



HR Strategic Plan 2016–2021

ISSUED BY

The Human Resources Department | July 2016

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

Waterloo | Brantford | Kitchener | Toronto





HR Strategic Priorities

Enhance a culture of diversity and inclusion

Support an exceptional employee experience

Build a high-performance culture

Strategically partner for organizational success

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INTRODUCTION

In support of Laurier's institutional commitment to inspiring lives of leadership and purpose, and to align our efforts in support of the University's Strategic Academic Plan (2015-2020), the Human Resources Department (HR) introduces its' five -year strategic plan.¹

The purpose of this plan is to articulate key strategies that will enable Human Resources to deliver effective services, consultation and programming to meet the needs of our clients within a multi-campus institution which has grown in both size and complexity.

HR has identified four **key priority areas** to focus on. They are:

- 1) Enhance a culture of diversity and inclusion;
- 2) Support an exceptional employee experience;
- 3) Build a high-performance culture;
- 4) Strategically partner for organizational success.

These priorities were developed considering current and future needs of the institution. They reflect a commitment to the growth and development of our employees, and to evolving Laurier's management and leadership capacity.

Underpinning these priorities is a commitment to building the capacity and resources within the HR department to deliver on these strategies. We acknowledge that fundamental to the delivery of these strategies is a clearly defined HR value proposition and client service model for the organization.

Building on Core Services

The HR strategic plan builds upon the core services offered by the HR department and through the Diversity and Equity Office (DEO). As shared services, HR and the DEO support the people needs of academic and administrative departments across the University. These **core services** include:

- employee/labour relations and advising
- recruitment and selection
- organizational development and learning
- employment equity and accessibility
- compensation, payroll, pension and benefits
- employee wellness, accommodation and abilities management
- human resources systems and reporting

¹The five year plan is in effect from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2021.

Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles



OUR VISION

To be an influential partner, adding value and supporting the University in the achievement of its strategic priorities.

OUR MISSION

To build trusted partnerships and deliver innovative human resource solutions, programs and services in support of the changing needs of the University.
To enable high performance, enhance leadership capacity, and foster a healthy and inclusive work environment for all employees.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Human Resources is dedicated to the following principles:

- **Service Excellence:** We proactively seek to understand needs to deliver consistent, high quality service to our clients.
- **Accountability:** We take responsibility for our work by taking ownership for our decisions and delivering on our commitments
- **Best Practice:** We seek to invest in the best human resources solutions for Laurier using evidence and research to inform our recommendations.
- **Respect:** We value different ways of knowing and doing through open dialogue and respecting confidentiality.
- **Inclusivity:** We challenge assumptions, value differences, and create safe spaces for diverse voices to be heard.

OVERVIEW

Laurier's people – its faculty, staff and students – are the University's greatest and most valued resource. The university community is comprised of a dynamic and multi-faceted employee base with over 2,000 staff and faculty who are committed to academic excellence and providing an exceptional student experience. With five labour unions and numerous non-unionized employee groups across multiple campuses, the complexity of our community, in addition to the growing needs of the university, require the Human Resources Department to further evolve its service delivery model to a value-added strategic partner.

The Human Resources Strategic Plan was developed through a consultative process with leaders from across the organization and with the participation of the entire Human Resources team. Through in-person meetings and focus groups with our university key partners, we identified a number of strengths demonstrated by the HR Department. Our consultations indicated that HR is viewed as a trusted resource and subject matter expert with a strong ability to help our clients get “unstuck” and solve problems in a timely manner. In addition, we add value to the organization through the delivery of effective HR programs and services and by building and maintaining positive and productive relations with our various employee groups. These recognized characteristics are critical to a successful HR organization and provide a strong foundation upon which further value can be recognized.

Consultation with university academic and administrative leadership indicates a desire to further HR's commitment to employees through a focus on succession planning, talent management, leadership development, employee engagement and retention, diversity and inclusion, health and wellness and strategic workforce planning. Underpinning these will be a focus on continuous improvement and innovation supported through all activities in Human Resources. The strategic priorities identified in this plan reflect the desire for the HR Department to evolve its contribution to further enhance the effective management and leadership of the university. These strategies will be pivotal to supporting the university community in realizing the goals and priorities articulated by the 2015-2020 Academic Plan and 2015-2017 Strategic Priorities.



