

Laurier Strategy: 2019-2024

Today. Tomorrow. Together.

Wilfrid Laurier University is renowned as an exceptional learning community. From our roots in Kitchener-Waterloo as a small Lutheran seminary that opened its doors in 1911, we have evolved into a comprehensive, multi-campus, multi-community university with an expanding research profile. Since the turn of this century, our institution has experienced historic growth, while maintaining the small-campus feel and student-focused approach to post-secondary education that form the essence of Laurier.

The foundation of Laurier's success is this collegial spirit. It informs our academics, research, and relationships with each other, our host communities, and communities around the world. Throughout the consultation process central to developing the strategic plan, students, faculty, staff, and alumni overwhelmingly spoke of our university's unique character and the desire to preserve it.

This sense of community is built on Laurier's commitment to purposeful learning and research. Every day our people build meaningful relationships that have lasting impact, whether it is between students and faculty, staff and alumni, graduates and employers, researchers and community organizations, or entrepreneurs and investors. Through collaboration we find inspiration.

As we look ahead to the next decade, it is Laurier's spirit of community that will propel us forward as we innovate to meet challenges and harness opportunities. Successfully navigating these changes requires adaptability, creativity, and partnership. We have a significant contribution to make as we educate and inspire.

The core underpinnings of a university education will remain constant. Students require intense intellectual engagement combined with hands-on learning that prepares them as engaged members of their communities, who are innovative and ready to work together to solve the challenges of the future.

Laurier is committed to academic excellence, research, scholarship and creative endeavours that advance knowledge to improve the quality of life, build bridges inside and outside the university, and contribute to local and global economies. Laurier's long tradition of community provides the foundation for our Laurier Strategy: 2019-2024. The strategy sets direction that clearly defines who we are, where we are headed and how we will move forward together.

Looking Ahead

The next decade will bring significant changes to the way we live, learn and work. Engaged and aware global citizens are needed to address challenges such as economic and social inequality, cultural divisions, environmental change, and rapidly changing technology. These profound challenges are distinguished by their highly interdependent nature; the connections among them are deep, circular and complex.

At the same time, Canadian universities are experiencing systemic challenges, including uncertain funding, precarious employment and demographic changes. The university is committed to finding ways to address these challenges to pursue our core missions of teaching and learning, research and

scholarship, and community engagement. Universities are in a unique position to address internal and external challenges through collaboration, interdisciplinary approaches and partnerships across institutions, communities, government, and industry.

Laurier commits to developing the competencies of our graduates so that they emerge ready to face whatever challenges the future may hold. The university's role in enabling critical, contextual, and technical thinkers through research and teaching has never been more important. Therefore, we must examine our own structures and practices to better understand how we can pursue our mission in new contexts.

As we confront the challenges of the next decade and beyond, we are guided by our [institutional mission, vision and values](#), which were approved by the Senate and Board of Governors in 2008.

Developing the Strategy

In September 2018, Laurier embarked on a strategic planning process to create a five-year mission for the university's future. A [Steering Committee](#), comprising 28 members from all areas of the university, led the development of the Laurier strategy through extensive consultations and research over several months. Alumni, faculty, staff, students and community members expressed tremendous pride in Laurier's accomplishments and ambition to continue pursuing excellence. They articulated a desire, as Laurier develops, to preserve and strengthen the sense of community that has distinguished Laurier throughout its history.

Since the late 1990s, Laurier has transformed from a primarily undergraduate university to a comprehensive one. The multi-campus environment, growing internationalization, and increases in graduate programming, research and scholarship are evidence of how the university has changed over the last two decades. This transformation is still in progress.

Laurier Strategy: 2019-2024 sets a mission for the institution that is guided by two distinct strategic themes: thriving community and future-readiness. The themes and sub-themes are a high-level guide for developing unit-specific plans across the university that will be tied to key metrics and outcomes (to be developed in 2019-20). This document is a public statement of Laurier's ambitions and aspirations over the next five years.

Critical Enablers of Strategy

To pursue strategic objectives, the university must have sufficient strength and capacity. For Laurier, the critical enablers of strategy are the quality and engagement of our people – faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, and alumni – and the stability and sustainability of our finances, technology, systems, and physical infrastructure.

Mission 2019-2024

Laurier will excel at creating a thriving community where all members of our comprehensive university can reach their potential. From this foundation, we will develop future-ready people who will transform where they live, work, and continue to learn.

The Strategy

Thriving Community

Laurier excels at creating a culture of engagement that develops the whole person and builds reciprocal community relationships...

Enriching partnerships

...by facilitating mutually-supportive relationships with alumni, other educational institutions, government, Indigenous communities, industry, and the not-for-profit sector.

Inclusive community

...by fostering a highly personalized equitable, diverse, and inclusive community in which all members can experience the powerful sense of belonging that has distinguished Laurier throughout its history.

Indigeneity

...by pursuing enhanced and accelerated initiatives to integrate Indigenous knowledges and practices across the university.

Intellectual climate

...by facilitating the expression, testing, and challenging of a range of perspectives and ideas grounded in reason, evidence, and frameworks of knowledge and creativity.

Internationalization

...by increasing internationalization of the university to cultivate global citizens with strong intercultural competence.

Future-Readiness

Laurier excels at preparing people for whatever challenges the future brings...

Credential innovation

...by expanding the range of credentials to address the needs of people at all stages of life and career and to enhance lifelong learning.

Enduring skills

...by developing a range of competencies (knowledge, skills, and attributes) that lead to innovative and creative thinking, collaboration, adaptability, good judgment, ethical action and leadership.

Engaged research

...by connecting research, scholarship and creative activity with communities and across disciplines to address the most pressing local and global challenges.

Experiential learning

...by augmenting experiential opportunities that encourage reflection, expand knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and heighten self-awareness for all students.

Sustainability

...by leading the sector in environmental sustainability of our campuses and inspiring the incorporation of sustainable practices in society and the economy.