

Dean's Report: May/June 2021

I write report this following a much enjoyed vacation and most memorable weekend. Two important events took place this weekend that made it, in my mind anyway, a memorable one.

First, I received my second dose of the COVID vaccine this past Saturday morning (AZ + Moderna). It felt good to participate in the larger effort to ensure our province, and university are able to effectively deal with the presence of the COVID virus in our community. Admittedly, the first day following the vaccine (Sunday) was not great, but that's a very small price to pay (Please make sure you do your part by taking part in the vaccine program the province has rolled out).

Second, the province began Phase 2 of the re-open plan on Sunday and also announced that Phase 3 will commence July 11 (all restrictions removed). This certainly has an impact on the Faculty and our operations and the next few weeks will be busy preparing for what that looks like for our academic, research, sport, recreation, and community focused activities. This is very exciting news, not just for the Faculty, but the University more generally as we emerge from the pandemic. Several items connected to the reopening are touched on elsewhere in this report.

A special thank-you to Larena Hoeber for serving as Acting Dean during my absence.

Hope you enjoy what follows. There are some wonderful things going on and coming our way!

Some General News and Activity

1. We have again renewed our Sponsorship **MOA with the Saskatchewan Highschool Athletic Association** for the next few years. The agreement will see a number of provincial sport championships (including Hoopla) take place at the U of R in the coming years. It provides a great opportunity to showcase the University and its various academic programs

to a key segment of our audience (highschool students and their families). Thanks to Chris Wermie for working on this agreement.

2. As many of you may know, the **campus 'bookstore'** is now operated by a third party, Follett. A notable change is the online presence that facilitates purchases of textbooks and merchandise. You can find a link to that store here:

<https://www.bkstr.com/ureginastore/home> Over the coming months textbook ordering and purchasing will be integrated through URCourses (our learning management system); this should make the process easier for students and faculty alike.

3. Our **spring 2021 Big Hearts Family Giving Campaign**, the University's internal giving campaign, achieved a number of objectives. First, the number of donors from the Faculty increased substantially. Second, the overall amount given or pledged also increased. Thank you to all who participated in the campaign – your willingness to give will benefit students now and in the years to come.

4. Still on the topic of **philanthropy and a culture of giving**, a University Advancement and Communication publication (*2020-2021 Donor Impact Report*) will be featuring one of our own faculty members, June LeDrew. June and her family established the now endowed Children on the Move Scholarship in 2004. In fact, over her 30 years as a member of our Faculty, June has been a recurring donor for 25 of those years. She participates through payroll deductions. To quote from the article:

The reason for this decision hinges on her long-held belief that the smallest acts of kindness can over time bring about big changes. "The analogy I like to use is a drop on a rock, which may not seem like much but if it's a steady drip then that rock will eventually split. That's the impact of monthly giving."

5. Based on the suggestion by Jennifer Love Green, members of our executive leadership team undertook a **'postcard' writing** campaign – sending specially designed postcards (thanks to Printing Services) with a handwritten note to (a) prospective students who had accepted the University's offer of admission (domestic and international), and (b) student athletes who had made a commitment to join one of the University's varsity teams. As of June 22, a total of **118 domestic students**, who accepted our offer, have registered. An additional **45 international students** have done the same (163 total).

One other observation based on the data we have been collecting regarding the registration funnel process: in the month of June, an additional 50 students have applied to the Faculty, and an additional 51 have accepted our offer of admission.

6. In the area of (seemingly) never-ending news regarding **renovations**, I am pleased to note all of our various projects have either been finished or are in the final stages of completion. Of note, the conversion of CK 185 into a high-end hybrid teaching space should be done by the end of July, and the project to connect CK 219/222, CK 113 (Dance studio), and Gym 1 to CK 188 (Broadcast studio) for livestreaming and video recording purposes is almost finished and should be completed in the coming month as well.

The move back to CK 164 (research suite) has taken place with some research/testing activity already underway.

Note: We will plan for an orientation(s) to the technology available for teaching and learning (research, and community related activity as well) in CK 219/222, CK 185, and CK 187 in July (and again in early August – and probably again after that) for those who are interested (and of course those who will be using the space to deliver our courses this fall and beyond).

