

President's Report to the Board

For the period from July 1, 2016 – September 7, 2016

Submitted to the Board of Governors

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

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 over the past two months on six key areas of focus that the Board and I have identified for the 2016-17 academic year. As in past years, these areas of focus have been specifically identified to 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: Minimize disruptions to students, faculty and staff and maintain enrolments at 2015-16 levels at the College Avenue campus during renovations

With some aspects of the College Avenue campus renewal underway, and with others on the near horizon pending federal funding and a decision from the City of Regina regarding a land donation, work began in earnest approximately four months ago to ensure that CAC programming can continue throughout the fall with as little disruption as possible:

- The Centre for Continuing Education seconded an employee from Facilities Management and hired students to assist in coordinating the physical move and salvage operations at CAC. With their assistance, staff began taking inventory of and sorting all portable items (furniture, files, books and equipment, for example), packing necessary items, and disposing of or sending to salvage items that are no longer required.
- In addition, with the help of McNair Consulting, swing space was located to host regular CAC operations for the coming months. The space for the non-credit operations is now at 2151 Scarth Street, while the space for the credit operations is on the third floor of First Nations University of Canada. Space has also been leased at Westminster United Church to run Conservatory of Performing Arts group classes, large ensembles, musical theatre and drama, and the Lifelong Learning Centre's movement and fitness classes.

- For credit certificates, all courses have been put online. The large Flexible Learning operation (online, summer, evening and all distance courses) will be the least disrupted because it is the last to move, and the move is purely an “office to office” one.
- Prior to the official announcements regarding federal funding, the City of Regina land donation and the Conexus partnership, CCE responded to inquiries from students and instructors with whatever information was available at the time. Once it was confirmed that the CAC renewal would go ahead and CCE would be indeed be moving operations, CCE was able to begin an extensive and proactive communications campaign with staff, instructors and students. Meetings, email notifications, poster communications, and extra signage at CAC and the new locations have all been part of this, and a great deal of emphasis has been placed on dealing with student, instructor, staff and stakeholder concerns and comments directly and quickly.
- CCE has also worked to maintain and if possible enhance non-credit enrolments. This has included:
 - Extra promotion for the Fall and Winter terms through means such as Facebook advertisements and providing incentives for enrolment;
 - Working with Student Services to monitor and address any issues students may experience because of the move;
 - Doing extensive work on the website to ensure it contains up-to-date and accurate information about new course locations and the status of staff movements; and
 - Using email and registration incentives to specifically target past non-credit students, both those who have registered for the Fall, and those who have not yet done so.
- These activities will continue and be enhanced as necessary through the fall, and an enrolment update for the Fall semester should be available by the next Board report.
- It is also of note that overall University of Regina enrolment for the Spring/Summer semester was up by 3.0% compared to last year, and the number of credit hours taught was up 3.9%. Given the role CCE plays in delivering University programming throughout the summer, the unit played an important role in this success.

Objective: Increase the retention rate of undergraduate students from first year to second year from 85% to 86%

Increasing the University’s first-to-second-year undergraduate retention by a percentage point would place the University at or above the median of Canadian universities for this measure. For that reason, a number of initiatives have been underway to build on the planning and momentum from 2015-16.

Dr. Thomas Chase will be providing a comprehensive retention report at the September Board meeting. In the meantime, some highlights from that report are:

- The hiring of a full-time psychologist – and the planned hiring of another – to help provide mental health services to at-risk students;
- Expansion of the residence Living/Learning communities that were piloted last year;
- Increased involvement of recruiters over the summer in the process of helping convert admitted students to registered ones; and
- Additional teaching assistants and tutorial support for threshold courses in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science.

