

President's Report to the Board

For the period from July 10, 2014 – September 3, 2014

Submitted to the Board of Governors

Submitted by Dr. Vianne Timmons, President and Vice-Chancellor

This report summarizes my progress to date on the six key areas of priority that the Board and I have identified for the remainder of 2014. It also includes updates on my academic research, University events and accomplishments, and other matters that may be of interest to the Board. In addition, **Appendix 1** provides the Board with a detailed summary of the accomplishments under the existing strategic plan, *mâdawohkamâtowin: Our Work, Our People, Our Communities*. A final version of this preliminary summary will be available on the University website the week of September 8, 2014.

Objective: oversee the successful development and approval of the University's 2015-2020 strategic plan

The process of developing a draft of the new strategic plan and receiving input from the campus community continued throughout the reporting period:

- After a consultative process that saw approximately 600 people provide input through various means including facilitated consultation sessions, the first draft of the 2015-2020 strategic plan was prepared and then made available on July 11 for consideration and feedback.
- The draft strategic plan was a key point on the agenda of the University Leadership Team retreat in late August, where there was considerable discussion of how the draft plan aligns with the work of the three federated colleges.
- The facilitation team is currently considering the input it is receiving from members of the campus and larger communities. The team has also made plans to hold three face-to-face meetings with stakeholders to discuss the plan in person – at the Fall meeting of University Council on September 10, and at public forums on September 16 and 29 that will be open to all members of the University and larger communities. The feedback at these meetings will be crucial to the development of the next draft of the plan.
- There will also be a full discussion of the draft plan at the October meeting of Senate, and this input will be taken into consideration as the next draft is prepared.
- In addition, the facilitation team has been developing an implementation plan that will be part of future drafts of the plan. This implementation plan is intended to help senior administrators, Deans, Directors, and department and unit heads integrate the plan into the operations of their own work areas.

Objective: increase overall enrolment at the University, including the Federated Colleges, by 2% year-over-year

The work being done to recruit, retain and support students has continued to have positive results:

- Pre-orientation sessions took place throughout the summer, giving students a taste of university life through things like sample lectures and conversations with current students.
- By the time of the Board meeting, a full suite of Fall 2014 orientation activities will have taken place to help students make the transition into university and succeed in their first year. At many of these events, either the Provost or I spoke directly with the participants.
- These orientation sessions included specialized events for mature and transfer students, parents, and residence students. As well, First Nations University of Canada and the Aboriginal Student Centre collaborated in August to hold “101 Aboriginal Orientation” for approximately 80 first-year students of Aboriginal descent who learned about important aspects of university such as residence life, academic writing, academic expectations, and the University Library.
- To help instil a sense of pride and tradition in new students, the September 2 general orientation event, which was attended by approximately 1,500 new students, had as its theme the traditions of the University that have developed over the course of its 40-year history as an autonomous institution.
- Elder Noel Starblanket has joined the University, and will play a key role in providing support and guidance for our growing number of self-declared Aboriginal students.
- The Spring/Summer term was very successful, with a year-over-year enrolment increase of 8.0%. This helped take the University to an all-time record for Spring/Summer enrolment, and built on the year-over-year increase of 5% experienced last year.
- It is also of note that teaching credits were up 9.4% for Spring/Summer, again representing an all-time high.
- These increases are in large part the result of the work that the Centre for Continuing Education has done with the faculties to respond to student demand. This has included increasing the number of online courses (where enrolments have quadrupled over the past five years) and night courses that are offered.
- Preliminary enrolment figures for Fall 2014 are also looking positive. As of September 3, enrolment at the University of Regina proper was up 4.5% over Fall 2013, with overall enrolment, including the Federated Colleges, up 3.4% over compared to last year. Total undergraduate enrolment was up 3.5% year-over-year, and graduate enrolment was up 2.2%. The number of credit hours being

taught was also up, with a 3.1% increase over last year. As a result of these increases, the University is on pace to set its fourth consecutive enrolment record.

