

AGENDA
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
2:30 p.m. Thursday, March 1, 2012
Neatby-Timlin Theatre (Room 241) Arts Building

*In 1995, the **University of Saskatchewan Act** established a representative Council for the University of Saskatchewan, conferring on Council responsibility and authority “for overseeing and directing the university’s academic affairs.”
The 2011-12 academic year marks the 17th year of the representative Council.*

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Opening remarks
3. University of Saskatchewan Third Integrated Plan 2012/13 – 2015/16
 - 3.1 Request for Decision: University of Saskatchewan Third Integrated Plan – Brett Fairbairn and Bob Tyler

That Council approve the University of Saskatchewan Third Integrated Plan as a framework for action for the third planning cycle, 2012/13 to 2015/16.

4. Other business
5. Question period
6. Next meeting – 2:30 pm, March 15, 2012

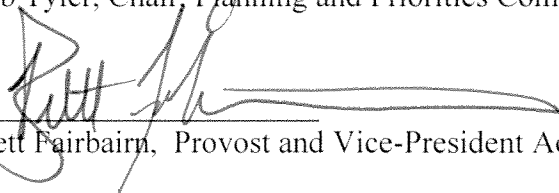
If you are unable to attend this meeting please send regrets to: Lesley.leonhardt@usask.ca

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR DECISION

PRESENTED BY:



Bob Tyler, Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee



Brett Fairbairn, Provost and Vice-President Academic

DATE OF MEETING: March 1, 2012

SUBJECT: University of Saskatchewan Third Integrated Plan

DECISION REQUESTED: That Council approve the University of Saskatchewan Third Integrated Plan as a framework for action for the third planning cycle, 2012/13 to 2015/16.

PURPOSE:

The Integrated Planning process has now advanced to the stage where University Council is asked to approve the University of Saskatchewan's Third Integrated Plan.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

Integrated planning is an ongoing process, and is based upon the values of openness, cooperation and continuity. The University's Integrated Planning Initiative presents a University-level plan every four years for consideration by Council. The initial draft Third Integrated Plan (Plan) has been under development for fifteen months, and began with a consultation on the areas of focus, which guided the development of college, school, and administrative/support unit plans. Following submission of unit plans in October 2011, the task of developing the draft Plan began in earnest. Discussions at the Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning (PCIP), the Unit Plans Review Committee (UPRC) and a workshop to discuss the transformative strategies in each area of focus (in December 2011) have informed the development of the draft Plan. On January 9, the draft Plan was distributed to the campus community and the office of Institutional Planning and Assessment (IPA) initiated a comprehensive consultation process. The draft Plan was presented as a request for input at the January 26 and February 16 meetings of Council.

The Third Integrated Plan is informed by the *Strategic Directions*, the achievements and challenges of the first and second planning cycles, the submissions by colleges, schools, and units, and discussions with the Unit Plans Review Committee of Council, the Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning and the broadly based University

community. In this planning cycle, there are four areas of focus; 1) knowledge creation: innovation and impact, 2) Aboriginal engagement: relationships, scholarship, programs 3) culture and community: our global sense of place and 4) innovation in academic programs and services. Within these focus areas, 12 commitments have been articulated. The commitments made in this plan are intended to accelerate the University's progress toward holding 'an honourable place among the best'.

IMPLICATIONS:

The Board of Governors will consider the Third Integrated Plan, the Multi-Year Budget Framework and the Multi-Year Capital Plan associated with its implementation at its March 2012 meeting. The implementation will depend on the resources (operating, capital and other) that are and will become available to support the plan over the planning cycle.

CONSULTATION:

The posting of the draft Third Integrated Plan on an NSID-protected website on January 9 was widely advertised to the campus community through PAWS announcements, ads in the On Campus News and The Sheaf and emails to the Deans and Department Heads. People were encouraged to provide feedback through meetings, an online feedback form, email and a Town Hall. The draft plan was discussed at the following meetings:

- University Council (January and February meetings)
- Deans' Council (twice in January on the plan and once in February on the Multi-Year Budget Framework and the Multi-Year Capital Plan)
- Planning and Priorities Committee/Unit Plans Review Committee (UPRC) (four times on the plan and at least once each on the Multi-Year Budget Framework and Multi-Year Capital Plan)
- Other committees of Council, including ASC, TLCC, APC, IACC
- Department Heads Forum
- Faculty Coffee with the Provost
- Second Integrated Plan Commitment Leaders
- Student Groups (USSU, GSA, Coffee with the students)
- Regional Advisory Councils (in person: Prince Albert, North Battleford; video conference: Melfort, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, La Ronge, Swift Current, Rosetown)
- Colleges/Schools/Units by invitation: Library, Engineering
- Website/on-line feedback – approximately 15 responses
- Email/In person feedback – approximately 20 responses
- Current and incoming presidents
- Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration
- City of Saskatoon
- Saskatoon Health Region

SUMMARY:

Comments and feedback from the general University community and from University Council and its committees have been incorporated both into the initial draft and in the

revised draft, which is being submitted for approval. Revisions to the initial draft include:

- reshaping the strategy section of each area of focus
- revising and expanding the metrics in each area of focus section
- strengthening the international/global engagement theme within Culture and Community: Our Global Sense of Place area of focus
- moving the Foster Student Creativity and Innovation commitment from Culture and Community: Our Global Sense of Place area of focus to Innovation in Academic Programs and Services
- removing the Support Student Success commitment by moving the content of this commitment into other commitments in the Innovation in Academic Programs and Services area of focus
- minor editorial changes throughout the document

The plan is expected to be approved on the understanding that minor adjustments to the text for purposes of clarification and correction will be permitted subsequent to Council's approval.

FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED:

University Council, specifically the Planning and Priorities and the Academic Programs Committees, will be intimately involved in the evaluation and approval of initiatives and program proposals emanating from this Plan. Other committees of Council may also be involved in providing comments on proposals as these come forward for consideration and approval.

The Planning and Priorities Committee will also provide advice to the Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning on the college and administrative unit planning parameters outlining expectations for the third planning cycle and prepared by the Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning.

The Planning and Priorities Committee is discussing the Multi-Year Budget Framework and the Multi-Year Capital Plan and will provide information to the Council and advice to the President and Senior Administration separately.

In addition to the above, an implementation plan is under development by the Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning and will be brought to Council for information at its May meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

University of Saskatchewan's *Third Integrated Plan*

As of February 28, 2012

Realizing Promise and Potential

The University of Saskatchewan is charting a course for its future. We are determined to make the changes that are required to place the University of Saskatchewan among the most distinguished universities in Canada and in the world. We have set high goals for ourselves and we will continue to work together to attain them.

Strategic Directions, 2002

VISION

In 1907, at the edge of a swift-flowing river and surrounded by a vast prairie landscape, our university's founders envisioned a world-class university. They were dedicated visionaries with a powerful dream. Their first bold move was to create a university with an unprecedented combination of colleges: Arts and Science and Agriculture. In so doing, they established a university with two purposes: to advance knowledge of the human condition through inquiry and imagination and to serve the many-sided needs of the community by supporting Saskatchewan's then foremost industry to thrive and grow. Their goal, eloquently articulated by our first President, Walter Murray, was for the University of Saskatchewan to hold 'an honourable place among the best'.