Objective: Identify and publicly profile innovative, high-impact research projects that address issues affecting Aboriginal communities

Research regarding matters that affect Aboriginal peoples and communities, especially that which aims to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, is vital to our University and our province. We are all Treaty people, and thus it is our responsibility to conduct and promote wherever possible research that has an impact on issues facing Aboriginal communities. Over the last few months, a great deal of work has taken place in this regard:

- The University celebrated National Aboriginal Day by highlighting our commitment to Indigenization through the CBC Homepage takeover, a paid initiative that gave the University a prominent spot on the CBC homepage during National Aboriginal Day.
- National Aboriginal Day also provided the perfect opportunity to introduce Emily Grafton, a member of the Métis Nation, as the University's new Executive Lead – Indigenization. This was done by profiling her on the University homepage and through advertisements in the *First Nations Drum*, the *Leader-Post*, and the *Globe and Mail*. In the coming months, Ms. Grafton will play an important role in helping identify and promote Indigenous research on campus.
- In August, a new Indigenous Scholars web page was created as part of the University's commitment to Indigenization. This project, which was initiated and led by Dr. Shauneen Pete during the final months of her term as Executive Lead – Indigenization, currently features eight Indigenous scholars and includes information about their backgrounds and research interests. Located on the Office of the President website as part of the Indigenization section, the Indigenous Scholars page provides media as well as other internal and external stakeholders with an easy-to-find-page specifically highlighting our University's Indigenous scholars.

- Discussions are underway about the possibility of creating a specific Indigenous-centred research cluster to complement the other areas of expertise and impact represented by the existing research clusters. This would provide another avenue to promote work affecting Aboriginal communities in Saskatchewan and beyond.
- Discussions are also taking place about how to further Indigenize the existing research clusters: Anxiety, Stress and Pain; Water, Environment and Clean Energy; Digital Future; Social Justice and Community Safety; and Integrated Human Health – Equity, Disease and Prevention.
- The University is in the process of recruiting two Canada Research Chairs (CRC) in Indigenous research areas. One is a SSHRC CRC focusing on Indigenous Peoples and Global Social Justice, and the other is a SSHRC CRC focusing on Reconciliation Education.
- Planning is taking place for an Indigenous Research Showcase that will be held in October. This showcase will involve collaboration with First Nations University of Canada and will feature researchers from across the entire University.
- University of Regina researchers are being called upon by media more than ever to provide expert commentary on different topics. In the past few months, several researchers and other staff members provided perspectives to media on Aboriginal issues. These included:
 - Elder Noel Starblanket, along with language instructor Bill Cook, was part of a *Leader-Post* story about the four-week Cree “crash course” offered at First Nations University this past summer. The story was picked up by some members of the national media;
 - Elder Starblanket was also interviewed, together with Dr. Carrie Bourassa of First Nations University of Canada, regarding a racist job ad posted by the Regina-Qu’Appelle Health Region. They provided commentary for several local media outlets as well as the *Huffington Post Canada*.
 - In the wake of the Colten Boushie shooting, several faculty members provided insight for local media. Dr. Michael Cappello and Dr. Shauneen Pete of the Faculty of Education provided a Saskatchewan perspective on the racial implications of the shooting, and Dr. David Gerhard from the Department of Computer Science talked about the racist side of social media;
 - Dr. Pete also took part in a live call-in show on CBC’s *BlueSky* where she was interviewed about her position on the recently announced national inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women;
 - Dr. Michelle Stewart of the Department of Justice Studies is a pre-eminent expert provincially and nationally on the issue of persons with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and their treatment by the justice system. In August, she was asked to provide her expertise in this area for a *Leader-Post* feature article;
 - Dr. Emily Eaton of the Department of Geography was called upon by provincial and national media to discuss the implications of the Husky Oil

spill that has been of concern to communities in Saskatchewan, including a number of First Nations; and

- Dr. Raven Sinclair of the Faculty of Social Work was interviewed by the international news organization *VICE News* about her research into the “Sixties Scoop.”

