



Board of Governors meeting highlights

Issued July 14, 2017

The University Of Saskatchewan Board Of Governors held its regularly scheduled board meeting on June 19 and 20, 2017. The following is an update on the highlights of the meeting and strategy session.

New board member

David D'Eon joined the board effective June 19, by virtue of his election as president of the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU). David, who was named to the finance and investment committee and the land and facilities committee, will represent the student voice.

Finance and investment

The board approved a comprehensive budget that includes a deficit of \$16.7 million for the 2017-18 year. A number of factors contribute to this deficit, including: a significant reduction in the university's base budget grant from the provincial government; and the hold-back of \$20 million in targeted funding for the College of Medicine, accompanied by a request to fund the requirement from the operating budget. The pressure on the central operating budget, which funds the university's annual expenses, is more than \$30 million.

A number of measures will be taken to offset this projected deficit, including spending university fund balances and a voluntary layoff program. The university continues to strive toward a balanced budget and to take steps to manage expenditure growth while supporting the academic mission.

The board discussed the 2018-19 operations forecast in preparation for submission by the end of June 2017 deadline. The operations forecast outlines the university's funding request of the Government of Saskatchewan for the next fiscal year, and gives the Ministry of Advanced Education information about the university's operating, research operating, capital and targeted funding requirements. More information will be shared with the campus community after it is shared with the Government of Saskatchewan.

A financial authority policy was approved that will allow deans to recapture fund balances that have not been used. Ultimately, the Board of governors has authority over all university finances, but deans also have the authority, when deemed appropriate, to reclaim or repurpose funds held in accounts in the college.

The board endorsed a proposal that is seeking approval from the Government of Saskatchewan for a \$90 million bond that will raise funds for the following projects identified within the RenewUS project plan:

- Physics Building (last major renovation in 1921)
- Thorvaldson Building (last major renovation in 1924, excluding the Annex renovation in 2001)
- W.P. Thompson Building (last major renovation in 1967)



- University Library (last major renovation in 1974)
- Arts Building (last major renovation in 1976)

The board approved a policy to waive differential tuition fees for Native American students. This honours the spirit of the Jay Treaty (1794) that stated that Indigenous people in Canada and America could “freely to pass and repass, by land or inland navigation into the respective territories and countries... and freely carry on trade and commerce with each other.”

Human resources

The board carried out its annual review of senior administration total rewards, which includes analysis of compensation, pension, benefits, perquisites and recognition programs. The board approved a series of compensation and benefit rollbacks for approximately 75 senior leaders at the university. Senior administration includes vice-presidents, deans, executive directors, associate deans, vice-provosts, associate vice-presidents, university secretary and university auditor. The cuts range from 2-5 per cent off salaries, in addition to reductions in benefits and a freeze on bonuses and merit pay.

The board approved a policy on public salary disclosure that will apply to those individuals who earn more than \$125,000 taxable income per annum from the university. This will take effect in fall 2017 and will be available online to improve transparency. It should be noted that this information is currently available, and has been for a number of years, in University Archives.

Principles and roles guiding collective bargaining were addressed by the board. This discussion outlined how Human Resource Division at the university engages in bargaining with ASPA, USFA and CUPE. The principles outlined include:

- Collective bargaining must align with the university’s strategic directions and priorities.
- Collective bargaining outcomes must not impede the university’s progress in achieving its goals or interfere in any way with its primary responsibility to enhance the learning experience and success of our students.
- Collective bargaining must support the university’s commitment to both institutional and individual excellence and accountability, and the responsible and efficient use of all its resources.
- Collective bargaining is guided by the understanding that a university is its people and strives to create an environment that is built on mutual respect, understanding, shared values, and goals.
- Collective bargaining strives to provide a fair and equitable total rewards for the work and contributions of its employees. This will be approached within the context of responsible stewardship and the constraints of the university’s financial resources.
- Management is committed to promote the recruitment and retention of talent, provide working conditions that are adequate and in alignment with the services and environment provided through the university infrastructure, and enable flexible and effective management.



- Management commits to collectively bargain and reach agreements that support the financial stability of the university, allow responsiveness in a changing fiscal environment, and contribute to the university's sustainable future.
- Management is committed to timely conclusion of multi-year agreements that provide stability for students, and to a bargaining process that is conducted responsibly, and respects the collegial and tricameral governance structure of the university as provided for in *The University of Saskatchewan Act*.
- Management approaches bargaining with good faith, transparency, and respect, and will foster and encourage an environment of collaboration between bargaining teams that promotes consideration of mutual interests in solving issues of concern.

The board approved a policy that will provide institutional recognition and formally define the academic relationship medical faculty have with the university and establish a framework for the governance of medical faculty relations with the university. While this policy on medical faculty represents a significant change in the nature of faculty appointments at the University of Saskatchewan, it is in line with the national accreditation standards for an MD program. This will also enable a more research-intensive College of Medicine through a more engaged and expanded faculty. The procedures that will accompany this policy, are currently being drafted and will be presented to University Council in the fall for review. Any further revisions made to these procedures are required to be approved by the provost.

Senior administrative and academic appointments

The board approved the recommendation to appoint Jacqueline Ottmann as the university's first Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement beginning October 1, 2017.

The board approved the recommendation to appoint Suzanne Kresta as dean of the College of Engineering for a five-year term beginning January 1, 2018.

In addition, updates were provided to the board on senior academic and administrative extensions and appointments.

Land and facilities

The Human Resources Technology Transformation project received Board 2 approval. This project, estimated to cost \$3 million, will see the Ellucian Banner Human Resources and Talent Management Suite replace the existing system that was installed in 1998. Other major systems at the university, including students, finances, degree planning and relationship management, are Ellucian products. This current enhancement project in HR will:

- provide a robust framework of technology for human resources, payroll, benefits, performance management, learning and development and employee lifecycle management;
- provide built-in integrations with existing systems and processes improving efficiencies and
- lowers operating costs;



- develop integrated workflow across administrative processes including HR, finance, student administration and donor management; and
- enable position management within the HR system to support the development of a comprehensive budget, automated role-based processes and access to services.

The One Health Imaging and Oncology expansion WCVN PET-CT suite received Board 2 approval. This project, an integrated program in oncology and imaging, builds on major research projects including the Fedoruk Centre cyclotron facility, the Canadian Light Source and the health sciences programs. The scope of the project includes two chairs—the Fedoruk Chair in Animal Imaging and the Allard Chair in Oncology—as well as the planned Animal Cancer Centre featuring a PET-CT suite.

The Athletics and Recreation Facilities Master Plan was presented and received broad endorsement from the board. This plan outlined a vision for the recreation and athletic spaces and facilities on campus for the next 20 year and maps out the ideal mix of space and facilities to enhance the student experience at the U of S. Merlish Belsher Place is part of the plan which was developed through campus and community wide consultation. This document outlines a vision for the future, however, it should be noted that all items within the plan are simply recommendations identified in the immediate-, short-, medium- and long-term (ranging from zero-25 years).

Additional items

Additional items discussed and/or approved by the board that may be of interest are outlined below.

- The Board approved matching funding for a CFI proposal for a Super-Resolution Confocal Microscope for High Speed Imaging of Cellular Dynamics and Tissue Development in Plants
- Preston Smith, dean of medicine, gave a presentation updating the Board on the progress with restructuring in the College of Medicine. He spoke of the progress being made in engaging community faculty in academic activity, changes in the administrative framework of the college, and an encouraging increase in research funding and activity.

The next scheduled Board of Governors meeting will be held July 24, 2017.

