

Introduction

On June 30, 2018, my second five-year term as President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Regina will expire. At that time, I will have spent a decade in this role, making me one of the longer-serving university presidents in Canada. In today's post-secondary sector, it is becoming increasingly rare for university presidents to serve two terms, and it is even more rare for them to seek a third one.

I would like to say that I have given a great deal of thought and careful consideration to seeking a third term as President of the University of Regina, but the truth is, I have not done so – nor did I need to. I love this University, this city, and this province, and the thought of leaving here after only a decade is not something I have entertained at all.

I would like to think that I have helped have a positive impact on the University of Regina over the past eight years, and I believe that I have a great deal more to contribute. For that reason, I am formally asking the Board of Governors to contemplate granting me a third five-year term as President and Vice-Chancellor so that we may continue building on the progress we have made together as a University community.

To help the Board in its deliberations, I have prepared the following high-level summary of the progress the University has made under my leadership in the following key areas of priority:

- Enrolment;
- Financial Management;
- Strategic Planning;
- Research;
- Senior Leadership;
- Issues Management;
- Community Relationships;
- Indigenization;
- Internationalization; and
- Inclusive Campus.

Should the Board require additional or more specific information about any of these areas to help with its decision, I would be happy to provide it.

Enrolment

When I began my first term as President of the University of Regina in 2008, the Board made it clear that stabilizing student enrolment was of the utmost importance. The number of registered undergraduate and graduate students at the University and its Federated Colleges had declined over the previous three years, reaching a low of 11,664 students for the Fall 2008 semester, as the following table shows:

	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
Overall Enrolment	12,786	12,266	11,997	11,664

This three-year, 8.8% decline in enrolment from its Fall 2005 peak was affecting both the institution's reputation as well as its ability to fulfill its academic mission. With enrolment-based government funding predicated on a five-year rolling average, the University was entering a period in which its share of the provincial government's post-secondary funding envelope stood to be reduced significantly. Something had to be done quickly to stabilize and eventually begin growing student enrolment.

To help address this situation, a number of strategic initiatives were undertaken in the early part of my first term, and have continued them through my second term. Student recruitment activities outside the University's traditional provincial catchment areas were expanded, for example, with additional focus on Alberta and British Columbia as well as other target areas in Canada. International joint educational partnerships were pursued more vigorously through the restructured UR International department, and additional resources were allocated to graduate student support and undergraduate student awards to help with retention.

The Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing program was developed with Saskatchewan Polytechnic, expanding our program offerings and bringing new cohorts of students to the University each year. The University also designed and launched the one-of-a-kind UR Guarantee program, which now helps more than 1,700 students remain engaged with their studies and focused on preparing for careers after graduation.

The impact on student enrolment was both immediate and lasting, as the table below indicates:

	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
Overall Enrolment	11,664	11,886	12,267	12,887	13,115	13,586	13,902	14,360

The University has now experienced seven consecutive years of increased enrolments, including five consecutive years of record student numbers. As of Fall 2015, enrolment

was up 23.1% over Fall 2008. Graduate student enrolment was up 19.9% over that time, a good indication of the strength of the University's research enterprise. These increased enrolments have put the University in a better position than before in terms of the provincial post-secondary education funding envelope, restored pride and confidence in the institution, and provided thousands more students and graduates with the opportunities that a University of Regina education affords.

Financial Management

Although enrolment increases have somewhat eased the financial challenge that was beginning to face the University in 2008, financial management has been by no means an easy task over the past several years.

Despite continued advocacy with the provincial government, capital and sustaining capital funding have not been at the levels hoped for by the University, posing a challenge for an institution with both a growing student population and aging facilities. Through careful financial management, however, the University has continued to advance its capital program. The Kišik Towers residence and day care facility was completed on time and on budget**, for example, and key upgrades have been done to Darke Hall in an important step for the College Avenue Campus renewal. Maintenance and repair of other campus facilities, although challenging in light of funding constraints, have been carefully prioritized so as to best preserve and enhance infrastructure that is essential to the fulfilment of the University's academic mission.

