

The University of Guelph (U of G) has submitted a request to renew Dr. Aicheng Chen's Canada Research Chair (CRC). This will be Dr. Chen's second term at Guelph, and his third term in total. We believe this to be an exceptional case that merits consideration of a third term.

Dr. Chen's first CRC term at Lakehead was only one year. While the rules now state that chairs can be held for no more than two terms, this was not the case at the time Dr. Chen decided to accept the Lakehead Chair.

When Dr. Chen accepted the Tier 1 CRC at Lakehead in November 2016 it was with the understanding that accepting this offer would not limit his subsequent terms at the U of G, should his U of G nomination be successful. At the time, Dr. Chen was already in negotiations with the U of G. Dr. Chen also accepted an immediate start date. Like most institutions, Lakehead encourages early start dates, rather than deferring for the year the CRC Program permits, since vacant chairs represent lost research revenue. If the new guidelines had been in place when the Lakehead CRC was offered, Dr. Chen would at least have insisted on deferring his start date until negotiations with the U of G had concluded or would have declined the chair, knowing that he would only be at Lakehead for another few months. We ask that this context be considered. A detailed timeline is below.

The U of G is meeting its equity targets, and the retention of Dr. Chen contributes to meeting our targets.

Detailed timeline:

Nov. 2016	Lakehead CRC position accepted and start date given as immediate (Nov. 2016)
Dec. 2016	U of G position offered and accepted
Jul. 2017	Anticipated start date at U of G
Oct. 2017	U of G CRC Nomination submitted
Nov. 2017	Actual U of G start date (delayed because of lab renovations)
Nov. 2017	Change to CRC guidelines on renewals
May 2018	U of G CRC nomination approved