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A Snapshot of the University

Established in 1964, the University of Guelph is a research-intensive, comprehensive university, with nearly 27,000 undergraduate and over 3,000 graduate students. The University’s main campus resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. The University of Guelph plays an integral role in the educational, business, and cultural life of the province of Ontario, through the impact of its teaching, research, and community service, and through its special mandate to serve the Province in support of the agri-food sector and veterinary medicine. Guelph’s seven colleges conduct leading edge teaching and research in the physical and life sciences, arts, business, social sciences, and agricultural and veterinary sciences. In addition, through a collaboration with the Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning in Toronto, the University of Guelph-Humber offers a unique blend of theoretical and applied learning that allows students to earn both a university degree and a college diploma. The University’s Ridgetown Campus in southwestern Ontario is a leader in applied agriculture, animal sciences, and environmental sciences.

Guelph is recognized for its academic reputation, for being student-centered, and for its strong sense of community. At the core of its identity is a focus on sustainability and improving life, a commitment that has found deep resonance within the community. An excellent comprehensive university with world renowned agriculture and veterinary colleges, the University is strong, vibrant, distinct, and highly successful across a range of measures. Its faculty have a strong track record of generating new knowledge and discovery. The University applies its knowledge and discoveries to shape understanding and effect lasting positive change. The University is deeply committed to mobilizing research into action and has a robust track record of successful commercialization, particularly in the food and agriculture space. U of G discoveries are fueling job creation, supporting sustainable food production, protecting the environment, improving the quality of life, and empowering those who are frequently marginalised. Within the University, research is infused into teaching. It creates experiential educational opportunities that enrich the student experience, and provide transferable skills that make graduates more competitive in the job market.

This is an incredibly exciting time at the University of Guelph. There is enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the University of Guelph’s Strategic Framework, which identifies five key themes that have been widely embraced by students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners. This Framework has set the direction for the future.

Consultations in preparation for the presidential search revealed a community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners optimistic about the coming years and very proud of both the culture and the accomplishments of this singular institution. The focus on improving life and on sustainability in all of its forms has galvanized faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners. There is a feeling that Guelph is poised to take a real place on the world stage – as its areas of research and scholarly excellence align with some of the most pressing issues facing our planet today. The new President and Vice-Chancellor arrives at this propitious time.
The President and Vice-Chancellor

The President of the University of Guelph must be an inspiring leader, encouraging faculty, staff, students, and alumni to see the world in new ways, to pursue the University’s mission to improve life in all that they do, and to recognize the role they all play in changing the world for the better.

The President will harness the energy and enthusiasm for the Strategic Framework and -- together with the Board, faculty, staff, students and external partners – give focus to the metrics that will ensure realization of its goals. They will build on the excellence and momentum that is already in place. The goal now is to accelerate this momentum. An exciting direction has been set; the new President will steer Guelph forward in pursuit of this vision.

The President will foster an environment that encourages dialogue and a diversity of perspectives. The University of Guelph is a community that embraces collaboration and collegiality, and comes together to support what is in the best interest of the University. The President must value, embrace, and support equity, diversity, and inclusion, and must have the drive to ensure these critically important and highly relevant principles flourish in practice.

As governments across the country adjust their approaches to funding universities, the President needs to provide courageous leadership, and have a vision around building capacity even in a difficult budgetary climate – ensuring that the financial and human resources are in place for the University to realize its goals. While the University is on a stable financial footing, thanks to careful planning and vigilance, it still must respond to the challenging and evolving fiscal landscape. The new President must be comfortable embracing philanthropy and fundraising responsibilities, must identify diverse, innovative channels for sustainable funding to support excellence in research and pedagogy, must continue to cultivate and foster productive partnerships with industry, and must have the ability to envision and develop novel strategies for attracting and/or generating resources that will allow the University to grow.

To ensure that the University of Guelph continues to be at the forefront of both teaching and research innovation, the President must have superb entrepreneurial instincts, and a natural tendency to set high standards and encourage big ideas. They will be a champion for excellence in teaching. As higher education becomes more globalized and institutions make strategic decisions in order to remain competitive, the President will work with colleagues to expand the international dimensions of Guelph’s research portfolio, including by communicating research successes more broadly and forming international research and scholarly partnerships.

Increased internationalization as a whole – including bringing more international students to Guelph and supporting them to thrive and succeed, and providing local students with robust and varied international experiences – is also a goal for the University and the President will play a key role in its achievement.

The President will make the student experience a priority during their tenure. They will continually elevate the quality of that experience, ensure that communication with the student community is engaging and constructive, and ensure that students are prepared for increasingly diverse and evolving career options. Continuing the focus on enhancing student services will be a priority, as will be the focus on the well-being and mental health of members of the Guelph community. This is an important issue across the campus, and one that will remain at the forefront.
Candidate Qualifications

The successful candidate for President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guelph will be an inspiring and globally-minded leader, with impressive scholarly credentials in their field, a deep commitment to the student experience, and a strong and distinguished administrative track record earned in a complex environment. They must respect and thrive in a collegial culture, and have a natural tendency toward inclusivity, consultation, and transparency. The President must be brave and bold, while consulting carefully and thoughtfully, as they chart the path forward -- building on Guelph’s considerable strengths and exploring new directions.