Over the past several years, the provincial government has been unable to provide an operating grant increase that fully accounts for the University's increasing operational expenses, particularly in the area of labour costs. The impact of this funding shortfall has been lessened, however, by careful budgeting as well as attention to finding efficiencies where possible through initiatives like the print optimization program, attrition and early retirements. The University has been able to balance its budget every year with minimal impact to faculty, staff and students, while still making strategic program investments for the future.

The University's ability to put forward and adhere to 21 consecutive balanced budgets in challenging financial times is a testament to the resiliency, creativity and commitment of our campus community. Living within our means has placed the institution in a financial position that is the envy of many universities across Canada, if not North America.

Strategic Planning

My first term as President began at an opportune time because the University's existing strategic plan – *Building on Progress: The Plan for 2004-2009* – was due for renewal. Renewing the plan would provide the institution with a shared vision and purpose at a time of considerable change, so one of the first orders of business in year one was to begin the process of developing a new plan.

This process was a consultative and inclusive one that engaged the entire campus – students, faculty, staff, alumni, the Board of Governors and Senate – as well as key stakeholders in the larger community. Only six months after the process began, the result was *Our Work, Our People, Our Communities* – a five-year plan designed to guide the University from 2009-2014.

The plan was unanimously recommended to the Board by the University's academic governing bodies, and provided a framework within which all faculty and staff could see themselves and their contribution to the institution's three-part academic mission of teaching, research, and service to community. Over the course of its five-year life span, *mâmahowkamâtowin* led to many accomplishments for the University, many of which are outlined here: <http://www.uregina.ca/strategic-plan/2009-14-strategic-plan/accomplishments.html>.

By 2014, it was time to develop a new plan that built upon the strengths of *mâmahowkamâtowin* while focusing attention on some new priorities that were identified by the community. The consultative process which had given a sense of unity and shared purpose to the University during the development of *mâmahowkamâtowin* served as the model for creating the new plan. A similar approach was taken in which a facilitation team carefully considered and incorporated the input of the extended University community as well as external parties.

The resulting plan, entitled *peyak aski kikawinaw: Together We Are Stronger*, received overwhelming support from the University community and was formally launched in January 2015. Emphasizing sustainability and Indigenization more strongly than its predecessor did, this plan is taking the University further than ever before in the direction the institution's founders envisioned amid the optimism of the mid-1970s when the autonomous University of Regina came into existence.

Faculty and staff awareness of and engagement with the new plan is very high, and a great deal of progress has been made in the past year. Strategic plans for Indigenization and sustainability have been developed and approved, student success is at the forefront of the University's focus, and research impact and community partnerships continue to grow.

Earlier this year, I received the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District VIII 2016 Leadership Award – an award that recognizes someone who has, among other things, helped create a vision for an educational institution and inspired others to follow that vision. This award really honours the entire University of Regina community, because it is a testament to the impact strategic planning has had on our University. Entering its fifth decade of existence as an independent institution, the University of Regina has a clearer identity and more confidence than ever before – something that almost certainly relates to the collective development and continuing implementation of its most recent strategic plans.

Research

The University's research enterprise was an area that faced significant challenges at the beginning of my first term. The first issue was around leadership, since the Vice-President (Research) position had recently been vacated, and over the next few years, a series of interim appointments and an abbreviated permanent appointment followed. This did not foster continuity in leadership, and did not allow the University to take full advantage of the strategic plan for research that had been developed.

In recent years, the issue of research leadership has been addressed. A successful search concluded with the appointment of Dr. David Malloy as Vice-President (Research), and the position of Associate Vice-President (Academic and Research) was created to better integrate research administration with that of other academic areas. As a result, the research enterprise at the University has been rejuvenated, with a key initiative being the identification and promotion of five key cluster areas where the University is making a particular research impact.

Another challenge that has been addressed successfully was the issue of the controls and processes that are in place to govern the administration of research. Quite simply, the University's research enterprise had outgrown the controls that were in place. The University welcomed the Provincial Auditor's assessment of both research and procurement processes, and has worked diligently to implement the resulting recommendations. The provincial government's Public Accounts Committee has been satisfied with the progress that has been made in these areas.

