



## The Governors of The University of Lethbridge Mandate and Roles Document

### PREAMBLE

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This Mandate and Roles Document for the Governors of The University of Lethbridge (“Board”) has been developed collaboratively between the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education (“Minister”) and the Board to reflect a common understanding of respective roles and responsibilities.

### 1. MANDATE

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Established under the *Post-secondary Learning Act* (PSLA), the Board manages and operates the post-secondary institution within its approved mandate [PSLA Section 60(1)(a)].

#### **University of Lethbridge is a Comprehensive Academic Research Institution**

The University of Lethbridge (“University”) operates as a Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution under the authority of the PSLA [Section 102.3(1)] of Alberta. As one of only four Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution institutions in the Province of Alberta, the University provides bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral degrees and conducts pure, applied and scholarly research.

#### **University of Lethbridge Mandate Statement (edited July 2021)**

[“Mandate | University of Lethbridge \(ulethbridge.ca\)”](#)

*- Approved by the UofL Board of Governors, May 28, 2021 and Minister of Advanced Education June 14, 2021 (Investment Management Agreement)”*

#### **Vision and Mission**

The vision and mission of the University of Lethbridge is guided by our Strategic Plan and supported by our Comprehensive Institutional Plan, Research and Academic Plans that can be viewed at [www.uleth.ca/campaigns/destination-2020/](http://www.uleth.ca/campaigns/destination-2020/).

#### **Who We Are – Comprehensive Academic Research Institution**

The University of Lethbridge is Alberta’s Destination University. Founded in 1967 on traditional Blackfoot land, we are a community that fosters an atmosphere of discovery, a welcoming place where students and faculty have the freedom to think, create, and explore together. People are the essential resource of our institution; they define our university and are our greatest strength.

We are committed to the individual student as a person of ultimate worth. Our students learn within and beyond the classroom in a research-intensive environment that offers connections with the diverse communities we serve. Students are taught by inspired scholars who integrate research and creativity with teaching.

Our motto, *Fiat Lux* (“Let There be Light”), and our founding principle of liberal education, continue to define and inspire us. We are committed to being the comprehensive academic and research university in Alberta that empowers individuals with broader knowledge that prepares them to think critically and creatively, communicate clearly, solve complex problems, and contribute fully to society. We give people more than an education: we give them a life trajectory and the tools to make a difference. High quality is central to all that we do. Our commitment to maintaining high quality undergraduate and graduate academic programs is important to fostering a better society. High quality instruction and teaching are essential to our commitment to quality, as are the vibrant programs of research and creative activity that are a differentiating feature of our institution and a central part of our culture as a

Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution. High quality facilities and services support our institution and its students, staff, and academic staff.

The University of Lethbridge was born from the needs and aspirations of our local communities, and so access to our university is a foundational value. We are committed to providing student access to our high quality academic programs throughout the province, without creating unnecessary financial barriers. Community engagement with our university (and vice-versa) and the community use of our facilities are important to us.

Our liberal education foundation, combined with our student focus and research and creative excellence, enables a distinctive student experience across three campuses in Alberta – Lethbridge, Calgary, and Edmonton. The result is engaged citizens, who are intent on understanding relevant issues and on improving our region, our country, and our world.

*\*“at the basis of both our academic objectives and our structure will be a commitment to the individual student as a person and as of ultimate worth.” Sam Smith, first President of the University of Lethbridge, Address to Students of Summer Session: The Goals of the University and a Concern for Students as Persons: Mutually Exclusive or Interdependent?, August 1, 1967.*

### **Why We Exist**

The University of Lethbridge exists to build a better society and inspire the minds of tomorrow:

- We create, discover, disseminate, and apply knowledge through free and critical inquiry and excellence in basic and applied research of regional and global impact.
- At the undergraduate and graduate levels, we develop creative discoverers and independent learners, who understand their responsibility for critical thinking and scholarship.
- We prepare students for their personal and professional paths.
- We encourage and nurture creative expression.
- We pursue community engagement.
- We value, encourage, and celebrate the talents and efforts of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

### **Where We Are Going**

We will be Canada’s destination for all who seek a comprehensive, liberal education-based university that promotes a diverse and inclusive environment and inspires research-informed teaching and learning, creative discovery, scholarship, professional endeavor, experiential opportunities, and community engagement.

