



Press Release

R00083

Oct. 15, 2012

University Marketing & Communications

905-688-5550 x4687

Five new research groups a boon to Brock and Niagara

Brock University has entered a new era with the formation of five research groups that will expand and disseminate expertise in biotechnology, health care, the environment, and social issues.

“Once again, Brock is taking a leadership role in pursuing research that is of vital interest to the community and the world,” says Gary Libben, Brock University’s Vice-President of Research.

The five institutes and centres will be taking a trans-disciplinary approach to research. Experts from completely different disciplines - a biologist and a social scientist, for example - will combine their expertise to come up with a fresh, new approach to a common problem.

In the process, Brock will be working with local governments, business groups, organizations and others, both to gather information needed for the research and to distribute or implement the research findings.

“The partnerships and synergies being created amongst Brock researchers and the community will result in information, programs, and services that will transform many lives,” says Libben.

The five institutes and centres are:

* **The Institute for Advanced Biomanufacturing** will pair the cutting-edge work of Brock’s plant biologists and chemists with biotechnology companies that will develop this research into innovative products and services. Many of Niagara’s agricultural businesses will need to innovate to compete on the global stage in these challenging times. As Brock has research strengths in plant biology and natural product chemistry, new partnerships are expected to create jobs and economic growth in Niagara and beyond.

* **The Brock-Niagara Centre for Health and Well-being** is dedicated to enhancing quality of life for people with an array of health conditions and chronic diseases, and for the at-risk populations such as the obese or those vulnerable to type II diabetes. The centre will co-ordinate programs, link researchers to groups in Niagara, and partner with local, provincial, and national organizations to set up networks of excellence. Researchers will come from a variety of disciplines to address the

biological, psychological, and social determinants of health. The centre's mission is to promote health, prevent disease, and work to help rehabilitate/reintegrate people.

*** The Environmental Sustainability Research Centre (ESRC):** A transdisciplinary space for transformative change brings together faculty from the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities to research how society can best move forward in a time where the earth's natural, social, and economic resources are being threatened. The basic challenge of "sustainability" is to map out ways in which people and societies can live within the limits of our physical and natural world to safeguard our planet's life support system. Partners from across Brock University and beyond will collaboratively examine issues of: water and environmental resources; meanings and measurements of sustainability; climate change, adaptation and transformation; science and public policy; and, social justice, development and health. The Centre embraces Brock's privileged location in a Biosphere Reserve and draws upon the UNESCO framework for understanding, innovating, and measuring all aspects of sustainability through education, science and culture.

*** The Jack and Nora Walker Centre for Lifespan Development Research** will expand its focus on community-based research in mental health and biological, social, and psychological adjustment across the lifespan. Staff will be hired to develop research partnerships with the local community and share with the community knowledge that comes from the research. Plans are underway to offer a new post-Masters certificate program in Clinical Psychology and Counselling, involving community-based internships. The increased contact between the community and Brock University due to the certificate program and new partnerships will assist faculty research and improve the area's access to good mental health care.

*** The Social Justice Research Institute (SJRI)** will bring together researchers and students from a wide variety of disciplines to produce socially-relevant and community-based scholarship on social justice issues and create connections with community organizations. The institute will focus on five research clusters: global justice; jobs and justice; gender and justice; animals and justice; and epistemic justice.

For more info: Cathy Majtenyi, research communications/media relations specialist, Office of Research Services, Brock University, 905-688-5550 x5789; cmajtenyi@brocku.ca