Going forward, the University's research enterprise is in a strong position. It has strong and stable leadership, a focus on developing and promoting emerging areas of expertise, and adequate controls in place to allow our faculty members and graduate students to do what they do best – conduct world-class research that makes a difference in our communities.

Senior Leadership

The research area was not the only part of the University's leadership that had seen instability at the beginning of my first term. Some turnover at the executive level is normal and to be expected in any organization, but the University had experienced an unnatural degree of leadership turnover just prior to my arrival – something that held over in the early part of my term.

This was addressed in part through the appointment of Dr. Thomas Chase as Provost and Vice-President (Academic) during my first term, and as mentioned earlier, the appointment of Dr. Malloy as Vice-President (Research). In addition, Dr. Dena McMartin's appointment to the newly created position of Associate Vice-President (Academic and Research) has inspired confidence among faculty members. Most recently, Glenys Sylvestre filled a vacancy in the key position of University Secretary and Executive Director, University Governance. In a short period of time, Ms.

Sylvestre's expertise in governance matters and her holistic understanding of the academic environment of the University have already proven to be tremendous assets to an already strong and stable executive team.

The University Leadership Team, and in particular the complement of deans, has also experienced a great deal of change over the past eight years – something that is to be expected with term decanal appointments. In each case – Nursing, Business Administration, Engineering, Social Work, Fine Arts (now Media, Art and Performance), Graduate Studies and Research, Education, and Kinesiology and Health Studies – superb candidates have filled the decanal positions. With a new University Librarian recently named, and with the imminent completion of the current search for a Dean of Science, I am confident that the University's academic leadership will be at its most stable and high-functioning state in the past decade.

Change of leadership is inevitable in any organization, and will of course take place at the University of Regina in the future. At the present time, however, I am certain that our carefully built University Leadership Team instils confidence in our faculty, staff and students, and has put the institution in a strong position for the next five years and beyond.

Issues Management

“Bad news” has always travelled fast, but that is especially true in a world where the Internet and in particular social media have become a preferred means for people to access information on a daily – and even minute-by-minute – basis. For that reason, issues management is another area that has both required and received considerable attention over the past several years, with positive results.

In early 2010 – during my first full academic year as President – the funding crisis at First Nations University of Canada was an issue that threatened the very existence of FNUniv and stood to damage the reputation of the University of Regina as a whole. In public and behind the scenes, the University of Regina remained a strong supporter of FNUniv. University employees worked with both the federal and provincial governments to come to an acceptable agreement that would restore FNUniv's funding, ensure that appropriate financial and governance controls were in place, and at the same time preserve and promote the level of autonomy that the institution both seeks and requires in order to fulfill its academic mission.

Six years and two administrative service agreements later, FNUniv is in a far stronger position than before. Enrolments have recovered and in fact increased over the past few academic years. While it still faces challenges, as it enters the 40th year of its existence FNUniv has become an even more integral part of the University of Regina, and stands as a testament to the strength and value of our partnerships with the Federated Colleges.

2013 was a year that posed serious challenges due to issues whose genesis predated my tenure as President, but which nonetheless needed to be addressed decisively for the sake of the University's reputation. Early in that year, for example, it became public that IPAC-CO2 had potentially breached University of Regina policy related to conflict of interest and the procurement goods and services. In the following months, there was a great deal of public scrutiny of the University's justified decision to apply an unspent donation to a deficit in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science. On the heels of that, the University learned that unauthorized overtime payments had been taking place for several years in the Faculty of Education, and questions were raised in University Council about financial transparency.

Individually, each of these inherited issues posed serious public relations challenges to the University and its reputation, but their real threat to the institution came through their combined impact. They helped prompt a movement among members of University Council to consider a non-confidence vote in the leadership of the University. Although Council narrowly dismissed the idea of a non-confidence vote, the University suffered considerable reputational damage both provincially and nationally.