### **Applicable Legislation and Regulations**

The Board has responsibilities under, and is subject to, a number of statutes and regulations, which include but are not limited to the following:

- *Post-secondary Learning Act;*
- *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act;*
- *Financial Administration Act;*
- *Government Organization Act;*
- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act;*
- *Lobbyists Act;*
- *Results-based Budgeting Act;* and
- *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act.*

The PSLA provides the primary legislation for public post-secondary institutions in the province of Alberta. Regulations enacted under the PSLA include:

- Campus Alberta Sector Regulation;
- Enterprise and Advanced Education and Technology Grants Regulation (s. 13.2);

- Land Use Regulation;
- Model Provisions Regulation;
- Pension Validation Regulation;
- Programs of Study Regulation; and
- Public Post-Secondary Institutions' Tuition Fees Regulation.

All of these statutes and their accompanying regulations can be viewed at [www.qp.alberta.ca/Laws\\_Online.cfm](http://www.qp.alberta.ca/Laws_Online.cfm).

## 2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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### **Lieutenant Governor in Council**

The PSLA outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Lieutenant Governor in Council specific to the University. These include the establishment of the public post-secondary institution [PSLA Section 3] and its Board [PSLA Section 16(1)].

In addition, the Lieutenant Governor in Council:

- Appoints public Board members [PSLA Section 16(3)(e)];
- May by order disestablish the University and its Board [PSLA Section 102(1)];
- May order that the assets and liabilities of a dissolved Board be transferred to Government or to another post-secondary institution [PSLA Section 102(2)];
- Approves debenture borrowing, and the issuing of notes, bonds, debentures or other securities. [PSLA Section 73(1)];
- Approves an incorporation, and the establishment, acquisition and dissolution of a subsidiary by the Board [PSLA Section 77];
- Approved the Board's establishment of a registered pension plan as an alternative to a designated pension plan [PSLA Section 69(2)(b)]; and
- Approves the Board's disposition of certain land [PSLA Section 67(1.1)].

### **Auditor General**

The Auditor General is the auditor of the Board as outlined in Section 71 of the PSLA.

### **Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education and Technology**

The PSLA outlines a variety of duties and responsibilities for the Minister including the appointment of Board members from nominees of constituent groups [PSLA Section 16(3)(d)] and approval of the University's mandate statement [PSLA Section 103(1)].

In addition, the Minister:

- Monitors the University's operation and performance through the Board's Business Plan, Access Plan, and Annual Report submissions [PSLA Sections 78(1), 78.1 and 79(1)];
- Approves the Board's establishment of supplementary pension plans [PSLA Section 69(2)(c)];
- Chairs the Campus Alberta Strategic Directions Committee [PSLA Section 107.1(2)]; and
- Informs the Board of Government policies and direction impacting the work of the Board.

Under the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* (APAGA), the Minister also conducts regular reviews (at least every seven years) of the Board's mandate and purpose [APAGA Section 19(1)].

### **Deputy Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education and Technology**

The Deputy Minister supports and acts under the general direction of the Minister, and is responsible for activities which have been delegated by the Minister.

### **Department of Innovation and Advanced Education and Technology**

The Department of Innovation and Advanced Education ("Department") supports the Minister and Board in meeting their legislated responsibilities.

Examples of Department support for Board related functions include:

- The provision of orientation materials and training support for new Board members;

- Establishment of workflow procedures for the recruitment and appointment of Board members;
- Ensuring that the Board's Mandate and Roles Document is affirmed annually and renewed or revised every three years; and
- Coordinating the Board's mandate and purpose review, at a minimum, every seven years.

### **The Governance of The University of Lethbridge**

As a comprehensive academic research institution, the University operates under a shared governance model based upon a distribution of power and operated through broad participation and collaboration.

As indicated within the PSLA, different groups are given primary authority over different areas of expertise and a voice in decisions affecting the University. The Board though has overall authority on managing and operating the University [PSLA Section 60(1)(a)].

#### **General Faculties Council**

The General Faculties Council ("GFC") is responsible for the academic affairs of the University [PSLA Section 26(1)] and has general supervision of student affairs. Among other things, the GFC approves academic policy and priorities, and offers advice on issues touching upon the academic work of the University. It also has other duties and responsibilities legislated by the PSLA and delegated by the Board. A description of the membership and bylaws of GFC can be viewed at [www.uleth.ca/governance/general-faculties-council](http://www.uleth.ca/governance/general-faculties-council).