- Several academic areas are of particular note in terms of their registration numbers. The Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science is at capacity, and Nursing has now reached its steady state undergraduate students, with a graduate program launching this fall. The Faculties of Education and Science have also seen significant increases.

Objective: finalize plans to proceed with the College Avenue campus revitalization

Work has continued throughout the reporting period with respect to the College Avenue campus revitalization:

- This project continues to be the University's number one capital fundraising priority, and to that end, a considerable amount of work took place with potential donors. Verbal commitments have been received from a number of donors, and it is expected that through a gift to be announced within the next month, donations toward College Avenue will be in the order of \$8 million. Work continues to complete a number of final gifts.
- A funding request for the College Avenue campus was included in the Operations Forecast that was recently provided to the provincial government. Discussions with government will continue in the coming months, and the Board will be kept apprised of any further developments.

Objective: promote community involvement in and support of the University by visiting and hosting events in eight Saskatchewan communities as part of the "Community Connections" tour

Planning the fall "Community Connections" tour was a priority over the reporting period:

- The northern segment of the "Community Connections" tour has been set for September 22-24. Together with others from the University, I will visit Prince Albert, Buffalo Narrows, La Ronge, Stanley Mission and Pinehouse. The agenda, developed with the input of members of the University Leadership Team, will include meetings with principals, teachers, students, local mayors and other community leaders.
- Another segment of "Community Connections" outreach is slated to take place from October 20-22. Communities currently scheduled for this tour are North Battleford, Lloydminster and Meadow Lake. The full agenda is still in development, and efforts are being made to include an alumni and donor outreach event.

- Plans are also underway for a “State of the University” address and public forum to take place in the fall as a further outreach initiative in the Regina area.

Objective: oversee the development of a comprehensive alumni outreach plan whose implementation in the coming years will strengthen the alumni connection with the University

Engaging with alumni continued to be a priority throughout the summer:

- Preliminary planning took place toward developing an alumni outreach strategy, which will be completed over the course of the fall. This process will include a review of both the donor and alumni relations units at the University.
- In early August, the Ottawa alumni branch held a tailgate party prior to the Saskatchewan Roughrider game against the Ottawa REDBLACKS. Close to 60 alumni and friends were in attendance.
- By the time the Board meets, the Alumni Relations unit will also have hosted a tailgate party prior to the Rams home opener. Plans are also underway for the Edmonton alumni branch to host a tailgate party prior to the Roughrider-Eskimo game in Edmonton on September 26, and planning is taking place for an alumni event to be held in November at the Grey Cup in Vancouver.
- Planning has also taken place for an alumni and friends event in Ottawa whose theme will be “An Evening with the Saskatchewan Mafia.” This event, which will be held on September 17, will be a celebration of the significant impact Saskatchewan has had on public policy in Canada, and will help the University emphasize the role it continues to play in innovative public policy research.
- Preparations are being made for the 10th Annual Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards, which are a collaboration between the Alumni Association and Alumni Relations. The dinner will take place on October 22. The award recipients will be:
 - **Leonard Schein MA’73** - recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award.
 - **Courtney Keith BA’04 (Campion)** - recipient of Outstanding Young Alumni Award.
 - **Sean McEachern BEd’03** - recipient of the Dr. Robert and Norma Ferguson Award for Outstanding Service to the University of Regina and the Alumni Association.
 - **Barry Pittendrigh BSc (Hons)’90 (Luther)** - recipient of the Award for Distinguished Professional Achievement.
 - **Sel Murray BA (Hons)’73, BSW’76** - recipient of the Award for Distinguished Humanitarian and Community Service.
- As noted earlier, planning is underway to include an alumni event as part of the October segment of the “Community Connections” outreach tour.

Objective: successfully launch the search for the Vice-President (Research)

The search for a new Vice-President (Research) is in its early stages:

- An RFP was issued for a search firm to assist in the process. Through this tendering process, a consultant has now been engaged.
- In early September, the consultant will have preliminary meetings with various individuals and groups on campus including the Canada Research Chairs, heads of research institutes, and Associate Deans (Research) to solicit their input regarding the position's responsibilities and priorities.
- A search committee is currently being formed which will include wide cross-section of members from across campus. The search committee is expected to be in place by mid-September.

