



Provost's report to University Council  
October, 2021

Hello Council Chair, members, and visitors. Bonjour.  
à tous. tānsi. hau koda. ēđtanet'e? hau kola. taanishi. hau kona. anin  
[English. French. Cree. Dakota. Dene.Lakota. Michif. Nakota. Saulteaux]

### GENERAL REMARKS

I hope that the first term is going as well as possible in these dynamic, challenging times. I would like to share some updates and news with you around what we're currently working on in the Provost's Office.

Over these last 20 months, and through this fall term, everyone at USask has put an immense amount of effort, much of it innovative and creative, to keep USask moving forward across all aspects of the organization - from teaching and learning, to research, scholarship and creative works, and community engagement, along with student support and all operations. I remain so impressed by how everyone across the university has contributed so significantly to our safety and well-being while continuing to advance so many important initiatives forward for the benefit of our students, faculty, staff, and communities. We all are aware too that these accomplishments have happened at the same time as we have all experienced challenges affecting our personal and professional lives. Thank you, everyone, for the care for one another and our university community.

Our main focus continues to be keeping our campus safe while supporting academic initiatives. Thank you so much to the Pandemic Response Team for the leadership the members have provided for us all in ensuring solid, science-informed actions for our shared safety. Thank you to all members of our university community for your own actions to ensure a safe campus. This month I would like to give a special acknowledgement to our facilities team members.

### National Truth and Reconciliation Day

This past September, Canada marked the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. USask acknowledged this important day by supporting a day of reflection and learning for our campus community to recognize and commemorate the legacy of residential schools and the resilience of survivors. By closing regular operations on Thursday, September 30 to allow staff, faculty, and students time for learning, reflection and awareness. Observing this day is part of our commitment to reconciliation. I would like to acknowledge the resilience of the residential school survivors in the university community and the emotionally demanding and difficult work made possible through these respected leaders and all those directly affected by the colonial legacy of residential schools and other policies imposed by the Canadian government on Indigenous Peoples.

Members across our university prepared a series of events that aimed to provide opportunities for learning during the entire week from September 27th through September 30th, raising awareness and supporting reflection and education. The week began with remarks from our President and the illumination of our Saskatoon campus in orange light. The recording is available for viewing [here](#).

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Thank you, President Peter Stoicheff and the organizing committee for USask's inaugural Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) event featuring Dr. Malinda Smith, vice-provost (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) from the University of Calgary (October 19). To be the university the world needs, we embrace equity, diversity and inclusion in our teaching, research, scholarship and creative works, and community engagement.

## Planning and budget

This section provides general comments and information about planning and budget town halls and tuition.

Over the last year and more, members of my portfolio, along with those in the VP Finance & Resources' team, have considered, analyzed, and planned for how COVID-19 might potentially impact university operations, as well as how the university could mitigate some of these impacts. At this point, we can cautiously say that USask has weathered the initial impact of COVID-19 through the fiscal year 2020/21 more positively than originally anticipated. While we have a reserves deficit that needs to be resolved, we are in stronger financial position than we had contemplated at the outset of the pandemic. Even so, our resources are still constrained.

I am looking forward to working with the Deans, committee members, and my fellow Executive members on the upcoming 2022/23 budget cycle, so that our university is best-positioned to advance our academic and research priorities and ambitions within our means. Thank you in advance to Council and its committees for forthcoming discussions on planning and budget reports that will be provided to these meetings. The stability of our finances is critical for the university to sustain operations and drive innovation, necessary to fulfil the aspirations in our University 2025 plan, as well as to see how we can mobilize available resources to invest further in the academic mission of the university.

### *Planning and budget townhalls*

As part of our commitment to regular briefings to the university, Vice President Finance and Resources Greg Fowler and I would like to invite you to attend town halls that will provide information on strategic planning and budget. We plan to have these briefings each year in fall term (as we identify strategic priorities and head into annual planning for budget) and spring/summer term (following planning and budget approval).

Our first fall town hall will be on October 25, followed by a second on November 5.

After a short presentation from myself and Greg, we will invite the audience to engage in a discussion about planning and budget. This will serve to augment the feedback already received from the Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC) and Council from the regular reports that we make on strategic priorities and financial updates. In addition, we regularly report to the Deans' Council, Senior Leadership Forum, and the Board of Governors.

Thank you to the PPC and Council Chairs, and members for the support to widen this information sharing and for Greg and me to initiate regular townhalls for the university community. We appreciate this support.

Please join us online on October 25 at this link [here](#). We will run two sessions on October. 25, 2021, so you can choose the time that better suits you:

- **Session One:** 9 am – 9:55 am. **Session 2:** 10 am – 10:55 am.

If you can't make it to the event, it will also be recorded and available online.

Questions are welcome. We will also seek feedback after the town hall, which will help shape the format and agenda for the November 5 gathering.

To support university-wide information sharing, these regular town hall meetings will be live-streamed. Notes will be taken and shared with the PPC, Council, GSA and USSU Executives, and every college and school. We look forward to hearing from you at the town hall and in the months ahead.

### **Tuition**

The Provost's Tuition Advisory Group meets regularly to develop recommendations regarding tuition consultation and tuition setting. Thank you to the Executives of the USSU and GSA for participation in the working group on Tuition consultation that met over spring and summer terms. I have approved all recommendations from the working group and thank all members for providing clear guidance on how to strengthen tuition consultations consistent with our related [policy](#).

As chair of the TAG, Deputy Provost Patti McDougall, will this month launch one of these recommendations: the online tuition consultation survey for students. This information will help inform tuition planning and communications.

If you have questions about any of the initiatives coming out of the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, you can reach me at [airini@usask.ca](mailto:airini@usask.ca)

### **COLLEGE AND SCHOOL UPDATES**

#### **Edwards School of Business**

The Edwards School of Business is excited to announce the creation of a CPA Saskatchewan Indigenous Achievement Advisor in Residence. The new advising role aims to support students, focusing on self-declared Indigenous students and will play a critical role in driving academic success, recruitment, retention, graduate rates, employment, and overall quality of the student experience for Indigenous students and the entire Edwards community.

CPHR Saskatchewan also announced that it had accredited seven Edwards Executive Education programs for continuing professional development (CPD) hours. CPD eligibility signals to employers and the marketplace that the Edwards School of Business is closely tied to professional practice.

#### **College of Education**

On September 1, the College of Education [opened applications](#) for two new programs offered through the Jane and Ron Graham Centre for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The Master of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (MSoTL) and the Certificate in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning are the first of their kind offered by a post-secondary institute in Canada. Both programs provide the opportunity to understand the importance of and differences in disciplinary teaching and learning contexts and learn how to apply research methods appropriate in educational settings, focusing on the student's context. On September 17, the College of Education was [pleased to announce a \\$1-million donation by alumni Jane and Ron Graham](#) to further support and enhance the Jane and Ron Graham Centre for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

I am also happy to confirm one-time funding to support the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning renovation within the College of Education. These funds will go towards the development of the Jane and Ron Graham Centre for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The funding will be used for hiring a project consultant, and construction will be funded through the Strategic Initiative Fund.

#### **College of Nursing**

The College of Nursing wishes to highlight the work of our 3rd and 4th year Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students. Approximately 650 BSN students undertake about 900 hours of clinical education in their 3rd and 4th year of study. These students are each providing front-line, hands-on nursing care while they learn. This year a portion of their time will be spent providing care to COVID-19 positive patients at locations across Saskatchewan. Collectively in a year, this group of students will

## BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

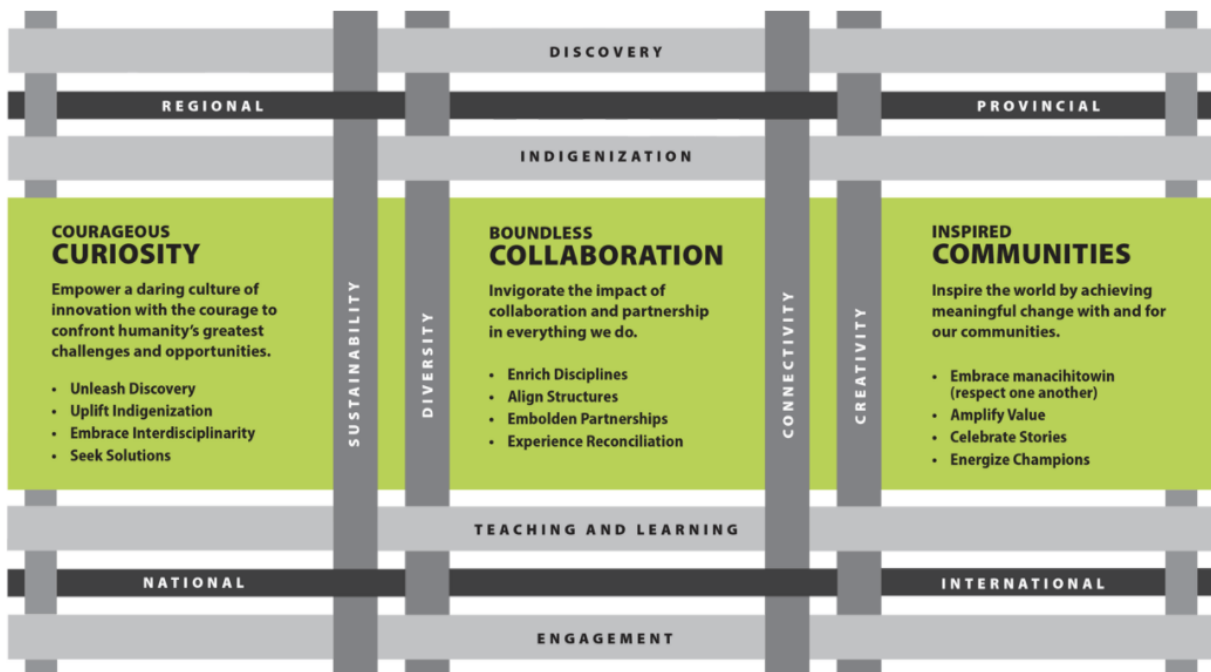
provide ~300,000 hours of clinical care in our province at a time when the pandemic is depleting our healthcare resources and exhausting healthcare workers.

The Saskatoon Open Door Society has also called upon our students to assist in the refugee settlement effort for a group of incoming Afghan refugees. Planning is underway for senior nursing students, under the supervision of a faculty member and as part of a community clinical placement, to assist in completing the rapid antigen testing / COVID-19 screening required as part of the resettlement plan for the refugees.

### College of Arts and Science

The College of Arts and Science, Galleries, and Indigenous Student Achievement Pathways celebrated the final installment of the 13th slate step on September 21, 2021, for the collaborative art project: *anohc kipasikônaw/we rise/niipawi*. This art project was publicly launched during Indigenous Achievement Week in 2020 and was conceived to celebrate Indigenous knowledge systems. Thirteen slate stair treads were reclaimed from a staircase in the Thorvaldson Building and were carved with Cree syllabics, representing the 13 moons in the lunar cycle. The 13th moon with the Cree syllabics for *nôcihitowipîsim rutting moon* was installed on September 21, representing the completion of this project. All 13 slate steps can be currently viewed in the Gordon Snelgrove Gallery foyer.

The StarPhoenix covered the installation of the final step in the *anohc kipasikônaw/we rise/niipawi* collaborative art project. Here is the link to the article: [Collaborative art project at U of S gallery reaches final phase | The Star Phoenix](#)



### UNIVERSITY 2025 PLAN ASPIRATIONS

The following events and initiatives, of the many across our university, featured during the past recent months. News items from our Colleges and Schools, related to each of our University 2025 Aspirations, is included.

### Transformative decolonization leading to reconciliation

With a history dating back more than a century through five generations of Métis farmers, Megan Wasden [has a deep appreciation and connection to the land](#). Her graduate studies have been supported by two major scholarships at USask: the Indigenous Graduate Leadership Award (\$16,000 plus two years of tuition) and the Keith Gilmore Foundation Prize for Beef Cattle Innovation (\$10,000) for advanced studies leading to a career in the beef industry.

### Distinguished Learners

[Two exceptional students](#) beginning STEM studies at the USask this year have received a financial boost to help them realize their educational and entrepreneurial dreams. Cole Willmann and Eva Sosnina have been named the University of Saskatchewan (USask) 2021 recipients of the prestigious Schulich Leader Scholarship, the largest science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) scholarship in Canada. Through The Schulich Foundation, these entrance scholarships are awarded to 100 graduating high school graduates enrolled in a STEM undergraduate program at one of 20 partner universities in Canada.

[USask's revamped biomedical sciences program](#) is also proving popular with students. The revamped biomedical sciences (BMSC) degree program at USask is attracting significant attention from prospective students from around the world.

### Meaningful impact

The University of Saskatchewan's [most generous alumni](#), Ron and Jane Graham, are supporting Huskie Athletics, the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO), the College of Education, and the College of Engineering with a multimillion-dollar donation. The Grahams' donation includes contributions of \$3 million to Huskie Athletics, \$1 million to VIDO, \$1 million to the College of Education and \$900,000 to the College of Engineering.

## SEARCHES, APPOINTMENTS, AND REVIEWS

### Appointments

Thank you sincerely to all committee members serving on appointments committees and to the administration and support staff who support these committees. Thank you for taking up these vitally important roles as university citizens for those appointed to service leadership roles. And, for those individuals new to USask: a very warm welcome.

### College and School Executive members:

- **Emily Snyder**, has been seconded from her position as a member of the Department of Indigenous Studies to be acting vice-dean Indigenous, College of Arts and Science. This temporary arrangement is effective September 1, 2021 for up to one year, while we await the completion of the Vice Provost indigenous Engagement search. This follows **Angela Jaime's** secondment to be Interim Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement.
- **Haissam Haddad** has been appointed department head, College of Medicine, (Medicine), for a five-year term effective October 1, 2021.

### Reviews

During fall and winter terms the following reviews and searches will be undertaken:

### Reviews:

- Dean Keith Willoughby, Edwards School of Business

**BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS**

- Dean Suzanne Kresta, College of Engineering

Searches:

- Dean, College of Arts and Science (fall term)
- Dean, College of Education (winter term)
- Vice Provost, Teaching, Learning and Student Experience (fall term)
- Vice Provost, Indigenous Engagement (winter term)

The University Library:

In welcoming back [Dean, Melissa Just](#), we would like express our thanks to outgoing acting dean, Charlene Sorensen, for her leadership over the last 18 months, April 9, 2020 – September 30, 2021.

.....

**thank you**

**mąsi / pidamaya / pinámaya miigwetch / marsee / hiy hiy**