

In keeping with the University of Regina's commitment to Indigenization, I would like to begin this report by acknowledging that the University is located on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 lands – something which has been an important part of our history, and which will be equally significant for our future.

This report summarizes progress since late 2015 on five key areas of focus that the Board and I identified for the 2015-16 academic year. These areas of focus align with the three priorities and two overarching themes of the University's strategic plan, *peyak aski kikawinaw*: student success; research impact; commitment to communities; sustainability; and Indigenization. The report also includes updates on my academic research, University events and accomplishments, and other matters that may be of interest to the Board.

Objective: Sustain enrolment at 2014-15 levels per the performance management framework, with particular emphasis on enhancing diversity among the student population

Student enrolment remained an area of strength for the University during the reporting period:

- On December 8, the last day of classes for the Fall 2015 semester, enrolment was up 3.5% over the same time last year, with a total of 14,192 students.
- For the Winter 2016 semester, headcount enrolments and the number of credit hours taught continued to be ahead of target. By the end of the fourth week of classes, 13,481 students were enrolled across the University system, an increase of 2.9% over the same point in January 2015.
- Areas of notable headcount increase for Winter 2016 are Engineering (6.1%), Graduate Studies (5.3%), (Kinesiology (5%), Science (5.2%), and Social Work (7.7%). Overall system credit hours being taught were up 1.4% compared to January 2015, with notable increases in Arts (5.1%), Science (6.5%), and Social Work (8.4%).
- As noted in my previous report, the Office of Resource Planning has initiated an effort to track "first-time" students – those who are in the first term of their first year of studies at the University. There are particularly strong increases in this cohort within Business Administration (up 19%), Arts (up 9%), Science (up 6%), and Media, Art, and Performance (MAP) (up 13%). These increases reflect a

number of factors, including: the effort being made by faculties to attract and retain students through innovative new curricula such as the Creative Technologies program in MAP and the Hill Legacy program in Business Administration; and the continuing boosts in enrolments in areas such as Biology, Chemistry, and Physics occasioned by sustained high registrations in our Engineering and Nursing programs.

- It is also of note that undergraduate international student enrolment is up 10% compared to Winter 2015.
- UR International is working closely with different faculties to strengthen and diversify the base of international student enrolments. A recruitment trip to Mexico is being planned and will feature the new Creative Technologies program; the Dean of Arts is working to bring students from Germany to study here; and MAP is partnering with UR International to target the United Kingdom, where steep recent increases in tuition have made a Canadian university education an increasingly attractive prospect for British students.
- The University's "admission on the spot" events continue to be an effective recruitment strategy. At events held in Regina and Moose Jaw in December, 311 students were admitted, which is significantly higher than last year. We continue to hear positive feedback from high school counsellors, teachers, parents and students about the level of service that we provide at these events.
- Leading up to the priority deadline of March 15, Enrolment Services will be hosting a final admission on the spot event at the University of Regina on February 25. In addition, the recruitment team will be in Calgary and area in March to hold admission on the spot events in high schools, building on the growth we have seen in the University's market share in Alberta.
- It has become apparent that as part of the University's enrolment strategy, we need to begin the recruitment process earlier in a prospect's high school career. For the first time, therefore, on February 19 the University held an event for 150 grade 11 students. The event ended with a pizza party for the students and attendance at the Cougars' basketball games.
- Plans are underway for the May 6 UR Beginning event, which is used to help new students register for classes and make connections with their home faculties.

Objective: Identify and begin implementing specific initiatives designed to increase first-to-second-year retention rates to 80% per the University's performance measurement framework

Enhancing student retention remained a focus during the reporting period:

- A two-person central advising unit has been created in the Office of Student Affairs. This unit is tasked specifically with addressing the needs of students in transition from high school, students in transition from faculty to faculty, and

students struggling with academic difficulties. This small unit will complement the more specialized advising available in the line faculties, and will pay for itself within a short time by boosting the retention rates of first-year students.