Today, the University of Saskatchewan is one of Canada's fifteen medical-doctoral universities and among the top research institutions in the nation. We have developed one of the most comprehensive arrays of academic programs in the country, built outstanding facilities and infrastructure for research, and progressively committed ourselves to making our university more accessible to generations of Aboriginal peoples. We have worked hard to achieve the vision established by the *Strategic Directions* (2002) and by the two integrated plans which followed (2004, 2008). Ours is a significant record of accomplishment.

In the next decade, we envision our university to be one of Canada's most distinguished, with a global impact in selected areas of academic pre-eminence.

This Third Integrated Plan continues to be guided by our *Strategic Directions*. We remain committed to our long-term goals of attracting and retaining outstanding faculty; increasing campus-wide commitment to research, scholarly and artistic work; establishing ourselves as a major presence in graduate education; and recruiting and retaining a diverse and academically promising group of students and preparing them for success in the knowledge age. How we go about achieving these goals will distinguish us among our peers and position us to realize the vision of our founding president to hold 'an honourable place among the best'.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

As the University of Saskatchewan enters its third planning cycle, we face a period of possibility and constraint. Behind us is a decade of transformative change, significant progress and increasing focus on areas of strength – on knowing who we are and what sets us apart from others. Ahead of us lie continued economic uncertainty, evolving challenges in the post-secondary education sector, unanticipated events and profound opportunity.

Our opportunity lies in the unprecedented extent to which society recognizes the significance and impact of higher education particularly here in Saskatchewan as well as globally. Society's need for well-prepared citizens, for professionals and leaders has reached new heights – and the roles of universities and other educational institutions in meeting these needs are on the minds of policymakers and the public at large. Public appreciation of the social and economic impact of research and knowledge creation has never been stronger. In the knowledge age, the hopes and

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aspirations of people, communities, governments and organizations rest on universities to such an extent, in fact, that universities are unlikely, relying on their own existing resources, to meet all the needs and expectations placed upon them. Existing partnerships need to be valued, new ones need to be forged, and strategic choices need to be made.

Over the past four years, the global economic recession has affected post-secondary educational institutions in marked ways. Universities in North America and Europe have faced severe reductions in government funding, losses in investment income and increased competition for resources. In contrast, universities in China and India are growing rapidly and facing challenges of their own. Locally, we have experienced strong support from successive provincial governments and, while we trust this will continue, slower economic growth due to unstable commodities markets and constraints on public sector funding are on-going concerns. Although governments, both provincial and federal, continue to be our biggest partners and largest funders, universities are increasingly relying on alumni relations and donor funding. Universities are creating complex partnerships with, for example, industry, health services, First Nations and business to support whole programs as well as individual students. As a result, expectations of university leadership are changing profoundly. We are in a favourable economic position compared to our peers nationally and internationally, yet, we cannot be complacent: the global economic downturn has driven universities around the world to be ever more innovative. While we have made great strides, to be recognized among the best universities in the world, our need to transform ourselves, to keep up with and surpass our peers in selected areas, is greater than ever.

Nationally, as the number of universities and degree-granting institutions grows and as more seek to become research-intensive, competition for Tri-Agency funding will only increase. It is critical that our faculty, graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and other highly trained professionals are connected, engaged, networked and supported in their pursuit of research and scholarly excellence. Especially important to our goals is the research success of the large number of new faculty we have hired over the past decade and those we will hire in this planning cycle. We will need to continue to pursue competitive compensation strategies to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel. And, we will need to ensure that our faculty, post-doctoral fellows, clinical scientists, other highly trained professionals and students have the opportunity and support to access and utilize the research and capital infrastructure in which we have invested (over \$1 billion in the last decade) to achieve their full potential. Finally, in this era of increased competition for scarce resources with other sectors and increasing government expectations of universities, we will need to demonstrate good return on investment including our contributions to economic and social innovation, productivity enhancement, economic growth and job creation, as well as citizenship and policy-making.

Concurrent with an environment of constrained resources, expectations for accountability and stewardship of the public's trust are increasing. We are called upon to provide unprecedented levels of accountability in the new 'fishbowl' reality for higher education. From the federal Tri-Agencies to the provincial auditor, we are required to meet increasingly stringent regulatory requirements. This includes financial oversight, human ethics and animal care protocols. The introduction of a periodic quality audit system for the universities in Saskatchewan as well as legislation to expand the number of degree-granting institutions in the province will require us to ensure that the quality and efficiency of our programs, processes and functions continue to meet national and international standards of excellence.

Like many other Canadian universities, we draw significant numbers of our students from our immediate surroundings. It is important that we deepen and broaden our recruitment of the best students in order to support our dual missions of education and discovery. In Saskatchewan, we are particularly mindful that our province's demographic composition is changing. Although the

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population is growing, the number of 18-year olds (a proxy for prospective university students) in the province is expected to decline over the next five to ten years. In Saskatchewan, the proportion of Aboriginal youth is growing rapidly; there is greater cultural diversity among our communities; new immigration to Saskatchewan has potential to offset the steep enrolment declines previously predicted; and, urbanization continues. Maintaining our enrolment, and thereby our significant program array, requires higher participation rates from both traditional (18- to 24-year olds) and non-traditional (Aboriginal, mature, rural, new Canadian, northern) student populations. In Canada, Saskatchewan has the lowest percentage of post-secondary education graduates in its workforce, a statistic that needs to change and that we can help change as the province develops. We need to increase student retention and degree completion rates at all levels to realize all of the ambitions that the people of Saskatchewan have for our institution and to fulfil our education and discovery mandates.

The competition for highly qualified students, both locally and internationally, is acute and is expected to continue given the increasing number of highly specialized niche universities and colleges in Canada and internationally. As top students from Saskatchewan high schools weigh their options, we need to ensure that our university offers compelling programs to attract them to us as their university of first choice. Further, given the intensity of the competition for international students, we need to develop a planned and integrated approach so that we succeed in attracting the numbers and diversity of students needed to meet our educational and discovery as well as our financial goals. Finally, we need to recognize that the rise of online and for-profit learning, plus aspirations of other institutions within Saskatchewan to offer degree programs, are changing our environment and creating new pressures as well as opportunities to open up new partnership arrangements through student pathways, articulation agreements and direct transfer programs.

Internally, the work of our university is accomplished through a participatory governance process which defines our character and which includes a series of checks and balances to regulate our actions at various levels within the university. In the changing environment in which we now find ourselves, it is increasingly apparent that simplification and streamlining of our structures and processes is a necessity. Our ability to react to quickly changing circumstances and therefore to compete with other universities in Canada and around the world requires greater nimbleness than currently exists.

These and many other circumstances call on all of us at the University of Saskatchewan to be imaginative and resourceful. We are in a favourable position compared to almost all other Canadian universities. We can take advantage of our circumstances through inspired choices.

