

# NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier  
University



## **Laurier will create two separate faculties for arts and science**

*Partition will allow both new faculties to better focus on distinct research*

**For Immediate Release**

**November 11, 1998  
54-98**

**Contact: Dr. Rowland Smith  
Vice-President: Academic  
(519) 884-0710 ext. 2221**

**or Michael Strickland  
Media Relations Officer  
(519) 884-0710 ext. 3070**

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University is planning to divide its Faculty of Arts and Science into two separate units. At a meeting late this afternoon, the University Senate voted to recommend that the Board of Governors create a Faculty of Arts and a Faculty of Science.

Senators endorsed the recommendation produced by the Senate Academic Planning Committee because of the positive effect the partition will have on the quality of teaching and research produced by the new divisions. A majority of administrators, faculty members and staff believe the new Faculties will be better able to focus on their respective areas.

"There was a general feeling among members of the existing Faculty of Arts and Science that they had grown too diverse to address the interests and concerns of individual constituents," explained Rowland Smith, vice-president: academic. "The two new Faculties will be able to concentrate on their specific areas, which we hope will allow each to focus program development in ways which will attract more students, to pursue more research grants and generally to improve quality."

– more –

Faculty and staff in Arts and Science expressed their support for the partition during a Faculty-wide vote that ended on November 2. Of the 195 eligible voters, 91 supported the decision and 41 voted against.

Six of the existing Faculty's departments (biology, chemistry, mathematics, kinesiology/physical education, psychology and physics/computing) will form the new Faculty of Science. The Faculty of Arts will house the remaining 10 departments (archaeology/classical studies, English, geography/environmental studies, history, interdisciplinary studies, languages/literatures, philosophy, political science, religion/culture and sociology/anthropology).

The Faculty of Arts will be home to 104 faculty members, 22 staff members and close to 2,950 full-time equivalent (FTE) students; 56 faculty, 26 staff and 1,150 FTE students will form the new Faculty of Science. The recommendation indicates that one dean, two associate deans, an executive assistant and two secretaries will staff the central office of the Faculty of Arts; the Faculty of Science central office will be staffed by one dean, an associate dean, an executive assistant and a secretary.

"The aim of the reorganization is to permit more focused planning and more innovative program development than the current structure appears to permit," said Don Baker, acting dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. "We also want to give our science programs a higher profile both on and off campus as we move into a new century in which science will be more important than ever."

Baker pointed out that Laurier's science professors are notable for their success in securing coveted research funding from the National Science and Engineering Research Council. About 90 per cent of those hired in the last 10 years hold NSERC grants.

Having secured Senate approval, Laurier must now determine a timetable for the partition. The timing will largely depend on the nature and number of procedural changes that must be made. The known changes include revisiting the bylaws of Senate, renegotiating sections of the collective agreement and instituting a search for the new positions.