



# Endowment Fund Annual Report

April 30  
2014

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Summary: Endowment Portfolio, Fiscal 2013-14 (May 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014)

## 1 University Endowments

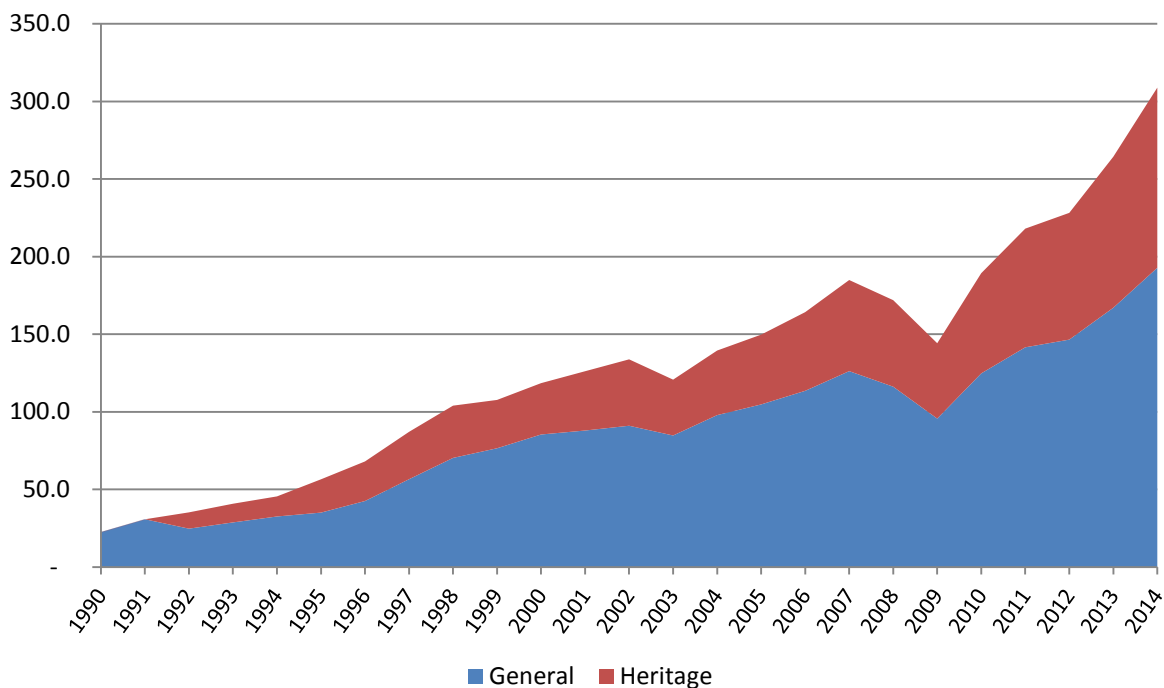
### Major Components

The University of Guelph endowments consist of two major designations; the General Endowment Fund (GEF) and the Heritage Endowment Fund (HEF). Since 1990 the University's total endowments have grown from \$22 million to \$309 million by April 30, 2014 (refer to the Chart A below). This growth is the result of both contributions and investment returns, net of spending for designated purposes. Contributions to University endowments are derived from a variety of sources including donations, governments and internal University sources such as income derived from Board of Governors designated land assets. Spending from endowments is directed to a number of specific purposes that include student assistance, faculty chairs, research and infrastructure support.

While there are many individual spending designations, for investment efficiencies, all endowment funds are managed as one investment portfolio. Each unique allocation or designation within this total portfolio is accounted for separately within the University's accounting system. Income is awarded to each endowment account in proportion to the total earned and the specific spending. There are currently around 1100 such designations or accounts within the University's single endowment portfolio.

CHART A

Total Endowment Market Values at April 30  
 \$308.9 Million at April 30, 2014



## Primary Objective

Regardless of funding source or purpose, in managing all endowments, the University's primary objective is to maintain the real (inflation protected) long-term spending capacity of each endowment. We are striving to achieve this objective by establishing a disciplined long-term spending rate that balances capital protection with current spending demands. The Board of Governors has established policies and a governance structure that ensures the necessary oversight is in place to realize this outcome. While both of the University's major endowments (General and Heritage) have different spending policies, they both share this fundamental principle.

