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JUNE 10, 2019 | 081-19

Wilfrid Laurier University appoints new deans for the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Science

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University has appointed new deans to lead two of its faculties. Beginning July 1, 2019, **Maria Cantalini Williams** will become dean of the Faculty of Education and, beginning Aug. 1, 2019, **Anthony Clarke** will become dean of the Faculty of Science.

Both Cantalini Williams and Clarke were chosen following an extensive search. Their terms will last five years.

“I am thrilled to announce the decanal appointments of these two exceptional administrators, leaders and scholars,” said **Robert Gordon**, provost and vice-president: academic. “Both Dr. Cantalini Williams and Dr. Clarke bring extensive knowledge and experience to their roles. With their leadership, the faculties of Education and Science will continue to make a meaningful impact, both locally and globally.”

Cantalini Williams was a faculty member in the Schulich School of Education at Nipissing University from 2003 to 2018 and recently received the designation of professor emerita. She taught in the Bachelor of Education and Graduate Studies programs and was director and associate dean of the Laurier-Nipissing Concurrent Education program in Brantford for six years. Cantalini Williams also founded and was the faculty lead for Nipissing’s international practicum program in Italy for 12 years.

Cantalini Williams received her Doctor of Education degree from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto in the Department of Applied Psychology. Her research has focused on innovation in education, collaborative inquiry, early childhood and work-integrated learning models. She has authored and co-authored numerous books, chapters in books and academic journal articles on these topics. She has also supervised many graduate student dissertations and has served as external examiner for several doctoral defences. Since 2016, Maria was chair of a Rideau Hall Foundation committee working on the Education for Innovation project, designed to develop innovation skills and mindsets in Canadian students.

She has also held a number of leadership roles with school boards, provincial committees and national associations. Cantalini Williams started her career as a school teacher in Sarnia and subsequently worked as program consultant with the Waterloo Catholic District School Board for 15 years. She was recognized provincially for her implementation of the junior kindergarten program and as a member of the Best Start Expert Panel.

Clarke is currently a professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at the University of Guelph. He has held a number of administrative roles at the University of Guelph since 1993, including as assistant vice-president of Graduate Studies and Program Quality Assurance; interim associate vice-president: academic; associate vice-president of research services; and interim dean of the College of Biological Science. He has also served on a number of administrative councils and committees.

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Besides his administrative roles, Clarke is also a renowned microbiologist and biochemist. In his time at Guelph, he established an inter-disciplinary research program, where he collaborated with colleagues across the country and around the world on ways to make antibiotic-resistant bacteria more vulnerable to drug treatment and to efficiently produce plant-based biofuels, among other goals.

He is an invited and funded member of the Canadian Glycomics Network, sits on the editorial board for a number of academic journals and has been the editor of the Canadian Journal of Microbiology since 2013.

Clarke received his PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Waterloo and was a post-doctoral fellow at the Carlsberg Research Centre in Copenhagen and research associate at the National Research Council in Ottawa before joining the University of Guelph in 1986. He has been awarded with the University of Guelph's College of Biological Science Teaching Excellence Award and the President's Distinguished Professor Award.

Cantalini Williams will succeed Colleen Willard-Holt, who was the inaugural dean of the Faculty of Education in 2008 and is now completing her second five-year term in the position.

Clarke will succeed Kenneth Maly, Laurier associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry, who has served as Laurier's acting dean of science since July 2018.

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