GIFT ACCEPTANCE POLICY

Approving Authority: Board of Governors  
Original Approval Date: February 25, 1999  
Date of Most Recent Review or Revision: April 7, 2016  
Office of Accountability: Vice-President (External)

1.0 SUBJECT  
Policy for the acceptance of gifts by the University of Guelph.

2.0 PURPOSE, SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to address the principles to be followed by the University in matters of gift acceptance.

2.2 This Policy is established to govern the acceptance of all types of gifts, made in support of existing or new initiatives or priorities of the University. The acceptance of gifts by the University will be informed by the terms of this Policy.

2.3 The following definition of gift(s) shall apply in this Policy:

A gift is any voluntary transfer of cash or in kind, from individuals, corporations, associations, foundations or other sources to the University (“donor”). A gift is made without expectation of return or benefit to the donor or any individual or company designated by the donor as a result of acceptance of the gift.

A gift may be monetary in the form of cash or cheques, or in kind. A gift may be directed by the donor to a particular purpose or may be directed by the University to uses based on priorities set by the institution in accordance with Section 3.

3.0 PRINCIPLES FOR GIFT ACCEPTANCE

3.1 The University recognizes the need to receive gifts to help support its teaching and research programs. It values its public and private-sector partnerships, its relationship with donors and supporters, and welcomes gifts that support its academic mission. Gifts that support the University’s academic mission are a vital source of additional funding.
3.2 At the heart of the University’s mission is its commitment to academic freedom. Therefore, the University will only accept gifts that are consistent with its mission and institutional priorities, limiting neither its academic freedom nor integrity nor requiring any action that would compromise these fundamental principles.

3.3 The University will not accept gifts that it determines may involve discrimination on prohibited grounds, as defined in the University’s Human Rights Policy and the Procedures for the Resolution of Human Rights Discrimination and Harassment Concerns, Disputes and Complaints or the Ontario Human Rights Code.

3.4 The University will not accept gifts it determines may violate federal, provincial, or municipal laws.

3.5 The University will not accept gifts that would require the University to give special consideration for employment or contractual services to the donor, or to any individual or company designated by the donor, or that would allow the donor to influence or appear to influence inappropriately any aspect of the University’s business or academic operations including but not limited to admissions, curriculum, teaching, or scholarship activities.

3.6 The University reserves the right to decline or return gifts that are inconsistent with its mission and institutional priorities as referenced under this section or are otherwise considered in the University’s sole discretion, to be contrary to the best interests of the University.

3.7 The acceptance of all gifts must comply with applicable legislation and with all relevant University policies and guidelines including but not limited to the Naming of University Physical Assets Policy, the Naming of University Academic Entities and Awards Policy, the Real Estate Donations Policy, the Endowment Investment Policy, the Acceptance of Gifts of Marketable Securities Policy and the Donor Recognition Naming Guidelines.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT GIFTS

The following procedures have been developed in order to implement the above-noted principles and to provide opportunity for careful and systematic reflection prior to the acceptance of gifts by the University.

4.1 The President is delegated authority from the Board of Governors to make decisions concerning acceptance of gifts in accordance with this Policy and is accountable to the Board for implementation of this responsibility.

4.2 In determining the acceptability of a proposed gift, the President may seek input from the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and other members of the senior executive team and/or others in the University Administration and/or Members of the University of Guelph Board of Governors or Senate.
4.3 The President may delegate responsibility for decisions under this Policy for gifts of less than $1,000,000 to one or more of the University’s Vice-Presidents.

4.4 The President is responsible for ensuring that all resource implications arising from acceptance of gifts are appropriately incorporated in University planning activities including, but not limited to, the University’s Integrated Planning process, annual budgeting and multi-year financial projections, human resource planning and facilities renewal.

4.5 The President must report to the Board of Governors at least annually on all gifts received over $1,000,000, and on all gifts of $1,000,000 or more declined or returned by the University. The report will include reference to any unique or precedent-setting aspects of gift transactions over the reporting period.

5.0 PERIODIC REVIEW PROCESS

5.1 In order to ensure that this Policy continues to be effective, it shall be reviewed periodically. The Vice-President (External) is responsible for initiating this review no less than every 5 years.