## The Heritage Fund (\$116.1 million)

The **Heritage Endowment Fund (HEF)** was created in 1991 by the Board of Governors through, a declaration of trust with the intention that the capital of the fund be held in perpetuity for University strategic purposes. The main sources of growth for the fund are the proceeds of sales, leases from Board-designated University owned properties and investment income earned on the capital of the fund. Distributions for spending from the Heritage Fund endowment are made in accordance with a formula prescribed in the trust agreement. The formula is based on a five-year average of market returns after providing for inflation protection and growth. Oversight of the fund was delegated by the Board of Governors to a Board of Trustees ([Reference Link](#)). The distribution of funds for spending from the Heritage Fund currently contains two designations; one for student assistance designated as the Keefer Fund (\$13.5 million) and the more general fund of (\$102.6 million) which is restricted for major strategic initiatives such as large information technology systems or infrastructure investments. Since its creation 20 years ago in 1991 with total initial capital of \$10 million, the HEF has grown to \$116.1 million by 2014 while having provided \$20 million for major University strategic purposes over the same time period.

## The General Endowment Fund (\$192.8 million)

The University of Guelph's **General Endowment Fund (GEF)** consists of a pool of invested funds created from external or non-operating sources that are restricted or designated to provide long term financial support for a specific purpose. A large majority of GEF funds are allocated for student assistance in the form of scholarships and bursaries. Other designations include research support, equipment or library acquisitions, special academic activities such as endowed faculty positions and on-going support toward the operating costs of academic facilities.

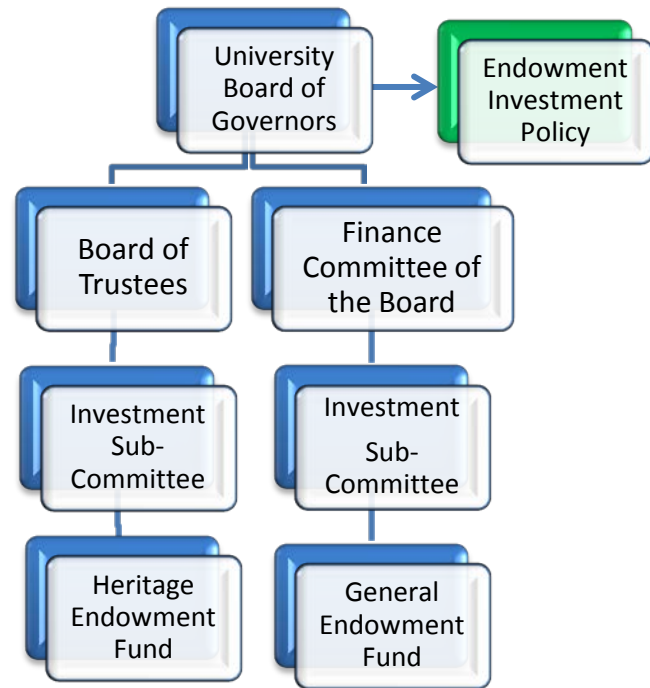
While the GEF is invested as part of total university endowment portfolio, each designation or restriction (e.g., donor agreement) is accounted for separately within the University's financial systems. There are currently about 1100 of these accounts within the GEF where the capital, investment income and expenses are recorded. (Refer to Section 4 for more on the GEF)

## 2 Endowment Policy and Oversight

The University endowment investment portfolio is allocated among different asset classes such as Canadian and global equities as well as fixed income investments including cash and government and corporate bonds. The “Endowment Investment Policy”

([Policy Link](#)) under which endowment assets are managed is approved by both the University’s Board of Governors and Board of Trustees. As part of the governance process (refer to the “Oversight Chart”), this policy is reviewed annually to ensure that it is current and meeting the objectives set by the Board of Governors for endowment management. Endowment assets are invested in accordance with this policy. Major objectives of the policy are to ensure the transparency and accountability of the Board’s oversight of assets as well as to provide an investment framework that balances endowment objectives with investment market opportunities.

