University of Regina

President's Objectives
September 2021 - June 2022

CONTEXT

Over the past few months, I have devoted a great deal of effort to getting to know the University of Regina community through introductory meetings with individuals, Faculties, and units across the institution. At the same time, much initial outreach has taken place with all levels of government, Indigenous leadership, and other stakeholders.

These meetings have helped me learn about the University culture, understand many of the challenges and opportunities we face together, and understand people's broader perceptions of and aspirations for the University. For example, I am increasingly familiar with major areas of research, teaching innovation, and several pertinent issues including budgets, major projects, labour relations, the restoration of in-person University activities, and revenue generation.

Given that these matters will inform much of my normal day-to-day work, I don't view acclimatization to the University as a unique objective for the next year. Nor do I view ensuring a smooth transition, continuing effective stewardship, and working effectively with the leadership team as primary objectives on which I should report to the Board.

Rather, I want to ensure that my objectives to be reported on for the Board are related to key areas of focus for the University as a whole, as guided by the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, *kahkiyaw kiwâhkômâkaninawak: All Our Relations*. As approved by the Board, the following objectives – developed in concert with the University Executive Team and based on meetings I have had with other members of the University community – will factor into my individual reports and annual performance. The first objective is a stand-alone one related to the University's overall operations. The other five are each related to a pillar of the Strategic Plan.

In forming these objectives (some of which may be multi-year ones, but all of which have measurable activities for the coming year), I am operating under the assumption that we will be continuing in an environment of fiscal restraint precluding the likelihood of major new infrastructure – especially since the post-COVID new normal may see more permanent online interactions, teaching, and work, all requiring less physical space.

Objective 1: Bring activity on the University's campuses to a level near that of full pre-pandemic operations

- As the COVID-19 pandemic abates, it is imperative over the next year that the University safely resume operations at near-pre-pandemic levels in several areas, including in-person activities, enrolments, and finances. Measures of success over the year will include:
    - the return of the majority of in-person courses (recognizing that hybrid or online courses may make up a larger percentage of courses than before);
    - the resumption of public events on campus, including athletics events and public lectures;
    - a full return to research;

- refining existing international undergraduate and graduate recruitment, enrolment, and student success strategies, while developing new ones as appropriate;
- targeting a 10% overall year-over-year increase in the number of new international students (April 2022 compared to April 2021);
- ensuring that proposals for revenue generation and finding efficiencies are submitted, carefully considered, adjusted and approved as appropriate, and developed to include detailed business plans; and
- finalizing the priorities and launching the "quiet phase" (Phase 1) of a multi-year Comprehensive Fundraising Campaign that will support the University's operations in multiple areas.

Objective 2: Advance Truth and Reconciliation, Indigenization, and decolonization at the University (aligns with Strategic Plan pillar "Truth & Reconciliation")

- For the first time in its history, the University has an Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Engagement) – something which affords a tremendous opportunity to move the processes of Truth and Reconciliation and decolonization forward at the institution over the coming year and into the future. As the University works to advance these key processes, measurables for the year will be to:
    - take a full inventory of the institution's Indigenization and decolonization initiatives; and
    - develop an Indigenous Strategic Plan to address key gaps, with some being addressed in the near future, and others requiring a multi-year approach.

Objective 3: Implement a consultation process with the Board, University Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team, faculty, staff, students, and the wider community regarding the University's identity and reputation (aligns with Strategic Plan pillar "Impact & Identity")

- As the University approaches its 50th anniversary in 2024 in an increasingly competitive Canadian postsecondary landscape, it will be more important than ever to define and communicate the institution's identity and enhance its overall reputation. This will be a multi-year process, but over the coming year, key measures of success will be:

    - Including identity and reputation as topics of discussion at the fall Board retreat, annual Senior Leadership Retreat, and University Executive Team retreat;
    - Discussing the University's identity in my meetings with key internal and external stakeholders, donors, and community and business leaders;
    - Launching Phase 1 (all landing pages) of the website re-design by December 31, 2021, ensuring that the institution is more competitive in the market with a mobile-friendly, search engine optimized (SEO) website aimed at prospective students;
    - Developing a strategy to capture and use enhanced analytics from the new website to better inform marketing and recruitment decisions and activities; and
    - Monitoring national rankings and exploring how the University might enhance its performance in areas that may need attention.

Objective 4: Enhance the University's efforts toward environmental sustainability and climate action (aligns with Strategic Plan pillar "Environment & Climate Action")

- Environmental sustainability and climate action are important aspects of the 2020-2025 strategic plan, so it is imperative to make meaningful progress toward them. For the coming year, key measurables will be:
    - completing and launching the Sustainability Action Plan;
    - creating an Office of Sustainability that over time will increase efficiencies, monitor and meet climate targets, and enhance teaching, research, and community and organizational partnerships; and
    - participating in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings to set a baseline that will help gauge our progress in relation to other institutions over the long term.

Objective 5: Create and grow a research innovation eco-system and entrepreneurial strategy that will help position the University as the leading entrepreneurial post-secondary institution in western Canada (aligns with Strategic Plan pillar "Discovery")

- Innovation is an increasingly important contribution that the University makes to our province, because a dynamic and entrepreneurial research enterprise attracts talented faculty and student researchers whose work supports industry, business, all levels of government, the public sector, and our communities. In recent months, the University has made considerable progress in developing a multi-faceted approach to building a research innovation ecosystem. Over the next year, continuing progress in this regard will be measured through:
    - the creation of a Commercialization and Technology Transfer Unit;
    - undertaking the consultation and approvals process necessary to create a Centre for Entrepreneurship and Graduate Development in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research;
    - partnering with provincial incubators to guarantee spaces for graduate students seeking to commercialize their research; and
    - the development of programming to help graduate students refine essential research career skills.

Objective 6: Advance Equity, Diversity and Inclusion on our campuses (aligns with Strategic Plan pillar "Well-being and Belonging")

- Advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) at the University will be a long-term endeavour, but the opportunity exists this year to set the stage for future activities. For this reason, the measurable activities for the year are:
    - engaging BIPOC faculty, staff, students, and community members to create an EDI and Anti-Racism Committee that can identify areas for improvement, develop priorities for action, and help execute EDI-related teaching, learning, research, and operational initiatives for the future; and
    - Partnering with URSU to co-fund a position to advocate for BIPOC students who experience racism and discrimination on campus.