Objective: Establish a process to ensure that the Chiefs of local First Nations are engaged with the University

Going forward, an important aspect of the University’s Indigenization efforts will be to engage with the Chiefs of local First Nations to ensure that the University is a culturally appropriate educational setting, and one that is meeting the needs of Aboriginal students. The Office of Indigenization has taken the lead on this in recent months:

- Emily Grafton, Executive Lead – Indigenization, is on the agenda to speak with the Chiefs at the September 16 Treaty 4 Chiefs’ Assembly. She will also be meeting that day with members of the Treaty 4 Education Alliance. These meetings will provide the opportunity to introduce herself, outline the University’s Indigenization strategy, get preliminary input, and begin the process of formalizing a long-term engagement process.
- As part of her attendance at First Nations University of Canada’s 40th anniversary celebrations, Ms. Grafton also has a one-on-one meeting scheduled with Chief Cadmus Delorme of the Cowessess First Nation.
- It is also of note that the Office of Indigenization has been developing other on- and off-campus partnerships to host Indigenization-related events throughout the 2016-17 academic year:
 - The office has been discussing with First Nations University of Canada Elder’s Helper Roland Kaye the possibility of holding regular pipe ceremonies between the two institutions;
 - The office will partner with the Aboriginal Student Centre, La Cité, Campion College and potentially some other units to hold approximately six evening “coffee houses” to explore the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action concerning language and culture. These will be open to faculty, staff, students and members of the public;
 - The office is also collaborating with the Saskatchewan Writers’ Guild, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Knox Metropolitan Church to host 10 monthly book club meetings entitled “Unsettling ideas.” Each meeting will explore a different Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action through a work of Indigenous literature and be led by the author or an expert on the subject matter. The events will be on campus and in other Regina locations;
 - Working with the Faculty of Education and the School of Journalism, the office is helping to bring American photojournalist Daniella Zalzman to

- campus to exhibit and discuss her photography in the context of the Residential School system and its impacts on Saskatchewan; and
- The office is taking the lead in organizing the first instalment of the “Deliberation and Debate” lecture series, which will feature Dr. Marie Battiste of the University of Saskatchewan speaking about decolonization in education.

Objective: Develop a comprehensive long-term Alumni and Community Engagement strategy

With the Alumni and Community Outreach unit now restructured and under new leadership, the unit has made a considerable amount of progress in its planning and engagement activities:

- To help the unit gather information and develop its strategic direction, a consultant reviewed its community engagement activities and provided recommendations on a more proactive focus. These recommendations are currently being reviewed and will be built into a comprehensive strategy.
- In June, an alumni engagement survey was conducted to help with long-term planning, and it yielded excellent preliminary data on attitudinal perceptions. However, survey responses were skewed by over-representation from Regina and surrounding areas, which represent the largest alumni base. Additional outreach and surveying will be conducted by early October to solicit further responses from alumni located 250 kilometres and more from Regina. This will provide further information on how best to engage alumni throughout and even beyond the province.
- The past couple of months saw a great deal of additional work related to alumni engagement:
 - The Alumni Association broadened its membership to include graduates from Campus for All and five professional certificates offered by the Centre for Continuing Education. This was a big step forward in making our University more inclusive;
 - A “Future Alumni” event was held as part of Welcome Week;
 - Planning continued for a September alumni event involving the Globe Theatre, as well as the October 6 Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards; and
 - Planning is underway for a September alumni reception in Beijing in September at which the Premier of Saskatchewan will be present.
- In late summer and early fall, some events were organized to engage with the campus community as the school year begins:
 - In late August, more than 900 faculty and staff attended the annual “Gathering on the Green” luncheon, to kick off the new academic year;

- In early September, a commemoration event was held to allow people from campus and the larger community to reflect on the heritage and history of the College Avenue campus' Gallery and Conservatory buildings, which will be demolished as part of the CAC renewal project; and
- Planning has been underway for the annual “Coffee and Conversation” series, which provides a good opportunity each month to meet with faculty and staff and get their input in an informal and welcoming environment.