Endowment Asset Oversight Chart



While overall oversight of endowment assets is the responsibility of the University’s Board of Governors, investment-related operational responsibility of the University’s GEF endowment assets has been delegated by the Board, through the Finance Committee ([Terms of Reference Link](#)) to the Investment Sub-Committee (ISC) ([Terms of Reference Link – ISC](#)). ISC also has been delegated equivalent responsibility for HEF assets by the Board of Trustees of the Heritage Fund. The ISC, which is composed of external independent members with expertise in the investment business, is responsible to ensure the effective implementation of the approved investment strategy.

Key ISC activities include regular monitoring of fund assets and performance, oversight and selection of portfolio managers, ongoing development of the investment policy and asset mix and regular reporting to the Board of Governors. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the ISC is supported by University administration through the Financial Services - Office of Investment Management. In addition the ISC may rely on independent external experts and consultants for certain aspects of the Endowment Funds operations where additional expert knowledge is required or where a perceived or actual conflict of interest exists.

## Investment Risk Management – Asset Allocation

In managing its endowments, University of Guelph strives to provide inflation-protected funding by protecting the purchasing power of each endowment. The realization of this objective is achieved in two ways: first by spending only a portion of total investment returns and second, investing in assets (e.g., equities) that yield sufficient investment returns to provide inflation-protected spending. Diversification through asset allocation plays a fundamental role in risk management and return enhancement, consequently development of the appropriate asset mix to meet the long term objectives of the endowment fund is one of the most important tasks in managing the portfolio.

Investment asset classes are defined by differences in their expected response to economic conditions such as inflation or changes in interest rates, and are weighted in the Endowment portfolio by considering risk, total return potential and correlations (i.e., how returns in one asset class move relative to others). The University combines these assets in such a way as to generate the required return at an acceptable level of risk (i.e., return volatility), over the long-term. This strategy is well-accepted for managing endowments. In determining the asset mix (and associated investment risks), the University periodically undertakes detailed studies performed by an external consultant. These studies use statistical techniques to combine long term return expectations of investment assets along with their variances and covariances to estimate risk and return profiles. The result of these studies is (presented to the Board of Governors through the appropriate committees) an allocation of investments across various asset classes. Included in this recommendation are additional risk mitigation measures such as limitations on the concentration of investments (e.g., limitations on investments in any one company), credit quality, market capitalization and currency exposure.

The “Target” and “Actual” asset mix at April 30, 2014 is shown in Table A. The target asset mix “Target” is specified in the Endowment Investment Policy. The “Actual” mix is within specified policy limits.

**TABLE A**

Asset Class	Policy Target	Actual % 2014	Benchmark Index
Canadian Equities	20%	20%	S&P TSX Composite
U.S. Equities	25%	23%	S&P 500
Non- North American Equities	20%	21%	MSCI EAFE
Emerging Market Equities	5%	5%	MSCI Emerging Markets
Fixed Income, Infrastructure* & Cash	30%	32%	Dex Bond Universe
Total	100%	100%	

\* *Infrastructure* is classified as a Real Asset which is often defined as physical or tangible asset that tends to provide a “real return”, often linked to inflation. This definition encompasses a wide range of potential investments, including real estate, timberlands, agrilands, commodities, precious metals and natural resources. Infrastructure assets are capital-intensive assets that provide essential products or services. *Infrastructure* was added to the endowment fund in late 2013 with a committed a maximum total of \$ 19 million (7.5% of the fund) to an infrastructure fund.

Manager selection is also an important method of risk control. The University engages a number of external investment managers with proven expertise to manage specialty mandates on its behalf. We not only assess the manager’s according to their investment experience and performance in an asset class, but also conduct thorough due diligence on their organization and operational processes. This is done with the assistance of external consultants. Most of our investment managers select securities on a bottom-up basis, by focusing on quality businesses available at attractive valuations. This approach also serves as a risk management tool. The ISC regularly reviews manager performance against expectations and will make changes to managers or their mandates as necessary.

In addition to tracking total fund return, investment performance is also reported against a “Benchmark” portfolio. The fund performance “Benchmark” is the Policy Target asset mix times the weighted composite of public market indices representing each asset class (noted in Table A). Each index is a broad representative sample of investable securities. The approved allocation of investments and other risk control measures are documented in the Endowment Investment Policy. The Office of Investment Management ensures that asset allocations are within approved limits and allocations are reviewed at least quarterly by ISC.

Table B below shows the change in asset allocation over the past five years. The changes in actual asset weights from the prior year are a function of several factors, including cash inflows and outflows, foreign exchange rates and the differing performance of various asset classes.

