

President's Report to the Board

For the period from July 1, 2019 – September 4, 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 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 is an important part of both our history and our future.

This report summarizes progress over the past two months on the six key areas of focus that the Board and I have selected for the 2019-20 academic year. The first objective is related to the development of the University's forthcoming strategic plan. The other five objectives align with the three priority areas of the University's current strategic plan, *peyak aski kikawinaw* – student success, research impact, and commitment to communities. All of these objectives are designed to lead to a more sustainable university system.

The report also includes updates on my academic research, University events and accomplishments, and other matters that may be of interest to the Board. Information about continuing efforts to enhance the student experience (including student success and retention), for example, begins the section on "Student and Alumni Success."

Objective: Oversee the development and completion of a comprehensive strategic plan for the University

With the timeframe for the University's 2015-2020 strategic plan coming to a close, it is a key priority throughout 2019-20 to develop a new strategic plan to guide the institution's operations and development for the next five years and beyond. A considerable amount of preliminary work took place in recent months in this regard:

- In May, Dr. Kerri Finlay, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology, agreed to serve as the lead facilitator for the strategic planning process. In this role, over the next year Dr. Finlay will play a key role in leading the development of the plan. This will include co-ordinating input from both the University community and the wider community.
- Throughout the summer, Dr. Finlay familiarized herself with the processes by which the University's past strategic plans were created. This included reviewing past documentation, consulting with those who were involved in the creation of past plans (including me and other members of the University Executive Team), and researching best practices at other institutions.

- Based on this work, Dr. Finlay determined the project parameters, worked with Supply Management Services to develop a request for proposals for a consultant to assist with the process, and reviewed the resulting submissions. After careful consideration, a consultant was selected from the submissions, and final arrangements are being made to develop a contract so the consultant may begin work.
- During the reporting period, Dr. Finlay also put out a call to campus for volunteers to serve on the facilitation team that will have broad representation from the University community. The membership of this team should be finalized by mid-September, after which the strategic planning development process will begin in earnest.

Objective: Develop a comprehensive teaching and learning plan based on student data

Another key objective for the year is developing a comprehensive and data-informed teaching and learning plan that will animate the Centre for Teaching and Learning in its support of faculty across campus, its relationship with the Office of Resource Planning, and the two units' long-term goal to enhance student retention and graduation rates. The teaching and learning plan will complement and support the University's retention and graduation strategy and strategic enrolment management plan, which are currently underway. Preliminary work took place on this objective:

- With the retirement of Associate Vice-President (Resource Planning) Brian Christie over the summer, his former position has been repurposed with oversight of both the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Office of Resource Planning as Associate Vice-President (Teaching and Student Analytics), or AVPTSA. The AVPTSA will play a key role in the development of the teaching and learning plan.
- Over the summer, the AVPTSA Search Advisory Committee received applications from across Canada and beyond, reached agreement on a shortlist, and as of mid-August was in the process of scheduling interviews. It is expected that a successful candidate will be in place by mid-fall.
- As part of the continuing restructuring of the CTL, the University is making arrangements to recruit and hire a CTL Director for a three-year term.
- An update on the AVPTSA hiring, the CTL Director hiring, and preparations for development of the teaching and learning plan will be provided for the Board meeting in December.
- It is also of note that an Advisory Council on Student Retention and Graduation was created in June. The Council is composed of representatives from many units across campus and chaired by the Associate Vice-President (Academic). The Council formed a working group that is responsible for developing a University

retention and graduation strategy to improve retention and graduation rates. Once they are in place, the new AVPTSA and the CTL Director will be invited to join in the development of the University Retention and Graduation Strategy, which as noted above will complement both the forthcoming teaching and learning plan and the strategic enrolment management plan.