AREAS OF FOCUS

Over the past decade, our faculty, sessional lecturers, staff and students have worked hard and made many gains. Lessons learned from our two previous planning cycles point toward the need for focus on key areas, continuity between planning cycles, leveraging our full resources for maximum impact and working together in new and different ways to accomplish our goals. In this planning cycle, we intend to make substantial progress in four key areas: knowledge creation; Aboriginal engagement; culture and community; and innovation in academic programs and services. These areas build on the successful projects and initiatives conceived and implemented during the first and second planning cycles. While these are not the only areas in which we must define, accomplish and measure progress, they are the most immediate if we are to distinguish ourselves among our peers in the next four years.

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This plan presents the strategies which we will employ to pursue our goals over this planning cycle. It is informed by college, school and unit plans and by fifteen months of discussions across our campus about where focused attention is needed. While the areas of focus are presented sequentially, they are interlinked, interdependent and connected. They should be read as a whole, not as isolated silos for action.

Knowledge Creation: Innovation and Impact

The *Strategic Directions* (2002) encouraged the University of Saskatchewan to meet international standards for and increase campus-wide commitment to research, scholarly and artistic work and committed us to be a major presence in graduate education both as a driver and indicator of research success. The *Foundational Document on Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work* (2004) committed us to establishing ourselves as one of the top ten medical-doctoral universities in Canada and one of a select few internationally in key areas. The *Strategic Directions Update* (2010) challenges us to achieve Tri-Agency funding performance above the national average for medical-doctoral universities in all competitions and in all of our academic units. This goal acknowledges that Tri-Agency funded programs represent a hallmark of success based upon peer review and recognition of research accomplishment. Tri-Agency research performance also represents our university's most obvious and most serious vulnerability.

Over the past two planning cycles, we have laid the groundwork for a strategy that will increase our research achievements and establish us as one of the top medical-doctoral research universities in Canada. We are increasingly recruiting top talent strategically: we were selected to receive one of 19 Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERC), a \$30 million investment in world-leading talent; we have 36 of Canada's prestigious Tier 1 and Tier 2 Canada Research Chairs (CRC); we are providing increased support for new faculty through start-up grant packages; and we have increased scholarships for graduate students from the operating budget (through the Academic Priorities Fund) by a total of \$3 million over two planning cycles. We have created three interdisciplinary graduate schools in public health, public policy, and environment and sustainability. We have begun to address innovation and engagement in different ways – particularly in the recent investment to enhance the engagement of undergraduate students and communities in knowledge acquisition and discovery. We have made significant investments in our research and clinical infrastructure (buildings, laboratories, funded research chairs and organizational capacity) and have two of Canada's most significant national science installations (the Canadian Light Source Inc. and the International Vaccine Centre) on our campus. We have begun to make inroads in the international community through partnerships with universities around the globe. We have established a quality assurance system to assess the performance of our existing research centres and our graduate programs. We are finalizing metrics for institutional research performance. And, following wide discussion, we have identified six signature areas of research in which we are perceived as world leaders and in which we can achieve global impact and recognition.

As far as we have come, others have also made great progress. For example, over the past five Tri-Agency competitions, we have remained at or near the bottom in outcomes in the medical-doctoral category, even though our total research funding has increased (from \$140.6M in 2006/07 to \$206.6M in 2010/11). Further, our standings in international rankings, such as the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU, also known as the Shanghai Ranking or the Shanghai Jiao Tong ranking) which represent an increasingly important faculty and student recruitment vehicle, continue to stagnate in part because of our modest performance in citation indexes and reputational surveys, both reflections of the *impact* of our work. While we aspire to be in the top quartile of peer comparators in terms of academic performance, and while our

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compensation strategies are built around this goal, our actual performance in some key indicators such as Tri-Agency funding places us in the bottom quartile. In this planning cycle, we need to see outcomes commensurate with the extraordinary investment in high quality personnel and in research and clinical infrastructure that we have put into place. We cannot have segments of our institution act as bystanders to our research mission.

Our Strategy: Over this planning cycle, we will establish a pervasive culture of research and scholarship throughout the institution. We will implement a comprehensive suite of research initiatives at the institutional and college levels encompassing the key functions of recruiting, supporting and networking existing and new researchers, and strengthening strategic focus. We will round out research involvement throughout the institution and ramp up outcomes and impacts generally as well as within the six signature areas of research. This is a dual message: first, all faculty need to be productive in all areas of research and scholarship. Every faculty member must contribute to the research, scholarly and artistic mission of our university and our faculty need to do so in ways that are comparable to those of colleagues at our peer universities. Second, we need to realize particular impact from our signature areas of research. Note, however, that the success we expect in the signature areas we have chosen will not substitute for overall improvements or enable us to match the across-the-board performance of our peers. Our overall goal is research excellence throughout the university; to achieve this goal will require the collective effort and creativity of the entire university.

Our strategy will be developed and refined using evidence-based methods and learning from successes at national and international peer universities to understand specific levers for and barriers to research success. Utilizing data from the U15 Data Exchange (U15DE) and other sources, we will identify and address the gaps between our performance and that of our peers in order to define and execute plans to increase our success, particularly with Tri-Agency funding. Supports will be provided in key areas to enable our faculty to succeed in collaborative and innovative ways, recognizing that strength comes through interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary efforts, with partnerships that cut across disciplines, institutions, cultures, and nations, and through initiatives that creatively leverage community and locale. Colleges and schools will create and implement research plans which align with institutional goals of pre-eminence and impact, which emphasize strengths both complementary to and independent of the signature areas of research, which describe strategies for increasing the productivity of faculty, and which provide for coordination of effort associated with research, scholarly and artistic work throughout the university. In doing these things, we will build a culture of research and scholarship, with inspired leadership at all levels within the university.

Our university-level strategy includes the following commitments, which we expect to be replicated in appropriately tailored ways within the colleges, schools and departments and to be strongly supported by our administrative units:

Recruit the Best: Because outstanding faculty are essential to our research mission, recruitment will be driven by considerations of outstanding talent, ability to establish high quality research programs, ability to attract and retain Tri-Agency funding, and opportunities for national and global impact. We need to recruit the very best into these roles because they are the highly trained and talented personnel who drive our research enterprise and because they attract others, such as post-doctoral fellows and research partners, to our doors. We will be mindful that research, scholarly and artistic work is measured by the critical judgment of our peers evaluated against national and international standards which assess quality, impact and significance. The probability of national or international impact is greater when researchers are clustered, networked, or otherwise work together within

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coherent, shared, research programs supported by cutting edge infrastructure. Recruitment represents a massive investment by the university that cannot be justified simply to fill content areas in historic curricula. Recruitment needs to focus on how these significant investments will shape the complement to support evolving college and institutional goals, enhance signature areas of research and contribute to creating synergies among disciplines. We need to set clear expectations, during hiring and throughout a faculty member's career, that faculty will continuously participate in meaningful ways in research, teaching, outreach and service/administration as part of their assigned duties. We can accelerate research progress by strategically hiring highly productive mid-career or senior faculty who bring to bear a strong track record in external funding and international impact in key areas. We can also increase research impact through the recruitment of research leaders and faculty to advance specific projects, at different levels throughout the institution. Further, we can refine our practices by ensuring that deans provide direction and leadership for faculty searches.