- As noted earlier, individual faculties have introduced specific retention and academic support initiatives such as the Hill Legacy program in Business, the honour code in Engineering and Applied Science, and NCLEX assistance in Nursing.
- For international, new Canadian, permanent resident and refugee students, the UR International – Student Services office has developed and successfully implemented the UR International Peer Advisor Program, in which new students are connected with current students to assist with their successful transition to the University of Regina. There are currently 33 International Peer Advisors and more than 60 International Student Advisees who meet at least twice a week in the Global Learning Centre.
- In addition, there programming has been enhanced in the Global Learning Centre through the Study Assistance program in areas including Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Engineering, Kinesiology and Health Studies, Mathematics, Physics, and Math and Statistics. Hours for English coaching have also been expanded to provide access for students from Monday to Sunday, as well as into the evening on select days.
- With such programs in place, retention numbers for undergraduate international students continue to increase. The Winter 2016 term saw a 10% increase compared to Winter 2015 in the number of returning international undergraduate students – a clear indication of the effectiveness of support services for international students.
- Work continued on the development of the University’s newly created in-residence Living-Learning Communities that are designed to enhance student engagement, success and retention at the University. To close out the Fall semester, the students worked with a group of Nursing students to raise approximately \$1,000 for the North Central Family Centre. The students will be entering a team in the Relay for Life cancer research fundraiser this semester, and are continuing to work with their tutors in educational workshops.
- In follow-up to an environmental scan of best practices in student retention at other universities, the Office of Resource Planning is completing a short report focusing on the benefits of early detection and referral of at-risk students.

Objective: Highlight and publicly profile four research initiatives (including one related to Indigenous research) that clearly demonstrate the tangible local impact of our work

In recent months, the University remained active in promoting the successes of its researchers, continuing an upward trend in the number of research stories being publicized:

- More than 100 research-related stories were published on the University's home page over the course of 2015 – well over double the number of research stories produced in 2014. The new year has begun with a similar level of activity on this front. From January 1 to February 15, 16 research-related stories appeared on the University's homepage.
- The University continued implementing its plan to devote extra promotional attention to four specific research projects that were noted in the last report. An update is as follows:
 1. Dr. Carrie Bourassa, Professor of Indigenous Health Studies at First Nations University of Canada, is exploring the development of a model for culturally appropriate health care that meets the needs of Indigenous women infected with HIV/ AIDS and Hepatitis C. Given that the rate of new HIV infections on Saskatchewan First Nations is 11 times higher than the national rate, this Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) funded research has the potential to have a profound positive impact on health care delivery within our province.

Dr. Bourassa's research has been highlighted in several ways, including via the University's website and in *University Affairs* and *First Nations Drum*, as well as the publication *Research InfoSource* (which is distributed via *The National Post*, *Ottawa Citizen*, *The Hill Times*, and *Progress* magazine).

2. Psychology professor Dr. Gordon Asmundson and doctoral candidate Holly Parkerson are working to address the fact that Saskatchewan has the highest smoking rate among all provinces by piloting an online stop-smoking intervention (www.guidetoquit.ca) that offers individualized information and a structured quit plan to support people as they quit smoking.

National Non-Smoking Week took place in January, so during that week and throughout the month, the University supported a major media campaign that garnered local and national profile of this initiative. The campaign, featured in *University Affairs*, the *Regina Leader-Post*, and on CBC, CTV and CHAB, was designed to create awareness of the research and seek participants for the online program. Overall, nearly 500 participants have made a commitment to quit smoking through the program, 150 of whom did so during National Non-Smoking Week.

