

Selecting Research Themes and Chairs

Research Chairs will assist VIU to broaden research capacity across the institution, focusing on the themes described in the Strategic Research Plan. In general, selection of a research theme will optimize the academic strengths of our programs and faculty, our regional connections, and our geographical position.

The Institutional Strategic Research Plan outlines the following key objectives:

- to support student success through research activity, especially research involving the participation of students
- to support research promoting the strength and credibility of the institution
- to encourage new interdisciplinary research in keeping with the size and character of the institution
- to build on research inspired by VIU's geographical location, and regional and international connections – for example, research applicable to the needs and concerns of coastal communities
- to develop regional, national, and international partnerships and collaborations with other universities, government, and industry contributing to research and learning environments at VIU

Following from these key objectives, the Research Chairs Strategy Committee has developed (2009) the following principles to aid in **selecting a research theme** when VIU applies for a particular Chair:

- fit with the VIU Strategic Research Plan and our existing and planned programming.
- opportunities for collaboration within and outside the institution (other post-secondary institutions, business and industry, government research centres and agencies)
- commitment to student research
- the relationship between teaching, learning, and research
- building on and extending institutional strengths and priorities
- research capacity in existing or planned areas
- benefit to the institution as a whole rather than to individuals
- regional relevance

In addition, the Research Chairs Strategy Committee recommends the following as **guidelines to the selection of an individual** who will assume a particular Chair:

- research chairs will provide leadership/team building within the institution
- research chairs will be expected to create opportunities to build inter-disciplinary strengths, which are inclusive rather than exclusive
- research chairs will be expected to create opportunities for collaboration within and outside the institution (other post-secondary institutions, business and industry, government research centres and agencies)
- research chairs will undertake teaching and mentoring of students, primarily at the undergraduate level, but with some opportunities in graduate programs (both existing and envisaged)