REPORT ON THE STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN

In keeping with the Provincial Auditor's recommendations regarding research and reporting to the Board of Governors, this report provides an update on the Strategic Research Plan and by extension, its three signature research themes of Sustainable Development, Human Development, and Creativity and Informatics.

- **Research Clusters:** To date, the clusters have been defined and the research impacts have been identified, and alignment of the research clusters with the Saskatchewan Growth Plan is underway. Leaders for each research cluster will be designated in September as Special Advisors to the Vice-President (Research) for a one-year term. Government meetings are being scheduled for the fall, in which the University will have the opportunity to advise the government of our research that is directly aligned with the action items found within the Growth Plan.
- **Annual Faculty Research Plans:** The Vice-President (Research) continues to work in consultation with the Associate Deans on the development of their annual research plans. The Plans align the faculties with the research clusters, and identify research impacts and priorities for the resources required to advance their unit's research (e.g. graduate students, hiring, financial).
- The Vice-President (Research) has developed a draft "Office of the Vice-President Research Tactical Plan" (OVPR) for 2014-15. The Plan addresses the changes to the research enterprise at the University as a function of changing dynamics in the Tri-Councils, multi-level government agendas, industry demands, and growing graduate student populations.
- The Vice-President (Research) will hold a third research forum on Sept 23. This forum follows on two events held earlier this year. The April forum focused on progress of the PARR and Crago-Kirk Reports, and the June forum provided an overview of the University's funding model.
- The University of Regina researchers have had a number of outstanding research achievements in the past two months. These include:
 - Two University of Regina researchers have been selected as Fulbright Canada scholars for the 2014-2015 year:
 - Dr. Peter Leavitt, Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in Environmental Change and Society and Director of both the Institute of Environmental Change and Society and the Canadian Institute of Ecology and Evolution, received a year-long placement as a Visiting Research Chair at the University of California, Santa Barbara.
 - Dr. Shanthi Johnson, Associate Dean in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies and Research Faculty at SPHERU has been named a

Fulbright Scholar at the University of South Florida. The University of Regina was the only university in Canada to receive more than one Fulbright this year.

- Dr. James Daschuk's book *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* has recently been listed as the #1 bestseller on Amazon's Native American History list. In early August, the book became available in paperback.
- This summer, NSERC announced the results of the latest round of funding and three University of Regina students were chosen to receive graduate scholarships:
 - Leanne Michelle Heisler from the Department of Biology received a three-year post-Graduate Doctoral Scholarship (valued at \$63,000).
 - Heather Haig from Biology and Zhong Li from Engineering and Applied Science each received two-year Canada Graduate Scholarships for their doctoral studies (total value of \$70,000 each).
- Three researchers at the University of Regina were chosen to receive provincial funding from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, under the Establishment Grant Program and Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Award categories:
 - Dr. Bridget Klest (Faculty of Arts) received \$120,000 over three years for her project entitled "History of Exposure to Traumatic Stress and Healthcare Experiences."
 - Dr. Josef Buttigieg (Faculty of Science) received \$120,000 over three years for his project "Role of Pulmonary Neuroendocrine Cells in Lung Physiology."
 - Dr. James Vasblom (Faculty of Science) received a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Award valued at \$50,000 per year for two years.