Out of these challenges, however, the University has grown in many ways. As noted above, more stringent financial and conflict-of-interest controls are now in place, and are being followed and enforced to the satisfaction of the Provincial Auditor. It is a priority for the University's leadership to listen even more carefully than before to the concerns of faculty members, taking the "pulse" of the campus community often and taking early action if required.

The University administration has continued worked closely with Council over the past two years, and Council's new committees on Academic Mission and Budget are providing constructive advice to help inform the University's decision making processes. To address the issue of transparency, my expenses and those of the executive team are posted regularly online, and an extra effort has been made to ensure that everyone on campus is aware of the process by which the annual budget is created.

In addition, two strong hirings – Kim McKechny as Director of Communications and Dale Eisler as Senior Advisor of Government Relations – have enhanced the University's ability to address such challenges, and have allowed the institution to be more proactive than before in its issues management.

Community Relationships

A university should never be seen as an "ivory tower" that is not closely associated with those it serves, so when I assumed the role of President it was an immediate priority to enhance the University's connection with the local and provincial communities. Within the first two months of my term, approximately 20 public events were organized by the University and themed around the idea that we are "Greater Together with the Community." Those events, which both took the University into the larger community

and brought members of the public to campus, were a touchstone for what has transpired since.

Following on the momentum generated by those first events, members of the University have travelled regularly throughout the province to demonstrate and promote the fact that although our name is the University of Regina, we are a provincial university making an impact in communities all across Saskatchewan. In both the spring and fall, the University now undertakes the “Community Connections” tour, visiting both large and small communities in order to meet with civic officials, educational institutions, alumni, and representatives from business and industry. We have travelled as far south as Estevan and as far north as Uranium City to promote our University, and to show that we are an institution invested in and accountable to all of Saskatchewan. Recent memoranda of understanding with the Town of Nipawin and the City of Swift Current have opened the door to new teaching, research and employment partnerships, and going forward, the University will be working to strengthen ties with Aboriginal communities.

Also throughout my time as President the University has worked to strengthen connections with individuals as well as businesses in the Regina area. The annual holiday reception at the President’s reception has been one way to do so, and beginning in 2015, the State of the University Address has provided an annual means of informing the business community about the University and its impact. With the number of Co-op student placements growing each year, and corporate support for the University reaching new levels, these efforts are making a difference for our students and our researchers.

Of particular note is the College Avenue Campus Renewal Project. Over the past five years, the University has worked diligently to plan and find the resources to undertake its highest-priority capital project. Public and corporate support has been strong, and the University is nearing its fundraising goal. Important steps have been taken to begin the revitalization process from a construction perspective, and efforts continue to garner the necessary support from the City of Regina and the Government of Saskatchewan to complete the project. This has not been a rapid process, but is a necessary one for the University’s continued outreach into the community, and one that will continue in the coming months and years.

In the past, the University’s relationship with its alumni community had not been as strong as it could have been, so efforts have been undertaken in recent years to enhance that relationship which is so important from advocacy and donor perspectives. The Alumni Relations unit has been undergoing a restructuring with the intent of building its capacity to make it a more effective network to support – and garner the support of – our alumni. This stands to benefit the University a great deal in the years to come.

It is also important to note the growing role the University has played in recent years in the global community, particularly in the area of promoting international education and partnerships for the benefit of students. In 2011, my role as Chair of the Canadian Bureau for International Education helped me advocate nationally for Libyan students

whose scholarship funding had been disrupted by unrest in that country. From 2012-2014, the University also advocated publicly for two Nigerian students who were being deported for having worked illegally in Canada to help support their education.

This year, the University helped raise funds for a Syrian refugee to undertake English as a Second Language studies at the University, and matched student-raised funds to help bring other refugee students here to study. I was also recognized in late 2015 at the Congress of the Americas on International Education with an award for promoting women's leadership in academia.

Currently, I serve as Chair of Universities Canada's Standing Advisory Committee on International Relations. In this role, I will continue to promote international education for students at the University of Regina and across Canada, and help build the University's reputation as a destination for students from around the world who wish to receive a high-quality international education.

