

Report to the Board  
October 8, 2015

As a new format, I am trying to have a shorter, more succinct report for the Board members highlighting some of the critical issues and achievements that have occurred since the previous Board meeting. I welcome members' input on this new format and look to revising this as to meet the Board's needs.

1. Since arriving July 1, my primary objective has been to meet with as many of the staff, faculty, and administrators as possible one-on-one. At this point in time, I am about 85% towards achieving that goal, although the start of the new semester and all of the work that brings has slowed me down somewhat. Meeting with as many people as possible has been extremely valuable. As presented at a recent University town hall, 4 themes have emerged from these meetings:
  - We have a very talented and dedicated group of staff, faculty, and administrators
  - There is a real strength of connection to Algoma University that is quite unlike anything I have experienced at other institutions
  - There is a strong belief that Algoma University has an incredible potential to achieve great things and become a strong and leading university in Canada
  - We have issues of workplace climate and culture that need to be addressed to help our University move forward to achieve that potential
2. I have also reached out to numerous external organizations, groups, and individuals to make a connection and explore the potential the University has to work with the community. These include the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Sault College, Lake Superior State University, SSMIC, SSMEDC, NOHFC, FedNor, both Forestry Research Centres, Garden River and Batchewana First Nations, local businesses such as Bioforest, regional institutions such as the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, the northern universities (Lakehead, Laurentian, and Nipissing), as well as spending time with Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities' officials, and with COU.
3. A concerted effort is being made to improve our communication systems. I recently held a town hall that was open to all faculty, staff, and administrators that discussed issues of workplace culture and climate. Areas have been encouraged to organize regular meetings of their teams and this has met with some modest success. Monthly internal communications using blogs and newsletters are being planned. We are working to ensure that Board members are communicated with on a regular basis and information of events happening on campus is distributed widely. This is an ongoing



process and I hope that all members of the University community will provide input on our communication efforts so that we can continually improve what we do.

4. University communities are dynamic environments that have visitors coming and going on a regular basis. We have had a number of very interesting, informative, and high profile visitors in the past few months enriching our staff, students, faculty, and community. It would be a long list if I were to indicate everyone who has visited so I will just highlight two visits. At the end of July, the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, along with the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and our University, as part of the annual Shingwauk Gathering & Conference, brought in as keynote speakers internationally renowned architect Douglas Cardinal and Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Just recently, the Department of English brought one of Canada's foremost political poets, Gary Geddes, in for a two-week residency. These guests to our campus highlight the dynamic and exciting environment at the University, and the ability we have to impact our students and our community.
5. Dr. Richard McCutcheon, our academic dean, has initiated a professional development series for faculty that has great potential to encourage the emergence of significant conversations around the teaching and learning process. A very well attended full day of workshops were held prior to the beginning of the fall semester and more events are planned to occur at regular intervals throughout the academic year.
6. A very important step for the financial health of the Institution was the sale of the Windsor Park facility, which was concluded just recently. Many thanks to our Vice-President, Finance and Administration, Sean Dwyer, for his outstanding work in bringing this sale to a successful conclusion.
7. The Registrar's Office has been heavily engaged in the developing of transfer credit agreements with a number of colleges, as well as helping us through a review of our scholarship and financial aid program, and in planning the Presidential Installation, which will take place on October 17<sup>th</sup>. A debt of gratitude to Dave Marasco for his terrific work on these important files.
8. We have been making a number of improvements to our marketing and promotion efforts – some obvious, others not quite as obvious, such as using google analytics to help understand the impact of our efforts. We also redesigned our booth at the Ontario University Fair which improved our "street front" appeal, and held our first ever Alumni event in conjunction with the fair, which was a big success.
9. There is a significant amount of renovation activity occurring on campus as we re-purpose space to meet our current and future needs. This re-purposing includes the conversion of WW 105 (the former Fine Arts space) into a COSC pod, creating office space, most notably for Sociology, in the former HII space, re-designing the west wing classrooms (WW 101, 102, and 103), building a Tim Horton's on campus, and working to re-furbish the Shingwauk Auditorium.

10. Two very important policies have been developed for implementation - the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Code of Conduct/Respectful Workplace Policy. Sexual misconduct was a point of emphasis at student orientation this year as this has been identified nationally as one of the most significant student issues at universities.
11. We have been working to improve our collaborations and cooperation with Sault College. Initiatives include potential collaborative programs, such as to support workforce training and education in the Lottery and Gaming industry, establishing student advising offices on each other's campuses, and to meet together with representatives of the University of Guelph and Humber College to learn from their collaborative model.
12. As can be expected, the academic work of the institution continues apace. Key developments here include the development of new programs in Environmental Science and Anishinaabe Studies, Senate approval of the Strategic Research Plan, and reviews of several existing programs.
13. The University continues to deal with a number of human relations issues that challenge all of us at the University. It is my hope that we will be able to resolve these issues fairly in the near future in which all involved are valued. Although there are confidentiality issues at play, my request is that we deal with each situation as honestly and respectfully as possible. By having strong communication systems and building trust and respect among everyone involved at the University, I am hopefully we will be able to minimize our need to use the legal system to solve these issues in the future.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Craig J. Chamberlin