Above all, the new President must care deeply about this University and its people, and bring a deeply felt commitment to the success of the institution.

Although the Presidential Search Committee recognizes that no one individual possesses the sought-after qualifications in equal measure, it has developed a set of criteria to articulate the desired background, experience, and personal qualities of the successful candidate:

**Leadership**

- A deep and abiding commitment to collegial governance, the ability to work within existing governance frameworks, and a willingness to embrace, listen to, respect, and celebrate the diversity of views held by Guelph’s constituents.
- A proven ability to lead institutional change, articulate a vision and strategy for the University of Guelph, and then inspire the community in its pursuit of its goals.
- An entrepreneurial mindset, and the courage and creativity to think boldly about the future of the University.
- The courage, judgment, and wisdom to make important decisions when they have to be made, to delegate effectively to ensure that they are implemented, and to hold people accountable for their actions.
- A proven ability to create, develop, and lead a high-performance team.
- Strong strategic planning skills, and sound experience in leading an institution through complex planning processes – from inception and creation of ideas and strategies, to execution and implementation.

**Administration and Management**

- A solid track record as an administrator in a complex, post-secondary environment.
- Experience in change management and in responding to diverse and unexpected external pressures, and a track record of working with a diverse team of
administrators and faculty to ensure academic and operational excellence in a constantly changing environment.

- Experience managing in a challenging fiscal situation, sound business acumen, and well-developed people management skills.
- Experience in, and a comfort level with, working effectively with a Board and Senate, combined with a commitment to first-class governance.

**Scholarship**

- An advanced terminal degree, strong academic credentials, and a record of administrative experience gained in a complex academic environment.
- A demonstrated commitment to ensuring academic excellence, to the value of academic integrity and freedom, and to the pursuit of knowledge in all of its forms.
- An enthusiasm for interdisciplinary work, and the ability to motivate and inspire faculty and students to pursue collaborative and creative ways to pursue knowledge and solve problems.
- A deep appreciation for the importance of teaching, research, and public engagement, and a track record of actively supporting, encouraging, and fostering excellence in all three.
- A genuine commitment to students and to the quality of their experience – both academically and as citizens of a community.

**Government and Community Relations**

- Experience in building strong partnerships with government, industry, other educational institutions, community groups, and funding bodies, and a comfort level and sophistication to enable success in working with senior stakeholders across both the public and private sectors.
- A track record as a persuasive and effective advocate, with a particular knowledge of, and affinity for, government and industry relations.
- Issues management experience, especially in the high-profile areas that may require presidential comment in the media or other public fora.
- Experience and comfort with leading and actively participating in the institutional advancement function at Guelph, including fundraising, communications and marketing, and donor and alumni relations.

**Personal Qualities**

- A natural personal style that connects easily with others, that balances firmness and fairness in problem resolution, and that demonstrates an active interest in the lives of students, faculty, staff, and alumni as individuals in the Guelph community.
- A highly visible presence on campus and in the community, and the passion and energy to engage with students, faculty, and staff as the University articulates and pursues its goals.
- A deep understanding of, and commitment to, equity, diversity and inclusion. This must be combined with a track record of success in fostering a community that is not only diverse, but truly inclusive.
- Empathy, compassion, and selflessness, which are all deeply held values at the University of Guelph.
- Integrity and character, along with a high level of energy and a good sense of humour.
- An excellent listener, with superior public-speaking and communications skills.
The Appointment

Key Dates

Consideration of candidates will begin early in 2020, with the expectation that the new President will take office in the summer 2020.

How to Apply

Nominations and/or applications should be submitted, in confidence, to Colleen Keenan or Jason Murray at guelphpresident@odgersberndtson.com.

Your Personal Information

At Odgers Berndtson, we have always respected the privacy and the confidentiality of the personal information provided to us in context with our executive search assignments. This has been a fundamental value in building trust with our candidates and clients. We are committed to keeping your information secure and managing it in accordance with our legal responsibilities wherever we operate in the world, including the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (“PIPEDA”) in Canada.

For more information on your rights and to find out much more about how we process your personal data, a copy of our Privacy Policy is available for your review on our website.

By providing us with a copy of your resume and any subsequent personal information directly or from third parties on your behalf such as references, you understand that it has been furnished with your consent for the purpose of possible disclosure to our client, who has agreed to comply with our Privacy Policy. We will not disclose your personal information to clients without your prior knowledge and consent.

Equal Opportunity

The University of Guelph is strongly committed to employment equity and especially welcomes applications from all qualified candidates, including members of visible minorities, Indigenous persons, members of diverse sexuality and gender identities, and persons with disabilities. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply.

The University and Odgers Berndtson will take all reasonable steps to accommodate the varying needs of applicants during the recruitment process. If you require accommodation to participate in the recruitment process, please inform Odgers Berndtson.