REPORT ON THE PRESIDENT'S ACADEMIC RESEARCH

This report outlines developments in my academic research program since the last Board report.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- Work continued on my “Voices of Inclusion” appreciative inquiry into inclusive education and employment practices in Saskatchewan.
- Most of the analysis of the interview transcripts is complete. Based on the analysis so far, seven themes for employment and ten for early childhood have been determined, and the data has been organized accordingly. A matrix document has been created with most of the data incorporated, and it will provide the basis for the final report.
- Documentary photography at some of the research sites has been taken, and will be completed in the coming months as the final report is drafted.
- During the reporting period, my work continued as President of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD). Conference calls were held with other members of the IASSIDD Executive, and a face-to-face meeting was held as part of the Europe Regional Congress in July at the University of Vienna. At that conference, I gave a presentation to the IASSIDD Council on the subject of financial sustainability, and chaired a meeting at which a new Special Interest Research Group on Inclusive Education was created.
- I was recently asked to serve as a member of Inclusive Education Canada’s Network of Associates, providing guidance and training to the organization as it works to promote inclusive education in Canadian schools.

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- At the IASSIDD Europe Regional Congress at the University of Vienna, I delivered a presentation entitled “Inclusive Education: Fulfilling our Responsibility.”
- At the 24th annual summit of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region, I participated in a roundtable discussion on challenges and innovation within the university sector.
- I have been invited by the New Brunswick Association for Community Living to deliver a presentation and conduct a workshop on inclusive education. I am currently preparing that material.

CELEBRATING OUR CAMPUS

This report highlights faculty, staff and student successes as well as some other notable campus events since the last Board report.

FACULTY AND STAFF SUCCESS

- Dr. Chad Gaffield, outgoing President of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), commended more than 20 faculty members from across the University who participated in SSHRC review processes during 2013-14. Through their active participation in these reviews, these faculty members demonstrated their strong engagement with and commitment to their discipline, and have represented the University very well.
- Dr. Kent Klippenstine was recently named Manager of Counselling Services. In this position, he will play a key role in student success on our campus.
- Dr. Lee Schaefer of the Faculty of Education received a considerable amount of publicity lately for his work as part of a study on activity and fitness levels in children. His work, together with that of his colleagues from the University of Manitoba and the University of Alberta, was published in *Journal of Pediatrics* at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Centre.

STUDENT AND ALUMNI SUCCESS

- 18 Indigenous students from Mexico were at the University of Regina in August to undertake intensive ESL training. At the same time, five undergraduate students from the University of Regina were in Mexico for three weeks to learn about the issues faced by Indigenous people in Mexico.
- Many other students benefited from international study opportunities throughout the summer, including art history students studying in Italy, and geology students visiting Iceland.
- In late August, pinning ceremonies were held in both Saskatoon and Regina to honour the first graduates of the Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing program offered by SIAST and the University. Approximately 50 students who participated in the accelerated program received pins to mark their entry into the profession of nursing.
- Hillberg & Berk – the jewelry company begun by University of Regina alumna Rachel Mielke – announced that a Hillberg & Berk Endowment Award will be presented annually to a female student at the Paul J. Hill School of Business to recognize entrepreneurship, commitment to community, and academic excellence.

CAMPUS EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Over the course of the summer, the University hosted hundreds of elementary students on campus for the wide variety of summer camps. This is an important community outreach initiative each year, and one that allows future students to experience university programming at an early age.
- The University helped play host to the North American Indigenous Games in July. Campus volunteers, led by Dr. Don Clark, played an important role in the success of the Games.
- The University is becoming a destination for professors from other countries who are seeking professional development opportunities. A group of nine professors from Universidad Panamericana in Mexico were on campus in July to take a three-week course in “English for Professional Academics” that was organized by UR International and the ESL Program. Then in August, a delegation of 15 professors from Anhui University in China participated in a summer program on teaching and learning that was organized by UR International and the Centre for Teaching and Learning.
- By the time of the Board meeting, UR International and a group of international students on campus will have held their annual “Global Showcase,” featuring music, dance and food from some of the countries represented on our campus.
- In early September, the Jilin Symphony Orchestra performed on campus as part of the Province’s celebration of its 30-year twinning relationship with Jilin Province in China. The concert included a collaboration between the orchestra and the Darke Hall Five, composed of University of Regina employees.
- In late summer, a number of University of Regina employees and students took part in the ALS “Ice Bucket Challenge” to raise funds and awareness for ALS.