet the enrolment targets specified in our Strategic Mandate Agreement; a number of new graduate programs have recently been approved and efforts to increase the numbers of Master's and Ph.D. students are continuing.

Mental Wellness

The importance of providing appropriate support, guidance and education in relation to mental health and well-being has been an area of focus and concern for some time. Employee Health Services provides access to support and advice, as well as a variety of wellness programs for McMaster employees and since January 2014, Student Affairs and the Faculty of Health Sciences have been working to develop the McMaster Student Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy, which was formally launched on February 25. The Strategy includes a commitment that the University "will strive to nurture and support all students to be as healthy as they can be and to reach their potential". It establishes five key recommendations focused on the provision of robust mental health education, training and campus resources, the implementation of a proactive and coordinated response to students in distress, the review and adaptation of policies and processes to ensure that mental health needs are accommodated, the provision of increased capacity within the Student Wellness Centre, and the establishment of a program of research focused on young adults in post-secondary settings. The PVP group will monitor progress and developments as part of the Enterprise Risk Program, with a detailed review being planned for later in the year.

Broader Landscape

It is important to stress in considering these various issues that McMaster is not alone in grappling with them; they are undoubtedly common to most, if not all, Canadian post-secondary institutions. Our guest speaker for this meeting, Paul Davidson, President and CEO of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), will provide valuable context for this discussion, as well as an overview of some of the key trends, issues and risks affecting all institutions, ranging from enrolment patterns and changing demographics, to fiscal and reputational issues, and the impact of governmental policy and requirements.

CAMPUS UPDATE

Chancellor Emeritus Red Wilson receives national honour for public service

Governor General David Johnston awarded Chancellor Emeritus Lynton “Red” Wilson the Vanier Medal for public service at Rideau Hall in December. The award recognized Dr. Wilson’s contributions to Canadian public service, which have had a lasting and positive influence on the lives of Canadians.

John Kelton and Alba DiCenso named to Order of Canada

Two senior health scientists have been named members of the Order of Canada. John Kelton, Dean and Vice-President of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine, has been recognized for his research into blood cell disorders and for his contributions to establishing Hamilton as a hub for health science research. Alba DiCenso, a Professor Emerita of the School of Nursing and the Department of Clinical and Epidemiology and Biostatistics, has been honoured for her research in evidence-based nursing and for her contributions to the development of nurse practitioners.

Memorial service held for founding Dean of medical school

A memorial service was held on February 19 for the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine’s founding Dean. Dr. John Evans passed away on February 13 after a long struggle with Parkinson’s disease. A Rhodes scholar who received his medical training in cardiology at the University of Toronto, Evans was 35 years old in 1965 when then McMaster President, Harry Thode, chose him to found the University’s medical school.

iSci Program honoured with ‘Oscar of innovation in higher education’

The innovative Integrated Science Program has been recognized with a prestigious Wharton-QS Stars Reimagine Education Award. The program won a Presence Learning Award for its focus on student learning and outcomes. The competition was developed by QS Quacquarelli Symonds, publisher of the QS World University Rankings.

Discovery Program offers something for everyone

The Discovery Program, which offers community members who wouldn’t otherwise be able to attend university their first taste of campus courses, held its fourth graduation ceremony in December. This year’s no-fee program was taught by Anthropology’s Ann Herring and included 20 students, who met once a week in Mills Library for lectures and discussion. The program is designed to remove the barriers between the University and the community it serves.

Research

Chemistry Professor John Valliant to receive Brockhouse Canada Prize

John Valliant and a team of scientists from across Canada have been awarded the Brockhouse Canada Prize for Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Engineering. The group has used expertise in nuclear medicine, chemistry, physics, regulatory affairs and clinical testing to develop a new way to make a specific kind of isotope, which is used to diagnose patients with cancer and heart disease. The award is named for Bertram Brockhouse, the McMaster physicist who earned the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1994.