Congratulations on notable achievements

1. I begin by congratulating the **121 undergraduate students** who **convocated** at the beginning of June with a certificate, diploma, or degree. These students completed their program requirements either in the fall or winter semester. It is, by far, the largest graduating group in the history of the Faculty. In addition, a total of **5 graduate** students joined the large group of undergraduates by completing their own degree requirements.

Although, it was disappointing we were not able to celebrate this important milestone with the students in person, we are very proud of what they have accomplished and wish them the very best as they move on to their next adventure. I am certainly looking forward to in-person graduation ceremonies resuming in the near future.

A link to the video message from Faculty leadership to students may be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7OJt2bpKW7w&t=13s> A special thanks to the Creative Media Team for pulling that video together!

2. Congratulations to all the undergraduate students who were named to the **Dean's list** for the winter semester; letters went out late May. A total of **73 students** (of an eligible 841) made the list (85% semester GPA while taking at least 4 courses). A special shout out to Mohammad Shafiq who had the highest semester GPA in the Faculty.

3. Congratulations to those students who completed their **fieldwork** this past winter semester as well. An overview of the various placements is provided in the Fieldwork Newsletter and can be found here: <https://www.uregina.ca/kinesiology/Winter-2021-Experiential-Learning> - have a read if you have not yet done so.

I would also recommend you check out the various 3 minute videos created by our fieldwork students concerning their projects (can find these on the URAllKinected YouTube channel).

4. Congratulations to two faculty members on their recent grant success. Both **Cameron Mang** and **Michael Dubnewick** received Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) 3-year **Establishment Grants**. This is very exciting news for both faculty members, their current (and future graduate students) and the work they have planned.

5. Congratulations to **Brandy West McMaster** on being the Sask Hockey provincial winner of the BFL Canada Female Coach of the Year (High Performance). For more details, follow this link: <https://t.co/kHZwyEycZs>

6. Congratulations to **Bachelor of Health Studies student Bonnie Marko** on winning the 2021 Dr. John Archer Library Award. Her winning entry was an assignment she completed for Elizabeth Cooper in Health Studies 400. Once posted, her winning essay (Ethnography Qualitative Research Methods Literature Review) will be able to be found here in the near future: <https://t.co/kHZwyEycZs>

Faculty People News

1. As many of you may already know, **Brandy West-McMaster** will be on sabbatical this fall (through August 2022). We are just finishing up the search for an interim replacement (15 month term). Interviews have been completed and I have received a recommendation from the committee. I hope to complete the process in short order. We are looking to provide

overlap ahead of, and following, Brandy's sabbatical to ensure a smooth transition for our fieldwork students.

2. Our colleague **Bevin Thompson** is awaiting her opportunity to immigrate to the United States (Colorado). As we prepare for her departure, we are in the process of shortlisting candidates for the position of Executive Assistant to the Dean's Office. The Faculty went through a process of reimagining this role prior to posting. Preliminary screening has taken place. First round of the vetting process will commence shortly. Final interviews should take place in the coming weeks.

3. As announced last week, long time Women's Soccer Coach **Bob Maltman**, has resigned effective the end of July. He and his wife, Heather, will be taking time away from their careers to be closer to their daughter who is expected her first child this fall. Thanks to Bob for his years of dedicated service to the University of Regina and our Faculty. He's had a real passion for the work he did and has the heart of a servant.

In the interim, **Astrid Becker and Rob McCaffrey** will serve as interim co-head coaches for the fall season. A search for a replacement will commence after the season concludes.

4. Though not really 'Faculty' news, we are set to welcome the new University President, **Dr. Jeff Keshen**, as he begins his term July 1. We are looking forward to working together with him over the coming months and years.

5. We have been really pleased with the student interns we have hired for the summer to assist the Faculty with a variety of projects this summer: **Matthew Degenhardt (Marketing & Communications Intern – MAP student), Carly Shamray (BKin Intern - KHS student), and Wyatt Wiebe (BKin Intern - KHS student)**. They have been doing fantastic work and applying the things they have been learning through their undergraduate degree programs.

6. **Cameron Ross**, who recently completed his **BKin (Human Kinetics)** fieldwork in April and convoked in June has joined the Faculty as a post graduate intern. He will be with us for a year and working on projects related to the Athlete Health and Performance initiative.