Objective: Develop a campus-wide enrolment management strategy

In a post-secondary environment in which enrolments may be affected annually by a number of factors such as demographics, international events, competition and reputation, it is imperative that the University have a comprehensive, campus-wide, long-term, adaptable and sustainable strategic enrolment strategy. Developing such a plan is a primary objective for the next year, and work to that end began over the summer:

- After a great deal of preliminary work, the University is close to selecting an international vendor who will help establish a Strategic Enrolment Management Plan. Once the vendor is in place, work will begin in earnest on the development of the plan.
- The vendor will also collaborate with the retention and graduation working group (mentioned above) to help develop the University Retention and Graduation Strategy. This strategy will include predictive analysis that will help identify students who are at risk, and create and implement strategies to increase student success and retention. A student satisfaction survey will be included as part of this package, which will help with both recruitment and retention efforts.
- In the meantime, a considerable amount of ongoing enrolment-related work has been taking place that will provide a solid foundation on which to build the Strategic Enrolment Management Plan:
 - UR International is seeking to balance and diversify international student enrolment. To this end, new English language requirements were adopted, and new academic requirements for admission will be implemented starting in 2020. To further diversify the student body, UR International is looking at recruitment opportunities in the following countries: Colombia, Turkey, Vietnam, and Mexico;
 - The Enrolment Strategies Committee is conducting research on early leavers and stop-outs from the past five years to get an indication of why they left the University without completing a degree;
 - The University continues to focus more effort on recruiting and converting adult learners. A publication and a web page have recently been created with specific information for this group;
 - A greater focus is also being placed on transfer student conversion. Enrolment Services is working with many faculties to telephone transfer applicants to help convert them to offers. This is already seeing positive

results, and once the transfer credit unit is fully in place, it is anticipated that the number of applications and conversions for transfer students will increase;

- This fall, the University is targeting Montana and North Dakota students for the first time in many years. Recruiters will be spending one week at college fairs in Montana, and two weeks in North Dakota. Targeted emails are also being sent to high school seniors in those states, and University Advancement & Communications is buying geo-targeted ads on social media to support these efforts;
- The Saskatoon-based recruiter who has been in place for one year will continue her work throughout 2019-20. The University has seen a year-over-year increase in the number of applications from the Saskatoon area;
- Enrolment Services has worked with the Faculties and Federated Colleges to align registration practices and communications. This has included providing templates for communications with students and continuing to work with them on telephone and email campaigns;
- Enrolment Services has also done some restructuring to create a small, two-person communication unit. The goal is to unify the communications that are sent to prospective and new students in order to support recruitment and conversion; and
- Student Affairs is working together with UR International, the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, the Centre for Continuing Education and Information Services on a feasibility study for a new admissions and customer relations management software package. This software would allow the University to process admissions in a timelier manner with fewer mistakes, communicate more easily and consistently with prospective and new students, and contribute to recruitment and conversion.

Objective: Develop a research-focused equity, diversity and inclusion strategy that prepares the University to support the “Dimensions” principles, guides the revision of the CRC Action Plan, and engages the campus research community in the establishment of LGBTQ2S+ as a designated equity research group

In a context in which Canada is making a national effort to help advance the careers of women in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines, it has been identified as a priority over the next year for the University develop an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy that will guide the institution’s implementation of the federal “Dimensions” program, establish LGBTQ2S+ as an equity research group, and promote the existing Indigenous equity research group. Work began on this over the course of the summer:

- The University has been offered affiliate status within the Dimensions program. While not formally part of the Dimensions pilot, as an affiliate the University will have access to tools and information generated during the pilot. The University will also be a member of a community of practice and will be able to take part in workshops offered through the pilot. Through its participation as an affiliate, the University will also have an increased probability of successfully becoming part of the Dimensions program upon its next submission.
- The redesign of the University's Canada Research Chairs Action Plan is now taking place. Elements of the plan that are underway include an environmental scan, an employment systems review, and a comparative policy review of other post-secondary institutions. The goal is to complete the plan by mid-September in advance of the September 27 submission deadline.
- The hiring process for the Research Diversity Officer has now reached the interview stage, and the target is to have someone in place in September. The successful candidate will play an important role in advancing a scholarly culture of diversity, equity and inclusion at the University, with special emphasis on designing and developing an equity framework for the research enterprise.
- The University has purchased a membership with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI). This membership will make CCDI's extensive resources available to faculty and staff.
- By the time of the Board report, EDI training will have taken place for both the University Executive Team (two half-day sessions) and the University Leadership Team (a full-day retreat that included a presentation by CCDI). CCDI will also have conducted a separate session with the Human Resources team.
- In addition, CCDI has submitted a proposal for a cultural survey of the campus community to measure perceptions and attitudes of leadership and faculty with respect to EDI. The proposal is currently under negotiation.
- Planning is also underway for a town hall on EDI to be held on campus later in the fall.

Objective: Through a review of the University's community outreach projects in the province, complete a socio-economic impact assessment of the University's community engagement efforts and develop a plan to help address a key community need through University engagement in community-based programming

Following on preliminary work that was done last year, completing a socio-economic impact assessment of the University's role in the province and developing a plan to help address a pressing community need is a priority for 2019-20. Work took place toward this objective throughout the summer:

- Through a public tendering process, the University engaged Praxis Consulting to provide a comprehensive assessment of its socio-economic impact on a provincial scale. The vendor is currently in the process of analyzing data gathered through an employee survey as well as from various units across campus.
- Praxis Consulting will present the social-economic impact assessment, as well as recommendations on how the University can help address key community needs, to University Advancement & Communications on September 16. From there, the unit will share this information with the University Executive Team and work to develop a strategy to promote the University's impact and address key recommendations outlined by the vendor.

Objective: Increase the Advancement team's overall year-over-year fundraising by 10%

An identified objective over the next year is for the Advancement team to grow its revenues by 10% from last year's total of \$8.665 million to \$9.532 million for 2019-2020. Work to meet this objective has already begun:

- Building on the success of the 2018-2019 fundraising year, the University will focus on further developing a philanthropic culture institutionally. To do so, the University is planning to engage donors at all capacity levels within the University community, demonstrating "giving leadership" to our broader donor base. In 2019-2020, efforts will be focused on:
 - Increasing giving participation among University leadership, faculty, and staff through a family giving campaign;
 - Achieving the \$12.25 million fundraising target for the *College Avenue Campus Renewal Project*, which includes Darke Hall; and
 - Identifying new ways to engage and inspire alumni to contribute to the advancement of their *alma mater*.
- Key outcomes and activities to date include:
 - Raising \$865,837 as of July 31 toward the annual target of \$9.532 million. This is a 24% increase over the same period last year;
 - Launching the Darke Hall Matching Gift Challenge on August 26, 2019. A matching gift commitment was received from the Ann and Roger Phillips Foundation as part of a \$1.5 million pledge to Darke Hall; this enables the University to match gifts received to the *College Avenue Campus Renewal Campaign – Saving Darke Hall* up to \$500,000. The Darke Hall Matching Gift Challenge will help to close a significant portion of the \$612,286 remaining for College Avenue campus fundraising; and
 - Giving a presentation about the forthcoming family giving campaign at the University Leadership Team retreat in late August.

REPORT ON THE PRESIDENT'S ACADEMIC RESEARCH

This report outlines progress on my academic research program since the beginning of July.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH

- Leading up to the World Congress of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD), in my roles as Past President and Chair of the Governance Committee I continued helping plan the Congress. This included preparing for elections and bylaw adjustments that would take place at the general meeting held in conjunction with the Congress.
- At the Congress itself in Glasgow, Scotland in early August, I oversaw the organization's elections and bylaw changes, as well as discussions regarding potential organizational partnerships.

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- Over the summer, I continued to work on and deliver presentations based on my areas of academic interest. These included:
 - Presenting on women's leadership to a graduate class in Business Administration;
 - Working on a keynote presentation to be delivered in November at a "Best Buddies" intellectual disability-related conference at the University; and
 - Planning a presentation on accountability to delivered in October to the Province of Saskatchewan's Ministry of Central Services.

