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

As the 2015-2016 academic year drew to a close, I worked with the University Executive Team to develop a draft of my performance objectives for 2016-2017. I then submitted these draft objectives to the Board of Governors, and based on the Board’s input, finalized them to begin the new academic year. These measurable objectives were specifically identified to align with the three priorities and two overarching themes of the University’s strategic plan, peyak aski kikawinaw: Together We Are Stronger – student success; research impact; commitment to communities; sustainability; and Indigenization.

The six objectives for 2016-2017 as finalized by the Board were:

1. **Student Success:** Minimize disruptions to students, faculty and staff and maintain enrolments at 2015-16 levels at the College Avenue campus during renovations;

2. **Student Success:** Increase the retention rate of undergraduate students from first year to second year from 85% to 86%;

3. **Research Impact:** Identify and publicly profile innovative, high-impact research projects that address issues affecting Aboriginal communities;

4. **Commitment to Our Communities:** Establish a process to ensure that the Chiefs of local First Nations are engaged with the University;

5. **Commitment to Our Communities:** Develop a comprehensive long-term Alumni and Community Engagement strategy; and

6. **Commitment to Our Communities:** 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.
A regular intervals throughout the year, I have reported to the Board on these objectives as well as my academic research program. To help the Board in its assessment of my performance, this report summarizes that progress to date.

I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight some accomplishments from the past year that were important although not necessarily directly related to my objectives. One is that the 2016-17 year was a relatively calm one – something which in part is due to a collective commitment to openness and transparency on campus. I took every opportunity to meet with faculty, staff and students, including in open forums, and made a special effort to meet with specific groups of recent and long-serving faculty members to address any concerns they may have. In addition, the open budget forums held by the Vice-President (Administration) and Provost and Vice-President (Academic) contributed to a spirit of openness that is serving our University well.

Another key highlight from the past year was the College Avenue campus revitalization. Securing $27.6 million in federal funding, negotiating a 2.6-acre land donation from the City, and building a partnership with Conexus that allowed the College Avenue campus project to proceed were significant accomplishments. They moved forward a longstanding project that had been on my planning agenda since I began my tenure at the University, and that had posed a challenge for previous Presidents. With the revitalization now well underway, the University has preserved its historic campus and ensured that it can help serve the educational, cultural and recreational needs of the community for another century.

The University community’s collective effort to address budget challenges was another major accomplishment for the year. The provincial government’s second consecutive mid-year clawback of promised operating funding – this time amounting to a 1% mid-year reduction – did not demoralize the University community. Together, we managed the increasingly constrained financial situation with the least possible disruption to students, faculty and staff. I asked all faculties and units on campus to sacrifice some of the carryover funding that they had earmarked for other important purposes. What they offered more than compensated for the government’s 1% mid-year reduction – something that is a testament to the character of our institution and those who work here. The University of Regina is a caring community where faculty and staff pull together in challenging times, think of others before themselves, and do whatever they can to provide the best possible learning environment for our students. This was more evident than ever during the past year.

In submitting the following report, I would like to note that my performance as President is intrinsically linked to the work of many others. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge their contributions, so I wish to thank the faculty and staff of the University of Regina. Their commitment to this University and its students is inspiring, and has played a tremendous role in helping the institution achieve its objectives for the year. Likewise, I would like to thank the Board of Governors for its support and leadership.
over the past year. I look forward to the Board’s feedback on my performance as President, and I am excited to continue our work together in 2017-2018.

Respectfully,

Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor

Objective 1: Student Success – Minimize disruptions to students, faculty and staff and maintain enrolments at 2015-16 levels at the College Avenue campus during renovations

Since 2011 the University has worked very hard to fundraise and plan for the renewal of the College Avenue campus (CAC) in order to enhance sustainable long-term program delivery for students. With many aspects of the renewal underway and other major components on the horizon, it was important to ensure that the renewal did not have the counterproductive short-term effect of disrupting faculty, staff and the thousands of students who access programming at CAC either in person or through distance education. For that reason, a key objective for 2016-17 was to minimize disruptions to CAC’s students, faculty, staff and operations and maintain CAC enrolments at 2015-16 levels during the campus renewal.

This objective was met for the most part. Although some inevitable disruptions occurred as one would expect when the operations of an entire campus are temporarily relocated, these were kept to a minimum and any identified issues were quickly resolved. Enrolments decreased slightly in specific areas such as the Lifelong Learning Centre, but overall enrolments remained consistent with last year’s levels. The fact that the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) exceeded its budget targets is a further indication that faculty and staff did tremendous work throughout the year to address the logistical and operational challenges posed by the CAC revitalization.

Logistical work began early to ensure that CAC programming could continue throughout the fall with as little disruption as possible:

- Close to a year ago, CCE 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 were no longer required.
With the help of McNair Consulting, swing space was located to host regular CAC operations for 2016-17. Space for the non-credit operations was secured at 2151 Scarth Street, while space for the credit operations was secured on the third floor of First Nations University of Canada. Space was also 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.

Renovation of the swing spaces took place into October, with office moves spaced out throughout September and October. Staff and students settled in the new locations and any initial challenges were address quickly. Over the course of the year, the swing space locations proved to be suitable for CCE’s needs on an interim basis.