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1) Enhance a Culture of Diversity and Inclusion

As stated in Laurier's Strategic Academic Plan, diversity strengthens the University as a whole. A diverse student and employee population and a climate that supports that population, benefits all members of our community. To accomplish this, Human Resources and the Diversity and Equity Office will continue to work diligently to foster a culture of diversity and inclusion at Laurier. This means becoming intentional in our support of the Laurier community through the following strategies:

1.1 Support an institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion:

- 1.11 Formalize institutional commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion;
- 1.12 Assist departments to operationalize institutional commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion;
- 1.13 Review the Employee Success Factors with a focus on diversity and inclusion.



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1.2 Support a culture of inclusion by removing barriers, building awareness, and aligning workplace practices and systems:

- 1.21 Review workplace policies and practices through an equity lens to remove barriers and support an inclusive workplace;
- 1.22 Develop and deliver educational programming and resources to build Aboriginal and Indigenous awareness;
- 1.23 Develop and deliver educational programming and resources in support of diversity and inclusion, with specific focus on anti-discrimination and anti-racism.



1.3 Develop and implement an employment equity strategy aimed to attract and retain a diverse employee population with a specific focus on Aboriginal faculty and staff:

- 1.31 Work with the University Advisory Employment Equity committee in the development of the employment equity strategy;
- 1.32 Implement the Employment Equity Strategy;
- 1.33 Enhance the data collection and analysis of gender, abilities and race-based data to inform the employment equity strategy.



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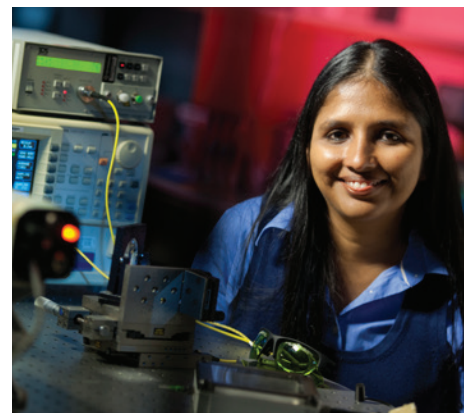


2) Support an Exceptional Employee Experience

The employee experience plays a critical role in attracting and retaining talent. It's what sets Laurier apart as a great place to work, and what keeps people motivated and engaged. What's unique about Laurier's culture is our strong sense of community and passion for supporting academic excellence and student success. Human Resources is committed to supporting an exceptional employee experience, focussed on professional and personal growth, development and wellbeing. Our four core strategies to support an exceptional employee experience include:

2.1 Develop recruitment and onboarding strategies and best practices to attract and retain a diverse pool of talent:

- 2.11 Develop a case to support a role dedicated to talent acquisition;
- 2.12 Enhance recruitment branding, outreach and online/social media strategies to enhance applicant attraction from a broad and diverse pool of talent; (linked to 2.11)
- 2.13 Build capacity to support international hiring and immigration (linked to 2.11);
- 2.14 Enhance the new employee experience through onboarding programs for new faculty and staff.



2.2 Further enhance opportunities for employee learning, growth, professional development and career progression:

- 2.21 Provide learning and professional development programs to meet the changing needs of employees;
- 2.22 Leverage technology through the implementation of a learning management system to support employee learning needs across all campuses;
- 2.23 Strategically partner with departments providing training to collaborate and coordinate learning programs.



2.3 Measure and enhance workplace climate and employee engagement:

- 2.31 Develop mechanisms to measure and enhance engagement and climate at the organizational and department level.

2.4 Support employee health and wellbeing:

- 2.41 Build capacity with employees and leaders to foster a mentally healthy workplace;
- 2.42 Deliver wellness programming and resources focussed on employee needs;
- 2.43 Develop gendered violence prevention and support policies and procedures for employees.

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3) Build a High Performance Culture

To support the advancement of Laurier as an institution, Human Resources will focus on encouraging and rewarding a culture of high performance focussed on standards of excellence and accountability. In support of this strategy HR will invest in the development of our employees with a particular emphasis on emerging leaders and management skills development. Through effectively measuring and rewarding exemplary employee performance we will ensure a strong foundation for future development. Our three **core strategies** to build a high performance culture include:

3.1 Build management and leadership capacity to support organizational success:

- 3.11 Create a Laurier leadership framework to define the competencies for effective leadership at all levels;
- 3.12 Develop programs to support and retain emerging and high potential leaders;
- 3.13 Deliver programs to equip managers and supervisors with the essential skills and tools to effectively lead teams;
- 3.14 Build capacity with leaders to have critical conversations and effectively resolve conflicts.