PUBLICATIONS

- An article entitled "The Canadian Idea Hinges on a Promise Fulfilled" that I wrote was published in the summer 2019 edition of *Policy Magazine*.
- I completed a first draft of a book chapter entitled "The more things changed, the more they stayed the same: A critical reflection on three decades of women's leadership in Canadian Academia" that I was invited to contribute to a forthcoming book. I am now revising the chapter for submission to the editors later in September.
- After an incident in which an international student at the University of Regina was assaulted, I published an opinion-editorial piece in the *Regina Leader-Post*

and *Saskatoon StarPhoenix* entitled “Cowardly act reminds us racism is in our city.”

- I was interviewed for an article on women’s leadership in academic institutions that will be published in September by *Academica’s* Top 10.

OTHER ACTIVITY

- In early July, I attended the launch of the newly formed Royal Society of Canada Prairies-North regional network, which was established by University of Regina faculty member and Royal Society Fellows Dr. Peter Leavitt and Dr. Raymond Blake.
- In August, I participated in meetings as a member of the Board of Directors VIA Rail Canada.
- I conducted editorial boards with the *Regina Leader-Post* and *Saskatoon StarPhoenix* to give them insight into the University’s progress, priorities, successes and challenges.

CELEBRATING OUR CAMPUS

This report highlights some of the many student, faculty, and staff successes as well as other notable campus events that have taken place throughout the summer.

STUDENT AND ALUMNI SUCCESS

- The University continued its efforts to enhance students' educational experience and promote their success. Examples of this work include:
 - Developing and delivering a full suite of orientation events for new students;
 - Co-ordinating "Move-In Day," where approximately 150 faculty, staff and returning student helped incoming students move into their residence accommodations;
 - Re-launching the "You Belong Here. Racism Doesn't" campaign for the fall term;
 - Preparing for a new year of academic recovery and transition programming, which helps retain approximately 70% of participating students who would otherwise have been required to discontinue their studies;
 - Continuing the transition in Student Affairs to a drop-in advising model for first- and second-year students to minimize delays in advising and registration;
 - Moving to a "Stepped Care" mental health programming model whereby students are able to access counselling immediately in a crisis, but may also be referred to other services that do not require urgent or one-to-one therapy;
 - Developing a partnership with Kids Help Phone and the Co-operators to create a free "Crisis Text Line" for students at the University needing mental health support. The University is only the second one in Canada to develop such a partnership;
 - Helping students find work placements through the Cooperative Education and Internships program. It is of note that a record 82 Indigenous students had work terms during the summer; and
 - Running two sections of the Summer Bridge program, which allows students to take English 100 and prepare for university life prior to the full semester of classes.
- University of Regina students had a number of successes over the summer:
 - Jimuel Belarmino, a student in the Faculty of Media, Art and Performance, was named a regional winner in the BMO 1st Art! competition for emerging Canadian artists; and