For credit certificates, all courses were put online. The large Flexible Learning operation (online, summer, evening and all distance courses) was least disrupted because it was the last to move, and the move was purely an “office to office” one.

As the space elements of the temporary move were being taken care of, CCE put a great deal of effort into registration procedures and communication with faculty, staff and students:

- Once it was confirmed that the CAC renewal would go ahead and CCE would be indeed be moving operations, CCE began 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 were part of this, and a great deal of emphasis was placed on dealing directly and quickly with student, instructor, staff and stakeholder concerns and comments.
- Staff worked with Student Services to monitor and address any issues students may have experienced because of the move. There were a few small issues during the prime registration period for non-credit programs in the early fall, but these were worked through without a great deal of difficulty.
- CCE also did a great deal of work to maintain and if possible enhance non-credit enrolments. This included:
  - Extra promotion for the Fall and Winter terms through means such as Facebook advertisements and providing incentives for enrolment;
  - Targeted marketing to update registrants on the status of programming, and offering incentives to non-credit students who registered online.
  - Doing extensive work on the website to ensure it contained 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 had registered for the Fall and Winter semesters, and those who had not yet done so.

The non-credit programs were the most affected by the move from College Avenue campus, though it should be noted that the non-credit registration system was changed from CLASS to ActiveNet on July 15, 2016. The new system has been beneficial, but it did pose some challenges in its initial period of use.

Overall CCE enrolment numbers for the year were strong, however, and are a testament to how seamlessly CCE staff and faculty handled the transition.

For non-credit programming:

- Conservatory enrolment for private lessons was down slightly, while group lessons were on par with last year.
- The pre-school was at capacity for the Fall semesters, but there was a small decline in registrations for Winter camp programs.
- The Lifelong Learning Centre (LLC) experienced a drop in registrations in both the Fall and Winter semesters. Parking was cited as a concern by LLC students, so to help alleviate this concern, the LLC began running some programs that are only an hour and a half in duration, allowing students to avail themselves of the free two-hour parking on the streets located near the Palliser Building. This adjustment, together with targeted marketing and outreach to former registrants, seems to have had positive results, as Spring enrolments for April and May are back on track.
- Career and Professional Development non-credit registrations were down in open enrolment courses due to smaller classrooms at FNUinv, but customized training programs exceeded projections.

For credit programming:

- English as a Second Language (ESL) enrolments were down slightly from last year, although this decline is more related to world events than it is to the fact that ESL instructors faced two physical moves during the year. Those moves – from Campion College to the third floor at College West, and subsequently to the second floor of College West – had less of an effect on students than they had on instructors.
- It is still early to predict ESL enrolments for the Spring/Summer semester, but they appear to be on pace with last year. The University recently signed a new contract with the federal government to deliver ESL programming to new immigrants and refugees in Regina. The first students will begin their programs in May, and this new contract should ensure that ESL meets its enrolment targets next year.
- Career and Professional Development credit registrations were on track, partly due to higher international enrolments in certificate programs. It is too early to predict whether enrolment targets will be met for Summer and Fall 2017, but early indications are positive.
- The Flexible Learning Division is CCE’s largest area, and has the most involvement with the faculties. Enrolments in this area were higher this year than last, far exceeding the targets for 2016-2017.

Despite a few exceptions, then, CCE’s overall enrolment for 2016-17 was up. Most of the areas exceeded their profit targets, and CCE’s overall revenue for the year is projected to exceed budget by approximately $1.5 million. CCE is optimistic that it will also meet its enrolment and revenue targets for 2017-2018.

This is a tremendous success story in a year of transition for CCE and in an environment of financial uncertainty for the University and the province as a whole. The faculty and staff at CCE should be commended for their work.

**Objective 2: Student Success – Increase the retention rate of undergraduate students from first year to second year from 85% to 86%**

Using the Maclean’s methodology, the University’s rate of retention for students from their first-to-second year of undergraduate studies stood at 85% for the 2015-2016 academic year – an increase of approximately 5% from the year before. Having spent much of 2015-2016 exploring and implementing new retention initiatives, the University committed to continuing that work and seeing positive retention results for the current academic year. To that end, a key objective for 2016-2017 was to increase first-to-second-year undergraduate retention by a percentage point, which would place the University at or above the median of Canadian universities for this measure.

This objective was not met. The retention rate for first-year undergraduate students from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016 stood at 83.2%. This does not meet the target of 86%, and represents a 1.8% decrease from 2014-2015.

As noted in the March report to the Board, there are several reasons for this. One is that there was a year-over-year retention rate decline in three faculties that had retention numbers in the high 80s and low 90s in the previous year. The Faculties of Business Administration, Social Work and Nursing had larger incoming cohorts of first-year students than in the 2015-2016 year, but at the same time, their retention rates declined. More students entering these Faculties, combined with declining rates of retention, served to reduce the overall institutional retention rate.

Conversely, three other Faculties – Education, Engineering, and Kinesiology and Health Studies – saw their retention rates, already at or above the institutional average, rise while the size of their entering cohorts was smaller than or similar to the previous year.
Because their intake of entering students in total declined, their increased retention rates were not enough to boost the overall institutional percentage.

Finally, three Faculties whose retention rates have typically been lower than the institutional average – Arts, Science, and Media, Art and Performance – saw a combined growth in the size of their incoming cohorts. As a result, a higher proportion of students than the previous year were in these Faculties whose retention rates were below last year’s 85% average. This did not serve to raise the overall institutional retention rate, but it is significant that retention in Science remained essentially unchanged, and it increased in Arts and in Media, Art and Performance. This is an indication that the retention initiatives being implemented over the past few years are beginning to have positive results.

At the end of the day, year-over-year retention results from the Fall 2015 to Fall 2016 were a mixed success. The retention rate rose in five out of nine faculties, and was virtually unchanged in one other. In absolute numbers the University retained more students this year than last. Both of these factors have helped contribute to the enrolment increases the University continued to see for Fall 2016 and Winter 2017. The University is retaining and educating more students than ever before, but individual circumstances in Faculties can change from year to year and have an impact on the overall retention rate. Going forward, the Faculties will continue to assess the factors affecting their individual retention rates, and do whatever is possible to mitigate them.

In the meantime, throughout the year a number of initiatives either continued or were begun to enhance retention for the future. These included:

- Improving mental health services for at-risk students;
- Expanding the residence Living/Learning communities that were piloted in 2015-2016;
- Providing additional resources to support students in threshold courses in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science;
- Continuing work in the Global Learning Centre to provide tutoring and mentoring services and develop academic and English-language literacy skills for the growing number of International students;
- Undertaking a call campaign to encourage returning international students to register for the coming semesters;
- Administering the ELNAT (English Literacy Needs Assessment Test) that has been developed by the English Department, UR International and ESL. This pilot project is a retention tool that has supported more than 1,000 domestic and international students over the past two years by assessing their readiness to take English 100;
- Providing support to international students to mitigate crisis during exams;
Continuing with the Academic Recovery Program/Arts Transition Program to help re-integrate students into their studies;

Holding hundreds of individual and group academic advising appointments in the Student Success Centre;

Creating a Summer Bridge program to help incoming students get their English 100 credits and gain academic experience prior to the Fall semester; and

Running the 7th cohort of the OMA Student Success Program, an Indigenous mentorship program whose retention rate of 69.2% is well in excess of the traditional first-to-second-year retention rate for this demographic. This year’s cohort had 25 students.

It is of note that student retention is closely related to the Undergraduate Degree Completion measure that is included in the University’s Performance Measurement Framework. This measure reports the percentage of undergraduate students who complete their undergraduate degree within seven years of first registering. This statistic is also reported in Maclean’s magazine’s annual ranking issue. The most recent result for this measure is 58.1%, which is the percentage of the fall 2007 entry cohort who graduated by 2014. The result compares favourably to the previous year’s figure of 56.6% and the current year’s target of 57%.

Another point of interest is that the retention rate of students in the UR Guarantee program continues to increase, and continues to outstrip that of students who do not participate in the program. 85.1% of students in the 2011 UR Guarantee entry cohort were retained the next year, compared to 80.6% of non-UR Guarantee participants; by fall 2016, 90.1% of the 2015 UR Guarantee entry cohort was retained, compared to 81.9% of non-UR Guarantee students. This is a clear indication that overall retention rates are increasing, and that the UR Guarantee is engaging students in the way that was envisioned when it was first introduced.

**Objective 3: Research Impact – Identify and publicly profile innovative, high-impact research projects that address issues affecting Aboriginal communities**

As the University of Regina finds ways to respond to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, maximizing the impact of research into Aboriginal issues will be of increasing importance. To that end, over this past year a major objective was to identify and publicly profile high-impact research projects taking place at the University that address issues facing Canada’s Aboriginal communities.

This objective has been met. Over the course of the year, the University made a concerted effort to highlight and facilitate Indigenous research in a wide variety of ways, including on the University’s website, in social media and conventional media, in paid
advertisements, in University publications, and in the recruitment of Canada Research Chair positions. What follows is a sampling of these activities.

For National Aboriginal Day in June, the University advertised extensively on the CBC homepage, and took the opportunity to announce the hiring of Emily Grafton, a member of the Métis Nation, as the University’s new Executive Lead – Indigenization. Ms. Grafton was profiled on the University homepage and through advertisements in the First Nations Drum, the Regina Leader-Post, and the Globe and Mail.

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, 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.

In the fall, the debut of Discourse, the University’s new research publication, provided the opportunity to promote Indigenous-related and other research being conducted at the undergraduate, graduate and faculty levels. The issue featured Justice Studies professor Dr. Michelle Stewart’s work on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – an issue that was identified as a priority in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action.

The work featured in the first issue of Discourse had an especially large audience. The publication was emailed to approximately 20,000 alumni and sent either in hard copy or electronically to another 650 individuals and organizations across Canada and around the world, including the Tri-Council funding agencies. It received considerable local media attention, and promotion by University Affairs, SSHRC and NSERC helped reach at least 100,000 other people via social media. The next edition of Discourse is in production and when published in the coming weeks will again feature Indigenous research projects.

In October, the Research Office collaborated with the Indigenous Advisory Circle and the Office of Indigenization to host the University’s inaugural Indigenous Research Day. The event helped people on campus and in the larger community explore the range of Indigenous research being conducted at the University and Federated Colleges. Communications and Marketing highlighted the event by writing a story for the website that featured Métis artist and Faculty of Media, Art and Performance professor David Garneau. The Regina Leader-Post and Eagle Feather News highlighted the day and interviewed researchers about their work. Planning is already underway for the second annual event.

Work took place throughout the year to examine the advisability of creating a specific Indigenous-centred research cluster to complement the other areas of expertise and
impact represented by the existing research clusters. After discussions with a number of people and groups including researchers, members of the Indigenous Advisory Circle and the Executive Lead – Indigenization, it was determined that the most effective way of facilitating and promoting Indigenous research at the University and in the larger community would be to further Indigenize the existing research clusters. In support of this, the newly launched 2016-2021 Strategic Research Plan includes an objective related to enhancing research partnerships and projects with First Nations and Métis people, communities and organizations. A number of supporting actions were identified in the plan to help achieve this objective.

The successful recruitment of two Canada Research Chairs (CRC) – one focusing on Indigenous Peoples and Global Social Justice, and the other on Reconciliation Education – was an important initiative undertaken during the year. Each search committee worked with the Indigenous Advisory Circle and/or Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers, as well as Indigenous colleagues and disciplinary experts, to ensure that the concept of “nothing about us without us” was honoured. In respect of budgetary considerations, these CRC nominees must be approved by the CRC Secretariat as a condition of employment, because the Secretariat’s approval is required for federal CRC salary contributions to be allocated to the University.

The University launched its call for proposals for Community Connections programming for the forthcoming 2018 Congress. These proposed events – many of which will be related to Indigenous scholarship – are designed to generate public participation and contribute to the strategic plan’s priorities of commitment to communities, Indigenization, and sustainability.

The University has also volunteered to be the lead on Indigenous issues for ACCRU – the Alliance of Canadian Comprehensive Research Universities. In this role, the University will be well-placed to work with other universities to facilitate and promote Indigenous research in the years to come, and potentially to provide national training on Indigenous research ethics.

As ACCRU Indigenous Lead, the University has formed a working group to examine how Indigenous research ethics are incorporated within the University’s Research Ethics Board review process. As part of this review, the University is collaborating with the University of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Polytechnic to hold a provincial workshop to be held in May. The workshop will produce a strategy for Indigenous research protocol and methods, as well as a provincial strategy for Indigenous research ethics. It will also form the basis of a SSHRC Connections grant to be submitted in August of 2017, with the intention of holding a nationwide workshop on Indigenous research at Congress 2018.

Several researchers have submitted proposals in response to a call for papers for a June 2017 international conference, entitled Connecting Indigenous Peoples in North America: Crafting a Community of Shared Knowledge. This conference will be held at
First Nations University of Canada in conjunction with the annual Consortium for North American Higher Education for Collaboration (CONAHEC) conference that is being hosted by the University of Regina.

Throughout the year, a great deal of additional effort went into promoting University of Regina research addressing issues of particular importance to Indigenous communities. Some examples are:

- Education doctoral candidate Katia Hildebrandt’s project aimed at bringing Treaty education to Saskatchewan classrooms was featured on the University website in September, after which it was covered by CBC news;
- In November and December, Dr. Carmen Robertson’s new book, *Mythologizing Norval Morrisseau: Art and the Colonial Narrative in the Canadian Media*, was featured on the University website and in a full-page ad in *University Affairs*;
- In February, the website profiled the work of University of Regina faculty members Dr. Angela Snowshoe and Dr. JoLee Sasakamoose as well as graduate students Amanda Scandrett and Rhonda Stevenson. Guided by Elder Noel Starblanket, a knowledge keeper at the University, they are working to redesign a conventional western counselling space into a culturally responsive setting for Indigenous people. The project is part of the University’s involvement in the Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research (SCPOR). The University’s SCPOR research is centred in the Indigenous Peoples’ Health Research Centre and Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, with strong contributions from Educational Psychology, Nursing, Arts Psychology, and Business Administration;
- Also in February, Dr. Michelle Stewart of the Department of Justice Studies hosted a national symposium on FASD and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s *Calls to Action*. The story was featured on the University website, and received considerable media attention;
- Two of the instalments in the “Deliberation and Debate” series – Dr. Marie Battiste’s lecture on decolonizing education and Caleb Behn’s lecture on oil extraction on traditional First Nations territory in British Columbia – explored topics of particular interest to Indigenous communities;
- The work of Cheyanne Desnomie, current History graduate student and student success facilitator at the Aboriginal Student Centre, was featured on the website. Her work as an Anthropology honours student examined a damaging social and agricultural experiment conducted on the Peepeekisis First Nation by the federal government in the late 19th and early 20th century;
- In late March, and as part of the first round of projects funded through the office of the Vice-President (Research) Curiosity Research Grant, money was awarded to Dr. Angela Snowshoe for her work entitled “(Re)connecting Animal-Human Relationships as a Doorway to Indigenous Wellness.” The grant recognizes
projects that fall outside those normally funded by other research streams and that promote new kinds of research and/or new types of outcomes;

- As part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s *Calls to Action* around protecting and promoting Aboriginal languages, in early March, First Nations University of Canada partnered with the Prince Charities Canada to launch Indigenous-language children’s books in Saskatchewan; and

- Solomat Ratt, associate professor of Indigenous Languages, Linguistics and Literature at FNUniv, advocated for and also carried out the task of translating street signs in Regina’s North Central area from English to Cree after residents called on him to assist in this endeavour. Ratt appeared in the *Regina Leader-Post*, on CTV news and CBC’s website, and was also interviewed on the CBC’s *Morning Edition* about this project.

Special mention should be made of the success the University of Regina Press has had in promoting Indigenous research:

- The Press’s *The Education of Augie Merasty: A Residential School Memoir* was selected by the Saskatchewan Library Association for its “One Book One Province” initiative in which as many people as possible in the province were encouraged to read the same book in the month of March. The University Library organized a public reading of the book in late March;

- The Press received 17 nominations for the upcoming Saskatchewan Book Awards, including nominations for the following Indigenous-themed works: *100 Days of Cree; Firewater: How Alcohol Is Killing My People (And Yours); Holy War: Cowboys, Indians, and 9/11’s; The Knowledge Seeker: Embracing Indigenous Spirituality;* and *Beginning Cree;* and

- The Press’s *Firewater: How Alcohol Is Killing My People (And Yours)* was also nominated for the Governor General’s Award for Non-Fiction, and James Daschuk’s *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* was named the best-selling Canadian academic book so far this century. These are the latest accolades for the Press, which is quickly developing a reputation as Canada’s foremost university publisher of Indigenous research.

It is also worth noting that University of Regina researchers were called upon by media more than ever before throughout the year to provide expert commentary on Indigenous issues such as the residential school system, racism, and missing and murdered Indigenous, women, and the “Sixties Scoop.”
**Objective 4: Commitment to Our Communities – Establish a process to ensure that the Chiefs of local First Nations are engaged with the University**

A critical part of the strategic plan’s commitment to Indigenize the University is to make the institution a more culturally appropriate place for Aboriginal students, faculty and staff to study, work and live. Another component looks beyond the University itself to ensure that the institution is meeting the educational and social needs of Aboriginal communities. A strong relationship with Aboriginal leaders is crucial to fulfilling both of these aspects of the Indigenization strategy, so a key objective for 2016-17 was to establish a process by which the Chiefs of local First Nations become and remain engaged with the University.

This objective was partially achieved. Although the University was not able to work with all local Chiefs and other key Indigenous leaders and organizations in the province to develop a comprehensive multi-year strategy of regular engagement, considerable progress was made over the course of the year with a number of groups.

As part of her attendance at First Nations University of Canada’s 40th anniversary celebrations, Executive Lead – Indigenization Emily Grafton had a one-on-one meeting with Chief Cadmus Delorme of the Cowessess First Nation. As a result of this meeting, Ms. Grafton was invited to the Treaty 4 Chiefs’ Assembly in mid-September to deliver a short presentation on the University’s interest in getting the Chiefs’ input into how the University can approach Indigenization. Under the guidance of Chief Delorme, a follow-up email was sent, inviting the Chiefs to provide further feedback.

Working with Chief Delorme, I arranged to meet with the File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Council in December to discuss the University’s Indigenization efforts and continuing academic program developments. At the meeting, the Chiefs provided me with a great deal of feedback on subjects as varied as community education programs, the University’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s *Calls to Action*, the implications the University’s budget has on First Nations’ ability to fund students, the need to better promote recreational services to Indigenous students, and the possibility of developing an on-campus Indigenous housing initiative.

During our discussion, I invited the Chiefs to meet with the Board of Governors, and work is underway to organize such a meeting in the coming months. In the meantime, Chief Delorme met with the University’s Board of Governors in March.

The Office of Indigenization worked with several Tribal Councils, the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, the Treaty 4 Education Alliance, and the Independent First Nations in Treaty 4 to secure time on their meeting agendas. Progress was as follows:
- Scheduling did not permit me to attend the FSIN Chiefs’ Legislative Assembly in October, but work continues to arrange a future meeting;
- The Office of the Treaty Commissioner is does not currently have an appointed Commissioner, but a meeting will take place once a Commissioner is in place;
- The Treaty 4 Education Alliance has expressed in having me attend one of the meetings of its Board, which is made up of First Nations Education Directors and several Chiefs from across Treaty 4. Although scheduling has not yet permitted this, Ms. Grafton did have a preliminary meeting with members of the Education Alliance on September 16 when she attended the Treaty 4 Chiefs’ Assembly; and
- The Office of Indigenization has been making contact with Tribal Councils and Independent First Nations to arrange meetings with them, but has not yet been able to schedule these meetings.

Work also took place during the year to enhance the University’s relationship with members of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. I was advised that the Métis Nation is in transition and that because of challenges in its organizational capacity, the University and the Métis community would both be best served if the University worked to enhance relationships through the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI).

Following that recommendation, in February I met with Geordy McCaffrey, the Executive Director of the GDI. We discussed our current agreements, the services we provide for Métis students, and the possibility of working together in the future to broaden the range of post-secondary opportunities for Métis students and fulfill the University’s mandate to Indigenize its programs. We agreed to meet bi-annually to discuss our programs and areas of mutual interest.

It is also of note that the Office of Indigenization worked on a number of initiatives to engage with off-campus groups and members of the public throughout the year. These included:

- Organizing the first public “Deliberation and Debate” lecture, which featured Dr. Marie Battiste discussing the subject of decolonizing education;
- Collaborating with the Saskatchewan Writers’ Guild, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Knox Metropolitan Church to host monthly book club meetings entitled “Unsettling Ideas.” Each meeting explored a different Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action through a work of Indigenous literature and was led by the author or an expert on the subject matter;
- Working with the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce to plan an event to be held in June focused on the TRC’s 94 Calls to Action. The event will feature Marie Wilson, one of the chairs of the TRC, as keynote speaker;
- Planning feasts with the Cree, Saulteaux and Métis communities; and
Providing input into my next visit to northern Saskatchewan, during which I will meet with potential students, First Nations leadership, and community members. A key point of discussion will be what supports are in place – and need to be in place – both for on-line students and for those who leave their home communities to attend the University of Regina.

**Objective 5: Commitment to Our Communities – Develop a comprehensive long-term Alumni and Community Engagement strategy**

Engaging with current Chiefs of local First Nations is a targeted strategy to build relations with and learn from key community members, but it only scratches the surface in terms of the University’s required community engagement. Now that the Alumni Relations and Community Outreach unit has been restructured and strong leadership is in place, it is also imperative to enhance relationships with alumni and other key stakeholders to strengthen public and private belief in and support of the University and its academic mission. To that end, a major objective for the year was to develop a comprehensive long-term Alumni and Community Engagement plan that will serve the University well for the years to come.

This objective was for the most part achieved. A comprehensive long-term strategy was developed to guide alumni engagement, and the University began acting on a key recommendation from a report on wider community engagement.

The process of developing the alumni engagement strategy began in the summer and continued into the fall with a survey through which more than 1,500 alumni provided input. The survey was designed to help:

- Outline the profile of alumni and the engagement differences of target groups;
- Evaluate the attitudes and intentions of alumni across a range of engagement measures;
- Benchmark attitudes against previous research, national scores and peer groups;
- Understand the impact of engagement on behaviours around giving and participation; and
- Provide insights into program development and strategic planning.

Some of the results from the survey were:

- The lowest level of engagement is among alumni from 6-10 years after graduation (11% engaged), but this improves to 20% engaged for alumni more than 30 years after graduation;
- Alumni have the highest affinity for their faculty and department (43%) versus the University as a whole (25%); and
Alumni are most interested in professional development and life-long learning for events/program offerings.

The survey results formed the basis for a new alumni engagement strategy that was completed under the leadership of the Director of Alumni and Community Engagement, Peggy MacDonald. The fundamental focus of the new strategy is to continue the shift from being events-driven to being relationship-focused. The plan covers the period of 2017 – 2020 and has six priorities:

1. Volunteer Leadership – finding and building alumni leaders;
2. Communications – elevate design and content, and expand channel delivery;
3. Age and Stage Programming – learning customized to age and life stage;
4. Services and Affinity Programs – value-based offerings;
5. Alumni Recognition – instil pride and enhance reputation; and
6. Operational Sustainability.

I provided additional resources to support new initiatives that are underway in these areas. Examples of these initiatives include:

- A pilot offering of career information sessions that was held in January to allow UR Guarantee students to engage with alumni and discuss eight career themes. All participants – both students and alumni – ranked the sessions as either a 9 or 10 out of 10;
- A new mobile app (Alumni PERKS pass) that provides alumni with benefits from local and national providers. New partners and new offerings will keep the app dynamic and relevant; and
- A series of professional development seminars for young alumni that is being piloted in conjunction with the Saskatchewan Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs (SYPE).

In addition, the Alumni Association is looking at new governance and operating practices to allow it to be more responsive to the new relationship-based focus and to fit into the new alumni engagement strategy strategic plan.

Throughout the year, a large number of other alumni-related activities took place. They included:

- Broadening Alumni Association membership to include graduates from Campus for All and five professional certificates offered by the Centre for Continuing Education;
- Holding a “Future Alumni” event as part of Welcome Week;
Recognizing the recipients of the 2016 Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards and launching the nomination process for 2017;

- Holding alumni events in Regina – one in conjunction with the Globe Theatre, and one in conjunction with the Rams game to open the new Mosaic Stadium;
- Holding an alumni event in Beijing in conjunction with the University of Saskatchewan and including the Premier of Saskatchewan; and
- Organizing alumni events in Ottawa, Victoria, Calgary and Saskatoon that featured University of Regina faculty and staff.

A great deal of work also took place to develop a strategy to guide the University’s engagement with the wider community beyond our alumni. An external consultant was engaged to interview internal and external stakeholders, examine best practices at other institutions, and produce a report examining the University’s community engagement. The report contains a number of recommendations to enhance the University’s wider community engagement activities over the long term.

As an initial step, I began addressing the report’s overarching recommendation to move from a traditional “community service” model to one where the University – through its students, faculty and staff – seeks new ways to engage the larger community by addressing expressed needs.

To this end, the University hired alumnus Victor Thomas on a one-year term as a part-time advisor in engaging key communities. He is working closely with the President’s Office and External Relations in a variety of areas, including:

- Creating a formal University Champions program to further engage community and business leaders with the University;
- Involving honorary degree recipients more closely with the University;
- Helping External Relations with donor prospects, lost or inactive alumni, and new partners;
- Attracting key local and national organizations to the University. For example, he arranged for CN to hold its Board meeting on campus from April 23-24; and
- Representing the University at targeted local, regional, national, and international events.

The transition from a “community service” model to one that engages the community in a mutually beneficial exchange will inform my upcoming visit to northern Saskatchewan, which is in the planning stages.

Going forward, the University will address other of the report’s recommendations such as developing a consultation and planning process that will ultimately lead to a formalized comprehensive community engagement plan.
Key engagement activities with the larger community over the course of the year included:

- A “Community Connections” event in Moose Jaw featuring a lecture by faculty member Dr. Jim Farney;
- A commemoration event 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;
- The third annual State of the University address, which was hosted by the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce. It drew more than 300 people and provided the opportunity to speak to a diverse audience about the University’s ongoing transformation;
- The eighth annual Inspiring Leadership Forum, which was attended by more than 600 people from across the province and beyond;
- The unveiling of the planned design for the College Building addition;
- Planning for the third annual Prairie Kitchen Party fundraiser; and
- Planning for Congress 2018, including the call for Community Connections programming.

Objective 6: Commitment to Our Communities – 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

As a publicly funded institution, the University of Regina has a responsibility to use our resources wisely to provide accessible, high-quality, relevant education for our students. This is especially important in light of the province’s current economic climate, the government’s significant budgetary deficit, and the government’s message during the release of its 2016-2017 budget that “transformational change” would be necessary for the future across a number of sectors.

Because the government did not clearly signal what “transformational change” might mean in the post-secondary sector, it was prudent for the University to proactively discuss this concept with government and other stakeholders. For that reason, a key objective for the year was to develop and begin implementing an engagement strategy to manage the expectations and implications of “transformational change” while upholding the institution’s autonomy and academic mission as well as the interests of our faculty, staff and students.
This objective was achieved. During the year, the University developed an approach to transformational change, discussed it with a variety of stakeholders, and began exploring five potential initiatives.

The University’s proactive approach to defining and implementing transformational change began in the summer when the University Executive Team met to develop a framework for further engagement with government and the University community. 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.

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. In addition, I chaired a discussion with University of Saskatchewan President Peter Stoicheff and Saskatchewan Polytechnic CEO Larry Rosia to consider where we might undertake joint efforts.

In late August, transformational change was a major topic at the University Leadership Team’s annual retreat. The group discussed how changes to processes such as credit transfer and program approvals could enhance our ability to serve our students, and identified potential initiatives. In September, five proposed initiatives were presented to the Board, who endorsed them for further consideration, provided that the University’s process of considering the proposals was consultative and transparent.

These proposals were:

1. Assuming ownership of Innovation Place – Regina;
2. Joining with other post-secondary institutions to undertake an external review of program duplication;
3. Enabling seamless credit transfers to our University;
4. Streamlining the process of academic governance and program approval; and
5. Maximizing our academic program offerings throughout the entire 12-month academic year in order to use our facilities and resources as efficiently as possible.

Following the Board meeting, I updated the Honourable Bronwyn Eyre, Minister of Advanced Education, on the University’s proposed approach. This approach then formed the basis for our annual presentation to Treasury Board.

The five proposed initiatives were communicated to the University community in early November, and faculty, staff and students were invited to an open forum on November 23 to discuss them. Prior to the forum, University Council placed the item on the agenda.
for discussion at its November 18 meeting. The general consensus arising from both the Council meeting and the open forum was that the University should give further consideration the five possibilities, while ensuring that any final decisions regarding them go through the appropriate approvals processes. Executive of Council endorsed this approach.

Since that time, a considerable amount of work has been done to explore the feasibility of the five proposals:

1. **Assuming ownership of Innovation Place – Regina if a business case is feasible:**
   - Initial discussions were held with Innovation Place and government regarding the possibility of the University’s assuming ownership of Innovation Place – Regina;
   - The Ministry of Advanced Education indicated that the University should continue pursuing the initiative and developing a business case. Innovation Place/CIC had dual property assessments conducted by DeLoitte and Colliers to determine the value of the land; and
   - The University investigated developments of Land Trusts in other jurisdictions to confirm the scope and requirements of a potential RFP for a consultant study to develop a business case and provide advice on governance, taxation, risk and legal issues pertaining to the development of a Land Trust. The RFP was successfully completed, with KPMG selected to provide a study of options and alternatives for a Land Trust or some other appropriate mechanism to manage the property.

2. **Undertaking an external review of program duplication:**
   - The University discussed the proposal with both government and the University of Saskatchewan;
   - The Ministries of Health and Advanced Education announced that they intend to proceed with a review of the two-provider nursing education model in the province; and
   - The Ministry of Advanced Education has not yet indicated if and when it will undertake a review of Engineering and Education.

3. **Ensuring that the credit transfer process is as seamless as possible for students:**
   - Registrar Jim D’arcy is co-chair of the Saskatchewan Transfer Credit and Learner Pathway Council (STCLPC), which had its inaugural meeting on December 1, 2016. STCLPC – which includes the Ministry of Advanced Education, the University of Saskatchewan, the Federated Colleges, Saskatchewan Polytechnic and a variety of other post-secondary institutions – is currently making an inventory of articulation opportunities. Based on this inventory, the group will then identify gaps
in transfer credit opportunities, promote the value of transfer credit, and formalize a Dual Credit Strategy for the province.

- With an eye to removing barriers for students within the University of Regina itself, Registrar D’arcy has created an Undergraduate Transfer Credit policy document and is currently getting feedback from the Faculties, departments, and Federated Colleges.

4. Streamline the academic approvals process:
   - This is on the agenda of the Council Committee on Academic Mission for its consideration.

5. Maximizing the University’s facilities and programs as a 12-month campus:
   - A report was provided to the Ministry of Advanced Education outlining the progress the University has made in recent years in maximizing its facilities and programs as a 12-month campus. It is of note that Spring/Summer semester enrolments have consistently increased from year-to-year, and Nursing and Engineering are effectively working as 12-month per year programs.
   - All Deans are considering ways in which they might extend program offerings to reflect shifts in student demand and make best use of University facilities and teaching resources during the summer months.

Although the provincial government did not specifically refer to “transformational change” in its recently released 2017-2018 budget, the drastic cut to post-secondary education in that budget made something very clear: the University will need to find ways to transform itself and its operations in order to continue serving our students. As part of this process, we will continue exploring the five proposals that were developed over the past year. If it is determined that any of these proposals are feasible and advantageous, they will be pursued through the appropriate approval processes.

REPORT ON THE PRESIDENT’S ACADEMIC RESEARCH

This report outlines developments in my academic research program throughout 2016-17.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH

- In the lead-up to the December completion of my term as President of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD), I continued my work for the organization. This included chairing teleconference meetings of the IASSIDD
Executive, corresponding with members of the organization, and helping plan the August 2016 World Congress, which took place in Melbourne, Australia.

- 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.

- At the end of December, I completed my four-year term as President of IASSIDD and transitioned into the role of Past President. In my new role, I continued participating in Executive meetings and providing input on IASSIDD’s operations as well as its planning of future conferences, including the 2017 Regional Congress set to take place in Bangkok, Thailand.

- I also continued work throughout the year on the final report of my “Voices of Inclusion” appreciative inquiry into inclusive education practices in Saskatchewan. I edited several drafts of the report before sending it to my co-researchers for final input. With that input now incorporated, the report is complete, pending formatting, layout and printing. I expect to complete this later this spring so the report can be distributed to school divisions and other interested groups in the province.

- In the summer, I met with representatives of the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living to advise them on ways in which they might promote and advocate for inclusive education in Saskatchewan schools. In early fall, I also met with representatives of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education to provide input into a position statement they are creating to guide and promote inclusive education in Saskatchewan schools.

- To help bring these two groups together with school division administrators for meaningful consultation about inclusive education in Saskatchewan schools, in January I developed and delivered an inclusive education workshop. The purpose of the workshop was three-fold: it helped the Ministry refine its position paper to guide inclusive education in the province; it allowed school division administrators to discuss the state of inclusion in their schools; and it helped SACL determine where more work needs to be done with schools.

- Other activities throughout the year in my research area of inclusive education included agreeing to serve on the editorial board of the *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, doing an assessment of the doctoral dissertation of a student in Australia, and assessing the application for promotion of a professor at an Atlantic Canadian university.

**PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION RESEARCH**

- For the past year, I have been participating in a multi-institutional study of program prioritization at Canadian universities. Throughout the summer, I
analyzed material related to my assigned university, and in October I met with my colleagues. At that time, I received feedback on the case study I had prepared, provided input on my colleagues’ work, and participated in discussions on how we would prepare our final report and present our findings.

- In recent months, I have revised my case study, and when my colleagues have completed theirs, we will begin developing the final report. I also provided input into a presentation that will be delivered by members of the research team at upcoming meetings of the Canadian Association of University Business Officers.

**ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITY**

- Throughout the year, I delivered a number of keynote presentations and participated in panel discussions on areas of my academic and professional interest. 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;
  - Delivering keynote addresses at Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Calgary on the subject of women and leadership;
  - Speaking about women and leadership to the Regina organization Amakon: The Women Forum;
  - Speaking about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to a Kinesiology class and as part of the Faculty of Science “Science Pub” presentation;
  - Participating in a presidential round table discussion at the “Maamwizing” Indigenization conference held at Laurentian University;
  - Presenting on inclusive education for staff members of the Prairie Valley School Division;
  - Participating in roundtable discussions on collective bargaining and building effective leadership teams at a Universities Canada session for university presidents;
  - Leading a Universities Canada panel discussion on removing barriers to inclusion;
  - Providing opening remarks at a symposium on FASD; and
  - Participating in two panel discussions on women and leadership at a summit for women in academic medicine.

**PUBLICATIONS**

- I continued working on publications throughout the year. This work included:
- Collaborating with President Stoicheff of the University of Saskatchewan to on a policy brief about Indigenization that was published by the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy;
- Writing an article on women and leadership that appeared in *Policy Magazine*;
- Writing several opinion/editorial pieces on various subjects for the *Regina Leader-Post* and *Saskatoon StarPhoenix*;
- Writing an article on curricular integrity that was published by the Association of Commonwealth Universities; and
- Working with colleagues to submit an article on our “Voices of Inclusion” research to the journal *Disability and Rehabilitation*. We are awaiting word on whether or not the article has been accepted for publication.