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Laurier appoints Heidi Northwood as senior executive officer: global strategy

WATERLOO – In support of Wilfrid Laurier University's internationalization efforts, a key priority outlined in the [Laurier Strategy: 2019-2024](#), the university has appointed Heidi Northwood as senior executive officer: global strategy to lead strategic institutional internationalization activities.

Northwood, the senior executive officer of Laurier's Brantford campus, has been appointed to this pan-university position for a two-year term. In the role, Northwood will focus on leading development of Laurier's internationalization strategy; establishing a senior council to champion the internationalization agenda; identifying new international partnership opportunities; and leading and supporting internationalization across the university.

"Internationalization is a critical part of our strategic plan as we mature as a globally recognized comprehensive university with a strong reputation for academic excellence, engaged research and student experience," said [Deborah MacLatchy](#), Laurier's president and vice-chancellor. "I am excited to have Heidi Northwood take on this role at this important time for Laurier. She has a proven track record of facilitating key international and national partnerships, collaborative strategic planning, and innovative international program development, and she is an inclusive and collegial leader."

Through the position, and in collaboration with leaders across the institution, Northwood will support Laurier's internationalization goals, including raising Laurier's reputation and reach internationally, and building partnerships abroad to create more international opportunities for recruitment and for Laurier faculty, staff and students, including exchanges, research projects and field courses.

"I am pleased that Heidi Northwood has taken on this role to work with our academic leaders and departments toward realizing their own program and research goals for internationalization, in alignment with a broader institutional strategy," said [Tony Vannelli](#), Laurier's provost and vice-president: academic. "Heidi's experience and expertise make her the ideal person to bring people together and make them excited about developing a strategy. She has been working closely with Laurier International and our International Recruitment team and has already identified opportunities that will bring us closer to this goal."

"I look forward to deepening Laurier's global interconnectedness in meaningful ways that will benefit our students, faculty, and staff, and contribute to research and learning that impact the world around us," said Northwood. "Through Laurier International's work, and partnerships such as our Sussex law program and the new Wilfrid Laurier International College, we have an excellent foundation from which to build."

As outlined in the [Laurier Strategy](#), the university excels at cultivating global citizens with strong intercultural competence. From welcoming international students, to offering domestic students global opportunities for study and research, Laurier is building a reputation on the world stage as a globally integrated institution.

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Northwood joined Wilfrid Laurier University in 2014 as dean of the Faculty of Liberal Arts. As dean she led the development of new programs including the BA/LLB partnership with the University of Sussex (UK) and the Bachelor of Design in User Experience Design (UXD). She also prioritized undergraduate research and experiential learning on the campus.

In 2018, Northwood took on the additional role of interim senior executive officer of the Brantford campus and in January 2020, this role became permanent. She represents the university president at the Brantford campus and connects the university with various levels of government, and the communities of the surrounding region, including the Indigenous communities of Six Nations and Mississaugas of the Credit. Northwood connects and supports academic and administrative leaders on the Brantford campus, and leads Laurier's partnerships with other post-secondary institutions. She is responsible for the fulfilment of the campus' strategic plan, which includes enrolment growth from 3,000 to 5,000 students and ensures the appropriate experiential and physical supports are in place for an exceptional student experience.

Prior to joining Laurier, Northwood was the director of integrative programs and the core curriculum at Nazareth College in Rochester, NY and a professor in the philosophy department. In addition to teaching and working in the area of Ancient Greek philosophy and science, she led the development of a new core curriculum, domestic and international experiential learning opportunities and assessment structures, and twice co-led the College's self-studies and external accreditation.

Northwood received her bachelor and master degrees in philosophy from Western University and her PhD in philosophy from the University of Alberta in 1997. Her research continues in the areas of Ancient Greek philosophy and she is teaching Design Ethics in the UXD program in 2022.

- 30 -