Support Faculty and Graduate Students to Succeed: The teacher-scholar model will continue to be the core expectation of faculty throughout their careers, and as such, all faculty, including research chairs, will contribute to the instruction of undergraduate and graduate students in a manner that is innovative and built on a foundation of research-based inquiry. We recognize that we have unevenly distributed pockets of intensive research activity across campus, that needs vary greatly among researchers even within disciplines and that we need to put in place the right mix of personnel and supports, at both the institutional level and across the campus, for faculty at different stages of their careers. As a community, we will invest time and resources in activities and processes that increase our success in obtaining research grants, including utilizing a university peer review process. We will implement a mentoring program for new faculty and for promising graduate students who are to become the professoriate of the future. We will streamline and make more efficient processes and supports to enable faculty and research staff to concentrate on innovation and creativity. We will continue to identify, find or develop spaces and places for collaboration and incubation of ideas across disciplines and with a diversity of partners. Faculty members will be supported in leveraging the expertise of others both on and off-campus through collaborative grants and projects, networks, clusters and groups and in working on the complex 'wicked' issues facing society today which require innovative, interdisciplinary solutions. This work will be recognized as part of the assignment of duties and in collegial decisions. At the other end of the spectrum, newly hired faculty will be provided with targeted discipline-specific start-up packages, space, equipment and mentorship to ensure they are well launched on their academic careers. More undergraduate students will be systematically engaged in knowledge creation and dissemination. In recognition of the significant contribution of graduate students to the research, scholarly and artistic work of faculty, we are committed to increasing the budget for graduate student support, particularly through competitive scholarships and fellowships to attract the best graduate students to our university, and at levels commensurate with our aspirations to become a major presence in graduate education.

Strengthen Strategic Focus: While individual faculty members, post-doctoral fellows, other highly trained professionals and graduate students will work on a multitude of topics reflecting the diversity of a great university, at the institution-wide level, we will further strengthen our focus on selected areas of pre-eminence. Our signature areas of research exist because we have, over our history, attracted innovative scholars, graduate students and resources to achieve critical mass and impact in these areas. We will leverage our investments in our signature areas of research to achieve the international recognition we

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desire in these areas. As we develop flagship initiatives in each of our signature areas, such as the recently proposed or established institutes in water, mining, nuclear science, and food security, and consider new initiatives, such as a possible institute for social innovation, we will ensure that we have the institutional leadership to guide these developments and amplify their impact. Building on the process used to identify institutional signature areas, we will look to departments, schools and colleges to identify their own areas of strength, both independent of and complementary to the university's signature areas.

Our success in achieving our goals will be measured against activities that contribute to making research and knowledge transfer more significant and meaningful. We will know we are on track if, by 2016, we have:

- Increased our performance in Tri-Agency funding in each academic unit against our peers, on track toward above-average ranking in all units and all competitions by 2020.
- Increased the proportion of research-appointed faculty holding Tri-Agency funding and/or supervising graduate students in all departments, colleges and schools.
- Increased the number, citations and impact of faculty publications tracking toward national and disciplinary comparators and improved placement for the university in major national and international rankings systems.
- Established new targeted institutes and hired the faculty and staff required to move them forward.
- Established a fully subscribed and effective mentorship program for new and early career faculty.
- Increased externally funded trusts to support a more comprehensive array of funding supports for graduate students approaching the national average at medical-doctoral peer universities, e.g., teaching assistantships.
- Increased internally funded graduate scholarships by a further \$1M and increased by 10% the number of Tri-Agency funded graduate and undergraduate students.
- Increased enrolments in PhD programs by 10% to support our more intensive research culture.
- Established a baseline and increased by 50% the number of undergraduate students participating in research.

Aboriginal Engagement: Relationships, Scholarship, Programs

The *Foundational Document on Aboriginal Initiatives: Forging New Relationships* (2004) committed us to becoming the pre-eminent Canadian medical-doctoral university in Aboriginal education in five areas including: student affairs; academic programming; research, scholarly and artistic work; cultural initiatives; and community outreach. The *Strategic Directions Update* (2010) describes Aboriginal education as the great social imperative of the 21st century in our province and nationally and compels us to achieve Aboriginal enrolment at 15% of our total enrolment by 2020. From surveys of persons who self-identified as First Nation, Métis, or Inuit, we know that education is a top concern of urban Aboriginal peoples. University education, including in professions, sciences, arts and at the graduate level, is critical to the future of First Nations and Métis people and communities in Saskatchewan and therefore to the future of the province itself. Our university, along with the whole post-secondary educational sector in Saskatchewan, is called to service in meeting these needs.

The University of Saskatchewan holds a national reputation as an innovator and leader in Aboriginal education. Beginning with the Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) in the College of Education and the Program of Legal Studies for Native Peoples (PLSNP) associated with the College of Law, we have been responsible for ground-breaking initiatives in Aboriginal education

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for over four decades. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s and into the 21st century, we have increased and diversified our student support programs. Our proportion of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and international Indigenous students is the highest among our peer medical-doctoral universities. We have significant research and scholarly expertise and have identified *Aboriginal Peoples: Engagement and Scholarship* as one of our signature research areas. We are the first university in Canada to have a presence on an urban reserve, at English River. We partner with Wanuskewin Heritage Park to provide a 'living classroom' for our students and research, cultural and educational programs for faculty, students and staff. We have many connections to Aboriginal communities within the province and beyond. In the first planning cycle, we identified student support as the key area of focus and we put into place the Aboriginal Achievement Model as a key initiative institutionally. In the second planning cycle, we identified graduate education as a high priority. Numbers of Aboriginal graduate students have been slowly growing and we have created new graduate programs in Agriculture and Bioresources (PGD in Aboriginal Agriculture and Land Management) and Education (Integrated M.Ed. through an Indigenous land-based cohort). There are emerging initiatives in many colleges and important central initiatives which have contributed substantially to student success. However, rates of enrolment and success for Aboriginal students remain significantly below our targets.

In the spirit of Treaty Six, in whose territory the University of Saskatchewan is located, our vision is to be recognized as a place where many peoples come together to engage in mutually respectful relations and dialogue. We bring this spirit to all of our educational, scholarly and service activities as we: engage in partnerships with Indigenous, First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities in Canada and beyond; increase the participation and support the success of Aboriginal students; build institutional research capacity and reputation on issues related to Indigenous peoples; promote understanding of Aboriginal society by non-Aboriginal students, staff and faculty; listen to the concerns and needs of Aboriginal peoples and communities; and work with Indigenous people from around the globe, including far beyond our campus and our province.