**TABLE B**

<b>Asset Allocation (as of April 30)</b>					
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Canadian Equity	19%	21%	18%	18%	20%
U.S. Equity	32%	26%	26%	27%	23%
Non North American Equity	19%	18%	18%	18%	21%
Emerging Market Equity	-	5%	4%	5%	5%
Fixed Income	23%	27%	28%	28%	26%
Infrastructure	-	-	-	-	1%
Cash	7%	3%	5%	4%	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **3 Investment Performance to April 30, 2014**

The endowment fund’s gross return over the last 12 months was 16.6%, marginally underperforming the policy Benchmark return of 16.8%. Table C presents these returns with the previous five years. The Fund returns have exceeded the Benchmark over this five year period and recent positive returns have more than recovered from the market losses of the financial crisis of 2008-2009.

TABLE C

**ENDOWMENT FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE**  
**Annual Rates of Return ( Years ended April 30th )**

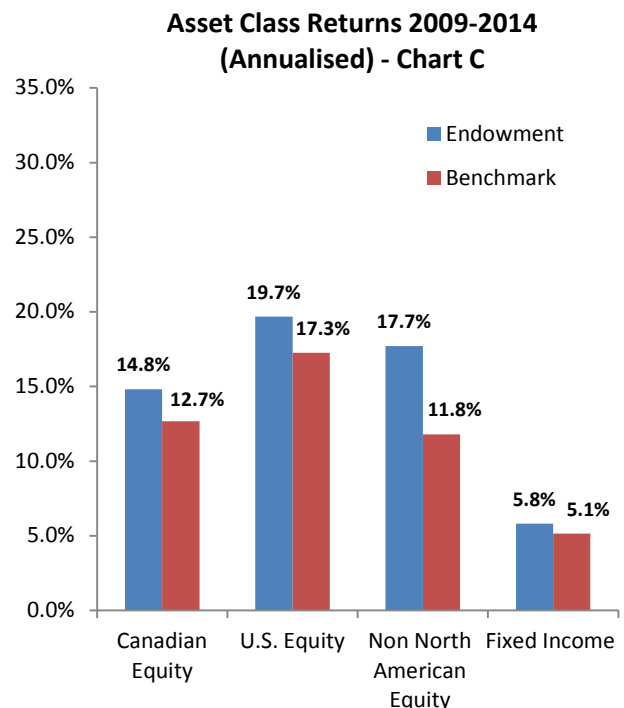
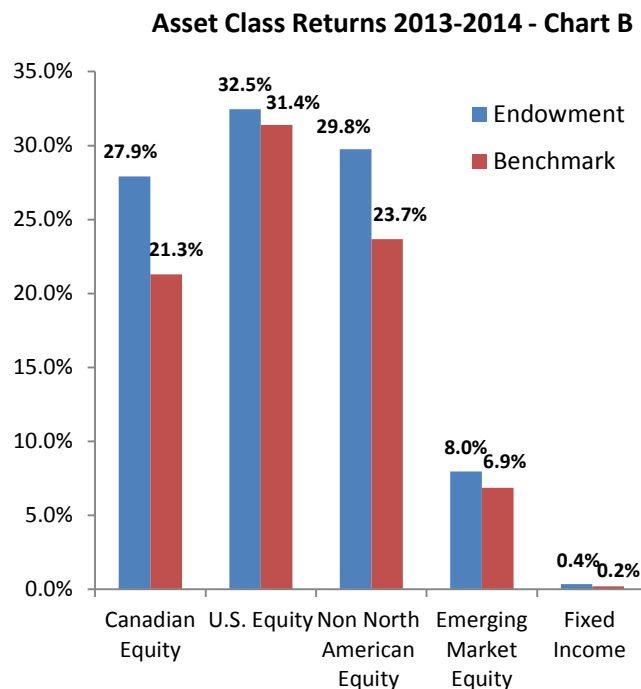
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Five Year Annualized
Endowment Return (Gross)	20.4%	12.6%	1.7%	14.8%	16.6%	13.0%
Endowment Return (Net <sup>1</sup> )	19.2%	11.5%	0.6%	13.6%	15.6%	11.9%
Benchmark Return*	18.9%	10.6%	0.7%	11.9%	16.8%	11.6%
Market Value ( in millions)	189.5	218.2	228.5	264.6	308.9	

