

# U of L FACULTY GROUP OPPOSES FRACKING IN LETHBRIDGE

**125 University of Lethbridge Faculty Members have endorsed the below letter to Gordon E. Jong, FCA, Chair, Board of Governors, University of Lethbridge**

Gordon E. Jong, FCA  
Chair, Board of Governors  
University of Lethbridge

Dear Mr. Jong;

Facing imminent incursions of hydraulic fracturing on the home turf of the University of Lethbridge, we seek the help of the Board of Governors in pre-empting this dangerous and ill-considered industrial initiative. As a group of concerned faculty members, our goal is to enlist the primary governing body of our post-secondary institution in a movement given early support and leadership by the trustees of both Lethbridge School District #51 and the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division. Over recent months these school boards have given over their facilities for community meetings where citizens of Lethbridge, but especially of West Lethbridge, have conducted self-directed information sessions.

So far the central subject of these educational gatherings is the Goldenkey Oil corporation's proposal to conduct hydraulic fracturing, in other words drilling and fracking, in West Lethbridge. The site of the proposed "exploratory wells" lies on municipal land within a two-mile radius of six schools. One of these schools is the University of Lethbridge, the primary seed of activity from which the urban development of West Lethbridge originally sprouted. It seems fitting that the University of Lethbridge should join together with the Public and Catholic school boards as well as with the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce, our Mayor, City Council, and the Lethbridge and District Association of Realtors to oppose a project that bodes poorly for the future of our community generally and of our University more specifically.

Fracking, but especially Urban Fracking, has become the subject of increasing opposition by those millions of people whose health and wellbeing is negatively impacted by this industrial activity. Many countries, including France, Germany, South Africa, and the Netherlands, have banned this activity altogether. The petro-province of Newfoundland has said "no" to fracking. Quebec has banned fracking. Fracking has been prohibited in Dallas Texas and Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. The enactment in Pittsburgh that outlawed fracking referred to the likelihood that corporations as well as municipal, state, and national governments will be sued for the "chemicals and chemical compounds found to be trespassing into the bodies of the residents of the city or into the ecosystems within Pittsburgh."

Some are already asking serious questions about issues of liability and due diligence that arise from the prospect of Urban Fracking in Lethbridge. For instance, are those most directly responsible for the governance of the University of Lethbridge doing due diligence in critically evaluating the Goldenkey company's Penny Project whose full scope and extent remain unclear. Any full assessment of the health and environmental outcomes of the Penny Project would have to take into account Goldenkey's plans for drilling and fracking throughout the larger Lethbridge area. If the project were to go ahead, would the University administration be required to take on new types of insurance to protect against the new host of threats to students, staff, and faculty arising from the failure to stop the "frack attack" on West Lethbridge?

If West Lethbridge were to be transformed into an industrial danger zone, how would this change affect our school's future recruitment of students and faculty? What would be the consequences for the University if University Drive were to become a major thoroughfare for the conveyance of large quantities of known toxins and highly flammable products? How would the influx of transitory work crews affect public order in our neighbourhoods?

Wouldn't the negative impacts of urban fracking in West Lethbridge detract from the idealistic imagery of the University of Lethbridge as Alberta's Destination University? Shouldn't the University become proactive to maintain the conditions of personal and community health and security that have helped make our school a magnet for students? Shouldn't the same conditions be maintained that attracted faculty members to come here in the first place; to establish family homes in the area and contribute to the growth of the U of L's academic reputation?

So far the volunteers of No Drilling Lethbridge campaign have collected the signatures of over 10,000 citizens who publicly oppose Goldenkey's plan to conduct Urban Fracking and drilling. Many of those who have signed the petition are U of L students, staff, and faculty. This upsurge of opposition took place as news emerged that Goldenkey purchased

mineral rights in 2011 to almost 10 square miles of West Lethbridge including Paradise Canyon, the Canyon, Riverstone, Sunridge, Mountain Heights, Copperwood and part of Varsity Village. Without notice or consultation, mineral rights were sold out from underneath four thousand homes as well as part of the University of Lethbridge's campus.

We believe that it is entirely fitting that educational institutions, which bear a kind of fiduciary responsibility for the health and wellbeing of their students, are playing leading roles in opposing Urban Fracking in West Lethbridge. Why don't the governors of the largest and most senior educational institution in West Lethbridge follow the lead of the Trustees of Lethbridge School District #51 and the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division? As time passes U of L's Corporate unwillingness to come out against the nearby Urban Fracking project is looking more and more like a position of compliance.

Will the University of Lethbridge exercise its Corporate power to intervene? Will the University of Lethbridge oppose the Goldenkey Oil company's plan to sink "exploratory wells" on municipal lands near our educational institution? What is the University of Lethbridge's official position on the Goldenkey plan to drill and frack in West Lethbridge?