Our Strategy: Over this planning cycle, we will be characterized as a place with diversified approaches and flourishing initiatives in every college and school involving rigorous and supportive programs for Aboriginal student success, engagement with Aboriginal communities, inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and experience in curricular offerings and intercultural engagement among faculty, staff and students. We will focus on ensuring the recruitment and success of First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal and Indigenous students across the full range and all levels of university programming as we fully grasp the foundational imperative of our role in educating larger numbers of Aboriginal students for the benefit of our province and nation. Ensuring student success will be a complex task which will require many approaches: engagement of all faculty, students and staff; support for new teaching methods, content and transition/retention programs where required; research by, for and with Aboriginal people; community partnerships developed in a coordinated way by those experienced in this work, drawing others in wherever possible; identification and implementation of mechanisms to address and reduce barriers to Aboriginal student participation and success (e.g., childcare spaces for students, housing, targeted financial assistance, proximity to community, language). University-level initiatives will focus on coordinating efforts, listening to and working with partners to augment the pool of qualified applicants, increasing the visibility and the attractiveness of the campus for prospective students, providing supports, leveraging existing knowledge and experience, celebrating past and current successes, building on common interests and ensuring co-ordination among colleges. As an institution, we will build personal, professional and technological networks and partnerships to share information widely across the campus for greater overall impact and to make our campus a more welcoming, culturally

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sensitive and nurturing environment. As we work with Aboriginal communities, our efforts will be characterized as a balanced team, – described by Gordon Oakes, former chief of the Nekanee First Nation, as two horses, one Aboriginal and one non-Aboriginal, moving together, each understanding and celebrating each other's culture and traditions.

Our university-level strategy includes the following commitments:

Coordinate and Strengthen University-Community Relationships: Our university has many Aboriginal partners: communities, schools, governing organizations, corporations and individuals locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. These partnerships are created and nourished primarily within individual units, and relationships are often carefully guarded. The end result is multiple contacts with single communities; without coordination, the overall impact of the university is diffuse. In this planning cycle, we will look to campus leaders to work proactively and collaboratively to assist the university in increasing the overall impact of our activities through greater coordination and harmonization of effort, internally and externally. This work will take a multi-pronged approach. Two initiatives will be the primary focus:

- *Engage with the provincial K-12 system.* We anticipate the creation of a joint Council - Provost's Task Force early in the planning cycle to support this important initiative. The main focus is coordination of activities and initiatives taking place in the elementary and secondary schools in Saskatoon, in schools in areas immediately surrounding Saskatoon and within the province. A particular focus concerns the emerging campus-led partnership to promote STEM education (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) within the Northern Administrative District, which will be accelerated so that Aboriginal students and northern residents have access and early exposure to the full benefits of the University of Saskatchewan. Based on this prototype and our work with teachers and administrators in the provincial K-12 system, we will launch a broader initiative throughout the province to ensure that Aboriginal students and northern residents will be exposed to STEM education in new and innovative ways.
- *Facilitate and co-ordinate community-based research in First Nations and Métis communities.* The university will identify resources, processes and protocols to support the involvement of faculty and students in partnerships for research, scholarly and artistic work in, with and reflecting the priorities of First Nations communities and Métis Locals. These partnerships will reflect the idea of mutually beneficial engagement that both advances the university's research goals and meets needs identified by recognized community partners.

Increase Visibility of Aboriginal Culture and Symbols On-campus: Our campus is one of the most beautiful in Canada and its Gothic architecture speaks to a proud collegiate tradition. That architecture also is a symbol of European colonization and under-represents the traditions of Aboriginal Peoples who inhabited these lands since time immemorial. In this planning cycle, we will move to make our campus better reflect our unique position at the intersection of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture through the construction of the Gordon Oakes – Red Bear Student Centre as a distinctive campus landmark. This signature on-campus centre of Aboriginal higher learning will be a home and hub for Aboriginal students and student activity. Other efforts to increase the visibility of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture will be through initiatives such as website content and signage in Aboriginal languages, naming of roadways and rooms after Aboriginal leaders or in Aboriginal

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languages and displays of art collections. Aboriginal culture will also be prominent in our university's ceremonies and events.

Celebrate Success and Leverage Internal Expertise: It is critical that we proudly celebrate the accomplishments of our faculty, staff, students and community partners, share stories of successes, and build on the key learning of our past accomplishments to further encourage student success throughout the entire university. Early in this planning cycle, we will organize a symposium which will be geared toward ensuring that the campus community is fully aware of our past and current accomplishments so that we may collectively celebrate our successes and turn our attention toward the next priorities in Aboriginal education for the University of Saskatchewan. We will establish awards for faculty and students to recognize scholarship, accomplishment, innovations in pedagogy and contributions to reconciliation and understanding between Aboriginals and newcomers in Canada, including targeted and prestigious graduate scholarships. Through reciprocal learning – where Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, peoples, students and faculty respect and learn from one another – we will move forward together.

Our success in achieving our goals will be measured against activities that contribute to making Aboriginal engagement at all levels more significant and more meaningful. We will know we are on track if, by 2016, we have:

- Increased the institutional first to second year direct-entry retention rate of Aboriginal students by 10%, on track to achieving the goal of Aboriginal enrolment at 15% of total enrolment by 2020.
- Increased the graduation rates of self-identified Aboriginal students in a wider array of programs.
- Implemented a registry and/or portal documenting Aboriginal initiatives, programs, services and partnerships.
- Increased the visibility of Aboriginal culture, language and symbols throughout the campus, beginning with the Gordon Oakes – Red Bear Student Centre and including on institutional, college, school and unit websites, on roadways and signage, on and within buildings.
- Established a set of prestigious awards for faculty and students to recognize scholarship, accomplishment, innovations in pedagogy and contributions to reconciliation and understanding between Aboriginal peoples and newcomers in Canada.
- Established initiatives and programs that encourage and enable faculty experts and Aboriginal students to engage with counterparts in other regions of the world.
- Established a baseline for courses providing undergraduate students with experiential learning through outreach and engagement involving Aboriginal communities or organizations.
- Established a baseline for research partnerships or projects happening in and with Aboriginal communities.

Culture and Community: Our Global Sense of Place

The University of Saskatchewan is a dynamic, resourceful, imaginative community – a place full of life, people and activity linked both to our immediate local environment and to the wide world beyond. The *Strategic Directions* (2002) encouraged the University to be known for its connections to Saskatchewan, Western Canada, the North and the Great Plains environments of the world, while at the same time nurturing connections to a wide variety of communities (local, regional, national, international, cultural), thereby enriching both the university and the province. Our *First Integrated Plan* declared that “no local challenge that deserves the word is without its global manifestation; no global challenge fails to touch us where we live.” As a

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result, we put into place a series of academic initiatives which addressed health, science and technology, environment, business and entrepreneurship, community, and public policy, establishing three new interdisciplinary graduate schools in the process. Over the Second Planning Cycle, we developed and invested in an implementation plan to support the goals enunciated in *Globalism and International Activities* (the International Activities Foundational Document, 2003). We are now at a moment in our history when we can choose to be more internationally engaged and thereby build our international reputation. The hallmark for our university's third plan needs to be a deliberate cultivation of those locally grounded aspects of culture, creativity and community that also speak to global issues and challenges.

