

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
COORDINATING COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

PRESENTED BY: Jay Wilson, chair, Coordinating Committee

DATE OF MEETING: June 17, 2021

SUBJECT: **Annual Committee Report**

COUNCIL ACTION: **For Information Only**

SUMMARY:

The following is a summary report on the work of the Coordinating Committee for the 2020/21 academic year.

The Coordinating Committee membership consists of all Council committee chairs and several members of the Governance Office. The committee met monthly throughout the year for the primary purpose of setting University Council agendas, which were very full this year. Throughout the year, Council considered new academic programs, faculty council bylaws, university policies, nominations to Council committees and search and review committees, and much more. We received regular reports from the President, Provost, and student societies, and special reports on items of strategic importance to the university, such as the budget, and progress on the University Plan: 2025.

There were additional considerations this year in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic due to our remote working modality. With 116 members on Council, determining the proper approach to hosting the meetings was given careful consideration. In September 2020, we moved from asynchronous meetings, which had been the practice since March 2020, to synchronous meetings held via WebEx. Meeting protocols were developed with the support of the Governance Office and endorsed by the committee. Overall, the feedback from Council members on the online approach was positive. Next year, in 2021/22, the platform will change in accordance with USask's move to Zoom, but meetings will continue in a virtual format until SHA recommendations indicate that a full return to campus is safe.

As I have reported to Council at each meeting, the Coordinating Committee and the President's Executive Committee met monthly (formerly known as breakfast meetings) to discuss key strategic issues for the academic affairs of USask. The committees work collaboratively to set the agenda for these meetings. In every meeting, we debriefed the previous Council meeting and received updates from the Pandemic Response Team. We also discussed such matters as the collaborative relationship with the Provincial Government, the provincial budget, the challenges facing Laurentian University, the impact of the pandemic on students, staff, and faculty and the supports available to them, the Post-Pandemic Shift Project, and much more. Each meeting was productive, the topics were timely, and the tone was collaborative and collegial. This valuable time with our senior leaders is appreciated by Council chairs.

In addition to this important collaboration with PEC, the Coordinating Committee invited Dr. Airini, Provost and Vice-President Academic, to the May meeting of the Coordinating Committee. The subject of discussion was coordination and collaboration with Council and Council committees on strategic priorities of the university as articulated in the *University Plan: 2025*. To enable the success of the Provost's critically important role in engaging in the university's academic governance, it was decided that Dr. Airini will be regularly invited to meet with the Coordinating Committee in 2021/22. We look forward to enhancing and supporting this vitally important relationship for the university.

I have sincerely enjoyed working with the chairs of the committees of Council through the Coordinating Committee – it is a great team. I would like to thank the outgoing Council chairs, Susan Detmer, chair of APC and Vince-Bruni Bossio, chair of TLARC. Both are going to continue working with Council committees, Dr. Detmer on APC, and Dr. Bruni-Bossio as vice-chair of PPC. I'll also welcome Alison Oates as chair of APC, and Kathleen James-Cavan as chair of TLARC starting July 1, 2021. I look forward to working with both of them along with the continuing Council chairs next year.

I also wish to recognize University Secretary and Chief Governance Officer, Dr. Chelsea Willness for her support and counsel throughout the year. Thanks to the members of the University Governance Office Michelle Kjargaard, Jacque Thomarat, and Amanda Storey for the countless behind the scenes hours to make the work of the coordinating committee operate efficiently and smoothly.

Finally, thank you to all of the members of Council committees, and Council members. Your dedication and contributions are vital to the success of our university.