



# THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

N E W S R E L E A S E

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**For Immediate Release**

## **UWinnipeg's Newest Canada Research Chair: Focus on Indigenous Science Education**

WINNIPEG—The University of Winnipeg's Dr. Dawn Sutherland was named *Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Science Education* as part of today's \$66.9 million announcement in Ottawa of 90 Canada Research Chairs by the Honourable Maxime Bernier, federal Minister of Industry and minister responsible for the Canada Research Chairs program.

In her research, Dr. Sutherland, Associate Professor in Education, plans to explore the relationship between culture and science education in indigenous communities, in particular in Manitoba. One of her goals is to see the teachings of Aboriginal culture incorporated into school curricula so that science education is more meaningful, interesting, and relevant for Aboriginal students.

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, University of Winnipeg President and Vice-Chancellor stated that this initiative is part of a broader strategy underway at UWinnipeg to make education more accessible to and inclusive of Aboriginal peoples and culture.

"This project complements our holistic approach to Aboriginal education," said Dr. Axworthy. "The *Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Science Education* builds on our University's growing expertise and resources in this area such as our new Aboriginal Student Services Centre and the innovative Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre. This combined with the generous support of our partners in both the inner city of Winnipeg and the Aboriginal community as a whole are benefiting not only our students and researchers, but future generations of Aboriginal students."

A five-year, \$500,000 appointment, this Canada Research Chair builds on Dr. Sutherland's expertise teaching education students in the field of science. Sutherland incorporates traditional Aboriginal knowledge into her science lessons, and participates in an international committee dedicated to exploring how culture, language, and gender influence learning. She is collaborating with colleagues from around the world to develop an academic framework for teaching science to Aboriginal students that teachers can follow in their classrooms. In addition, she is in the process of establishing a centre where research in this area can be carried out.

"The idea is to make science learning relevant and interesting—to put it into a context that students are exposed to day to day," said Dr. Sutherland. "For some students, this means developing creative techniques, such as incorporating the indigenous knowledge of trappers, Elders, Aboriginal community members who live off the land, to help students engage with the science curriculum."

Dr. Sutherland is the fifth University of Winnipeg professor named as a Canada Research Chair. Dr. Mavis Reimer is *Canada Research Chair in the Culture of Childhood*, Dr. Jennifer Brown is *Canada Research Chair in Aboriginal Peoples in an Urban and Regional Context*, Dr. Tom Carter is *Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation*, and Dr. Jacques Tardif is *Canada Research Chair in Tree Ring Research*.

The Canada Research Chairs program, part of an overall Government of Canada plan to encourage Canada's innovation, promotes leading-edge research and innovation in universities; provides exciting opportunities for Canadian researchers; and, attracts the best research minds in the world to Canadian universities.

*Located in the heart of downtown, The University of Winnipeg is a compact, diverse, multicultural academic community committed to access and excellence. Home to more than 9,200 full- and part-time students, UWinnipeg has been ranked by our graduates in the Top Ten of all Canadian universities when asked about their "Entire Educational Experience" (Maclean's Graduate Survey, June 2006). The Globe & Mail 2005 Report Card gives The University of Winnipeg an overall 'A' grade in the areas of teaching quality, class sizes, faculty-student interaction, and the availability of faculty outside classroom hours. Find out why. Visit [www.uwinnipeg.ca](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca)*

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