3. Plans are in place to profile the work of Dr. Wanda Lyons and Dr. Scott Thompson, professors in the Faculty of Education who have recently released a report examining how inclusive educational practices can help overcome barriers that are often faced by marginalized groups such as persons with intellectual disabilities. The University will highlight this work in March using both paid and unpaid media to highlight best practices in inclusive education.
 4. A sustainability research project will be highlighted to correspond with Earth Day in April. The University has successfully marked Earth Day in the last two years by gaining significant profile for two sustainability-related research initiatives; work is underway to identify a project to profile on Earth Day 2016 that will be similarly successful in profiling our commitment to sustainability and sustainability research.
- Since the beginning of 2016, the University has made good use of other opportunities to profile research that stands to have a high impact locally, nationally, and even internationally:
 - In late January, the University was the site of a National Roundtable on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other operational stress injuries that disproportionately affect our public safety and military personnel. The event brought together academics, advocacy organizations, government ministries, and representatives of national and provincial fire, police and paramedic associations. The University was selected as host in large part because over the past decade, researchers here have built an international reputation for excellence in this important mental health field.
 - In February, members of Innovative Medicines Canada visited the University to discuss Dr. Heather Hadjistavropoulos' research into the effectiveness of Internet-based Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for depression and anxiety.
 - A collaborative research project between the University of Regina and researchers at Stanford University in California recently garnered considerable media attention. The University of Regina researchers – Dr. Ramy Maly, Dr. Hiroyuki Aoki, Dr. Zoran Minic and Sadhna Phanse – are associated with Dr. Mohan Babu's lab in the Research and Innovation Centre. The team is examining the molecular basis that leads to Autism Spectrum Disorder, and their findings have been published in the peer-reviewed journal *Cell Systems*.
 - Dr. Mark Vanderwel, an assistant professor of Biology, is part of a world-wide research team that has produced the most extensive study on tree competition to date. The study's results have recently been published in the influential journal *Nature*, which is the most highly-cited scientific journal in the world.

- Computer Science professor Dr. Yiyu Yao has been ranked as one of the most cited researchers in his subject field for 2015. Dr Yao is ranked among the top 1 per cent, earning him “the mark of exceptional impact.” The ranking comes from Thomson Reuters, an intellectual property and science business firm that conducts this annual survey of researchers.

Objective: Ensure that the newly restructured Alumni Relations and Community Outreach unit develops a comprehensive long-term plan for its operations

It is essential for the University to enhance its outreach to alumni and members of the larger community, and considerable progress was made in this area during the reporting period:

- Increased sponsorship has solidified the impact of several key events – the sold-out Inspiring Leadership Forum in March, the Prairie Kitchen Party in May, and the Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards in October. Joint sponsorship packages for these three events, for example, have helped generate more than \$95,000 in sponsorship for Inspiring Leadership, and more than \$55,000 for the Prairie Kitchen Party. It is expected that these numbers will continue to increase as the events draw closer.
- On January 21, staff from the Alumni Relations and Community Outreach unit coordinated with the Regina Chamber of Commerce to present the second annual State of the University address. More than 300 members of the University and larger communities were in attendance for a presentation about an Economic Development Regina report that details the economic impact the University has on Regina and Saskatchewan.
- In February, External Relations staff and the University of Regina Alumni Association (URAA) Executive held a joint strategic planning session. This planning session helped set a direction for the revision of the Joint Initiatives Agreement between the URAA and the University.
- Interviews have begun for the position of Director of Alumni Relations and Community Relations. A total of 44 applications were received from across Canada, and a candidate is expected to be announced in March. With the new Director in place, External Relations will be in a position to complete the transition of the Alumni Relations and Community Outreach staff over to the Development Unit, strengthening the University’s ability to raise money, connect with alumni and donors, and build pride in the University among key stakeholders.
- While in New York recently for meetings, I met with a key alumnus and gained his support to extend our connections to New York-area alumni. To build on this opportunity, an alumni event has been tentatively planned for New York this spring, with another being planned for Ottawa.

Objective: Implement the key recommendations from the review of the University's donor relations functions in order to enhance relationships with donors and build the University's capacity for fundraising

The key recommendations from the external review have been implemented or are in development, and the University's fundraising efforts are seeing the benefits:

- Donations from May 31, 2015 to January 31, 2016 were more than \$5.8 million, net of in-kind gifts and grants. That compares to \$2.8 million over the same period in 2014-15.
- Work continued on the University's number one fundraising priority, the College Avenue Campus Renewal Project:
 - The fundraising is now \$7.2 million toward the \$10 million goal;
 - A request for proposals (RFP) was issued in January for the development of three sites adjacent to the College Avenue campus – a critical step in attracting private investment and support for the project. The RFP was sent to 44 proponents, and seven responded that they will participate in the RFP process.
 - The University has met with potential proponents and accommodated requests to extend the RFP closing date to March 3. The resulting proposals will be evaluated and interviews will be conducted in the first two weeks of March.
 - The University's application to the federal government for Canada 150 infrastructure funds for Darke Hall was unsuccessful. The University has also submitted two additional infrastructure funding requests to the federal government – one for Darke Hall, and one for the College Building.
 - We continue to tour potential donors through the College Avenue campus and engage with past and potential donors. Several of the Darke Hall user groups (more than 10,000 people attended events in Darke Hall from March 1 to Nov. 30, 2015) have indicated a desire to support the campaign and also to engage their corporate sponsors.
- In the previous Board report, I outlined an additional investment in fundraising capacity, and this is underway. Interviews for the new Director of Development position have been conducted, and a candidate is expected to be announced shortly. A search has begun for the new position of Annual Giving Coordinator, which is designed to enhance support from the University family (students, employees, and alumni) and build a stronger leadership gift program for annual gifts of \$1000 or more.
- Throughout the reporting period, I also continued to work with my own personal donor prospect portfolio, inviting donors to University events, updating them on University programs and activities, and exploring donation possibilities with them.

REPORT ON THE PRESIDENT'S ACADEMIC RESEARCH

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

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH

- Work continued on the “Voices of Inclusion” project that is examining best practices in inclusive education and employment in the province. The final report is still in progress, and I am working on a second draft of an article that will be submitted shortly to the journal *Work, Employment, and Society*. The team is also awaiting word on a publication date for another article that has been accepted for the *International Journal of Inclusive Education*.
- I continued my work as President of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. In addition to participating in monthly conference calls, I attended the organization’s Board meeting in early February to plan activities for the next year and beyond. Planning centred around the upcoming World Congress, as well as subsequent regional conferences and partnerships with other organizations including UNICEF.

PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION RESEARCH

- I am part of a team of researchers based out of Wilfrid Laurier University who are conducting a study on program prioritization at Canadian universities. Over the course of the reporting period, I helped the team develop and revise its case study template, and I am now beginning work on a case study of the university for which I am responsible in the study.

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITY

- During the reporting period, I participated in a number of lectures and panel discussions both at the University and at other organizations. These included:
 - Moderating a panel discussion at the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy on the subject of women in public sector leadership;
 - Speaking to SaskPower about inclusion, diversity, Indigenization and leadership; and
 - Speaking to new university presidents at a Universities Canada session about Board relationships.

CELEBRATING OUR CAMPUS

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

FACULTY AND STAFF SUCCESS

- I would like to acknowledge the many teaching and research contributions made by Dr. Jo-Ann Episkenew, who passed away in February after a brief illness. Dr. Episkenew, who served as Director of the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre as well as a professor of English at First Nations University of Canada, was an inspiring teacher and researcher of Métis descent who was well-respected in Saskatchewan's Aboriginal community and beyond. She had recently been named a recipient of a 2016 Indspire Award. She was a strong leader and role model at our University, and she will be missed a great deal.
- Dr. Cindy Hanson, Associate Professor in Adult Education with the Faculty of Education, was named the recipient of the Global Citizens Award given annually by the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation. The award recognizes Saskatchewan people who make significant contributions to international development, cooperation, peace and justice. Dr. Hanson's research includes work on intergenerational learning in Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan and South America, as well as gender and labour education.
- Media, Art and Performance employee Dianne Ouellette's short film "Red is Dead," a tribute to her late mother, received first prize in the Kodak Filmmaking challenge at the Slamdance Film Festival.
- UR International Director Livia Castellanos has been elected to the Board of the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE). The election is an indication of her growing national reputation as an expert and leader in the field of international education.
- The University's 2015 United Way campaign raised \$102,000 – its highest total ever. In addition, the University campaign was named the recipient of a United Way Spirit Award for the second consecutive year, and the United Way created a new Lifetime Achievement Award in honour of Professor Emeritus Dr. Jack Boan.
- Dr. Donalda Halabuza and Dr. Daniel Kikulwe from the Faculty of Social Work are working closely with employees and management at the Regina Open Door Society on a research project to examine how refugee families have adjusted to life in Regina.
- After a comprehensive national search, Brett Waytuck has been appointed University Librarian.

- Dr. Armin Eberlein, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies.