Creative diversity is key to our character and mission. We are a multi-cultural community, located within and connected to other cultural communities – most immediately, the City of Saskatoon, recently named one of Canada's cultural capitals. Our university is a part of, and a microcosm of, larger communities including the province, the nation and the world. According to recent studies, technology, talent and tolerance are key elements that encourage and sustain innovation. Markers of creative, vibrant, communities include embracing diversity and inclusiveness, showing openness to change, responding fluidly to opportunities and placing a premium on new ideas. Given the talent available here and the resources we have at our fingertips, we have a critical and leading role to play in ensuring that Saskatoon and Saskatchewan are seen as among the world's most creative and vibrant communities. Our role includes being an active leader of international and global engagement. We are well positioned to continue to support the province's goals of recruiting and retaining highly qualified people to bring the province's multi-cultural motto, "from many peoples strength", to reality. We are also well-positioned to develop international partnerships, to help Saskatchewan and Canadian students gain global experience, and to contribute to global solutions.

Our Strategy: Over this planning cycle, building on the successes of the *Second Integrated Plan: Toward an Engaged University* and specifically its emphasis on working collaboratively across boundaries, we will support our community to be greater than the sum of its parts. We will model innovation through creative responses to challenging environmental, social and economic problems. We will be more inter-culturally engaged, more knowledgeable about and affirming of other communities, peoples, customs and traditions, and more invested in the sense of place based at the University of Saskatchewan. We will provide a safe and welcoming environment – in attitude, in support services and in infrastructure. We will ensure that we fully embrace our intercultural environment and pursue international partnerships that reflect our priorities. Valuing a wide variety of perspectives – Aboriginal, new Canadian, international students, mature students, various sexual and gender identities, differently-abled – is second nature for an institution of higher learning. In this planning cycle, we anticipate becoming an even more diverse and inclusive community if not a much larger one.

Our university-level strategy includes the following commitments:

Celebrate and Promote Diversity/Inclusiveness: Communities are shaped by their citizens. As a reflection of society today, our campus community will be both diverse and inclusive, supporting individual differences, involving and valuing differences and viewing these differences as strengths. Over this planning cycle, we will significantly ramp up our efforts to encourage and support activities leading to the development of a more diverse and inclusive community throughout the university. As part of this commitment, we will promote the recruitment of international faculty and students into our colleges, schools and departments, and actively recruit Aboriginal faculty, students and staff to ensure a diversity of peoples and cultures within our faculty, staff and student complements. We will further

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initiate opportunities for all employees and students to develop increased intercultural awareness and competencies to maintain respectful and supportive educational and workplace environments that attract and retain a community that visibly represents the citizens and the society we serve. We will leverage the diversity of our people to create programs and services that meet the differing needs of those we serve to enrich the lives of co-workers, the workplace, the university and the community.

Model Sustainability and Practice Effective Stewardship of Institutional Resources: One of the drivers of creativity is our desire to contribute to social, environmental and economic sustainability in our immediate environment and around the world. Our sustainability goals cross the traditional lines of teaching, research, operations, administration and service and call on all of us to find new ways to work together in service of global goals. One form of sustainability is the stewardship of the natural environment in a socially and economically responsible manner that meets the needs of both present and future generations. In this regard, our vision is that every member of the campus community will act sustainably and will make informed choices in all areas of campus life: education, research, operations, governance and community engagement. In the second planning cycle, members of our community worked together to develop a Campus Sustainability Plan. In this planning cycle, we will identify three or four concrete initiatives that will serve as prototype projects in the first year and which will result in demonstrable gains for enhanced sustainability on campus. We will identify the actions required and costs associated with implementing the *University and College Presidents' Climate Change Statement of Action for Canada*, to which the university is a signatory. We will encourage members of the campus community to make individual and collective choices in their daily lives to be responsible participants in the local and global communities.

Experience has shown that there is no environmental sustainability without social and economic sustainability, and vice-versa. Thoughtful and transparent institutional sustainability through the prudent stewardship of our financial resources and our capital inheritance, including compliance with regulation and reporting requirements, fair and ethical procurement policies, transparent and inclusive governance arrangements, fair and appropriate employment agreements and effective management of resources at all levels are other important aspects for our attention. We have been managed well and this has contributed to a relatively strong position relative to our peers. Yet, to meet the expectations of external funders, partners and regulators, while supporting our decentralized structure, we need to ensure clarity in assignment of responsibilities, tasking individuals with responsibility and accountability; provide enhanced orientation, training and communication programs; establish service level agreements and standards of service performance for all administrative and support units; and establish a leading practices internal control framework. The sustainability of our campus buildings and infrastructure, through our revitalization and renewal strategy (RenewUs), will ensure that key parts of our campus receive the attention they need to continue to support our instructional and research programs.

Our success in achieving our goals will be measured against activities that contribute to making culture and community more significant and meaningful. We will know we are on track if, by 2016, we have:

- Engaged a significant proportion of faculty, staff and students in activities designed to increase intercultural awareness and understanding and improve intercultural competencies.
- Increased the number of self-identified Aboriginal employees from the current 2.6 to 4%.

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- Implemented a Campus Climate Survey to assess the level of 'welcome' our campus environment provides to its increasingly diverse population.
- Set 2020 targets for diversity among the student and employee populations.
- Set 2020 targets for retention and graduation rates for provincial, international and out of province undergraduate and graduate students.
- Demonstrably increased our sustainability activities, on target toward a Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) rating of silver by 2020.

Innovation in Academic Programs and Services

The *Teaching and Learning Foundational Document* (2008) committed the university to increased innovation in its academic programs and services. Following from the emphasis in the *Second Integrated Plan* on the undergraduate and graduate student experience, we have made significant inroads into changing the teaching and learning environment. Specifically, we have initiated learning communities, created teaching awards, provided increased support for curricular innovation and design, adopted a learning charter, increased student funding, provided mentoring and training, opened up experiential learning opportunities in a wider variety of programs and created a new Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning portfolio to advocate for new and innovative initiatives at the college and department levels.

The University of Saskatchewan has one of the broadest arrays of academic programs available in Canada, and in general this array of programs was developed to suit past students and methodologies of learning and instruction. Many of our programs, particularly our professional programs, are in high demand; others are less sought-after by today's highly mobile, connected and discriminating students. We cannot expect that the current program array, based primarily on disciplinary lines, will be sufficient or even attractive to 21st century learners who are increasingly more technologically literate, more mobile and more self-directed in the choice and selection of courses and programs leading to a degree. We need to offer more compelling, engaging and challenging academic programs which are creatively designed, are grounded in interdisciplinary and broad global perspectives, are informed by the scholarship of discovery, are responsive to student needs and market demand, utilize new methodologies and approaches, provide future-oriented professional education and address areas of societal need. Students, through a host of surveys, studies and reports have asked for a variety of innovations, such as more experiential learning activities, more program, course and method of delivery choice, improved opportunities for mobility, recognition of prior learning and increased flexibility in scheduling and regulations. The needs, demands, pressures and exciting opportunities for change require us to go beyond experiments and incrementalism. Now is a time to rethink our models of programming and delivery and to pursue academically and student-driven streamlining and innovations.

Our Strategy: Over this planning cycle, we will implement a strategic approach to enrolment planning by creating a mix of programs and learners that reflects deliberately chosen academic priorities, builds synergies with our signature areas of research, facilitates student movement between degree programs and mobility between institutions, addresses low enrolment programs, responds to areas of increasing student interest and market demands, and supports college and school goals to rethink programs profoundly. We will work to provide increased opportunities for experiential learning for our students throughout their academic programs. Assessment initiatives based on pre-defined learning outcomes will be developed and implemented and will serve as a basis for decision-making and for program and service development. Academic support processes and programs within and across colleges, schools and administrative units will be streamlined and simplified to ensure that organizational

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structures and processes facilitate student mobility (from inside or outside of the university), recognize prior learning, open up new 'pathways' for transfer and other non-traditional students, support student success and promote efficiency and effectiveness of operations, processes, and structures. To deliver undergraduate and graduate degree programs renowned for quality, innovation and relevance and to maximize impact from institutional resources, academic and administrative units will need to work collaboratively to support student success. Likewise, trust and support for innovation and allowing for fluidity within programs and service offerings through enhanced decision-making and accountability will need to be nurtured and supported. Utilizing investments made in the University Learning Centre (ULC), the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching Effectiveness (GMCTE), the office of Institutional Planning and Assessment (IPA), in Student and Enrolment Services Division (SESD), and the Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning over the past two planning cycles will be critical to our success.

Our university-level strategy includes the following commitments, which we expect to be replicated in appropriately tailored ways within the colleges, schools, departments and administrative units:

Actively Shape Our Student Body: To reach our goal of a diverse student body, we will develop targets for composition and diversity of student populations in alignment with institutional goals and to implement strategies to achieve these goals. This needs to be a conscious effort informed by evidence, with concerted efforts placed on addressing areas of strategic priority which support our broad institutional goals and which involve the entire campus through the recently initiated Strategic Enrolment Management project. While our size will not be much larger, we need to change the student mix, continuing to focus on graduate student recruitment, on Saskatchewan's best and brightest, on out of province and international students at the undergraduate level and on building a presence in other provinces, especially Alberta, in other parts of Western Canada and other countries which are carefully identified based on data. We will aggressively recruit high calibre Aboriginal graduate students, as well as students of Indigenous heritage and students interested in Indigenous cultures and issues. As we move toward our goal of research intensiveness, we will increase the number of graduate students by recruiting the most talented students, from Saskatchewan, Canada and around the world. Given provincial demographics and the significant facilities and infrastructure we have available to us, we will continue to pursue the very best students from Saskatchewan and make available to them highly attractive undergraduate and graduate scholarships. Our efforts will be supported by active alumni engagement and strong leadership at the college/departmental level. Lastly, we know that we need to place significant effort on retention and completion strategies to ensure that our students make a successful transition from high school to university and from first year to second year where the majority of challenges are faced. This will require us to consider alternative method of delivery approaches, including 'learn where you live', distributed learning models, and to develop and nurture strong partnerships with regional colleges which are resident within local communities, are anxious for us to share opportunities with them, and can provide flexible access on and off campus to students. It will also require us to provide additional innovative academic services for students to support student success, in areas such as student advising, academic support, childcare and financial supports, including scholarships and bursaries.

Focus on Learner-Centred Programming and Curricular Innovation: Universities are defined in significant measure by their academic programs. Students increasingly choose universities on the basis of the degree programs offered as well as institutional reputation garnered from various and disparate sources. Student populations also shape the identity

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and profile of universities and the academic units they house by virtue of their participation in higher education. Each student who chooses to enrol with us to reach their educational goals has individual needs, interests and abilities. While we cannot tailor our programs and services to address all possibilities, we can design them with flexibility at their core. We also need to design them to meet the needs and expectations of today's and tomorrow's students, including meeting them where they live and providing experiences that they enjoy. Further, we need to design programs around identified learning outcomes that drive course design and offerings. The curriculum mapping exercise currently underway in the College of Arts and Science has much potential here to transform our thinking and there is much that can be learned from existing accredited programs which are further advanced in this regard.

As members of the University of Saskatchewan community, we need to define what sets a University of Saskatchewan educational experience apart from those at other universities and post-secondary institutions. Our students also need to experience, recognize and tell others about these differences which should be directly related to the curriculum delivered, the method of delivery, or both. One of the ways to be more distinctive is to provide Aboriginal-related content, experiences, or examples within curriculum in ways that complement the discipline and enhance the intercultural knowledge or practice of our graduates. Other ways include delivering programs through distance and distributed education or year-round, with a focus on experiential or community-based learning. This will involve designing many new courses and programs on a foundation of outreach and engagement with experiential learning opportunities and primary research built directly into the curriculum. We will, in this planning cycle, continue to encourage curricular innovation, create an institutional plan for distance and distributed learning, identify prototypes of blended learning models, consider block programming for degree programs and explore moving away from a primarily two-semester system. One aspect of increased flexibility will be the possibility of utilizing our third semester (May to August) more creatively and strategically than has been the case to date as well as explore scheduling structures and processes within the existing structure. All of this effort will recognize and build on our continuing commitment to make the Learning Charter come alive within our academic programs.

Foster Student Creativity and Innovation: We will expand and create new opportunities for hands-on, active learning and applied innovation in student-oriented and student-driven initiatives. Our students already engage in a variety of forms of creative activity in courses and projects and outside the formal curriculum through clubs, entrepreneurship and community engagement. They have signalled their interest and enthusiasm for 'out-of-class' experiences through the establishment of student-led projects such as the University of Saskatchewan Space Design Team (USST), the inter-professional iPASS symposium in health sciences, Footprint Design, Policy Works and Student Teachers Against Racism, among other examples. We know that involvement in applied work and learning relevant to student interests leads to better student engagement and outcomes. Part of our commitment to creativity and innovation and thereby to our provincial and global sense of place, needs to be the provision of opportunities for our faculty and students to explore ideas, in essence, to provide them with organizational, curricular and physical spaces in which innovation can be incubated and flourish. While different approaches will be needed in different types of disciplines, students in arts, professions, humanities and natural and social sciences all desire and can benefit from formal and informal opportunities to put learning, talent and imagination to work. We will facilitate our students to volunteer in local organizations and to participate in international research and development projects.

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Demonstrate Effectiveness: Coupled with a focus on evidence-informed learning outcomes assessment, our processes will be more aligned with international standards and expectations for transparency and efficiency in program and service delivery. To achieve outcomes for students and communities using our always limited resources, all participants in the university community will be thinking deeply about the significance and impact of their activities. Looking at opportunities to consolidate and strengthen our programs and define our optimal enrolment goals and strategies for achieving them will be a deliberate consequence of our Strategic Enrolment Management project. Looking at streamlining academic processes to provide more flexibility and simplicity and to reduce the barriers to achieving our goals will build on the work initiated in the second planning cycle. Our recent Service and Process Enhancement Project (SPEP) identified a long list of opportunities to enhance service and improve effectiveness; it is unreasonable to think that we would not continue to act on these and to identify other opportunities as they arise, including within our academic activities and practices.

Our success in achieving our goals will be measured against activities that contribute to making our programs and services more effective and streamlined. We will know we are on track if, by 2016, we have:

- Defined learning outcomes for all undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Established a baseline and increased by 20% the number of students engaging in experiential learning, including community-service learning, internships, undergraduate research, international student exchanges and co-op experiences within their academic programs.
- Achieved the goal of institutional graduate enrolment at 20% of total enrolment.
- Obtained improved student satisfaction ratings associated with student advising on national and international surveys.
- Increased the number of external transfer students by 10%.
- Established a baseline and increased, by 10%, the number of students and faculty engaged in international research and development work and in study-abroad programs.
- Benchmarked the administrative efficiency of administrative/academic support units against comparators.
- Obtained improved student ratings on their learning environment through improvements in NSSE scores.
- Implemented the recommendations of a joint Council-Provost Task Force on student financial aid.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THIS PLAN

This Third Integrated Plan for the University of Saskatchewan is supported by a Multi-Year Budget Framework, a Multi-Year Capital Plan and an implementation plan, all of which are in the final stages of development and together comprise the University-level strategy for the next four years. They represent the 'integration' within integrated planning.

People Resources. A university is comprised of people and their talents and diversity are our greatest resource. This plan sets goals for us that will shape our university and that will require transformative change in our organizational culture and composition. We cannot achieve these goals unless we deliberately shape and direct faculty and staff recruitment, development, leadership and organizational culture in supporting ways. This will require collective energy and leadership from all levels. In this planning cycle, we will develop an institutional people plan to ensure closer alignment of our people resources with institutional priorities and to bring focus to our continuing efforts to recruit, retain, develop, engage and reward faculty and staff and

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thereby build a solid foundation for our future. We will continue to measure our success through the annual *Employee Opinion Survey* and our *Achievement Record*.

Financial Resources. Current global economic uncertainties and anticipated constraints in public sector financing, tempered by our experiences in 2008-09, surround us as we approach the start of this planning cycle. Our university diversified revenue sources over the past two planning cycles and is well positioned financially although challenges persist. In spite of economic uncertainties, the *Academic Priorities Fund* (APF) will continue to support transformative change initiated as part of the integrated planning process. Currently, \$3.5M is available in permanent funding to support initiatives outlined in this plan. However, the APF represents only a fraction (less than 1%) of our resources. Total university revenues now exceed \$1B annually. It is crucial that we leverage all of the human and financial capital that the university has, most of which is allocated to the colleges and units, to support our priorities and our success. In this planning cycle, the **Multi-Year Budget Framework** will move away from an exclusive focus on the operating budget to provide a comprehensive overview of consolidated university revenues from 2012-2016 as well as a detailed projection of both revenues and expenses in the operating budget anticipated for the planning period. By the end of this planning cycle, a comprehensive multi-year budget framework that includes all university revenues and expenses will be introduced. As we work to increase our collective understanding of the financial resources at our disposal, early in this planning cycle we will also transition to a new budget approach, currently referred to as the Transparent, Activity Based Budget System (TABBS). It is anticipated that this new system will have a profound effect on the university, including the provision of better information to decision-makers throughout the university to guide choices and inform decision-making. It will also provide a framework for how colleges can meet budget targets through activity increases and revenue growth. As we move toward a more rigorous budgeting system, we will need to work diligently to live up to the title of our new system, including reviewing the framework, updating assumptions, obtaining annual approvals and ensuring financial sustainability.

Capital Resources. In the decade since the *Strategic Directions* were written, we have made exceptional progress in establishing new campus facilities and infrastructure. These capital investments represent an historic investment in a comprehensive set of projects that will fundamentally strengthen our capacity in teaching, research and the student experience. While the Government of Saskatchewan has been and will continue to be our most important funding partner, we will continue to seek out and leverage capital funding from other sources, such as the Government of Canada, other provincial governments, donors, private sector partners, students, entrepreneurs, and the university operating budget. We will pursue more private sector partnerships, as we have with *Preston Crossing* and the *College Quarter* and as outlined in *Vision 2057*, as a source of financing for university priorities. We expect this trend to continue as our engaged university builds more mutually beneficial partnerships, pursues projects where there is a shared interest with governments and other organizations outside the university and leverages our land endowment. In this planning cycle, the **Multi-Year Capital Plan** will shift our emphasis to address our backlog of deferred maintenance through *RenewUS*, a new and concerted approach, which draws on the experiences and best practices at other universities, which have effectively tackled the deferred maintenance challenge. *RenewUS* calls for a reinvigorated effort, informed by the academic directions of key programs and investing energy and financial support to achieve a set of major capital projects in this planning cycle. The Multi-Year Capital Plan identifies several institutional priorities such as the Gordon Oakes-Red Bear Student Centre, childcare expansion, distributed delivery of educational programs, the Natural Resources Innovation Complex and Clarion. In addition to these priorities, our new institutes will challenge us to partner with a host of others to ensure they come to fruition. Finally, we

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anticipate that we will pursue new – and in many cases emergent – capital projects, ensuring that we respond to academic initiatives and opportunities and keep our teaching, research and student services on the leading edge. In the creation and dissemination of knowledge, standing still is simply not an option.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Plans without a strategy for implementation rarely produce results. Through the integrated planning process, the *Strategic Directions*, the foundational documents, the *First* and *Second Integrated Plans* and now the *Third Integrated Plan*, we have defined who we are. In the implementation of these documents, we are actors shaping the future of our university. Our people bring our plans to life.

In this planning cycle, we will bring together the best aspects of the implementation models employed in the first two integrated plans. We will make every effort to define expectations early in the planning cycle. We will recognize at least two types of activities within commitments – those limited to clearly articulated projects that simply need to be completed and those that are opportunities for open-ended processes to identify creative ways to advance our work as an institution in relation to the commitment. The first set of commitments will be executed under a project management framework using best practices in communications and consultation to engage stakeholders at appropriate times in appropriate ways. The second set of commitments will be led by a facilitator/ animator who will guide the discussions in such a way as to encourage a diversity of perspectives, explore collaborative, flexible solutions, and foster leadership in many corners of campus. It will be critical to engage individuals from multiple neighbourhoods of campus in these conversations, particularly new faculty members who bring recent knowledge of other institutions and who will be critical in shaping our university in the decades to come. It will also be important to measure our progress toward our institutional goals and those outlined in this plan.

Our strategy will recognize that we are a creative, collaborative and resourceful university. Our best resources are our people. It is imperative that we engage them in multiple ways in implementing the University's *Third Integrated Plan* and the college, school and administrative unit plans.

CONCLUSION

A plan establishes priorities in the context of a moment in time, an internal and external environment and available information. The best planning takes into account vision, capacity and strengths. This plan builds on a foundation of strategic thinking and implementation that makes it adaptive to changing circumstances while being grounded in shared vision and goals.

Our campus is a different place than it was a decade ago; this is a product not only of changing times but of concerted effort, collegial processes and, importantly, the environment that we have collectively created and fostered. As with our previous two plans, the success of this plan and the objectives of the university depend on the engagement of our faculty, post-doctoral fellows, sessional lecturers, undergraduate and graduate students, and staff. We have a collective responsibility for governance, administration and outcomes. Working together within the university and with our local, national and international partners provides us with the platform for success. We are building on a track record of success. We are confident that we will realize, in this planning cycle, the full promise and potential of our hard work and choices. As we work collaboratively together, we move ever closer toward our goal of 'an honourable place among the best'.