\* Endowment Policy Benchmark = 30% DEX Bond Universe + 20% MSCI EAFE Index + 20% S&P/TSX Capped Composite Index + 25% S&P 500 Total Return Index + 5% MSCI Emerging Markets Index

**Note 1: Net expenses include all direct investment management fees and internal University costs. Total expenses and fees charged to the endowment fund in 2014 were \$2.61 million or 0.9% of the total portfolio year end value (in 2013 total fees and expenses were \$1.96 million or 0.7% of the total portfolio value).**

**Asset Class Returns**

Chart B shows the performance of various asset classes relative to their benchmarks over the past 12 months. The last year reflected strong equity returns across most markets. On a relative basis, Canadian equity outperformed the S&P/TSX index by 6.6 %, while US, non-North American equity and emerging market equity outperformed by 1.1%, 6.1% and 1.1% respectively. Fixed income also outperformed over the period albeit by a smaller margin. Chart C shows the five-year results.



The fund's equity investments are dominated by value-oriented managers that as a group tend to provide better downside protection in volatile markets. This is reflected in the five year results wherein the fund's equity managers have had better returns than their benchmark indices.

In addition, generally the five-year performance of the fund reflects recent strength in equity markets, normal for a low growth, low inflation environment. Only time will tell if this is sustainable with government support being withdrawn from bond markets and the expected normalization of interest rates.

## 4 The General Endowment Fund (GEF)

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Over the past five years the GEF, which comprises two thirds of total University endowments, has grown from \$95.6 million to \$192.8 million. This reflects the combined effect of total contributions into the fund of \$30.8 million, payments out of the fund of \$14.2 million and accumulated investment earnings. The GEF contains 1,062 accounts each reflecting donors' individual contributions and designations. In terms of the number of accounts, 85% are designated for student assistance, with the remainder supporting endowed chairs and special programs.

### GEF Spending

University policy limits annual spending from GEF accounts at no more than 5% of the recent four-year average of the fund's value in any year. For 2013-14, the spending rate was set at 3.5% by the University in consultation with the Finance Committee of the Board of Governors. Annual investment earnings after spending accumulate in each account, growing that endowment's value and protecting long-term spending stability. For the University's endowment spending policy (the Policy), please visit: [GEF Management Policy](#). With market fluctuations, annual disbursements sometimes exceed the annual investment income and so, to the extent possible, investment income accumulated in prior years is used to support spending.

Under the Policy, spending from any account may be curtailed in any endowment account if there are insufficient accumulated returns to support spending. The decision to suspend spending in an account may be reviewed in the context of donor intentions, current spending commitments and future contributions. Following the 2008 dramatic downturn in financial markets, overall endowment spending was significantly curtailed. Endowment accounts that are well established (created many years ago) had time to build up sufficient accumulated earnings to absorb both the market down turn and maintain spending. However for those accounts created in more recent years that did not have a significant build-up of accumulated net earnings (greater than the initial donated capital), spending was suspended. This difficult but deliberate decision was taken to protect the longer term strength of those endowments and to enable a more speedy return to targeted spending once markets recovered. As markets have recovered since that period, spending from most of these accounts has been restarted. Table D indicates total spending from endowments, particularly as it relates to student assistance. The market remains



volatile; however, the University will continue with its long term investment strategies which hold as paramount, the protection of endowment capital, both in real and nominal terms.

TABLE D

History of Spending from the GEF (at April 30) (\$ millions)					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Scholarships and Bursaries	1.6	1.8	2.4	2.7	3.5
Other Designations	0.1	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.6
Total Spending From Endowments	1.7	2.1	3.0	3.3	4.1
GEF Policy Spending Rate	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%
Total University Spending on Student Scholarships and Bursaries (all sources)	26.5	28.9	31.2	31.2	33.1
% Total University Spending on Student Scholarships and Bursaries from Endowments	6%	6%	7%	9%	10%

## 5 WEB Page References

1. [Board of Trustees Overview](#)
2. [Endowment Investment Policy](#)
3. [Finance Committee Terms of Reference](#)
4. [Investment Management Committee \(ISC\)](#)
5. [GEF Management Policy](#)