STUDENT AND ALUMNI SUCCESS

- The first Syrian refugee student sponsored by the University through World University Service of Canada – Usama Ahmad – began his studies here in January.
- Sienna Johnson of Estevan, a fourth-year geology student, won the Best Undergraduate Technical Talk award at the 2016 Western Inter-University Geosciences Conference in Saskatoon.
- Charlie Bailey, a Master’s student in Biology, received a \$25,000 Royal Saskatchewan Museum Graduate Scholarship to help fund her research into pollination of sour cherries by wild insects.
- Simon Fuh , a fourth-year visual arts student, has been chosen as one of Canada’s 20 emerging artists. As a result, his work was on display from February 18-21 at Artists Project 2016, a prestigious contemporary art fair in Toronto.
- Computer Science doctoral student Trevor Tomesh was named one of 39 people from 26 countries to be designated a Texas Instruments Engineer-to-Engineer MVP for his work to teach others about microcontroller technology.
- Students from the Paul J. Hill School of Business had a great deal of success in recent national competitions:
 - The UR Investing team finished third out of more than 1,900 teams from across Canada in the Montreal Exchange Options Trading Simulation contest;
 - At the Inter-Collegiate Business Competition in Kingston, the Human Resources team finished first in that portion of the competition; and
 - At the JDC West competition in Saskatoon, the Hill School team was named Top Academic School of the Year, and finished second in the School of the Year category.
- The Academic & Professional Skills (APS) program is new initiative being developed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research in collaboration with the Career Centre, Dr. John Archer Library, and Student Success Centre to support both the academic and professional success of University of Regina graduate students. The APS program provides graduate students with the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in the classroom and their research, as well as prepare them for the workplace. Through APS, graduate students gain a set of skills on selected topics, including academic and business writing, time

management, conflict resolution, stress management, resume writing, and interview preparation.

- Students from the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science worked with SaskTel to develop, install and test new wireless technology on campus. This is a great example of experiential learning in the Faculty.
- The University Cheer Team won gold in the Premier Super Coed Division at the World University Cheerleading Championships.
- Through the “Giving Tuesday” initiative, faculty and staff raised more than \$19,000 to support undergraduate and graduate bursaries.
- Over Reading Week, 55 students took part in Arts CARES (Community Action in Regina for Educational Service). By volunteering with community organizations, they gained practical experience as well as a better understanding of how community organizations operate.
- Recent Faculty of Education graduate Stuart Beatch was named the recipient of the national Debbie Fleming Prize for Choral competition, and his original composition was premiered recently at a concert in Toronto.

CAMPUS EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- In January, the University of Regina launched its first-ever Strategic Plan for Sustainability, which will set the course for the University to become a leader in environmental responsibility. Areas of focus are Leadership, Waste, Energy, Transportation, and Communication and Engagement.
- In late January, the University held its second annual “State of the University Address” at the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce. The focus for this year was economic impact.
- Also in late January, an MOU was signed by the University and Saskatchewan’s Ministry of the Economy, which oversees the Saskatchewan Geological Survey (SGS). This MOU, which will extend a relationship dating back close to five decades, will provide Geology students and faculty members with free access to the SGS’s collection of core samples. It will also provide the opportunity for funding and employment for students.
- The University of Regina, Great Plains College and the City of Swift Current have committed to ongoing partnerships to collaborate in the areas of post-secondary education, research and employment. An MOU was signed in Swift Current on February 8.
- The University of Regina and the George Reed Foundation signed an MOU on February 12 to continue the research and initiatives taking place at the George Reed Centre for Accessible Visual Communications in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies. The MOU will provide \$250,000 for the Centre, which was originally established in 2014 through a gift of \$150,000.

- The University also signed an MOU with the Canadian Light Source to enable collaboration in synchrotron science.
- More than 2,000 elementary and high school students gathered at the University of Regina on February 23 to participate in a Red Cross Pink Day anti-bullying rally.
- Preparations are being made for the Spring meeting of University Council, which will take place on April 14.
- Each year, the University pays a fee to the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board to ensure that staff members are covered in the event of accident or injury. The University's fee for 2016, which is based on the number and severity of incidents at the institution over the past three years, has been reduced for this year. This is the result of the University's careful attention to occupational health and safety, and stands to save the institution up to \$35,000 this year.