Objective: Develop and begin implementing a principles-based strategy to engage with the provincial government and other key internal and external stakeholders as the government contemplates “transformational change” and what it could mean for the post-secondary sector

Although the Ministry of Education has set out five general objectives – accessibility, responsiveness, sustainability, accountability and quality – it has not yet outlined precisely what “transformational change” might mean in the post-secondary sector. For that reason, the University has taken a proactive approach to determining how best to engage with government, the university community, and other institutions and stakeholder as we identify and work through these changes:

- The University Executive Team met in August to develop a framework for further engagement. This involved discussing how the University could define transformational change from an institutional perspective, and be guided by principles such as alignment with the strategic plan, accessibility of education, responsiveness to student needs, accountability to stakeholders, and setting realistic and achievable objectives for change.
- The University Executive Team also identified that a strategy and proposals to effect transformational change would require three streams of activity: internal initiatives, cross-institutional collaboration, and engagement with other external stakeholders.
- Following the University Executive Team discussions, University of Regina staff met with their counterparts at the University of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Polytechnic to discuss common objectives and the possibility of collaboration.
- I also chaired a discussion with University of Saskatchewan President Peter Stoicheff and Saskatchewan Polytechnic CEO Larry Rosia to consider where we might undertake joint efforts.
- The University Leadership Team had transformational change as a major topic at its annual retreat in late August, and discussed how changes to processes such as credit transfer and program approvals could enhance our ability to serve our students.

- By the time of the Board meeting, I will have met with our new Minister, Bronwyn Eyre, to update her on the University's approach to transformational change.
- The University's priorities and approach to transformational change will form the basis for our annual presentation to Treasury Board, which is expected to take place in October.

REPORT ON THE PRESIDENT'S ACADEMIC RESEARCH

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

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH

- As President of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD), throughout the summer I helped plan the August 2016 IASSIDD World Congress.
- At the Congress, I delivered a plenary address on the status of inclusive education in Canada and around the world, and facilitated a Past-Presidents' panel on the state of intellectual disability research. In addition, together with Dr. Scott Thompson of the Faculty of Education, I presented on the "Voices of Inclusion" study I have been conducting in Saskatchewan schools and workplaces.
- I continued work on the final "Voices of Inclusion" report, and together with colleagues, submitted a draft article to the journal *Disability and Rehabilitation*.
- I have been asked and have agreed to serve on the editorial board of the *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*.

PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION RESEARCH

- I am currently incorporating feedback from my fellow researchers on the case study I have submitted as part of a multi-university study of program prioritization at Canadian universities.

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITY

- Throughout the summer, I delivered a number of other presentations and wrote some other articles. These included:
 - Delivering a plenary address at the Western Regional Conference of the Canadian Bureau for International Education;
 - Giving presentations on both curricular integrity and the early years of being a university president for the Association of Commonwealth Universities;
 - Being invited to submit my curricular integrity presentation as an article for the Association of Commonwealth Universities' journal;
 - Being invited to prepare an article on women and leadership for *Policy Magazine*; and
 - Preparing a policy brief on Indigenization for the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy.

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

- Dr. Gordon Huang of the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science was awarded an honorary degree from McMaster University in June.
- Dr. Paitoon Tontiwachwuthikul was one of 43 new Fellows from across Canada who were honoured at the Canadian Academy of Engineering’s annual general meeting in Winnipeg.
- Throughout the summer, provincial and national media took a keen interest in the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) research being conducted by Dr. Nick Carleton in the Department of Psychology. His recently published PTSD “Blue Paper” was the subject of a number of provincial stories, which were in turn picked up by more than 30 media outlets across Canada, including the *National Post*.
- Dr. Raymond Blake of the Department of History was interviewed by the *New York Times* for his analysis of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s decision to leave politics – a clear indication of the esteem in which Dr. Blake is held as a scholar.
- A research team in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science consisting of Dr. Wei Peng, Dr. Rene Mayorga and Dean Esam Hussein has devised an “Automated Confirmatory System” to help radiologists detect breast cancer in women. The results of their work have been published in *Computer Methods and Programs in Biomedicine*, a science journal that encourages the application of computing methods in the fields of biomedical and medical practice.
- Dr. Stephen Bend, a professor of petroleum geology, was the recipient of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists Foundation Professorial Award. The award is given annually to a professor for excellence in the teaching of natural resources in the earth sciences.
- Vice-President (Administration) Dave Button was honoured for the third time in five years by the APPA, by an international organization that promotes leadership among physical plant administrators in educational institutions. He is also being recognized as a founding member on occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Regina South Saskatchewan Chapter of the Project Management Institute.