#### **Senate**

The Senate within the [PSLA Section 13(1)] has the duty to inquire into any matter that might benefit the university and enhance its position in the community, and [PSLA Section 107(1)] can grant an honorary degree on a person. A description of the membership and bylaws of Senate can be viewed at [www.uleth.ca/governance/senate](http://www.uleth.ca/governance/senate).

#### **The Governors of The University of Lethbridge**

The Board shall manage and operate the University in accordance with its mandate [PSLA Section 60(1)(a)].

The Board agrees to work with the Minister to support and promote Campus Alberta, and its goals of an accessible, affordable, quality and sustainable post-secondary system in Alberta that fosters innovation, entrepreneurship, and collaboration.

The Board has the authority through the PSLA to establish admission requirements and publish rules with respect to enrolment and programs [PSLA Section 60(1)(c) and (d)], determine tuition fees to be paid by students in accordance with the regulations [PSLA Section 61], and delegate in writing powers, duties or functions set out in the PSLA, with the exception of bylaws [PSLA Section 62].

Other Board specific functions include:

- The settlement of questions [PSLA Section 63];
- Student discipline [PSLA Section 64];
- The acquisition of land [PSLA Section 66(1)];
- The disposition of land with approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council [PSLA Section 67(1.1)(a) and (b)];
- Subject to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, Borrow and issue notes, bonds, debentures or other securities, and sell or otherwise dispose of notes, bonds, debentures or other securities [PSLA Section 72];
- Banking and investment [PSLA Section 75]; and
- The appointment of the President, Vice-presidents, the Registrar, Deans and hire any employees and appoint any officers or other persons it considers necessary and may promote or dismiss the officers, employees and other persons. [PSLA Sections 81(1) 82(1), 20(1), 21(1), and 83 (a)].

The Board operates in accordance with the following governance documents: Charter of Expectations; Code of Conduct and Ethics; Terms of Reference of an Individual Governor; Governance Guidelines; and Rules of Operation of the Board of Governors. These governance documents can be viewed at [www.uleth.ca/governance/board-governors/governance-documents](http://www.uleth.ca/governance/board-governors/governance-documents). In terms of accountability and reporting:

- The Board must prepare a statement setting out the mandate for the University and this must be submitted to the Minister for approval [PSLA Section 103(1)].
- The Board must also submit a Business Plan, Access Plan and Annual Report to the Minister on an annual basis [PSLA Sections 78(1), 78.1 and 79(1)].
- The Board may be required to collect information (such as enrolment data and Key Performance Indicators) and submit to the Minister any information and reports the Minister considers necessary [PSLA Section 118(1)].
- The Board is accountable for ensuring that the public funds appropriated for the support of the University are used effectively and appropriately. The Board approves annual operating and capital budgets and regularly review expenditures, investments and borrowings.
- The Board is responsible for the appointment of a President as the Chief Executive Officer of the University [PSLA Section 81(1)] and the remuneration to be paid to the President [PSLA Section 81(2)]. The Board is ultimately responsible for the quality and performance of its administrators, and therefore is required to evaluate the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the President and the administration.

The Board may establish committees as it deems necessary to carry out its duties and ensures that terms of reference for each committee is reviewed and approved annually.

The Board has six standing committees: Executive Committee; Finance Committee; Audit Committee; Advancement Committee; Governance Committee; and Compensation Committee. Each Board standing committee has their own established Terms of Reference as well as the Board has approved Committee Chairs Terms of Reference to guide those who preside over these committees. These documents can be viewed at <http://www.uleth.ca/governance/board-governors/governance-documents>.

The Board acts as an intermediary between the institution and the public that it is intended to serve. The Board is responsible for ensuring that the institution is responsive to changing educational and societal needs. The Board, in collaboration with Senior Administration of the University, are significant participants in Campus Alberta.

### **Board Chair**

With direction from the Board, the Chair represents the Board and its interests in dealing with the Minister, the Department, the President, stakeholders and the community. The Chair is responsible for providing leadership for the Board and for effectively facilitating the work of the Board. The Board established a Board Chair Position Description (<http://www.uleth.ca/governance/board-governors/governance-documents>) to identify the responsibilities of the Chair.

### **Board Members**

Board members (governors) must act in the best interests of the University [PSLA Section 16(5)].

The Board established Terms of Reference for an Individual Governor (<http://www.uleth.ca/governance/board-governors/governance-documents>) to outline the responsibilities, personal and professional characteristics required of all members. The Terms of Reference are used as the basis for the evaluation of individual member's performance and also serve as a model for establishing the general attributes and expectations in recommending Board nominees.

