

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE  
NOTICE OF MOTION**

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**PRESENTED BY:** Vicki Squires, Chair; Darrell Mousseau, Vice Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC)

**DATE OF MEETING:** March 16, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Proposal to move the reporting of the Toxicology Centre from the Office of the Vice President Research to the School of Environment and Sustainability (SENS)

**NOTICE OF MOTION:**

*The Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC) recommends that the reporting structure of the Toxicology Centre be moved from the Office of the Vice President Research to the School of Environment and Sustainability, effective April 24, 2023, pending approval of the Board of Governors and confirmation of University Senate.*

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**SUMMARY:**

This is a notice of motion for University Council's consideration on March 16, 2023, regarding the Toxicology Centre's reporting structure. PPC is recommending that the reporting structure be moved from the Office of the Vice President Research to the School of Environment and Sustainability (SENS).

On behalf of PPC, this document confirms that the following consultations with Council committees took place, including: the Research Scholarly and Artistic Works Committee, Academic Programs Committee, Centres Subcommittee of PPC, and finally by PPC, which was then recommended for approval to University Council on March 1, 2023.

Information was provided to these committees and is now submitted to Council by Dr. Patti McDougall, Deputy Provost, Dr. Karsten Liber, Executive Director of SENS, and Dr. Markus Brinkman, Director of the Toxicology Centre.

The recommendations will be presented to USask's governing bodies on the following dates:

Board of Governors	April 18, 2023
University Council	April 20, 2023
University Senate	April 22, 2023

**ATTACHMENTS**

- a. Briefing Note on Shifting a Reporting Line: Moving the Toxicology Centre into SENS (February 2023)
- b. Toxicology Reporting Structure Presentation

**Briefing Note**  
**Shifting a Reporting Line: Moving the Toxicology Centre into the School of Environment and Sustainability**  
**(February 2023)**

## **1.0 Background**

Toxicology has been a recognized strength at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) for over two decades and all day-to-day activities have been managed through the Toxicology Centre since 1982. The Toxicology Centre (the Centre) is the foremost centre of its type in Canada and the existing interdisciplinary Toxicology academic programs (undergraduate and graduate) are routinely rated as top in Canada and among the best in the world. However, our pre-eminence in Canada is slowly being eroded by investments and enhancements made at other Canadian universities. Strategic changes to the governance structure of Toxicology at USask are required to ensure that the Toxicology Centre and Toxicology's potential are fully realized.

At present, the Toxicology Centre reports into the Vice-President Research (and was considered a "Type B" Centre under previous nomenclature). This reporting line made sense historically, however, change is now required. The Centre effectively manages and oversees aspects of both the interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programs in Toxicology, the former on behalf of the College of Arts and Science (A&S) and the latter on behalf of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS). This has worked reasonably well, but the changing resource allocation and academic structures landscape at USask necessitates that the Toxicology Centre becomes part of an academic unit to more appropriately and legitimately manage research and academic programming (especially graduate programming) and ensure continued growth and success. Doing so in partnership with the School of Environment and Sustainability (SENS), where the majority of current research-active Toxicology faculty hold their academic appointments, presents the best opportunity for Toxicology to grow.

This document outlines the rationale for moving the Toxicology Centre into SENS and presents information on the benefits and strategic advantages such a move would have for the Toxicology Centre and for USask. The specific request at this time is for oversight of the Toxicology Centre to reside inside SENS and no longer report into the VPR. Following from the terms of reference for Planning and Priorities Committee of University Council (PPC), decisions involving the establishment, disestablishment or review of a research centre come through the Centres Subcommittee of PPC, with advice to the Centres Subcommittee from the Research, Scholarly and Artistic Works Committee (RSAW). Although the current request does not involve creating new, taking apart, or reviewing the Toxicology Centre, the request involves an organizational/structural change thus invoking the aforementioned governance decision-making pathway. This proposal was given preliminary consideration at the January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Centres Subcommittee of PPC before being discussed at the February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of RSAW.

The shift in reporting line is the first step to enable strategic change. There is no request at this time for the move of academic authority for programs in Toxicology. Such a proposal would involve different governance processes. Beyond the move in reporting lines, there will be no changes to the Centre. It will continue to operate on a day-to-day basis as it presently does.

## 2.0 Current Governance Structure and the New Vision

The Toxicology Centre was originally created as the Toxicology Research Centre back in 1982-83. In 1995-96 it was changed to the Toxicology Centre to better reflect its growing role in academic program delivery at USask.

Over the past 40 years, the Toxicology Centre has developed a strong academic mission, both in terms of research involving graduate students and post-doctoral fellows and academic programming. In that way, it has operated more like an academic unit, while at the same time reporting directly to and receiving an annual operating budget allocation from the Office of the Vice-President Research (OVPR). With the current financial challenges at USask and the continuing changes to the USask resource allocation processes, the Toxicology Centre is unable to capitalize on revenues that would be generated from its various activities, thereby significantly limiting its scope for growth.

With this proposal, we seek to move the direct reporting line of the Centre from the VPR to SENS which, as a School, reports to the Provost. The effort to make this move happen has been underway for well over one year with much discussion happening within a range of units. Information on these discussions and deliberations is included in Section 3.0.

Figures 1 and 2 below show the current and proposed reporting structure.

**Figure 1: Current Structure**

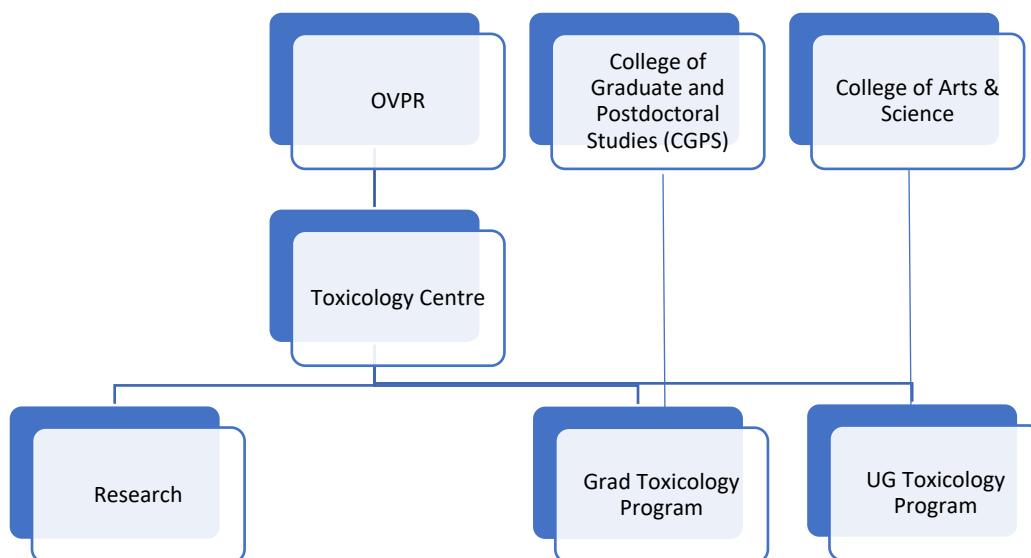
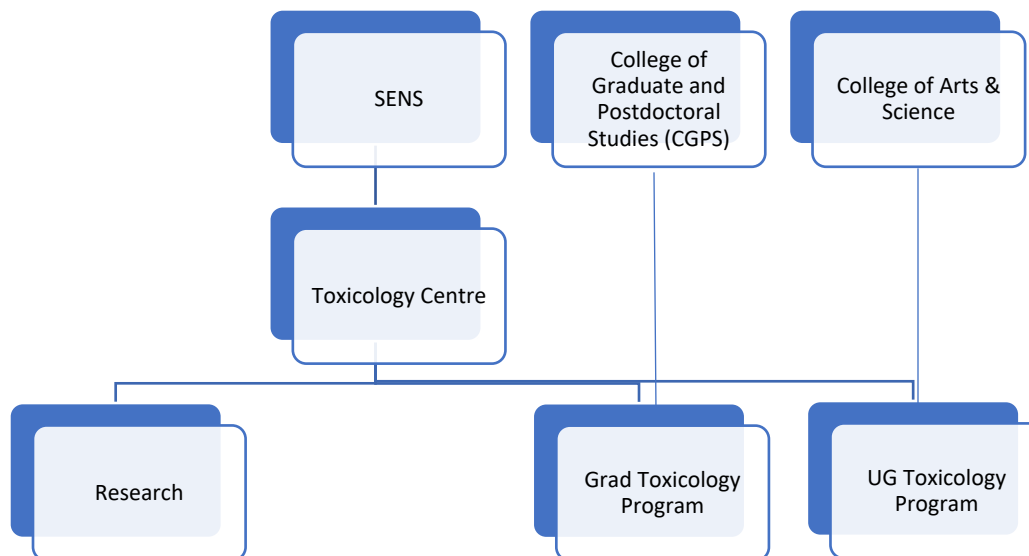


Figure 2: Proposed Structure



### 3.0 Why SENS as the Academic Home?

While four colleges have actively participated in building capacity in the Toxicology Centre (Western College of Veterinary Medicine, School of Environment and Sustainability, Agriculture and Bioresources, Arts and Science), two have been the strongest contributors and supporters – the WCVM and SENS. For years, the 15 core faculty members contributing to the Toxicology Centre and programs have largely had their academic homes in these two units (67% of core faculty). At the present time, most of those faculty members are in SENS and 90% of all the research activity in the Centre is conducted by SENS faculty. (Note: Today the core is down to 13 faculty members due to retirements with five of those being in SENS).

**Appendix A** maps out a series of discussions and consultation steps taken as well as formal deliberations, leading up to February, 2023, at which time the Director of the Toxicology Centre has completed a check-in with the 13 faculty members involved with the Toxicology Centre. Out of the 13, 11 colleagues have responded and their feedback is included verbatim. Two colleagues did not respond.

*A summary of the steps to date:*

Since two units (WCVM and SENS) presented the most logical home for the Toxicology Centre, a year-long consultation process was launched in early 2021 led by then-Acting Director, David Janz, to identify which unit would be preferred by the Toxicology faculty. In an effort to provide full and unbiased space for deliberations, the Executive Director of SENS (Karsten Liber), a Toxicology member, did not participate in most of these discussions (see details in **Appendix A**). All core Toxicology faculty members were consulted and leadership from both the WCVM and SENS were asked a series of questions during “interviews” with the Toxicology core faculty. After much debate over a series of meetings, a majority of the Toxicology core faculty voted for SENS as the preferred home for the Centre. Although the

decision was not unanimous, all faculty who participated in the process, including those from the WCVM, agreed to support the decision of the majority. After that decision, everyone aligned with a common purpose and efforts have been under way to make this move happen, a move that now has the full support of all Toxicology faculty. It should also be noted that the new Director of the Toxicology Centre, Markus Brinkmann, holds his academic appointment in SENS, something that was not known when this process was initiated in 2021. This makes the decision to move the Centre into SENS even more logical. In addition to special faculty meetings held in Toxicology to discuss the matter, it was discussed regularly at routine monthly faculty meetings where there is Toxicology graduate student representation. Toxicology graduate students were also consulted separately and are also supportive of the move to SENS.

*Note: Appendix A includes reference to a “Faculty Council” in the Toxicology Centre. Although nomenclature has been used for ease of understanding within Toxicology, it has been recently flagged by the Governance Office that the use of the term “Faculty Council” is only permitted in nomenclature within the context of College and Schools. This has been duly noted by colleagues in the Toxicology Centre and in SENS and will need to be addressed.*

**Appendix B** contains a letter of support from the past and current Chairs of the Toxicology Graduate Student Association.

The proposed move of the Toxicology Centre to SENS (a unit with a balanced budget) will create a solid budgetary and organizational foundation from which it can keep growing and continue building its already globally recognized brand with the aim to become the #1 Interdisciplinary Toxicology Program in the world.

#### **4.0 Operational Principles**

After the proposed move to SENS, the Toxicology Centre will continue to exist as a distinct unit within SENS. The Centre will remain and will keep its name and brand. It will operate semi-autonomously and make its day-to-day decisions under the leadership of its director.

In short, existing SENS and Toxicology activities and programs will remain largely separate but operate under the umbrella of SENS. This approach will ensure the continued high-quality of research and academic activity within the two units. There will be minimal impact on the day-to-day activities of SENS.

#### **5.0 Strategic Advantages of the Proposed Change**

The need for well-trained toxicologists is escalating in response to Canada’s (incl. Saskatchewan’s) active and expanding natural resources sector, increasing regulatory requirements, and growing political focus on environmental pollution and food safety. This need is not expected to diminish and will likely increase even further in future years. In addition, Canadian society generally expects that governments and industry will ensure a healthy environment and healthy food supply, as well as provide thorough assessment and regulation of chemicals and pollutants, including industrial emissions, pesticides, and pharmaceuticals. Today, this is particularly true in Canada’s North where many Indigenous communities

worry about the expanding natural resource sector and associated environmental degradation. The Toxicology Centre and associated academic programming train students to serve in these capacities and graduates continue to be in high demand. The demand is even greater on a global scale which presents an enormous opportunity for USask to take global leadership and be seen as *the* place where top international students want to come to train in toxicology. The potential here is huge.

There are many strategic advantages to moving the Toxicology Centre under SENS as an academic unit. These include:

- Ensuring the Centre is embedded into the academic fabric of the University.
- Enhanced access to staff support, such as research facilitation and research communication, and other services (e.g., fund raising).
- Expanded graduate student opportunities through new linkages between Toxicology and SENS graduate programs alongside possibilities for new academic programming
- More opportunities to bring social science and policy aspects into the Toxicology programs thereby enhancing the academic experience for Toxicology students.
- Stabilizing the funding for a research centre by embedding it within a revenue centre.
- Create the foundation for a new collaborative spirit between the broader core Toxicology faculty and SENS faculty, and with faculty in other units that SENS has close working relationships with.
- Allow for easier participation of Toxicology with several of the Usask Signature Areas and Institutional Priorities (e.g., Water, Indigenization).

The University would also see several advantages of such a move, including a simplification of structures and a step towards more opportunity for shared services.

## **6.0 Implementation Plan and Financial Considerations**

The existing institutional base funding support for the Toxicology Centre from the OVPR ends on April 30, 2025. Ahead of that time, there is a need for the Toxicology Centre to be embedded within an existing revenue centre (and academic unit). SENS has been identified by the Toxicology faculty as the desired unit for such a move. Without such a move, the Toxicology Centre would be unable to sustain its operations. The SENS Faculty Council has provided unanimous support for the proposed integration. While such an affiliation is a necessity, the ability of the Toxicology Centre to manage its affairs and programs has been thoroughly proven over more than 30 years (e.g., Flex II and Devolved Scholarship status). As a result, it is imperative that Toxicology maintains a certain level of autonomy and authority over its programs. That is assured in SENS.

The proposed approach is for the Toxicology Centre to remain a centre, but to move that centre from oversight of the VPR to oversight by SENS. In short, the Toxicology Centre would become a centre solely under SENS. While Toxicology would fall under SENS, it is imperative that Toxicology remains interdisciplinary (which SENS already is) and that it retains strong relationships and partnerships with the WCVI, AgBio and A&S. Essentially, Toxicology will continue to operate more or less under the model that exists now, only the reporting line changes. No faculty will have to change their academic homes or become jointly appointed.

Toxicology has been financially successful for decades and there is no reason to think that would change in the future. Therefore, the requested shift carries negligible financial risks to the institution, but substantially simplifies Toxicology programming and activities, and provides the platform upon which Toxicology can grow and become the unequivocal global leader in academic interdisciplinary toxicology research and training within five to ten years.

## 7.0 Discussions with RSAW

As part of the process for considering a shift in the reporting line for the Toxicology Centre, RSAW considered this matter at its February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The discussion at RSAW was helpful. Highlights from the proponents' notes include:

- The Vice-President Research spoke about his deep engagement with the Centre and his support of the move of the Centre into SENS. It's important to document the specific sentiments of the Vice-President Research, given that the current reporting line has the Centre reporting to the VPR and any changes in reporting would not make sense in the absence of VPR support.
- The Dean of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies was engaged in the discussion with regard to her position on the shift in reporting lines. Her response was supportive of seeing this shift take place. The discussion at RSAW suggested a letter of support would be a useful addition to the materials.
  - **Appendix C** includes a letter of support from Dean Debby Burshtyn.
- Members of RSAW queried whether moving the Toxicology Centre into SENS (versus WCVI) might somehow diminish the important and longstanding connections to WCVI.
  - Reassurances were provided by the Director of the Toxicology Centre and the Executive Director of SENS that the desire and the energy dedicated to collaborations with WCVI will not diminish and are a critical part of the success of the Toxicology Centre. It was pointed out that there are no faculty members appointed to the Toxicology Centre. Faculty members are appointed to academic units (like WCVI) and will continue to have responsibilities and time commitments to the Toxicology Centre.
- Members of RSAW raised the matter of our schools (SENS, SPH, JSGS) being created as graduate schools asking whether this would change in the case of the Toxicology Centre, given that there are UG programs in Toxicology.
  - There is no immediate plan to shift the UG programs in Toxicology into SENS from their current academic home in Arts and Science. Importantly, the move of the reporting line for the Toxicology Centre into SENS would not result in any automatic cascade of UG programming shifting. This kind of a shift in academic authority would be a substantive move and would need to involve a much broader discussion, as flagged by RSAW, about the involvement of the Schools in UG programming.
- Members of RSAW highlighted that the Toxicology Centre has an entrepreneurial spirit as part of its "DNA" and asked whether there was any risk that the move of the Toxicology Centre into SENS would diminish that activity.
  - Reassurances were provided by the Director of the Toxicology Centre and the Executive Director of SENS that there would be a continued need for an entrepreneurial approach in order for the Toxicology Centre to be supported – to grow and to flourish.

## **8.0 Discussion at the Centres Subcommittee (of PPC).**

The request to move the reporting line of the Toxicology Centre into SENS was considered at the February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the PPC Centres Subcommittee. There was a request to provide written confirmation of support from the College of Arts and Science.

**Appendix D** includes a letter of support from Dean Peta Bonham-Smith.

Presented by:

Patti McDougall

Markus Brinkmann

Karsten Liber



## Appendix A

### Summary of Consultations Regarding the Planned Move of the reporting line for the Toxicology Centre into the School of Environment and Sustainability

(February 2023)

- **March 26, 2021:** Regular School of Environment and Sustainability (SENS) Faculty Council Meeting (minutes approved on May 7, 2021), where SENS Executive Director Dr. Karsten Liber discussed opportunities as well as potential or perceived risks of an affiliation of Toxicology with SENS under agenda item 4.5, “Discussion of Potential Affiliation of Toxicology with SENS.” Following a brief discussion, the following motion was put forward and carried, with no votes against or in abstention verbalized: “That the SENS faculty encourage Dr. Liber to engage in conversations with Toxicology and report back to SENS Faculty Council.”
- **May 21, 2021:** Regular Toxicology Faculty Council Meeting (minutes approved on September 17, 2021), at which upcoming meetings for Toxicology Core Members with academic leaders of the potential future homes for Toxicology from both SENS and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVN) were announced. During these meetings, both leaders would present their perspectives of what a future of the Toxicology Centre within their units could look like, and providing the opportunity for Toxicology Core Members to ask questions. The Toxicology Graduate Student Association (TGSA) representative, Jensen Cherewyk, was present for this meeting.
  - From the minutes (edited for clarity): “Before meeting with Karsten [Liber] and Gillian [Muir], the official decision regarding their positions needs to be made. David [Janz] sent out a 5-page fact sheet about the strengths of Toxicology and the list of questions to be used as a guide in the discussions with SENS and WCVN. It might be useful for the Toxicology faculty to have a quick 45-minute discussion before the first meeting to discuss the questions as a group. The importance of [...] having the two meetings before summer was emphasized.”
- **July 8, 2021:** Short presentation to Toxicology Faculty Council (including a representative of the TGSA, Jensen Cherewyk) on the vision for a potential future of the Toxicology Centre within the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVN), Dr. Gillian Muir, Dean WCVN, as well as opportunity for faculty members to ask questions and provide feedback. Dr. Liber recused himself from this meeting.
- **July 13, 2021:** Short presentation to Toxicology Faculty Council (including a representative of the TGSA, Jensen Cherewyk) on the vision for a potential future of the Toxicology Centre within the School of Environment and Sustainability (SENS), Dr. Karsten Liber, Executive Director SENS, as well as opportunity for faculty members to ask questions and provide feedback.
- **July 20, 2021:** Follow-up discussion, debrief, and consultation with Toxicology Faculty Council giving both potential future homes equal consideration. Dr. Liber recused himself from this meeting. The TGSA representative, Jensen Cherewyk, was present for this meeting.
- **September 8, 2021:** Anonymous ballots were sent out to all Toxicology Core Members to be completed after a meeting scheduled for September 9, 2021, with the question “What is your

first choice for our future home unit?” with the options being WCVI or SENS. This wording was deliberately chosen to not exclusively vote for or against a unit but to indicate first and second choices and ensure that all members of the Toxicology Faculty Council would be on board with either outcome.

- **September 9, 2021:** A meeting summarizing the outcomes of consultations and re-iterating pros and cons, as well as perspectives on both potential future academic homes for Toxicology, providing additional opportunity for follow-up discussion, debriefing, and consultation with Toxicology Faculty Council. Dr. Liber recused himself from this meeting. The TGSA representative, Jensen Cherewyk, was present for this meeting.
- **September 14, 2021:** Outcomes of the vote were communicated to all Toxicology Core Members *via* email. The vote was 8 in favor of moving the Toxicology Centre under SENS as the first choice, while 6 votes were in favor of moving it under WCVI as the first choice.
- **September 17, 2021:** Regular Toxicology Faculty Council meeting (minutes approved on October 15, 2021), where the outcome of the vote was further discussed and the next steps summarized.
  - From the minutes (edited for clarity): “A vote to decide the future academic partnership for the Toxicology Programs took place and SENS had the majority vote (8-6). David [Janz] will meet with Karsten [Liber] next Thursday to have an initial discussion. Baljit [Singh] is supportive of the Toxicology Centre joining with another unit, and he will likely be the executive sponsor of this proposal. Karsten [Liber] has indicated that he has a good rapport with Provost Airini and hopefully it should not be too difficult to remain a Centre under SENS.
- **October 1, 2021:** Dr. Liber informed the SENS Faculty Council during its regular meeting (minutes approved on November 5, 2021) of the Toxicology Center vote resulting in a decision for Toxicology to partner with SENS, and that conversations have been started with those who did not vote for SENS to ensure that everyone is on board.
- **December 17, 2021:** Dr. Janz provided an update to the Toxicology Faculty Council (minutes approved on January 21, 2022) on the state of discussions regarding the mechanics of the move into SENS.
- **February 4, 2022:** Dr. Liber informed the SENS Faculty Council during its regular meeting (minutes approved on March 4, 2022) that conversations regarding the move of the Toxicology Centre under SENS were still ongoing and that regular meetings chaired by Patti McDougall were taking place to try to find the appropriate implementation plan and the appropriate governance options.
- **January 21, 2022:** Dr. Janz provided an update to the Toxicology Faculty Council (minutes approved on February 18, 2022) on the state of discussions regarding the mechanics of the move into SENS.
- **February 18, 2022:** Dr. Janz provided an update to the Toxicology Faculty Council (minutes approved on March 18, 2022) on the state of discussions regarding the mechanics of the move into SENS.

- **March 18, 2022:** Dr. Janz provided an update to the Toxicology Faculty Council (minutes approved on April 22, 2022) on the state of discussions regarding the mechanics of the move into SENS.
- **April 22, 2022:** Dr. Janz provided an update to the Toxicology Faculty Council (minutes approved on May 20, 2022) on the state of discussions regarding the mechanics of the move into SENS.
- **October 21, 2022:** Dr. Brinkmann chaired the first Toxicology Faculty Council meeting after he was appointed as the new Director of the Toxicology Centre and provided an update to the Core Toxicology Members Faculty Council (minutes approved on November 18, 2022) on the state of discussions regarding the mechanics of the move into SENS. Dr. Brinkmann re-emphasized that himself and senior USask leadership continue with the plans of moving the Toxicology Centre under SENS.
- **February 3, 2023:** Dr. Brinkmann held a meeting with past TGSA president Jensen Cherewyk, who served as the student representative on the Toxicology Faculty Council in 2021, as well as the sitting TGSA president Hannah Mahoney to re-iterate the plans of moving the Toxicology Centre under SENS, and to open the floor to any questions and concerns from the students. Both signaled their support and agreed to provide a Letter of Support from the TGSA in favor of moving the Toxicology Centre under SENS.
- **February 3, 2023:** A Letter of Support from the Toxicology Graduate Student Association (TGSA) was provided in favor of moving the Toxicology Centre under SENS.
- **February 3, 2023:** Regular SENS Faculty Council Meeting (minutes have not been approved at the time of submitting this memo), during which Dr. Liber provided an update that progress is being made towards moving the Toxicology Centre under SENS. Dr. Liber opened the floor for questions, which he answered, and allowed all faculty members to voice concerns with or opposition to moving ahead as outlined. No concerns were brought forward, and the SENS Faculty Council expressed their full support for the move.
- **February 6, 2023:** Dr. Brinkmann sent an email out to Toxicology Core Members to update them on the process that has been identified, recent progress made, and asking members to confirm their support for the move of the Toxicology Centre under SENS. The January 2023 briefing note to RSAW was attached to this email. He received 11 affirmative responses out of 13 Toxicology Core Members (with two being on sabbatical leave or otherwise unavailable). Email responses (of those other than Drs. Liber and Brinkmann) are provided below:
  - “I’m happy to hear that there is movement on this front and I remain fully in support of the Centre and its new home in SENS.”
  - “So happy to hear that there is significant movement in moving Toxicology into SENS. This move is essential to happen as quickly and smoothly as possible for the viability of the program. I fully support Toxicology's move into SENS.”
  - “Yes I am aware of the proposed changes and have been in support of them ever since they were proposed. The sooner we get this done the better !! Glad to see we are finally getting some movement on this – thanks to you and Karsten for your dedication to this.”
  - “I am in full support of this move. Thanks for all your effort in moving this forward.”

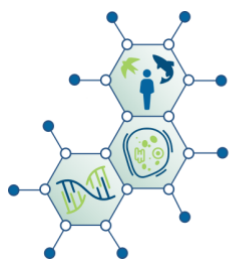
- “No concerns Markus. Good to see some things are moving along even if they don't affect me directly.”
- “I support the administrative move for Toxicology into SENS.”
- “Thanks for providing the clear email and outlining document. Your work with Karsten to move this forward quickly is very much appreciated. I fully support the administrative move of the Toxicology Centre in SENS.”
- “So happy to see that you have gained some serious traction with senior admin on this important step – good job! Of course I am 100% supportive of this initial administrative step in the future of the Centre!”
- “I absolutely support this. Great to see this finally moving forward.”

## **Appendix B**

### **Letter of Support from the Chairs (Past, Present) of the Toxicology Graduate Student Association**

## **Appendix C**

### **Letter of Support from Dean, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies**



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**Hannah Mahoney, Jensen Cherewyk**

PhD Candidates

Toxicology Centre, University of Saskatchewan

44 Campus Drive

Saskatoon, SK S7N 5B3, Canada

**Dr. Markus Brinkmann, Director**

Toxicology Centre, University of Saskatchewan

44 Campus Drive

Saskatoon, SK S7N 5B3, Canada

February 3, 2023

**RE: Note of support for moving the Toxicology Centre under SENS**

Dear Dr. Brinkmann,

The graduate students in the Toxicology Graduate Program support the movement of the Toxicology Centre to another academic unit, the School of Environmental and Sustainability (SENS). The Toxicology graduate students attended meetings of the Toxicology Faculty Council, where the move to SENS was discussed, and the students were allowed to provide their input on this move.

The Toxicology Graduate Program has been deemed one of the highest-ranked interdisciplinary programs in Canada, and being students within the program, we can attest to this statement. In order for the Toxicology Graduate Program to continue to succeed in the future, further stability and credit for the research and teaching activities would be beneficial. These positive contributions to the Toxicology Graduate Program can be achieved through the movement of the Toxicology Centre under SENS. It is important for the Toxicology Centre to succeed in order for the Toxicology Graduate Program to succeed as well.

The move under SENS would provide further research and career opportunities for Toxicology Graduate students, as well as necessary stability for the future. Since the Toxicology program is an interdisciplinary program, the holistic, interdisciplinary focus would still be a key aspect of the program under SENS, making it an ideal unit to merge with. Further, the move under SENS will provide new research and partnership opportunities for graduate students, which gives us excitement and reassurance for the future.

The graduate students of the Toxicology Graduate Program support the movement of the Toxicology Centre under SENS and see it as a positive change and a step in the right direction.

Sincerely,

**Jensen Cherewyk, Past Chair of  
the Toxicology Graduate Student  
Association**

Phone: (306) 594-8108

[jensen.cherewyk@usask.ca](mailto:jensen.cherewyk@usask.ca)

**Hannah Mahoney, Current  
Chair of the Toxicology  
Graduate Student Association**

Phone: (639) 998-4265

[hannah.mahoney@usask.ca](mailto:hannah.mahoney@usask.ca)



February 9, 2023

Patti McDougall  
Deputy Provost

**Re: Proposal to change of Toxicology Centre reporting line from VPR to SENS.**

Dear Dr. McDougall,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support to move the reporting line for the Toxicology Centre to SENS.

I was briefed by Karsten Liber, Executive Director of SENS during the period he was also acting as Director for the centre as well, and I do not see any issues for the Toxicology graduate programs (MSc and PhD). There is good alignment between the interdisciplinary environment in SENS and the Toxicology program and I expect there to be opportunities in the future that are mutually beneficial for students and postdoctoral fellows affiliated with the Toxicology center when they are under the same umbrella.

Due to the interdisciplinary focus of the Toxicology programs and the affiliation with a centre, the programs are administered by the Toxicology Centre and for administrative purposes situated directly within CGPS without a disciplinary college or school host. As with all graduate programs, CGPS would continue to have academic responsibility for the program and the students.

The Toxicology graduate programs are very successful, and I am pleased to see a plan that will allow the centre to continue to run the programs beyond the commitments from the VPR. The programs held funds through the Devolved Scholarship Program and will be allocated a student support fund and recruitment scholarships under the new system. The Chair of the Toxicology graduate program will also maintain their representation on the GGPS Council as an interdisciplinary program.

I look forward to working with the Toxicology Centre and SENS as they progress through the next steps and facilitate changes they wish to make in future.

[Redacted signature block]



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Debby Burshtyn', with a stylized, flowing script.

Debby Burshtyn  
Dean, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
Professor, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology

cc. Markus Brinkman, Director Toxicology Centre  
Karsten Liber, Executive Director SENS



February 21, 2023

Patti McDougall  
Deputy Provost

**Re: Proposal to change Toxicology Centre reporting line from VPR to SENS.**

Dear Dr. McDougall,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for moving the reporting line for the Toxicology Centre from OVPR to SENS.

As an Interdisciplinary research centre, moving oversight of the Toxicology Centre from VPR to SENS will better align its research activities with that of the interdisciplinary research environment within SENS.

With this move, administrative responsibility for the Toxicology undergraduate program will remain with the College of Arts & Science, where it is positioned alongside a large number of interdisciplinary (inter-collegial as well as inter-departmental) programs that are currently administered through the college. The chair of the undergraduate program will maintain a membership on the interdisciplinary chairs standing committee of Arts & Science Faculty Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my support for this change – it is a step forward for Toxicology RSAW.

Sincerely

Peta Bonham-Smith  
Dean, College of Arts & Science

cc. Markus Brinkman, Director Toxicology Centre  
Karsten Liber, Executive Director SENS



# Shifting a Reporting Line: Moving the Toxicology Centre into SENS

March 1, 2023

# Areas of discussion

- Brief background on the Toxicology Centre
- Current state and the new vision
- Why SENS?
  - a) Consultations
- What changes?
- How is this a better positioning?
- Discussion

*Please see the written document in the PPC package for additional detail*

# Brief Background

- Toxicology – a recognized strength of USask for over two decades – with activities run out of the Toxicology Centre for over 40 years
- The activities of the centre blend together research and training of students
- We train world-class toxicologists and we provide leadership – *regionally, nationally, and internationally* in the practice of toxicology.





# Current State - Organization

- The Toxicology Centre reports to the Vice-President Research
- Markus Brinkmann was recently appointed to be the Director of the Centre



# Next Step - Organization

- In order to flourish and in order to achieve future potential, the Toxicology Centre needs to be part of an academic unit.
- The Toxicology Centre will be re-positioned as a centre within the School of Environment and Sustainability (SENS).

# Why SENS?

- Early conversations and consultations included consideration of which academic home would be best for the Centre
- Two clear possibilities: WCVM and SENS
- Extensive discussions leading to a decision on moving to SENS





# What will change in the daily lives of those associated with the Toxicology Centre?

- The Toxicology Centre will continue to function as a distinct unit – now under the umbrella of SENS
  - The day-to-day operational decisions made by the Director
  - Minimal impact on the day-to-day activities of SENS
- 
- The Toxicology Centre will remain a centre under the University's Centres Policy (e.g., for review purposes)



# How does this position the Toxicology Centre in a better way?

The Toxicology Centre will be positioned to be responsive to increasing demand from multiple sectors and can move forward to take global leadership

- ✓ Centre will be embedded within an academic unit
- ✓ Enhanced access to staff support (e.g., research facilitation and communication)
- ✓ Renewed foundation for collaborative spirit
- ✓ Easier participation of with USask signature areas
- ✓ Expanding graduate student opportunities (linkages between existing programs and development of new programs)
- ✓ Platform to stabilize funding for a research centre

# Thank you!