Budget 2021-22

As many of you will already know, the Board of Governors has accepted University's budget proposal to guide us through this coming fiscal year. It is worth noting that the budget is

not balanced (\$3.6 million deficit) – however, the deficit is being looked after by taxing 'carry-forward' balances from all units on campus from the previous fiscal year. The University has a significant task ahead of it to find ways to eliminate the gap between revenues and expenses in the coming fiscal years.

I also highlight that provincial funding for this, and the next three, fiscal years will remain constant (no increase or decrease). Moreover, tuition may not increase by more than 4% (this year's increase will be 4%). One other item, the budget is predicated on a 2% increase in student enrolment.

During our town hall concerning the budget (and its KHS specific impact), I noted the following:

(a) the Recreation & Athletic Fee will not see a rate increase this year (typically it would increase at the same rate as tuition). What that means, is that the costs tied to this revenue line will need to be covered from other sources and/or some of the spending in this area will need to decrease in this fiscal year.

(b) vacant positions, across the University, were 'reset' to their base values. Units will often leave the positions vacant and use the funds in other priority areas. In our case, that resulted in a difference of about - \$121K

(c) our budget includes other revenue projections (obligations we must meet) in the amount of \$1.77 million – i.e., revenues we will need to generate through our various operations in order to balance our own budget. (Hence, the news regarding the start of Phase III is positive news)

The theme for this year's budget operation is: *Serious, yet manageable, challenge*. We will certainly need to be frugal and shrewd on the spending side, but we do need to continue to move forward with strategic priorities. We will continue to find ways to become more efficient (and effective), maximize our building and space related revenues, continue to integrate our academic mission into all parts of our operation, and look to find new long terms lines of revenue.

Summer and Fall Campus Plans

1. Over the coming months (July and August) the University will begin bringing its staff **back to campus** in preparation for the fall semester. The same is true for our Faculty. I do note that many members of our unit have continued to work on campus throughout the pandemic. Given our outward community focus during the summer months (e.g., Camps begin first week of July), the Faculty is making plans to see us prepare for the face to face/in-person access near the end of June.

2. With the announcement of Phase 3 of Saskatchewan's reopening coming July 11, we are making plans to providing **greater access to recreational facilities** and to resume many of our usual activities/programs at or near that time. You will likely see some differences in how programs/facilities are accessed – the long closure has given us time to reconsider how best to operate when we return. Look for information in this regard in the coming weeks.

Generally, we plan on announcing that we will once again provide FLC and Aquatic Centre access to the general community beginning Monday July 5, 2021.

Our various camp programs also begin July 5 (e.g., Summer Sport School, Cougar Camps), albeit running at a lower density than would normally be the case; roughly about one third of the slots are available this year compared with years prior to COVID. We are certainly thankful that we are able to run camps again.

3. As has been previously announced, the **fall semester** will be a transitional one for the University (transitioning from no activity on campus toward a normal semester being planned for the winter semester). For the Faculty of KHS, this means delivering (a) some classes exclusively face to face/on campus, (b) a fairly substantial number of classes as hybrid type courses – both an on campus and remote sections are available for students to register in, (c) our usual online course offerings, and (d) remote classes delivered through Zoom.

4. The fall will also see a return of recreational activities for students (e.g., intramurals, etc.) as well as varsity sport. Our plan is to continue to offer virtual access to many activities that are also taking place on campus (to complement the in person opportunities). More information will be forthcoming as those plans are solidified.

Concluding Thoughts

I hope you are as optimistic about the future as I am. I am very much looking forward to seeing you all again, in person. As I conveyed to the graduating students, Zoom (while very utilitarian in many respects) just cannot replace the in person experience; we are, after all, social beings. The pandemic has reinforced, in a very real way, the importance of a phenomena sport researchers have known about, and studied, for sometime now – the co-creation of an event by the participants who are there. For this very reason, live events are so very different from televised experiences. Even the opportunity to participating in 'live viewing events' with large numbers of other fan together in person has a tangible benefit and creates an energy that cannot be created virtually. The same sort of thing happens in other live settings (the classroom, a retreat, even an interview) – but tends to get lost when those things take place virtually. So, from my perspective, while there is a role for connecting virtually – it does allow to increase our reach and serve people we might not have been able to before – there is great value in getting back to in-person settings.

I want to wish all of you a wonderful summer – enjoy it (it will be September in 9 short weeks!). See you (literally) soon.

Harold