Indigenization

While I was at the University of Prince Edward Island, I led a study of the factors affecting the retention of Aboriginal students in Atlantic Canadian universities. With the results of this study fresh in my mind, when I became President of the University of Regina I vowed that under my leadership, the University would do its utmost to ensure that Aboriginal people would have the best possible access to a culturally relevant education at our University.

This began with the 2009-2014 strategic plan, whose Cree title, *mâmahowkamâtowin*, means "co-operation; working together towards common goals." The plan made commitments to "address the needs of First Nations and Métis learners, and reflect their cultures across program areas and campus life," and "prepare all our students to live in a Saskatchewan where First Nations and Métis peoples achieve their rightful place in society and the economy."

The campus community embraced these commitments, and great strides have been made since. The Aboriginal Student Centre was core funded and expanded, the Indigenous Advisory Circle was established, and the Executive Lead – Indigenization position was created to provide recommendations and support as all faculties and units on campus work to incorporate Indigenous culture and knowledge into the University's curriculum and operations. Additional scholarships and bursaries for Aboriginal students have been created – often in conjunction with donors – and mentorship programs for Aboriginal students have been enhanced. Northern communities have also been a key part of the "Community Connections" tours.

With the development of the 2015-2020 strategic plan with its focus on Indigenization, this work is gaining even more momentum. The former North and South Residences have been named Paskwāw Tower and Wakpā Tower, respectively, and the newly

opened residence and day care facility has been named Kīšik Towers to reflect the fact that the University is situated on traditional Treaty Four and Treaty Six territories. The University is expanding its efforts to connect with Saskatchewan's First Nations, and faculties continue finding new ways to incorporate Indigenous content into coursework. First Nations University of Canada remains on a strong footing, and continues to play a crucial role in the University's efforts to offer a meaningful post-secondary education for a significant segment of the population that has historically been under-represented at university.

These efforts are making a difference. The number of Aboriginal students at the University of Regina has increased by 63% since 2010, and now constitutes close to 12% of the entire student population. Guided by our new strategic plan, the University is well on the way to fulfilling our vision to be the national leader in Aboriginal post-secondary education.

Internationalization

The 2009-2014 strategic plan made a commitment to raise the University of Regina's international profile and increase its global presence – something that is increasingly important for the institution in light of projections for a continuing decline in the number of Saskatchewan high school graduates. Over the past several years, the University has made tremendous progress in this area.

The consolidation of the University's international recruitment and partnership activities under the UR International area has been especially beneficial. It has allowed for enhanced recruitment activities in traditional catchment countries such as China, as well as in non-traditional catchment countries such as Nigerian and Saudi Arabia. As a result, the number of international students on campus has grown by 113% since 2009, boosting overall enrolment numbers and helping to make the University a “12-month campus” more than ever before. Students from more than 70 countries now study here, bringing global perspectives to our classrooms and helping domestic students receive an international education “in their own back yard.”

This enrolment growth has been helped by continuing efforts to develop educational and research agreements with institutions around the world. In recent years, the University has built partnerships in countries such as India and the Republic of South Korea, bringing the total number of active international agreements to nearly 150, involving 100 institutions in 27 countries. Through such partnerships, each year more than 200 domestic students take advantage of opportunities to study abroad, gaining new perspectives on the world that they bring back to their studies at the University of Regina.

In addition, these agreements provide opportunities for faculty to broaden the scope and international impact of their research. According to a study done by Research InfoSource in late 2014, for example, the University of Regina leads Canadian comprehensive

universities – and is second among all Canadian universities – in international research collaboration. This is a testament to the quality of our faculty members’ work, and to the growing international profile of an institution that is living up to the potential Dr. Lloyd Barber envisioned in the 1970s when the University of Regina was the first institution in Canada to build relationships with Chinese institutions.

Inclusive campus

A key tenet of the 2009-2014 strategic plan was to build a diverse University of Regina that “pays particular attention to the marginalized, the vulnerable, people with disabilities, and the disadvantaged.” I am proud of the progress that the University has made in this regard over the past several years.