STUDENT AND ALUMNI SUCCESS

- In June, three students from the University of Regina – Ana Lucia Herrasti, Francisco Segura, and Daniel Soto Lopez – were selected by the Privy Council Office of the Government of Canada to participate in a discussion with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Mexican President Enrique Peña Nito.
- Under the supervision of Associate Dean Dr. Miguel Sanchez and assistant professor Dr. Randy Johner, a group of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Social Work designed a summer camp for Arab-speaking refugees, primarily from Syria.
- Social Work Master's student Michelle Apps, who examines the sexual barriers faced by persons with disabilities, presented her research at conferences in Calgary and Hawaii, and was featured by both CBC and the *Leader-Post*.
- Collaborative work by Kinesiology and Health Studies graduate student Michelle Degelman and assistant professor Dr. Katya Herman was published in the *Canadian Journal of Public Health*. Their research investigates the relationship between immigrant status and having a regular doctor.
- Recent Engineering and Applied Science graduates Brad Lulik, Eva Rennie and Brent Yeske won a global student design competition put on by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). Their winning project was a thorough energy assessment of the building that houses Little Souls Daycare, an affiliate of Souls Harbour Rescue Mission in Regina.
- As part of a performance called *Muscle and Bone*, Ken Wilson, a Master's student in the Faculty of Media, Art and Performance, walked for 300 kilometres through Ontario's contested Haldimand Tract. He started his journey in Dundalk, Ontario on June 12 and finished at Lake Erie on June 27.
- Four recipients of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarship were recently announced, and will have the opportunity to study abroad with Commonwealth partner universities:
 - Derrick Callan – Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy
 - Ryan Clark – Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science
 - Josh Gonzales – Psychology
 - Dallas Novakowski – Psychology
- Faculty of Business Administration alumnus Bradyn Parisian has been named Vice-Chair of the Conexus Credit Union board of directors.
- As of the first day of classes, overall enrolment at the University was up 2.8% to a total of 14,760 students. This marks the eighth consecutive year of increases, and the sixth consecutive year of record enrolment.

CAMPUS EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- In July, the University built on its longstanding partnership with Great Plains College by signing an agreement to allow students in the Swift Current area to obtain a Liberal Arts Certificate.
- Also in July, the Honourable Ralph Goodale, MP for Regina Wascana and federal minister of Public Safety, visited the University to announce major federal financial support for University researchers. Minister Goodale announced \$1.5 million of NSERC Discovery Grants for sixteen different research projects, and one graduate student scholarship.
- The University received the Green Service Award at the College and University Print Management Association of Canada (CUPMAC)'s annual conference in Waterloo, Ontario. There are 39 member institutions in CUPMAC.
- Luther College's Voluntary Sector Studies Network now offers a certificate program, approved recently by the University of Regina Senate. The certificate, which is a partnership between Luther College and the University, is the first of its kind in Saskatchewan.
- An exchange agreement in April between the University of Regina and Anhui University of Finance and Economics in China is already seeing positive results. A delegation of nine scholars from China recently completed a three-and-a-half week professional development program on campus and further exchange trips are expected.
- For the fourth consecutive year, the Paul J. Hill School of Business hosted the Prince's Operation Entrepreneur – commonly known as “Business Bootcamp” – for military veterans. The project was begun by HRH The Prince of Wales, and the University of Regina is the only institution west of Quebec that offers it.
- The University is partnering with Sheldon Kennedy's Respect Group to offer a respect in the workplace program to faculty, staff and students.
- Intake for a new cohort of faculty and staff members has begun for the next instalment of the URLeading leadership development program, which will begin later in September.
- As noted earlier in the report, a considerable amount of progress was made in recent months on the College Avenue Campus Renewal Project:
 - The Government of Canada invested \$27.6 million of the Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Infrastructure Fund (SIF) in renovations to the College Avenue Campus. In addition, \$2.4 million was announced for upgrades to the Laboratory Building;
 - Regina City Council approved a donation of land (2.6 acres) west of Darke Hall to support the College Avenue Campus Renewal Project; and
 - Removal of the buildings and early work on other aspects of the renewal project will have begun by the time of the Board meeting.