- A University of Regina robotics team went to Russia for an international competition. Karim Ait-Allaoua and Danish Hasan, two undergraduate engineering students at the University of Regina, along with University of British Columbia student Herman Muller, make up UofRobotics, the Canadian team that competed at the 45th WorldSkills Competition at the end of August.
- University of Regina alumni continued to make important contributions to the provincial and larger communities:
 - Alumnus Dean Potter, who earned both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in geology at the University of Regina, was named to the Saskatchewan Oil and Gas Hall of Fame;
 - The Regina Public Library screened the documentary *SkyGrazers: A Story of the Flying Farmers*, which was co-directed by Toronto-based Annmarie Aronoff, a graduate of the Film Department;
 - Alumnus and former Cougar men's basketball coach James Hillis was named to the Regina Sports Hall of Fame;
 - Alumnus Denis Carignan has brought his successful Indigenous software testing training model to Saskatchewan. The University of Regina graduate is the managing director of PLATO Sask Testing and president of PLATO Testing, a firm that is training and employing Indigenous Canadians across the country;
 - In late July, Journalism School alumni Victoria Dinh, Courtney Markewich, Karin Yeske, Coreen Larson and Paul Dornstauder's CBC investigative podcast, "The Pit," reached number one on Apple podcasts;
 - Former University of Regina Rams defensive lineman Akiem Hicks was named one of the NFL's Top 100 current players, coming in at number 39; and
 - The 2019 Alumni Crowning Achievement Award winners were announced. They are:
 - Gary Drummond, QC, BA '72 – Lifetime Achievement Award
 - Janine Windolph BFA '06, MFA '11 and Trudy Stewart BFA '08 – Distinguished Professional Achievement
 - Brianne Urzada BA '12 (with distinction), Bed '12 – Humanitarian and Community Service Award
 - Tyler Willox BBA '11 – Young Alumni Award
 - Paul McLellan BAdmin '81, MBA '09 – Dr. Robert and Norma Ferguson Award for Outstanding Service

FACULTY AND STAFF SUCCESS

- The University welcomed Dr. Soe Myint, a professor in the school of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning at Arizona State University, as the Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Environmental Studies.
- Dr. Julia Totosy de Zepetnek, assistant professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies, received nearly \$215,000 from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), Innovation Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, and biotech lab supply companies. This funding will support the Cardiovascular and Metabolic Research Lab (CMR Lab) that will include a wet lab for blood collection and analysis and a quiet light- and temperature-controlled space for cardiovascular and metabolic assessments.
- Dr. Gwen Grinyer, assistant professor in the Faculty of Science, received more than \$130,000 from CFI, Innovation Saskatchewan, and the University of Regina. This research funding will help to build the Regina Cube for Multiple Particles, a compact and highly efficient array to detect delayed charged particles emitted from exotic decays of nuclei.
- The University of Regina recently received CANARIE funding of up to \$330,000 for specialized research software support. Through this pilot project, three research software specialists will be hired to assist researchers with finding, adapting, and developing software solutions to support research. The University is one of only three Canadian institutions to receive funding for this project.

CAMPUS EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The University community was saddened in early July to learn of the passing of Dr. William F. Ready, honorary degree recipient and Chancellor Emeritus of the University. Dr. Ready served as the University's seventh Chancellor from 2007-2013. In recognition of his lifetime of service to the province, he was invested as a member of the Saskatchewan Order of Merit in June 2019.
- Raynell Andreychuk, Chancellor Emeritus of the University, retired from the Senate of Canada after 26 years of service.
- This summer, the University partnered with the Saskatchewan Roughriders and the City of Regina to offer a Mosaic Stadium Shuttle stop on campus. The service provides a free shuttle to and from campus during Roughrider games and special events.
- In partnership with Prince's Trust Canada, Enactus Regina and the Paul J. Hill School of Business, the University of Regina hosted the Prince's Operation Entrepreneur program for the seventh year. This week-long business "boot camp" provides veterans and transitioning members of the Canadian Armed Forces with a crash course in business essentials. A total of 19 participants graduated from the program.

- The University of Regina released its 2018-19 Annual Report, which highlights the University's many successes from May 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019.
- In support of the Canadian Red Cross, in July the University of Regina hosted more than 400 evacuees from Northern Ontario who were forced to leave their homes due to the threat of forest fires.
- More than 200 young people were on campus for the EYES (Educating Youth in Engineering & Science) camps. The week-long camps focus on a science, engineering and technology curriculum for young people. This was one of many camps held on campus during the summer, giving young students a first taste of what the University of Regina has to offer.
- On August 26, the University announced a \$1 million donation from the Ann and Roger Phillips Foundation in support of Darke Hall restoration. A secondary gift from the Foundation will match raised funds up to \$500,000.