In addition to the increased focus on services for Aboriginal, international, and refugee students as noted above, the University has made great strides in making a post-secondary education accessible to persons with disabilities. Services to students through the Centre for Student Accessibility have been enhanced, and the number of students accessing these services has doubled since 2009, now totalling approximately 500 students. This is a sure sign that the University has become a more welcoming, diverse, and accessible institution.

Of particular note are two programs for young adults with disabilities – Campus for All and the Astonished! Teaching and Learning Centre. Campus for All, which originated approximately a decade ago as a doctoral student’s project in the Faculty of Education, is now a core-funded inclusive post-secondary education program across all faculties. It enables students with intellectual disabilities to participate in University courses, be mentored by their peers, and gain work experience while earning a University of Regina leaving certificate. It has attracted international attention for its inclusive approach, including that of a delegation from a Japanese university who will be visiting the University of Regina this spring in order to assess how such a program might be implemented in that country.

The Astonished! Teaching and Learning Centre, a partnership with a not-for-profit community organization, provides academic, social, recreational and cultural opportunities for young adults with complex physical disabilities. It has allowed these students to participate actively in research with faculty members, and has opened the doors of the University to students who might otherwise not have had the opportunity to benefit from everything a post-secondary environment has to offer. With the signing of a new memorandum of understanding in 2015, Astonished! will continue to be a part of the campus community for the next several years, helping young adults with disabilities live active, fulfilling lives in the community and among their age-appropriate peers.

I often say that the quality of our education system should be measured by the education we provide to the most vulnerable people in our society. If providing meaningful, respectful and accessible educational opportunities to the vulnerable is indeed the true

measure of a university, the University of Regina is without question Canada's leading post-secondary institution. That is something of which all of us should be proud, and something I hope to build upon in the future.

Conclusion

From the moment I arrived at the University of Regina, I embraced every aspect of its wonderful motto, *As One Who Serves*. This motto – emphasizing service above self in the interest of the public good, and written in English rather than traditional Latin in order to convey the institution's accessibility – is an inspiring one that perfectly encapsulates both the history and the future of our University. Everything I have achieved as President has been done with the support of an amazing campus community, and has been done to look toward the future while honouring the tradition behind this inspiring motto.

Looking to the future, I would like to outline some of the many reasons why I am asking the Board to consider me for a third term as President. For one thing, I am more committed than ever both to the University and to the work that I do on its behalf. Simply put, the University of Regina is my life. I love this place, and I love my work.

I am also requesting consideration for a third term because I know that I have the energy to complete it. I continue to work long hours for the University, and in fact am energized by a schedule and workload that others might find overwhelming. I have never slowed down during my two terms as President, and my work ethic would not change in a third.

I would also like to serve a third term as President of the University of Regina because I love taking on new challenges. We have achieved a great deal together over the past eight years, but this work is not complete, and we cannot “rest on our laurels.” The 2015-2020 strategic plan is a challenge for all of us to do more, and to do better – and I want to lead by example as the University rises to this challenge.

As the strategic plan demonstrates, there remains a great deal to be done at our University. We must do all we can to retain and support our students through to graduation. We must pay increasing attention to their mental health. We must build stronger relationships with Saskatchewan's First Nations and increase Aboriginal participation in post-secondary education. We must find new ways to demonstrate and measure the impact of our research in the larger community. And we must be a model of environmental and financial sustainability for others in Saskatchewan and across Canada. These challenges will continue to inspire me in the years to come.

There will always be more students to educate, more discoveries to be made by our researchers, and more for us to contribute to our province and world. With a new strategic plan in place, we have a blueprint to guide us as we build on the momentum we have created in recent years – and I am as excited and energized about our shared

academic mission as I was the first time I set foot on the University of Regina campus eight years ago.

Should the Board grant my request to be considered for a third term, I will provide a comprehensive list of community representatives with whom the Board may wish to speak to gain other perspectives on my tenure as President and Vice-Chancellor.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vianne Timmons".

Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor

****Please note that this report was prepared before the University received notice that the Kišik Towers residence and day care project was over budget by approximately 2%. The report should have been adjusted accordingly prior to its distribution to the campus and larger communities for consideration. Please accept my apologies for this oversight and any confusion that may have arisen from it.**