3.2 Re-envision performance management processes and compensation strategies to align with organizational objectives and recognize and reward high performance:

- 3.21 Review the management and non-union performance assessment process and reward systems to enhance overall effectiveness;
- 3.22 Work with unions to develop and enhance unionized employee performance assessment processes and merit systems;



3.3 Support a culture of recognition:

- 3.31 Enhance opportunities for recognition of employee accomplishments and contributions at the institutional and departmental level.



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4) Strategically Partner for Organizational Success

With a focus on adding value to the organization, Human Resources will evolve our service-oriented focus to one that is increasingly strategic in nature. To support this evolution we look to be a value-added partner to our clients, strengthen our skills, and enhance HR information and systems to support the organization. Our three **core strategies** to strategically partner for organizational success include:

4.1 Define and deliver the optimal HR service model:

- 4.11 Research and establish the optimal HR service model;
- 4.12 Assess and support department/unit information needs and develop relevant dashboards, tools and reports;
- 4.13 Invest in and advance HR knowledge and skills to meet organizational needs.



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4.2 Strengthen HR systems and processes with a focus on continuous improvement:

- 4.21 Apply continuous improvement methodologies to HR processes to enhance efficiency and effectiveness;
- 4.22 Improve HR data quality to support robust reporting and analysis;
- 4.22 Leverage technology to enhance employee self-service capabilities and improve access to HR information.



4.3 Cultivate effective relationships with employee groups:

- 4.31 Foster an environment of open communication and joint problem solving throughout the life of the collective agreements and handbooks;
- 4.32 Maintain an employee and labour relations strategy that aligns with and supports the long term strategic priorities of the institution.

APPENDIX A: CONSULTATION MEETINGS

Interviews to gather input and feedback to inform the HR strategic plan were conducted with the following individuals:

Dr. Max Blouw, University President and Vice-Chancellor

Dr. Deb MacLatchy, Provost and VP Academic | John Fraser, Director: Strategic Academic Initiatives

Jim Butler, VP Finance and Administration

David McMurray, VP Student Affairs | Dan Dawson, AVP Student Services

Rob Donelson, VP Development and Alumni Relations | Jana Gordon, AVP Development

Dr. Robert Gordon, VP Research

Brian Rosborough, Senior Executive Officer, Brantford

Tony Araujo, AVP Campus Administration and Special Constable Services

Dr. Richard Nemesvari, Dean | Joan Leach, Administrative Manager – Faculty of Arts

Dr. Bruce Arai, Assistant Provost: Strategy

Jean Becker, Senior Advisor: Aboriginal Initiatives

Shereen Rowe, General Counsel

Dr. Colleen Willard-Holt, Dean | Michelle Baker, Administrative Manager – Faculty of Education

Dr. Glen Carruthers, Dean | Renée Ellis, Administrative Manager – Faculty of Music

Dr. Paul Jessop, Dean | Deb Thayer, Administrative Manager – Faculty of Science

Dr. Nick Coady, Dean | Linda Norton, Administrative Manager – Faculty of Social Work

Dr. Heidi Northwood, Dean | Melissa Huszczo, Administrative Manager – Faculty of Liberal Arts

Dr. Joan Norris, Dean | Helen Paret, Manager: Graduate Admission – Graduate Studies

Dr. Lauren Eisler, Acting Dean | Nancy Lambert, Administrative Manager – Faculty of Human & Social Sciences

Dr. Micheál Kelly, Dean | Jennifer Knechtel, Administrative Manager – Lazaridis School of Business & Economics

Gohar Ashoughian, University Librarian | Nancy Willing, Administrative Manager – Library

Jennifer Casey, Assistant Vice-President, Enrolment Services and Registrar

Nela Petkovic, Chief Information Officer

Wayne Steffler, AVP Administration

Gary Nower, AVP Physical Resources

Joel Peters, AVP External Relations

Dr. Kathryn Carter, Acting AVP, Teaching and Learning

Managers/Directors Open Invitation Session – Brantford

Managers/Directors Open Invitation Session – Waterloo



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