As faculty members with diverse areas of professional expertise we invite the Board of Governors to work with us in arriving at an informed decision on these matters of such vital importance to the future of the University of Lethbridge.

Yours Respectfully,

CC: Dr. Mike Mahon, President and Vice-Chancellor  
Dr. Andrew Hakin, Provost and Vice-President Academic

## 125 Faculty Endorsements include the following:

1. Carly Adams, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education
2. Amin Adatia, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
3. Amir Akbary, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
4. Kristine Alexander, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of History
5. Debra Basil, Ph.D., Professor of Marketing, Faculty of Management
6. Michael Basil, Ph.D., Professor Marketing, Faculty of Management
7. Kiki Benzon, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of English
8. Brian Black, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Music
9. Glenda Bonifacio, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Women and Gender Studies
10. Tiffany Boulton, M.A., Project Coordinator, Department of Sociology.
11. Sean Brayton, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education
12. Robin Bright, Ph.D., Professor, Faculty of Education
13. Bryson Brown, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Philosophy
14. Shawn Bubel, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Archaeology, Department of Geography
15. Theresa Burg, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
16. James Byrne, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Geography
17. Cathy Campbell, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Education
18. Adam Carter, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of English
19. Yllias Chali, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
20. Dagmar Dahle, M.F.A., Associate Professor, Department of Art
21. Sameer Deshpande, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Marketing, Faculty of Management
22. Brent Devos, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Languages
23. Jon Doan, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education
24. Anne Dymond, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Art
25. Wendy Faith, Ph.D., Instructor, Department of English
26. Jo-Anne Fiske, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Women and Gender Studies
27. Margaret Forgie, Ph.D., Instructor, Department of Psychology
28. Elizabeth Galway, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of English
29. Jay Gamble, Ph.D., Instructor, Department of English
30. Inge Genee, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Modern Languages
31. Beth Gerwin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Languages
32. Rumi Graham, Ph.D., Professional Librarian
33. Lance Grigg, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Education
34. Thelma Gunn, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Education
35. Anthony Hall, Ph.D., Professor, Globalization Studies
36. John Harding, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies
37. Trevor Harrison, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Sociology
38. Jean Harrowing, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences
39. Paul Hayes, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry
40. Michelle Helstein, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education
41. Shahadat Hossain, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
42. Leona Jacobs, M.L.I.S., Professional Librarian
43. Hester Jiskoot, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Geography
44. Habiba Kadiri, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
45. Hadi Kharaghani, Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
46. Atif Khalil, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Religious Studies
47. Stefan Kienzle, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Geology
48. Igor Kovachuk, M.D., Ph.D, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
49. Olga Kovalchuk, M.D., Ph.D., Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
50. Heather Ladd, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of English
51. Robert Laird, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
52. Jason Laurendeau, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Sociology
53. Suzanne Lenon, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Women and Gender Studies
54. Matthew Letts, Associate Professor, Department of Geography
55. James Linville, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies
56. D. Bruce MacKay, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Liberal Education
57. Claudia Malacrida, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Sociology
58. Annie Martin, M.F.A., Associate Professor, Department of Art
59. Ian McAdam, Ph.D., Professor, Department of English
60. Susan McDaniel, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Sociology
61. Kevin McGeough, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Geography
62. Abigail McMeekin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Languages
63. Dave Morris, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
64. Joy Morris, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
65. Richard Mueller, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Economics
66. David A. Naylor, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy
67. Nathan Ng, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
68. Chris Nicol, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Economics
69. Claudia Notzke, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Management
70. Daniel O'Donnell, Ph.D., Professor, Department of English
71. Luz Janeth Ospina, M.A., Instructor, Department of Modern Languages
72. Kent Peacock, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Philosophy
73. Michael Perry, M.L.I.S., Professional Librarian
74. Em M. Pijl-Zieber, M.Ed., Instructor, Faculty of Health Sciences
75. Mark Pijl-Zieber, M.S.N., Lecturer, Faculty of Health Sciences
76. Greg Pyle, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
77. William Ramp, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Sociology
78. Jacqueline Rice, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
79. Tom Robinson, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Religious Studies
80. Duane Rockerbie, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Economics
81. Hillary Rodrigues, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Religious Studies
82. Elizabeth Schultz, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
83. Blythe Shepard, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Education
84. David Siminovitch, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy
85. Barry Stannard, M.Sc., Instructor, Faculty of Management
86. Michael Stingl, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy
87. Stuart Thomas, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Management
88. John Vokey, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Psychology
89. Amy von Heyking, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Faculty of Education
90. Nicolas Wade, Ph.D., Associate Professor Emeritus, Department of Art
91. Mark Walton, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy
92. Stacey Wetmore, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
93. Carol Williams, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Women and Gender Studies
94. Janet Youngdahl, D.M.A., Associate Professor, Department of Music