### **President and Vice-Chancellor**

The President has general supervision over and direction of the operation of the University and has those powers, duties and function that are assigned by the Board [PSLA Section 81(3)]. The Board established a President & Vice-Chancellor Position Description (<http://www.uleth.ca/governance/board-governors/governance-documents>).

[governors/governance-documents](#)) to identify the responsibilities of this position. The President also chairs GFC and acts as a conduit between GFC and the Board.

### 3. RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS

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#### Membership

As outlined in the PSLA [Section 16(3)], the Board consists of twenty-one members comprised of the Chair of the Board, the Chancellor of the University, the President of the University, and not more than nine members representative of the general public, in addition to the Chair, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

In addition, the Board consists of the following members appointed by the Minister:

- Two Alumni of the University nominated by the Alumni Association;
- One member of the Senate nominated by the other members of the Senate;
- Two members of the academic staff of the University, one nominated by General Faculties Council and one nominated by the academic staff association (University of Lethbridge Faculty Association);
- Two students nominated by the council of the students association;
- One graduate student nominated by the council of the Graduate Students Association; and
- One member of the non-academic staff nominated by the non-academic staff association (Alberta Union of Provincial Employees).

#### Recruitment

The Department has an established recruitment process that applies to the University. The recruitment of public members is competency based and led by the Department in consultation with the Board. The Board will comply with all appointment requirements pursuant to the PSLA and any additional policies of the Government of Alberta or the Minister.

The Board has developed an attributes matrix for Board members. The steps that are taken or intended to be taken in the recruitment process and any identified skills, knowledge, experience or attributes required of a member to be appointed will be made public either before or after the member is appointed [APAGA Section 13(2)].

A public posting of all vacancies is the responsibility of the Department's Human Resources (HR) area.

#### Process

When a vacancy occurs:

- The Board identifies attributes that need to be focused on and provides that profile to the HR area, which facilitates the recruitment process.
- The HR area develops an advertisement for review by the Chair.
- The HR area posts the advertisement and the University may, at its discretion, do so as well.
- Applications are reviewed by HR and assessed on the basis of the identified attributes and values and creates a screening report.
- A Board Executive Committee reviews the screening report and forwards their recommendation to the Minister.
- Based on the screening report and the Board Executive Committee's recommendation, the Minister recommends to Cabinet the name of the candidate for appointment.
- Once Cabinet approves the Minister's recommendation, the Department will coordinate the appointment process by *Order in Council*.

#### Appointment

Prior to the appointment of a Board member, appropriate screening will include determining potential conflicts of interest. Appointment is for a fixed term not exceeding three years, with the potential for reappointment for a second three-year term [PSLA Sections 56(1) and 56(2)].

#### Remuneration

The Board prescribes the remuneration that members are paid for their duties as members of the Board. Board members do not receive remuneration but are reimbursed for travelling and living

expenses incurred while away from their ordinary places of residence in the course of their duties as members of the Board [PSLA Section 55(b)].

#### **4. INTERACTION BETWEEN BOARD AND DEPARTMENT**

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The Board serves as the intermediary between the Government of Alberta and the University. The Board may become involved in the development of provincial policies by:

- Providing advice on issues and trends;
- Reacting to proposals and statements put forward by the Minister;
- Recommending policy changes to the Minister; and
- Keeping the Minister informed about the development of the University and plans for the future.

As described under Part 2. Duties and Responsibilities, the Board provides the Department with regular reports on the University's performance and future plans.

In addition, Board Chairs of post-secondary institutions serve on the Campus Alberta Strategic Directions Committee. The Campus Alberta Strategic Directions Committee is chaired by the Minister and provides advice to the Minister respecting issues related to Campus Alberta [PSLA Section 107.1].

#### **5. ADMINISTRATION**

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##### **Three Year Renewal or Revision**

The Mandate and Roles document must be renewed or revised within three years after the last signing [APAGA Section 4].

##### **Transparency**

Copies of the Mandate and Roles Document will be filed with the Minister and the Agency Governance Secretariat. In support of the principle of transparency [APAGA Section 5] this document will also be made available on the Board's website and the Government of Alberta's website.

Original Signed

Gordon Jong, FCA  
Board Chair  
The University of Lethbridge

Original Signed

Donald Scott, QC  
Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education

October 16, 2014

Date

November 27, 2014

Date