



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

MEDIA RELEASE

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Students and Graduates Give UWinnipeg Top Marks for Quality of Teaching and Educational Experience

WINNIPEG – The University of Winnipeg continues to rank among the best of Canada’s undergraduate universities, especially when current students and recent graduates are surveyed. A recent survey conducted by the *Globe and Mail* rated UWinnipeg number one in Canada for class sizes and quality of education. And *Maclean’s* magazine today ranked UWinnipeg first in Western Canada for support for student services, student awards and alumni support.

In the *Globe and Mail 2006 Report Card*, released earlier this week, The University of Winnipeg earned top marks from its students, especially in the areas of class sizes and quality of education, when compared to other institutions with student populations between 4,000 and 12,000:

- **Class Sizes:** A+ (Tied for 1st)
- **Quality of Education:** A (Tied for 1st)
- **Faculty Availability Outside Classroom Hours:** A (Tied for 2nd)
- **Faculty Members’ Knowledge of Subjects:** A (Tied for 2nd)
- **Teaching Quality:** A- (Tied for 2nd)
- **Faculty-Student Interaction:** A- (Tied for 3rd)

“The best measure of a university’s success is how we are viewed by our most valuable constituency – our students and graduates,” said Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, President and Vice-Chancellor of The University of Winnipeg. “The University of Winnipeg performs very well in surveys that take this into account, illustrating our commitment to excellence in teaching and support for our students.”

In the *Annual Maclean’s Ranking of Canadian Universities* released today, The University of Winnipeg placed 2nd in Western Canada and 12th position overall among primarily undergraduate universities, performing strongly in the following areas:

- **Student Service (percentage of budget):** 2nd (1st in Western Canada)
- **Student awards:** 3rd (1st in Western Canada)
- **Alumni support:** 4th (1st in Western Canada)
- **Library expenses:** 5th (3rd in Western Canada)
- **Reputation survey:** 8th (2nd in Western Canada)

Two other surveys, publicized earlier this year, also demonstrated The University of Winnipeg's positive reputation with both current students and recent graduates. In the *Canadian Undergraduate Students' Consortium* (CUSC) survey, participating UWinnipeg students were asked if they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the following factors:

- **Quality of Teaching:** 91 per cent (2nd overall; 1st in Western Canada)
- **Quality of Education:** 90 per cent (2nd overall; 1st in Western Canada)

In the *Maclean's Graduate Survey*, recent graduates of The University of Winnipeg signaled their approval for the quality of their education at their alma mater and the positive influence it has on their careers:

- **"Definitely" recommend UWinnipeg to a friend or a relative:** 80 per cent
- **UWinnipeg "definitely" had a significant influence in their lives:** 77 per cent

"These surveys help highlight the fact that UWinnipeg is moving in the right direction," said Axworthy. "We are committed to providing a superior student experience at The University of Winnipeg through opportunities for faculty-student interaction and cutting edge research, enhanced student services and student housing, and full engagement with our urban environment and global reality."

Axworthy did take exception to the *Maclean's* survey, however, in a number of critical areas particularly in the ranking of the proportion of students who graduate and the number of classes taught by tenured faculty.

"I am disappointed that *Maclean's* continues to ignore some important realities we face at UWinnipeg," said Axworthy. "Firstly, the survey fails to take into account the number of students who choose to begin their academic studies at UWinnipeg in a smaller, more nurturing environment so they can better prepare themselves for success in professional programs – such as Law and Medicine – offered at other institutions. Secondly, with the hiring of 21 new faculty members this year, UWinnipeg has addressed the issue of classes taught by tenured faculty."

Axworthy also noted that the *Maclean's* survey does not recognize special initiatives that target key areas of growth such as Aboriginal engagement and global engagement – while maintaining its rich tradition of academic excellence. In the past number of years, The University of Winnipeg has taken a lead role in Aboriginal education in an urban setting and the revitalization of Winnipeg's downtown for the entire community. The opening of the Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre and the recent graduation of the first class in the Aboriginal Governance program are two examples of success in making university more accessible to the Aboriginal community.

Through UWinnipeg's Global College, students are actively engaged in seminars with leading experts in the fields of human rights, war-affected children and emerging democracies from around the world. UWinnipeg students are also traveling abroad on international missions including as election observers in Peru's presidential election last Spring. Supported by the Organization of American States, it was the first time ever where university students have participated in a mission of this kind.

As well, UWinnipeg is taking significant steps to increase and enhance its scientific and research capacity, evidenced by the recent announcement of a \$3.5 million donation to create the Richardson College for the Environment. The College will specialize in water stewardship, climate change and the North, urban ecology, as well as exploring the relationships between indigenous values and Western scientific research, supported in part by UWinnipeg's most recent Canada Research Chair, Dr. Dawn Sutherland.

This is on top of a recent study, prepared by Research Infosource, Inc., which ranked UWinnipeg in the top 50 of Canadian universities for research funding, with an increase this year of 13.4 per cent.

With increased support from the provincial government and a modest increase in student ancillary fees (\$100 paid by every student), UWinnipeg has been able to provide increased support to services that directly impact the student experience. These include: hiring 21 new faculty members; securing much-needed resources for the Library and laboratories; continuing with key initiatives such as on-campus health services, access to wireless and information services, enhanced safety and security features; as well as increased support for scholarships and bursaries. In addition, a successful fundraising campaign among faculty, staff, and retirees saw more than \$1 million raised for scholarship and bursaries for students.

“Our faculty must be commended for their dedication to their students and the pursuit of academic excellence,” said Axworthy. “As we look forward to The University of Winnipeg’s upcoming 40th Anniversary of its charter in 2007, we take pride in the contribution our students and graduates have made to both Winnipeg and Canada as a whole. But we also must look to bridging the ‘graduation gap’ still faced by many people – particularly our Aboriginal population. We need to fulfill our important role in creating an open and accessible learning precinct within the inner city of Winnipeg.”

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 2006 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

- 30 -

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