The following e-mail was sent by President Vianne Timmons to the University community on November 2, 2016:

Subject line: Invitation: November 23 open forum on "Transformational Change"

Members of the University community,

Facing a significant drop in resource revenues, the Government of Saskatchewan has asked all public sector funded institutions and organizations to consider “transformational change” measures to more efficiently deliver their services. Over the last several months I have held many discussions with members of the University community so we can be proactive in considering the meaning of and potential for transformational change as proposed by Government.

The issue was addressed for more than a day at the annual University Leadership Team (ULT) retreat at the end of August. The approximately 40-member ULT, which includes all deans and directors of academic and administrative units, was asked to consider possible ideas for change that would be discussed with the wider university community.

To help guide the discussion going forward, the ULT agreed to explore changes that foster sustainable delivery of high-quality post-secondary education aimed at transforming the institution and society. It was also agreed that any potential initiatives need to align with the University’s strategic plan and protect the University of Regina’s independence and interests. Finally, it was recommended that any proposals be consulted on with the University community, seeking input on whether these initiatives advance the accessibility, responsiveness, sustainability and accountability of our institution.

Based on these principles, five initial proposals are being advanced by ULT for consideration and input:

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

The five proposals have been shared and discussed with Executive of Council. They have also been presented to the University’s Board of Governors. In late September, the Board endorsed taking the five proposals forward for discussions with the campus community, and emphasized that the University’s process of considering these proposals should be a consultative and transparent one. The University also presented the proposals to Treasury Board at its October meeting, indicating that we would be taking them to the University community for consultation.
It is important to note that no final decision has been made on any of the proposals. Also, each of these proposed initiatives is still undergoing significant due diligence to determine how it might be implemented and whether it would prove to strengthen our University.

That is why we wanted broaden our consultations now in order to receive your input at the earliest stages of this process.

To that end, I invite the University community to participate in an open forum on the Government of Saskatchewan’s agenda for transformational change and the five proposals I have outlined above.

The forum will take place:

Wednesday, November 23
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Ad-Hum 527

This forum will provide me with the opportunity to expand on what each of these proposals may entail, discuss the pros and cons of each, identify other initiatives that we should consider, and plan next steps. I encourage everyone to attend the open forum, and invite those who are unable to attend to send me their input.

In the coming weeks, I will take every opportunity to speak with members of the University community as I see you on campus. In addition, should any individuals or groups wish to meet with me to share their ideas, please contact Rozanne Tennent in my office at (306) 585-4696 or rozanne.tennent@uregina.ca to set up an appointment.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to seeing you on November 23.

Sincerely,
Dr. Vianne Timmons
President and Vice-Chancellor