International honour recognizes lifetime contributions of Henry Giroux

Celebrated scholar, author and cultural critic Henry Giroux will be presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Educational Research Association. The honour for Giroux – the Chair for Scholarship in the Public Interest – will be formally announced in April. Giroux is the author of 62 books and hundreds of articles, and his work is frequently published in the international media.

Superbugs a looming global threat, but McMaster can help

Gerry Wright, Director of the Michael G. DeGroot Institute for Infectious Disease Research, made an appearance on CTV's Canada AM in December after a British report suggested drug resistance is a more certain and immediate threat to the planet than climate change. Wright talked about the report and McMaster's work in fighting superbugs, as well as the economics of developing new antibiotics.

McMaster faculty key in \$60M advance on cancer research

McMaster faculty are taking lead roles in a new Network of Centres of Excellence devoted to cancer research, the Government of Canada has announced. The faculty are involved in the Biotherapeutics for Cancer Treatment Network, which will investigate biotherapeutics, a treatment which holds the potential to completely eliminate advanced cancers with fewer side effects than current treatments.

The researchers involved are:

Brian Lichty, Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine
Yonghong Wan, Pathology and Molecular Medicine
Jonathan Bramson, Pathology and Molecular Medicine
Raja Ghosh, Chemical Engineering
David Latulippe, Chemical Engineering

McMaster discovery makes top 10 of 2014

A breakthrough discovery by scientist Mick Bhatia was selected as one of the Canadian Cancer Society's top 10 research stories of 2014. Bhatia and his team found that human stem cells made from adult donor cells remembered where they came from and preferentially reverted to their original cell type when reprogrammed in the lab.

Scientific American highlights astrophysicist's search for better planets

The Origins Institute's René Heller's work was featured on the cover of the January issue of popular magazine *Scientific American*. Heller researches "superhabitable" planets – non-Earth-like places that would probably be two or three times larger and much less mountainous than Earth. He says scientists need to consider them in their search for extraterrestrial life.

Nearly \$2M from John R. Evans Leadership Fund

McMaster has received nearly \$2M in funding from the John R. Evans Leadership Fund, which offers universities the opportunity to acquire infrastructure for their leading researchers to undertake their work. Researchers awarded funding include:

- Ishwar Puri, Professor and Dean of Engineering
- Paul Andrews, Evolutionary Psychologist
- Sue Becker, Psychology, Larry Roberts and Ian Bruce, Electrical and Computer Engineering

- Tracy Becker and Lydell Wiebe, Civil Engineering
- Fei Chiang, Computing and Software
- Khaled Hassanein and Milena Head, Business, and Scott Watter, Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour
- Jan Huizinga, Medicine
- David Latulippe, Chemical Engineering
- Paola Muti, Medicine
- Guillaume Paré, Genetic and Molecular Epidemiology
- Nigel Schofield, Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Ravi Selvaganapathy, Mechanical Engineering

Research shows tailored treatment needed for children with autism spectrum disorder

Researchers from the Offord Centre for Child Studies have found that pre-school children with autism spectrum disorder differed from each other in symptom severity and functioning at the time of diagnosis. Because of this, the researchers say that treatment plans are needed to target both symptoms and functioning skills, and need to be tailored to each child's strengths and difficulties.

Strategic partnerships address industry challenges

Three faculty members – Ken Coley, Alex Adronov and Todd Hoare – have been awarded more than \$1.2M from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council to lead projects that will merge their research discoveries with innovation-driven companies. Coley will lead a team for a project that highlights the breadth of expertise in the McMaster Steel Research Centre; Adronov will work to address the lack of technology for the mass production of carbon nanotubes; and Hoare will develop fully recyclable novel soft nanostructured hydrogel and thin film materials.

McMaster has lead role in initiative to support family violence victims

The DeGroot School of Medicine's Harriet MacMillan will co-lead a \$4.1M study looking into better ways to support victims of family violence. The study will develop pan-Canadian guidance and education materials to help health professionals better support the needs of victims.