

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
ITEM FOR INFORMATION

PRESENTED BY: Angela Lieverse, Vice-Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee

DATE OF MEETING: April 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Disestablishment of the Confucius Institute

ACTION: For Information Only

SUMMARY:

Dr. Darcy Marciniuk, Associate Vice-President Research attended the Planning and Priorities Committee on March 19, 2025, to formally close out the Confucius Institute, which was disestablished July 1, 2024, due to the government withholding research funding to the Institute as it had a partnership with the Beijing Institute of Technology.

CONSULTATION:

The disestablishment of the Confucius Institute was first brought forward at the December 12, 2024, PPC Centres Subcommittee meeting. It then came forward to PPC on March 19, 2025, where the following motion was passed:

That the Planning and Priorities Committee approve the disestablishment of the Confucius Institute effective immediately.

Note that the USask [Centres Policy](#) states that “The decision to close a centre will be reported to Council, or as appropriate the Board, for information only” (section 10.4). As such, the decision of the Planning and Priorities Committee is the ultimate decision maker on this matter and the results of the committee’s decision are being reported for information.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Disestablishment of the Confucius Institute

FOR DECISION

DATE OF MEETING: January 15, 2025

SUBJECT: **Disestablishment of the Confucius Institute**

DECISION REQUESTED: That the Confucius Institute be formally disestablished.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY:

At its meeting on December 12, 2024, the Centres Subcommittee passed the following motion:
That the PPC Centres Subcommittee recommend to the Planning and Priorities Committee that the Confucius Institute be formally disestablished.

At this meeting, the Subcommittee heard a presentation from Dr. Darcy Marciniuk, Associate Vice-President Research, outlining the rationale for the formal disestablishment of this centre. The committee heard that the Confucius Institute ceased operations on July 1, 2024 based on policy changes of the federal government. The federal government is withholding research funding to organizations that have relationships with various organizations, and the Beijing Institute of Technology – the partner organization for the Confucius Institute – is on this list.

The decision before the Planning and Priorities Committee is to formally disestablish the Confucius Institute as a centre of the University of Saskatchewan. The centre reports directly to the Vice-President Research, and as such the administrative recommendation (attached) was initiated through this office.

Note that the USask [Centres Policy](#) states that “The decision to close a centre will be reported to Council, or as appropriate the Board, for information only” (section 10.4). As such, the decision of the Planning and Priorities Committee is the ultimate decision maker on this matter and the results of the committee’s decision will be reported for information as necessary.

ATTACHMENT:

- Correspondence from the Office of the Vice-President, Research

September 16, 2024

Re: Confucius Institute Closure

To members of the Planning and Priorities Committee:

This document is a formal request for official closure of the University of Saskatchewan's (USask) Confucius Institute (CI), administered by the Office of the Vice-President of Research (OVPR). The headings from the university document, Guidelines for the Closure of a Centre or Research Collaborative (September, 2020) have been used to create this request.

A. Name of centre: Confucius Institute

B. Date of closure: July 1, 2024

C. Rationale for closure:

- The Confucius Institute (CI) was co-established in June 2012 by USask and the Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT). In consultation with President Stoicheff, Dr. Baljit Singh (USask CI Board Chair), and myself, Dr. Darcy Marciniuk (USask CI Management Committee chair) the decision was made to close CI effective July 1, 2024, to ensure USask remains compliant with the Canadian government's new research security policy released January 2024. The Canadian Government included BIT on its list of [Named Research Organizations](#) (NROs) under [the Sensitive Technology Research Areas and Affiliations of Concern](#) (STRAC) policy upon release in January 2024. It is also a listed entity on the US [Bureau of Industry and Security](#) list. As such, this action is necessary for our institution to adhere with Canada's federal STRAC policy, and also to maintain alignment with US federal compliance requirements.

D. Individual and team overseeing closure activities:

- Myself (Dr. Darcy Marciniuk, Associate-Vice President)
- Andrea Eccleston, Operations Manager, International Office
- Dan Zhao, Confucius Institute Administrative Coordinator (prior to her role ending at the CI)
- Dean Olorenshaw, Senior Strategic Business Advisor, Finance

E. Finances:

Fifty-five per cent of the CI's funding came from BIT. Forty-two per cent from an OVPR allocation and the remaining three per cent from external fees. There is \$64,000 remaining in the CI account that will be returned to BIT.

F. Human Resources:

Dan Zhou, the Administrative Coordinator and sole employee of the CI, resigned on July 1, 2024. She successfully applied for the position of International Partnerships Specialist for Asia in the International Office, part of the OVPR. Dan began her new role on the same day she resigned from the CI.

In addition to Dan, several student staff members received stipends and/or honorariums for their contributions to the Institute. These payments ended with the closure of the Institute.

G. Space and Physical Resources

- CI had two offices (Rooms 107 and 109) and a storage room in McLean Hall. These were returned to Space Planning.
- McLean Hall 107 was retained for Engaged Scholar.
- Arts Classroom Space on 2nd Floor was returned to Space Planning.
- Arts 205, 205.1 and 205.2 – CI Offices – were returned to Space Planning and then temporarily assigned to Dr. Marciniuk due to severe water damage in Ellis Hall (and closure of those spaces pending restoration).
- Much of the IT equipment was deemed to be too old to continue to use and was sent to surplus through IT. Three desktop machines, one laptop and a small number of gently used monitors, keyboards and pointing devices (mouse) remaining were assigned to the International Office for use.
- A small amount of remaining stationery also went to the International Office.
- Some items that contained the CI logo and were not useable were disposed appropriately.

H. Communications and Stakeholder relations:

The closure of the Institute was done clearly, transparently, and respectfully. Communication efforts were steered towards ensuring staff and faculty are given the correct information in a timely and respectful manner.

No proactive external communication was developed. Central communications and the OVPR's Research Profile and Impact team established response strategies for external

questioning for media/external parties as (if) they were to come on a case-by-case basis. None of arisen to date.

Senior leadership was prepped regularly with regards to messaging and any changes in the CI closure.

Key messages:

- USask's Confucius Institute will close (has closed) on July 1, 2024.
- The closure of USask's CI is to adhere to the Canadian government's new research security policy released January 2024.
- USask's CI was co-established by USask and the Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT) which is on the Named Research Organization list (last updated February 9, 2024). As such, this action is necessary for our institution to adhere with Canada's new federal policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern (STRAC).
- USask will continue to care for students from China during their time at the institution, and USask will continue to support Chinese culture on campus and in the community. These responsibilities have guided USask since 2012 and will continue to act as fundamental principles in the future.

We thank the Planning and Priorities Committee for reviewing this overview and look forward to its response.

Sincerely,



Darcy Marciniuk, MD, FRCP(C), Master FCCP, FCAHS
Associate Vice-President
Professor of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan