

## President's Report to the Board

For the period from Nov. 29, 2018 – Feb. 27, 2019

*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 and reconciliation, I would like to begin this report by acknowledging that the University is situated on Treaty 4 territory, with a presence in Treaty 6. This is the ancestral territory of the Cree, Saulteaux, Dakota, Lakota and Nakoda people, and the traditional homeland of the Métis – something that has been an important part of our history, and will be equally significant for our future.

This report summarizes progress over the past three months on the six key areas of focus that the Board and I have selected for the 2018-19 academic year. These areas of focus have been specifically identified to align with the University's strategic plan, *peyak aski kikawinaw*, with its three priorities and two overarching themes: student success; research impact; commitment to communities; sustainability; and Indigenization.

As in the past, the report also includes updates on my academic research, University events and accomplishments, initiatives to enhance the student experience, and other matters that may be of interest to the Board.

---

### **Objective: Ensure that the University's centralized assessment and exam accommodation facility is on track to be operational for the fall 2019 semester**

Work continued to develop the Central Testing Facility, which is being created to serve the growing number of students on campus who have accommodation needs or require make-up examinations:

- While construction continues in its former space, the Bookstore is currently operating from three different locations on campus, with all book orders being done online. Construction activity was slowed down during the final exam period in December to minimize noise for students, but the demolition of the former Bookstore space is now nearly complete. The project is expected to resume at full speed once several different work packages are completed and required materials are delivered. The construction/renovation work is still expected to be complete by September.
- Once construction is complete, the Bookstore will move back into the renovated space. It may take until the second half of the fall semester until the Central Testing Facility is fully operational and being used for exam accommodations

because new staff need to be hired and trained, and special equipment must be purchased and installed.

- The Central Testing Centre and Bookstore Construction Committee, composed of representatives from relevant units across campus and chaired by the Associate Vice-President (Academic), met several times during the reporting period to ensure strong campus communication and coordination and to address any issues that might arise with the construction of the facility.
- With the support of External Relations, the University community was regularly updated about the construction activity and the affected services. Through to late January, University-wide communication focused on ensuring that students, faculty and staff knew how to order textbooks and where to pick up their online book orders. A new section was created on the Associate Vice-President (Academic) website for this project, where all emails were posted for easy review. Additionally, the Bookstore's website was regularly updated and promoted as the go-to location for current information.

**Objective: Implement two key short-term aspects of the recently developed revenue-generation strategy and increase year-over-year revenue in those areas by 3% and 15%, respectively**

Work to enhance revenue generation continued in the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) and Hospitality Services:

- Based on nine-month forecasts, CCE anticipates that the unit is on track to exceed its target of a 3% net revenue increase. Originally budgeted to have a surplus of \$12.6 million, CCE is on target to have net revenue of \$15.9 million, which is 26% above budget.
- Key factors in this success are lower administrative costs in most areas, on-target revenue in two programming areas, and increased revenue in three others:
  - The Lifelong Learning Centre forecasts a small loss due to lower-than-anticipated Winter 2019 enrolments together with fewer grants and donations (due to the declining stock market), but also fewer expenses;
  - As noted in the last report, the Conservatory had higher Fall 2018 enrolments than originally forecast, but also more teaching expenses. It forecasts a slight improvement over budget;
  - Flexible Learning had strong enrolments in Fall 2018 classes and again in the Winter 2019 term (both in evening/weekend classes and in online ones). Enrolment numbers increased compared to budget forecasts in all areas, especially in the number of international students. As a result, net revenues are forecast to be 16% ahead of target, with transfers of revenue-sharing to the faculties anticipated to be 10% above budget target;

- English as a Second Language (ESL) also had increased Fall 2018 and Winter 2019 enrolments in the regular program, approximately 13% above budget forecasts. In addition, enrolments have been strong from the federal LINC contract, generating net revenue of \$147,000. As a result, ESL anticipates that it will have net revenues 47% higher than originally budgeted; and
- Enrolments in the credit certificates in Career and Professional Development were approximately 30% above budget targets for Fall 2018, with all of those extra enrolments being international students. This trend continued in the Winter 2019 term, driven by international student enrolments, high school accelerated students, and the Gabriel Dumont Institute numbers noted below. As noted in the last report, these students come with some challenges and extra expenses (extra sections of classes, for example), but overall, Career and Professional Development expects net revenues for the year to be 75% above budget targets.
- With a contract now signed with the Gabriel Dumont Institute for CCE to offer the Certificate of Liberal Arts in Métis communities, students have now been accepted, and classes began on February 1 for the Winter 2019 term.
- CCE's Flexible Learning Division has also started exploring the possibility of doing revenue-creating contracts for the creation of online support for coursework outside of the University, as well as in support of some specific internal University initiatives. The division has had some initial discussions on how it can use its expertise on the creation of online learning to support new opportunities, and is working on a business case to ensure it has the sufficient human resources (or can get those resources) to do this in an efficient manner.
- Hospitality Services continued working toward generating a 15% increase in revenue over 2017-18. This included:
  - Making preparations for the launch of an Expedia room booking option, which is targeted for March to promote and facilitate non-student stays in residence facilities. In addition, the new Hospitality Services website is slated to go live in April to help make off-campus groups more aware of and better able to access the University's facilities; and
  - Working with the Centre for Management Development to develop a space usage report. Based on the results, the Centre for Management Development is now drafting a policy to help Hospitality Services make the best possible use of available space and facilities.
- As it stands, non-student accommodation revenues are projected to be approximately \$100,000 lower than originally anticipated. Two primary factors have contributed to this. For one thing, the College West residence was not available for Congress, reducing the number of Congress attendees who could stay on campus at any given time. For another, Congress took place over a more

condensed timeframe than originally anticipated, meaning there was a high demand for rooms for 5-7 days rather than 8-10 days.

- As at December 2018, Chartwells reported \$1.2 million in revenues from catering. The University will be down about \$50,000 in commission from the original projections taking Congress into account, but still an all-time high, and up \$50,000 in commission from last year.
- Overall, Hospitality Services is on target to increase revenue by 15%. A final assessment will be available for the next report.

### **Objective: Complete a one-year review of the University's funding grants and contracts related to Post-Traumatic Stress Injury research**

Ensuring that the RCMP Longitudinal PTSI study remains on track and a model for other projects remained a priority:

- As noted in the last report, key recommendations from the “lessons learned” report that applied to the current RCMP project have been implemented. These included: improving project status reporting; enhancing two-way communication between the project team and sponsor; enhancing two-way communication between the project team and the University Executive Team (i.e. bi-weekly written and verbal reporting); and hiring a project director and a business analyst with significant IT project experience.
- A multi-unit team including the project team, the Office of Vice-President (Research), Financial Services, External Relations, the Research Office, Human Resources and Facilities Management has been ensuring that the remaining recommendations are being applied as process improvements to the projects arising from the CIPSRT funding announced in the Federal Budget 2018.

### **Objective: Complete a review of the University's undergraduate research culture and develop a strategy to enhance and promote research opportunities for these students**

Work continued toward this objective designed to enhance the educational experience of undergraduate students:

- As noted in the last report, the work plan to review the undergraduate research culture was finalized, and the first and second components – examining best practices both in Canada and across North America – have been completed. Since then, the examination of current practices at the University of Regina itself has continued, and the final report is now being developed. It will include recommendations on how the University might advance undergraduate research and inquiry.

- In advance of the final report and its recommendations, a proposal for a pilot undergraduate research fellowship program has been drafted for consideration by the Associate Deans (Research).
- In support of this work, External Relations continued promoting undergraduate students' research both on campus and beyond to demonstrate its far-reaching impact and importance. This included the work of undergraduate psychology students Calum Neill and Janelle Gerard, who co-authored a peer-reviewed article with Dr. Katherine Arbuthnott in *The Journal for Positive Psychology*. The article demonstrated that spending just five minutes in nature can significantly improve a person's emotional well-being.
- External Relations promoted the research on the University's Facebook page, Twitter feed, and website. This led to local appearances by the researchers on both Global News and CTV Morning. The research was also picked up by *PsyPost* (a psychology and neuroscience news website), *Bustle* (a digital media group aimed at reaching millennial women), *Travel and Leisure*, Fox News, and the *LifeHacker* website. The research also received attention from Sheldon Kennedy, who tweeted it to his 17,000 followers, and Martha Stewart, who tweeted it to her more than 482,000 Twitter followers.

**Objective: Create an inventory of the University's community outreach projects in Regina, identify gaps, and develop a plan to engage different organizations in community-based programming**

This work remained a priority over the reporting period as the University looks to enhance its involvement in community-based programs and increase its social impact:

- In January, alumnus Craig Perrault was hired as Director of Alumni and Community Engagement. While he has overall responsibility for providing direction and oversight on Alumni Relations matters, his primary focus once an Associate Director of Alumni Relations is hired will be on the University's Community Engagement strategy and initiatives.
- In the meantime, he has completed the request for proposal documentation that will be used to find an external vendor to conduct a social impact assessment. A survey to collect data and create an inventory of the University's existing community outreach projects and employees' volunteer activities in the community will be launched in March. This inventory will serve as the basis for the selected external vendor to assess the social impact that the University, as a whole, is making on our local community. In addition, the inventory coupled with the work of the vendor will identify other areas of opportunity where greater involvement by the University could have a significant impact on our community.
- During the reporting period, the Chili for Children organization provided a good example of how the University can enhance its social impact in the community. Chili for Children was presented in January with the President's Community

Award to recognize the organization's four decades providing nourishing meals to schoolchildren in Regina's inner city. In conjunction with the award presentation, the University Executive Team served lunch with the Chili for Children's staff and volunteers at Albert Community School, and the University donated a week's worth of school lunches to the program. The University is now determining how it might support Chili for Children over the long term with more regularized donations through our food services.

**Objective: Develop a strategy that results in a 20% year-over-year increase in the University's annual giving total**

Increasing annual giving and other donor support for the University remained a priority:

- External Relations has undertaken a strategy throughout the year to engage a broader base of donors than in previous years, and is on pace to exceed the target of increasing the University's Annual Giving by 20% over 2017-18.
- This strategy has involved focusing on alumni, faculty, staff and the leadership of the University in our appeal campaigns. Major initiatives have included the Fall Appeal, a social media campaign related to the University's charitable priorities, and the Spring Appeal. New for 2018-2019 was the reinvigoration of the University's Family Giving Appeal for faculty and staff, which was last undertaken in 2012, and increasing engagement with alumni as well as the Faculties and other units on campus to enhance the University's culture of philanthropy.
- Through these efforts, as of January 31 the University had raised \$1.7 million in Annual Giving in 2018-19, up 25% compared to the same time last year.

# REPORT ON THE PRESIDENT'S ACADEMIC RESEARCH

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

---

## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH

- My work for the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD) continued throughout the reporting period. I participated in several meetings by teleconference, including meetings of the Governance Committee, which I chair as the organization prepares for a set of elections to take place at the August 2019 World Congress and explores partnerships with other organizations.
- I also attended the annual in-person meeting of the IASSIDD Executive in early January, at which planning took place for the 2019 and 2022 World Congresses as well as upcoming Regional Congresses.

## ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- During the reporting period, I spoke to approximately a dozen groups on a variety of topics, including the annual State of the University Address to the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce. In addition, I began planning some presentations that I will deliver in the coming months. These include:
  - A speech in Ottawa to the Heads of Mission of the Southern African Development Corporation; and
  - A presentation on women's leadership to the Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada.

## PUBLICATIONS

- The final report on program prioritization at Canadian universities – on which I worked with researchers from several other institutions over the past several years – has now been published. It appeared in the January 2019 issue of the journal *Higher Education Policy*.

## OTHER ACTIVITY

- I provided expert witness material for a legal case related to disability and medical assistance in dying.
- February, I was presented with a 2019 Indspire award in the Education category, in part to recognize my family literacy research in Atlantic Canadian Mi'kmaq communities.

## 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

- The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research introduced its two new Associate Deans, both of whom have been at the University since the mid-2000s:
  - Dr. Lisa Watson of the Faculty of Business Administration, who will work with a wide variety of researchers in her role as Associate Dean (Strategic); and
  - Dr. Fanhua (Bill) Zeng, Program Chair of Petroleum Systems Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, who is Associate Dean (Graduate Studies).
- Dr. Zeng was also one of several members of the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science to receive Mitacs research funding.
- Researchers in a wide variety of areas received project funding from different sources during the reporting period. Many of these have been outlined in a separate research report that is part of the Board material.
- Faculty of Business Administration professor Dr. Gordon Pennycook had an article published in the *New York Times* on the subject of “fake news.” The article is based on research he is doing in partnership with a professor at MIT. He was also featured on PBS New Hour.
- Senior Advisor on Government Relations Dale Eisler, who is also an alumnus and a Senior Policy Fellow at the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, wrote an historical novel called *Anton* several years ago. The novel has now been made into a movie to be released later this year. The movie has been named the 57th most-anticipated foreign film of 2019.
- The University is developing a management development program entitled UR Managing that will enhance the skills of out-of-scope, APT and CUPE managers and supervisors.
- As of mid-February, nearly 500 staff and 200 students had completed the updated UR Respect training that was launched in late October, participated in a one-hour follow-up education session, and are now UR Respect Certified.

## STUDENT AND ALUMNI SUCCESS

- Work continued throughout the reporting period to enhance the student experience on campus. Here are some of the many examples of what has taken place:
  - The Registrar's Office has restructured its website as well as some of its processes to be more student-friendly, and is working with Enrolment Services to amalgamate front-line services;
  - The Visual Schedule Builder, implemented this year by the Registrar's Office, has improved the student registration experience by streamlining the planning of a course schedule. Students can now select the courses they need, add them to a personalized list, and then see a schedule of all potential schedule combinations before registering;
  - Beginning in February, a new system is being phased in whereby Faculty Advisors can assess a student's planned academic program in real time, and students can more easily track their progress toward program completion;
  - The Academic Recovery and Arts Transition Programs have been redesigned so that participating students take ACAD 100, a course on basic reading, writing and organizational skills, prior to taking ENGL 100. ENGL 100 can be a difficult course for many students, particularly international students, and it is anticipated that ACAD 100 will help at-risk students better prepare for it and the other coursework to follow in their programs;
  - Total enrolment in the UR Guarantee program is more than 2,100 students this year. As part of the program, students have been participating in volunteer events such as Random Acts of Kindness and Relay for Life;
  - The Faculty of Arts Work Experience Internship Program is now being coordinated through the Community Research Unit, which brings interested students into contact with community organizations who require research support. A recent example is The Regina intersectoral Partnership (TRiP), an organization who requested assistance in calculating a rate of return on their efforts to keep young Indigenous students out of the criminal justice system. Partnerships like this provide important employment experience for students while building capacity for community groups;
  - In past terms, the Faculty of Science has partnered with the Global Learning Centre to provide drop-in one-on-one tutoring in Mathematics and Statistics courses – highly subscribed courses that can pose challenges for many students. Building on the success of this initiative, the Faculty has extended its Global Learning Centre tutoring to include Chemistry as well as Biochemistry 220. Tutoring takes place during weekdays, in the evenings, and on weekends;
  - UR International restructured its orientation program for Winter 2019, with a conference-style approach undertaken to connect better with students and

allow for more in-depth sessions on academic life. Additionally, the unit has implemented weekly immigration sessions for students, and is collaborating with the University of Regina Students' Union to create an emergency financial grant for students in need;

- UR International is also piloting a postdoctoral mentorship program in collaboration with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research. The program allows Master's and PhD students to be mentored by post-doctoral students;
- An agreement was signed with the British Columbia Institute of Technology's National Advanced Placement and Prior Learning Program. This will facilitate the participation of current and former members of the Canadian Armed Forces in Levene Graduate School of Business programs;
- An agreement is now in place whereby Levene School students may take Harvard Business School online courses as partial fulfilment of their University of Regina Master of Business Administration program. The University is one of only three institutions in Canada to have such a partnership;
- The Levene School is also partnering with the Canadian Association of Management Consultants (CMC-Canada) to facilitate Certified Management Consultant (CMC) designation for Levene students;
- An interdisciplinary doctoral program has been created in Media and Artistic Research in the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance. This program aligns with several other Indigenization initiatives already underway in the Faculty;
- This past year, as part of the University of Regina Open Textbook Program, the University of Regina Press partnered with the Dr. John Archer Library to produce an updated, open-access version of *nēhiyawēwin: paskwāwi-pīkiskwēwin (Cree: Language of the Plains)*, by Cree expert and teacher Jean Okimâsis. The textbook, workbook and audiobook combo has already been accessed more than 10,000 times, and the audio portion is now available for download worldwide through Apple, Google, and several other podcast platforms. The project, which was designed in part to reduce costs for students, was funded by a grant from the Government of Saskatchewan;
- Valerie Sluth, founder and CEO of Praxis Consulting, was named to a two-year term as RBC Woman Executive in Residence in the Paul J. Hill and Kenneth Levene Schools of Business. In this role she will mentor and encourage aspiring women entrepreneurs in the schools and strengthen extracurricular programming in the area of entrepreneurship; and
- Alumnus Bradyn Parisian was named the inaugural Rawlinson Executive in Residence in Indigenous Entrepreneurship with the Hill and Levene Schools of Business. In this role, he will mentor and develop initiatives for Indigenous students interested in entrepreneurship as a career path.

- Overall enrolment for the Winter 2019 as of the end of the fourth week of classes was up 4.2% compared to the same time last year, and the number of credit hours being taught was also up more than 4%. Enrolment is stable at Luther College, and is up at the University proper, Campion College, and First Nations University of Canada.
- Students had national and international success on a number of fronts in the last few months:
  - Biology graduate student Alejandra Castilla Bolanos, under the supervision of Dr. Josef Buttigieg, has discovered that certain types of amyloid beta can neutralize neuronal brain cell electrical activity. This groundbreaking research may help lead to a cure for Alzheimer's disease. A video highlighting this work was released on the University's social media channels in January and has been viewed more than 12,000 times;
  - A two-member team from the Hill School of Business consisting of Julia Haines and Robin Hamilton finished sixth out of 130 teams in the accounting division at Queen's University's 41<sup>st</sup> annual international Intercollegiate Business Competition in January;
  - The Hill School team competed against 11 other universities at the 2019 JDC West competition and finished third overall as school of the year. The team came first in several other categories, including human resources and charitable hours. The team was captained by Braedon McLeod and Melanie Lehrer;
  - Software Systems Engineering students Paul Hewitt, Taylor Petrychyn and Maksym Zabynny placed first in the programming category at the Western Engineering Design Competition, and two other students in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, Mohanned Mohamedali and Devjiyoti Nath, received the International Energy Agency's Climate Change Travel Scholarship;
  - Three members of the Cougar men's hockey team – Dawson MacAuley, Tristan Frei and Tyler King – were named to the Canadian team that will compete at the March 2019 World Universiade in Krasnoyarsk, Russia; and
  - Cougar track and field athlete and Education student Greg Hetterley won the 1000-metre race at Boston University's David Hemery Valentine Invitational track meet, beating an international field of nearly 100 competitors.
- Some alumni also had noteworthy accomplishments during the reporting period:
  - Faculty of Media, Art and Performance alumnus Dakota McFadzean had two well-received satirical cartoons published in *The New Yorker* magazine;
  - Social Work alumna Carol LaFayette-Boyd was named 2018 female athlete of the year by World Masters Athletics;

- Alumnus the Honourable Ralph Goodale, federal Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, presented a public lecture on national security at the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy; and
- Alumnus Doug Burnett was named President and CEO of SaskTel.
- An alumni engagement event was held in late January in Saskatoon at the Remai Modern Art Gallery, and one was held in early February in Regina in conjunction with Cougar basketball games. At the Regina event, more than \$1,000 was raised in support of the Crystal Heisler McGregor Memorial Award.

## **CAMPUS EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- In mid-December, the University reaffirmed its commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by releasing its *Statement of Commitment in Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action*. The document is the result of approximately two years of work done by a working group that included faculty members and staff from across the University. The *Statement of Commitment* commits the University to five key goals recognizing that every student, staff or faculty member should have the tools necessary for reconciliation and moving towards decolonization by being provided with:
  - Knowledge of treaties, specifically of Treaties 4 and 6;
  - A basic understanding of Canada's history with and the continuance of colonialism, including of the Indian Residential Schools and the Indian Act;
  - An awareness of Indigenous ways of knowing and how these relate to their program of study;
  - Knowledge of the key elements of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its Calls to Action, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and
  - An understanding of the role they can play in reconciliation based on the knowledge and skills they will have acquired at the University of Regina.
- In early January, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau selected the University of Regina as the site for a "town hall" meeting that attracted approximately 1,500 attendees and a great deal of national attention.
- In late January I delivered the fifth annual State of the University Address to the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce. This provided an opportunity to discuss how complex the University is, and the many ways it contributes to the province.

- Also in late January, I took the opportunity of the first University budget forum to provide a general campus update and answer any faculty, staff and student questions.
- In mid-February, an historic signing ceremony took place at which urban reserve status was granted to First Nations University of Canada for the advancement of education – the first such designation in Canada. The new reserve, called *atim kâ-mihkosit*, is a partnership with the Star Blanket Cree Nation.
- The University was named one of Saskatchewan’s 2019 Top Employers by the organizers of the Canada’s Top 100 Employers project at Mediacorp Canada Inc.