

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
FOR INFORMATION

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**DATE OF MEETING:** November 21, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Planning and Priorities Committee Overview

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**SUMMARY:**

The Planning and Priorities Committee of Council (PPC) began the year having to elect a new chair, as Chair Vicki Squires was appointed as the Chair of University Council. Chris Willenborg was elected as Chair effective September 26, 2024. Chris is Head of the Department of Plant Sciences in the College of Agriculture. Thank you to Vice-Chair of PPC, Angela Lieverse, for stepping up to run the committee following Vicki's departure.

The committee meets biweekly with the objective to recommend and report to council on academic plans and priorities, community engagement, and matters referred from other committees and the CFO. Over the past months, we have heard from and provided input to the President and the VP of each executive unit. Each member provided priorities, goals, and ideas that will define our work moving forward.

President Stoicheff joined the committee's first meeting to discuss the leadership changes within the Provost Office. He spoke about the need to modernize the provost role given the changing world. Since the position was developed in the 1990s, there have been significant changes due to financial challenges and government relations, global political situations, student mental health, urgency of deferred maintenance of buildings, reconciliation, and sustainability. The President explained that these priorities have all gone to the Provost's office causing the portfolio to grow substantially. The PPC will participate and provide input on the profile and scope of the provost's role when required.

The committee also heard from CFO Deidre Henne on USask financial updates, and the implementation of the new structures including the Strategic Finance Committee comprised of the CFO and Vice-Presidents who advise the President. PPC's role is to provide feedback on the budget and financial stability, so Deidre will present updates and strategies to PPC regularly throughout the year. Related to financial and budgeting, the committee also learned more about capital projects on campus and their prioritization from VP Admin Greg Fowler.

Other topics of interest to PPC are the ongoing concerns around international students and the impacts of government decisions on admissions and our campus community. Members of PPC were notified that the UPlan is going to extend beyond 2025 with a slight adjustment to focus on values and ideas. Information is available on the [Tracking Our Progress Website](#).

Another area of focus for the committee is the current academic collaborations with Saskatchewan Polytechnic and best practices to inform future work and partnerships given the visibility of the neighboring campuses. Any future partnership will be an important step in post-secondary education in the province.

The President and Vice-Presidents will continue to provide updates on their unit priorities for 2024-2025 with an opportunity for PPC committee members to ask questions and learn about the goals within these units for the upcoming year. Looking ahead, PPC will be provided with information on the capital prioritization project, tuition and fee information as well as the Student Enrolment Management planning.

Christian Willenborg,  
Chair  
Planning and Priorities Committee